

Syracuse-Onondaga Food Systems Alliance

*Collaborating to build a more equitable, inclusive,
sustainable, and resilient food system in Onondaga County*

**Collective Wayfinding Part I:
Stories from Growing a Justice-Oriented Organization from the Start**

The Food Systems Leadership Network

A national **peer learning community** of individuals and organizations **from across the country working to advance more just, equitable and sustainable food systems** that generates good food, health, and opportunity for all!



What we do



Foster relationships among
food systems leaders

–
Mentorship, peer coaching, and
network building



Strengthen systems leadership
capacity

–
Systems leadership trainings,
technical assistance, and
building organizational
effectiveness



Inspire action and collaboration
across communities

–
Incubators, accelerators,
communities of practice and
member-led initiatives



Advance racial equity
individually and systemically

–
Developing shared analysis,
shifting narrative, and centering
equity in network practices

Join us!

www.foodsystemsleadershipnetwork.org



TODAY'S FACILITATORS



Avalon Gupta VerWiebe
SOFSA Equity, Inclusion, &
Engagement Coordinator



Brittany Taylor
Community Impact Director, AHA-CNY
& SOFSA Senior Community Liaison



Curtis Waterman
Hunter/Gatherer, Onondaga Nation Farm
& SOFSA Advisory Board Member



Maura Ackerman
SOFSA Facilitator & Co-Founder



HOUSEKEEPING

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a dense evergreen forest. The trees are silhouetted against a lighter, misty background, creating a sense of depth and mystery. The overall color palette is dominated by deep blues and greys.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Introductions & Group Norms
- Speed networking
- Bio break
- Sharing our journey
- Q&A
- Peer sharing
- Coming together
- Closing out



SOFSA GROUP NORMS

- **Recording.** The main session of this meeting is being recorded for those unable to attend. Small group conversations in breakout rooms are not recorded.
- **Accommodations.** Instructions to turn on closed captioning are being chatted to everyone now. If there are other accommodations that would help you to participate more fully in SOFSA meetings, please reach out to Avalon.
- **Preparation.** Please review any materials circulated prior to the meeting so that you can participate fully.
- **Self care.** Your snacks and drinks are welcome on screen if you are comfortable. If you're enjoying something special – especially anything local! – feel free to share with the group over chat. Stretch when you need to. Keep your camera on when you can, turn it off when you need privacy.
- **Background noise.** We'll be respectfully keeping everyone on mute for the large group portion so it's easier for everyone to hear. In small groups, please do unmute yourself as you are able.

GROUP NORMS & BRAVE SPACE GUIDELINES

- **Ask questions!** Feel free to use the chat box or use the raise hand function to ask a question. Those on the phone can dial *6 to unmute themselves to ask questions. Be sure to ask questions of presenters and one another to enable opportunities for clarification and to avoid making assumptions.
- **Balance your participation.** Speak & actively listen - especially in small group conversations. Make sure everyone has equal opportunity to share their thoughts, concerns, and questions.
- **Accept non-closure.** We may not get to all questions or even complete our planned agenda at every meeting but will always do our best to ensure timely follow-up on lingering items. You can help our staff by reaching out to us if there is anything you're waiting on from us.
- **Shared accountability.** We agree to support one another to maintain these guidelines in our work together. If harm is caused, we will apologize, take accountability and center the needs of the person who has been harmed.
- **Respecting confidentiality:** What is discussed in our breakout room sessions will stay in those breakout room sessions if a participant wishes.
- **Avoiding triggering language:** We will avoid using specific numbers, triggering/oppressive language and talk of trauma that could be triggering to others.



BREAKOUT #1: SPEED NETWORKING


Small Group Facilitator for Today:

- Person whose birthday is coming up next
- Responsible for keeping the conversation on track and ensuring all voices are heard
- Either take notes or assign a notetaker, make sure to include who was part of your group in the notes

Prompts:

1. What is one thing in your personal or organizational journey for racial justice that you are proud of?
2. What is one challenge in that journey that you are currently addressing or looking to address?

5-min BIO BREAK

 Syracuse-Onondaga
Food Systems Alliance

WELCOME BACK



Syracuse-Onondaga
Food Systems Alliance
www.syrfoodalliance.org



EVAN WEISSMAN'S LEGACY



MISSION & VALUES

Our mission is to strengthen our food system so that it works for all people in the City of Syracuse, surrounding Onondaga County, and neighboring Onondaga Nation. We bring communities together to foster relationships, develop projects, align resources, and advocate for policies to improve the health of our neighbors and our environment.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Witness To Injustice

Tuesday, Nov 9th

2:30-5:00



 Syracuse-Onondaga
Food Systems Alliance

Health Beyond Weight in Food Justice

Join the Syracuse-Onondaga Food Systems Alliance (SOFSA) and the Lender Center for Social Justice on Tuesday, March 8th from 5:30-7:30 for a panel and workshop on weight inclusivity in healthcare and food justice spaces. Register for this event at bit.ly/3LNRE2.

For more information or to request accommodations, contact Avalon at avalon@syrfoofalliance.org by Tuesday, Feb. 22.

