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Connecting Community to Research: A Training Program to Increase Community Partnerships in Research

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Connecting Community to Research: A Training Program to Increase Community Partnerships in Research



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Background

- Community Engaged Research (CErR) emphasizes the need for community members to partner with researchers in order to address health disparities.
- We created the Connecting Community to Research (CCR) training program to provide opportunities for community members who reflect our diverse population to learn more about partnering in CErR.

Purpose

- To increase the number and diversity of community members who are informed about, ready and willing to engage in the research process.

Training Development

- From July to December 2015, we partnered with a 12-member Advisory Board of community engagement professionals to design a training to introduce community members to CErR.
- The CCR training was adapted from existing Tufts University CTSI curriculum, Harvard Catalyst curriculum, and a CDC storytelling template.
- Loco-regional projects were identified and presented to trainees as opportunities to engage with researchers after trainings.

Training Program

- Original Goals:
 - 6 trainings over 9 months
 - Various community settings
 - At least 60 community members trained
- Training sessions:
 - 1-2 hours
 - Didactic and interactive components
 - Group size from 3-65 trainees
 - Designed for trainees with little to no prior knowledge of research

TRAINING

Curriculum

Activity	Objective
Advocate vs. Researcher	Explain the roles of advocates and researchers Understand how research can be used to address a community need
What is Research and Why Do We Do It?	Overview of the Scientific Method and Community Engaged Research
Storytelling	Convey how storytelling can effectively influence research
Opportunities	Provide regional opportunities to participate as a research advocate

