



December 14, 2023

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**“you are enough
your work is enough
you are needed
your work is sacred
you are here
and i am grateful”**

adrienne maree brown, Excerpt from *Radical Gratitude spell*

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Welcome to the December 2023 edition of the [NOW Innovation Forum Newsletter](#). We are excited to share opportunities and resources with you! In this edition you'll find:

- A new NOW Leadership Article featuring end of year reflections from members of the Vital Village Networks NOW staff
- Final episodes of In the Arena with NOW podcast, recorded live at the 2023 National Community Leadership Summit
- Recording of the November 30 NOW Webinar, *Building Relationships and Partnerships towards an Equitable Food System*
- Registration for January's *Cultivating Community Connections: Peer Learning & Reflection Hour* with the peer learning cluster co-leads
- An invitation to complete the Biennial NOW Network Survey
- NOW Resource Library featured resource, *Data is a Story: Reflections on Data, Storytelling and Equity in Social Change*, by Kristin Giordano

Thank you for your commitment to children, families, and communities and for joining us as we journey through another year together.

Bienvenido a la edición de noviembre de 2023 del [Boletín Informativo del NOW Innovation Forum](#) (Foro de Innovación NOW). ¡Estamos muy contentos de compartir oportunidades y recursos con usted! En esta edición encontrará:

- Un nuevo Artículo de Liderazgo de NOW que presenta las reflexiones de fin de año de los miembros del personal de Vital Village Networks NOW
- Episodios finales de En La ARENA con NOW podcast, grabado en vivo en la Cumbre Nacional de Liderazgo Comunitario de 2023
- Grabación del Seminario Web NOW del 30 de noviembre, *Construyendo Relaciones y Alianzas Hacia un Sistema Alimentario Equitativo*
- La inscripción para el curso de enero *Cultivando las Conexiones Comunitarias: Aprendizaje Entre Pares y Hora de Reflexión* con los co-directores del clúster de aprendizaje entre pares
- Una invitación para completar la Encuesta Bienal de la NOW Network
- Recurso destacado de la Biblioteca de Recursos de NOW, *Los Datos Son Una Historia: Reflexiones Sobre Datos, Narración de Historias y Equidad en el Cambio Social*, de Kristin Giordano

Gracias por su dedicación a los niños, las familias y las comunidades, y por acompañarnos mientras navegamos a través de otro año juntos.

Network Highlights

New Leadership Article: *Reflections on 2023: Moving to Transformation, Healing, and Joy*



The final Leadership Article in our 2023 series is a collection of reflections written by the NOW staff, and features highlights of transformative leadership and learnings from this past year. The 2023 theme **Collaborative Action and Coalition Building: Transformative Practices for Healing, Joy, and Equity** brought us resources, learnings, and community connections that inspired us to be bold in our collective imaginations for more just futures, to transform our organizational processes to center community voice and power, and to own all parts of our stories. Read more from the NOW staff, and find additional linked resources from the NOW network in this month's leadership article.

[Read Here](#)

In the Arena with NOW: Final Episodes, Live from the 2023 National Community Leadership Summit

In these special episodes, we tune in from Vital Village Networks' 10th annual National Community Leadership Summit, where hundreds of grassroots community leaders gathered in Boston in October. Episode 8, **Writing Our Story: Kiese Laymon on Joy, Justice, and Healing**, features an intimate conversation with opening keynote speaker best-selling author and educator [Kiese Laymon](#), as he delves into his personal journey growing up in Mississippi and shares insights on racism, family, dignity, and the power of sitting in grief. Episode 9, **Know Your Power: Camille Bennett on Coalition Building, Advocacy and Partnership**, connects the personal and political with closing keynote speaker Camille Bennett, Founder and Executive Director of [Project Say Something](#), as she shares her and her family's multi-generational work advocating for racial justice in Alabama.

We hope you enjoyed the powerful stories from Season 2, and stay tuned in 2024 for episodes from our third season.

[Subscribe Here](#)

Webinar Archive: Building Relationships and Partnerships towards an Equitable Food System

Thank you for joining us for the final webinar of our [2023 series](#).

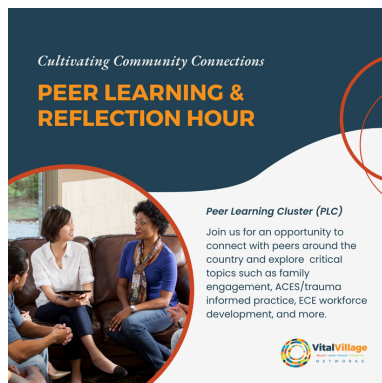
Our November 30 session featured two local food systems leaders and [2023 Community Food Systems fellows](#), **Hallie Nelson of Jefferson County Food Policy Council** and **Kim Ross of Mount Terra LLC**, who shared their experience, strategies, and lessons learned for building sustainable and meaningful relationships across their local food systems.

View the recording to hear their insights into how to sustain this critical work through community-driven, collaborative action.

[Watch Here](#)

Cultivating Community Connections: Peer Learning & Reflection Hour





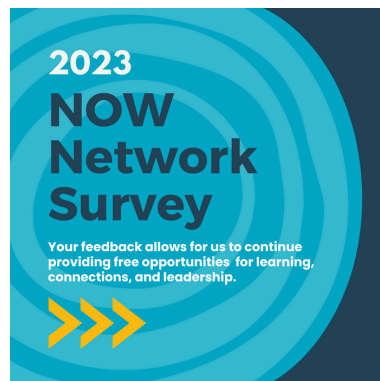
Join us in the New Year for the next Peer Learning Cluster meeting on **January 9th at 3:00 pm ET / 12:00 pm PT!** Peer learning and reflection hours are an opportunity to connect, share and learn from others who are supporting child and family wellbeing in their local communities. The monthly peer-led discussion space is an opportunity to bring questions, ideas, challenges, and successes to a national community for learning and support. Register today for a conversation on exploring pathways and strategies to engage in advocacy for community transformation.

[Register Here](#)

Biannual NOW Network Survey

Your feedback is important to us! We invite you to take our 2023 Biennial NOW Network Survey. Your input will help us to continue to provide free resources, tools, and learning opportunities that can better support your work on the ground. Take the survey today and be entered into a raffle drawing!

[Take the Survey Here](#)



NOW Resource Library Feature: *Data is a Story: Reflections on Data, Storytelling and Equity in Social Change*



As we enter into the end of another year, and reflect on the work of the past 12 months, we were inspired to share this brief reflection article by Kristin Giordano - *Data is a Story: Reflections on Data, Storytelling and Equity in Social Change*. In this piece, Giordano, explores the importance of making the connection between data, storytelling, and power explicit. "Recognizing that data are not inherently neutral forces those involved in social change to discuss fundamental questions about power."

Check out this resource, and many more, in the NOW Resource Library.

[Access the Resource Here](#)

In the Village, We all Belong



Support us in our newest campaign, *In The Village, We All Belong*, to ensure a sense of belonging for every child and family. Together, we continue to make significant strides in creating and elevating opportunities for co-creation and systems transformation to ensure an equitable future for all children and families. Thank you.

[Donate Today](#)

The NOW community hopes to stay connected and lift up the work and stories of all of our members. Follow and tag us so that we can virtually highlight the community-led transformation you are leading

[#VillageInMind](#)



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