 Lender Center
for Social Justice



Mikey Mercedes, Brown University



Harriet Brown, Syracuse University
(moderator)



Holly Lowery, Ophelia's Place



Kimmie Singh, Body Honor Nutrition



SOUL FIRE FARM

AFFINITY GROUPS



Pride @ SOFSA

TUESDAY, APRIL 12TH
5:30-7:00

VIRTUAL YOGA +
HANGOUT



COMMUNITY LIAISONS & STORYTELLING



EQUITABLE EMPLOYMENT

- **Goal:** Creating a basis as SOFSA as an equity-based organization as well as an open-source document that could be utilized by other entities in our region
- **Process:** Established an Equitable Workplace subgroup of our Equity, Inclusion, and Accountability Committee including BIPOC and queer/trans staff and FPC general members



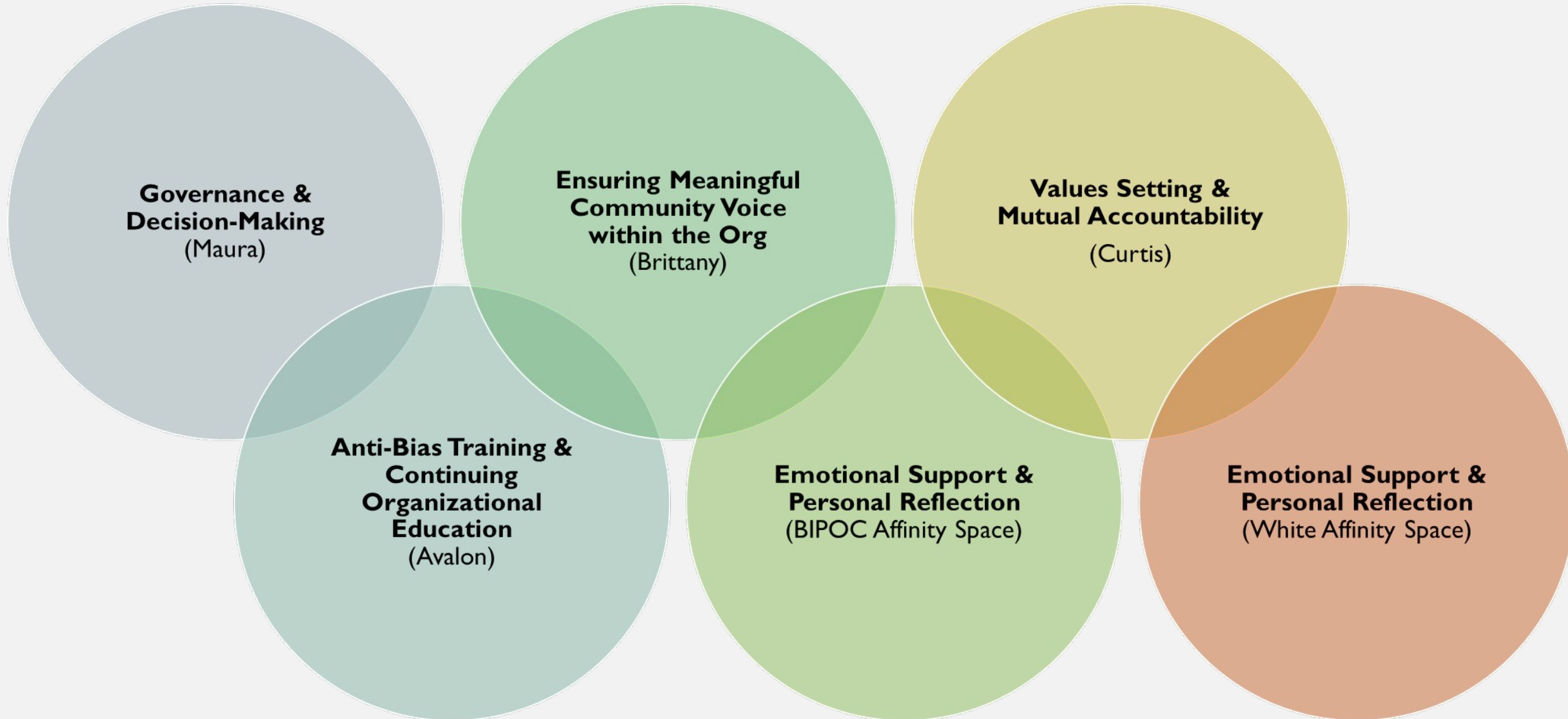
A word cloud featuring various values and principles. The words are arranged in a cluster, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others. The colors of the words include shades of teal, blue, yellow, orange, and purple. The words include: accountability, humility, transparency, community, people-centered, love, accessibility, equity, reflection, acceptance, justice, integrity, celebration, joy, dignity, and empathy.

EVOLUTION: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



QUESTIONS?

PEER SHARING OPTIONS (BREAKOUT #2)



WORD CLOUD EXERCISE

NEXT STEPS

- Speak with local funders about supporting collective learning and embed justice-oriented activities in grant budgets (ex. Community-Centric Fundraising)
- Seek out BIPOC-led organizations to see if regionally-relevant trainings are available
 - Fairly compensate BIPOC trainers and authors for the labor of these trainings
 - Publicize these opportunities to organizational stakeholders (and especially leaders)
- Retain a people-first approach to continual collaborative engagement and embrace “humble mistake-making”
- Recommended resources: <https://bit.ly/CollectiveWayfindingResources>

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

August 25th, 1-3pm EST:

Collective Wayfinding Part 2 w/ San Diego Food Systems Alliance

<https://bit.ly/CollectiveWayfinding2-SDFSA>

September 8th, 2-3pm EST:

SOFSa & SDFSA joint virtual “office hours”

CLOSING OUT



QUESTIONS?

FOLLOW US FOR UPDATES: @SYRFOODALLIANCE