Participants

N=100 with 7 trainings

Figure 1: Race of Participants

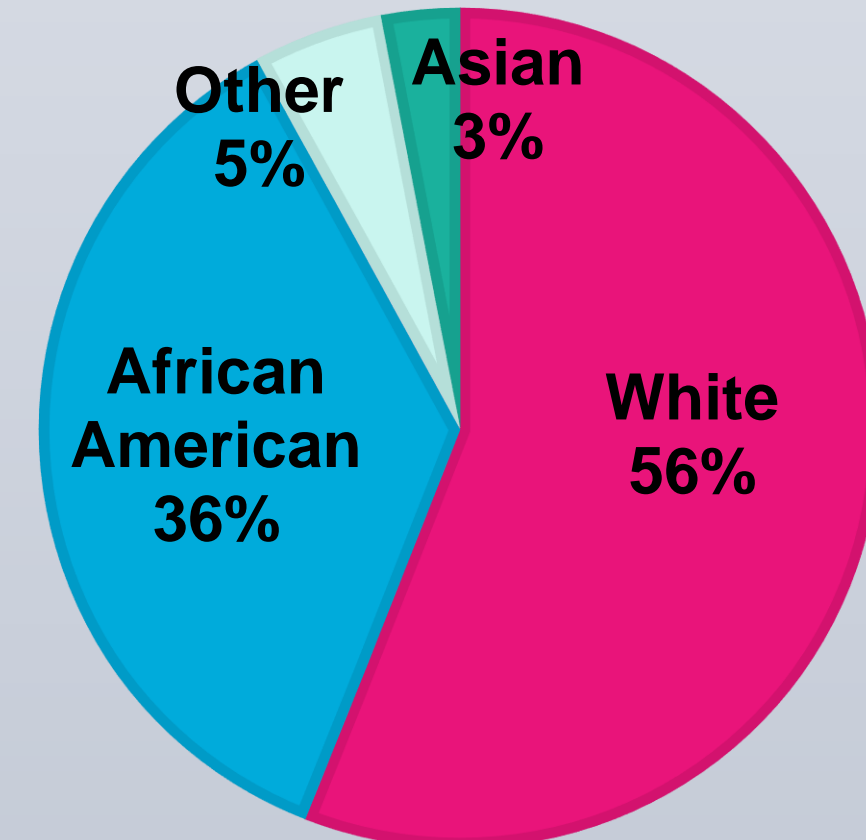
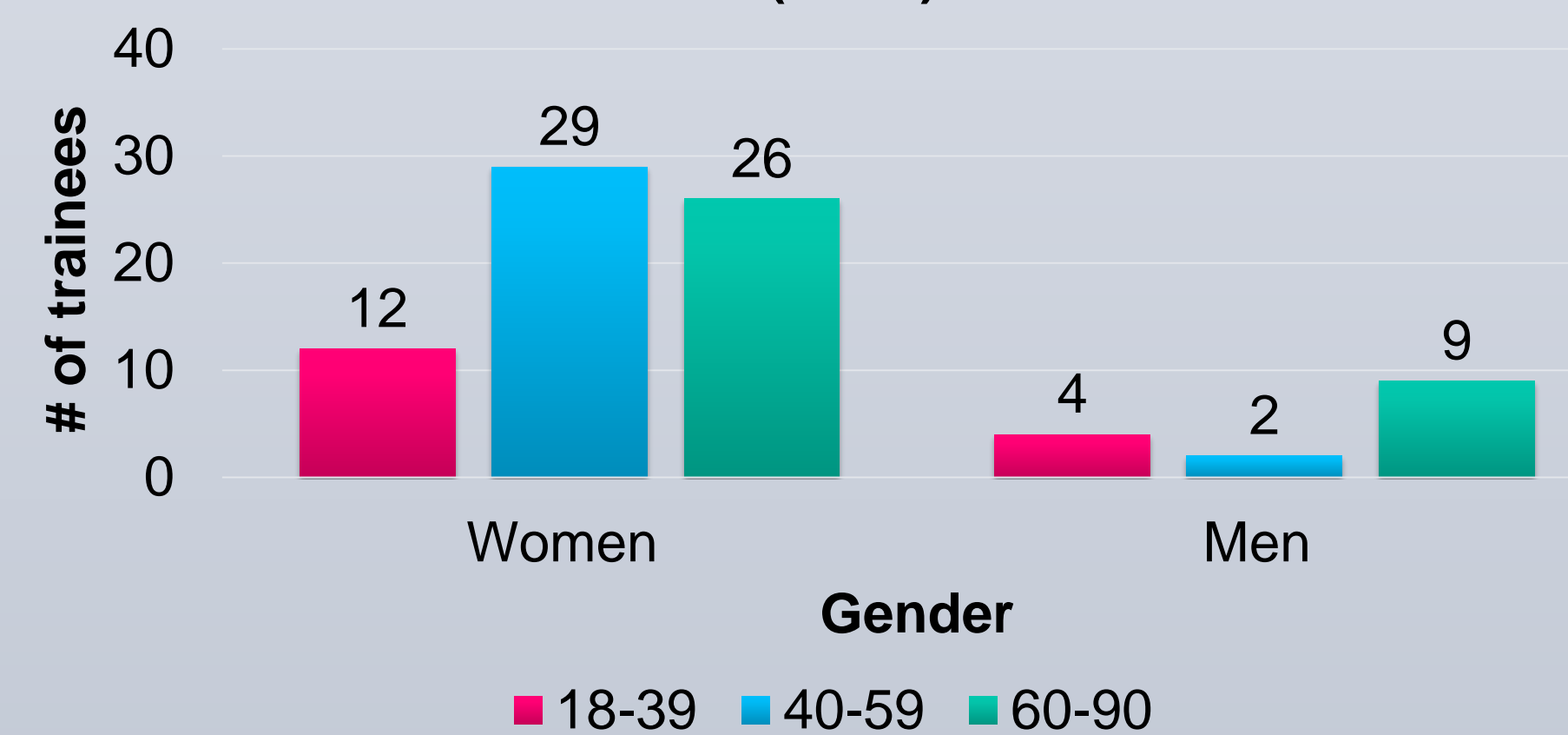


Figure 2: Age Range of Participants by Gender (N=82)



Outcomes

Evaluations

- 94% understood how research could address a community concern
- 82% understood how to use their stories to inform research
- 53% intended to participate as an advocate in research

Opportunities

- 2 trainees joined Institutional Review Board
- 2 became advisors on Patient Advisory Groups
- 2 became proposal reviewers
- 39 trainees signed up to receive quarterly newsletter

Lessons Learned

- Training curriculum must be flexible to adapt to:
 - the size and research experience of group
 - accessibility to technology
 - time constraints
- Ample time should be devoted to Storytelling to allow participants to both work through and share their stories.
- A quarterly newsletter functioned as an important way to keep all trainees informed of current opportunities to partner with researchers.
- A one-time training does not cultivate lasting partnerships between community members and researchers which takes time to establish.

Conclusion

- This introductory level awareness training generated positive results.
- The results demonstrate that additional trainings, with varying levels of skill development, may be needed to further empower community members to engage as partners in research.

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