

Introduction: The Health Disparities Podcast is a production of Movement is Life, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to eliminate health disparities across race, ethnicity, gender and zip code through a range of programs and advocacy for health equity.

Operation Change is a pivotal program for Movement is Life, which has been developed and implemented over the last 10 years. At the heart of Operation Change, a weekly activity is designed to foster community and bring about meaningful behavioral change with activities such as culturally appropriate health education, group discussions and physical activity.

Techniques such as motivational interviewing are used to bring to the surface authentic reasons or motivations for pursuing a more healthy and socially connected lifestyle, and the sharing of these motivations within the group creates a supportive cycle of accountability.

The Operation Change approach understands that for older women seeking to put in place changes that increase physical activity contribute to weight management and simultaneously improve mental health and social engagement. The formation of group programs in a safe space and using a community-led structured framework is essential.

Routines that include limited physical activity and minimal social contact are associated with lower mood, lower energy and chronic illness, so it

follows that the COVID pandemic would exacerbate these challenges. The pandemic also made it impossible to convene Operation Change groups for a very long period. Today, our panel of Operation Change Community Leaders – Rose Gonzalez, Darlene Donegan, Hazella LaVar and Yvonne Oby - reflect on the impact that the COVID pandemic had on the groups they had convened.

This episode of the podcast was recorded at the Movement is Life Annual Caucus, which was convened in-person in November of 2021.

Dr. Rose Gonzalez: Well, hello, ladies. I can't believe it; we're actually here in Washington, DC, at the Caucus. Just for our listeners here, I'm joined here with Program Directors of the Operation Change Program from Movement is Life and I'm going to ask each one of them to introduce themselves and just tell a little bit about themselves.

Hazella Rollins LaVar: Well my name is Hazella Rollins LaVar and I'm the Program Site Director at Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, New York. Grace is the only faith-based site that we have in Operation Change and it has been tremendous. We were able to complete one year in 2019. We went through an entire cycle and had graduates, and we'll talk more about that later.

Dr. Gonzalez: Thank you, Hazella.

Yvonne Oby: And I'm Yvonne Oby from Chicago. And in 2018, I was the director that launched Operation Change in Chicago, very successful year and now I presently continue in the role of motivational interviewer, which is really my niche. We had just finished 2019, epic numbers, great results. And then last time I spoke with you, Rose, we were getting ready to start the 2000 year. We were going to start it earlier and we had already reached out to the women. In fact, Verona and you were getting ready to come in and do our town hall meeting.

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes, that's right. We were living Mount Vernon and coming to you.

Yvonne: Right, and two weeks later, we had to call all the participants to tell them everything was on hold...

Dr. Gonzalez: Shutdown.

Yvonne: ...and shutdown, I said, so that's what was happening in Chicago.

Dr. Gonzalez: Thanks, Yvonne.

Darlene Donegan: Hi. I'm Darlene Donegan. I'm the Program Director for the St. Louis Operation Change. We're the babies of Operation Change. So in 2019 , we started our first actual Operation Change Program that was really successful for a freshman program. And then in 2020, of course, they said, "No program," so we have been really excited to have our sophomore year come and hopefully it will happen in 2022.

Dr. Gonzalez: That's right. That's right, so we lost a whole year and so one of the things that initially struck us was the isolation that we had felt and we had built with Operation Change this community. We had these communities of women who really opened themselves up to each other and forged strong relationships and support groups and many of them I think I had already even in Hazard and where we had another program in San Diego, they were meeting with each other and trying to keep that connection in hopes that they would rejoin the program in 2020. And as we were all excited to kick it off and we had all our dates and ducks in a row, shutdown pandemic and the isolation was overwhelming, so let's talk a little bit about maybe what you heard from your participants about how they were feeling during this period of fear.

Hazella: Well I'll start by talking about what was going on at Grace. We had decided that the 2019 graduates would be mentors to the incoming class. So when the pandemic happened, because we are still a church community, I decided

that I wanted them to go ahead and have that kind of support and interaction with each other even though the new class was not at all experienced and what the programming was really all about. It worked out fairly well in terms of people staying connected and supporting each other, but we weren't really able to talk about specifics and I knew that there were certain things that people wanted to just talk about, listen. I wanted to be able to listen to them, so I created a virtual program called *Fear, Facts and Faith* and I just put together a little bit of everything, but mostly a lot of open-ended discussion time for the ladies to be able to talk about what they were feeling and experiencing. And it was traumatizing, absolutely traumatizing to hear how many people have been lost and how many people were living alone and now they were isolated to the point that some of them felt like taking their own lives. I mean there was some really bad talk, so I got together with our minister of prayer and we put together a program called *Grace GPS*. That's Guidance, Prayer and strength; and I set about trying to find as many psychiatrists and psychologists as I could find that would be willing to talk to our people when they were having problems that surpassed what the clergy could handle; and that got off to a good start. Then I started thinking: You know, we can't be the only ones having problems like this. Everybody's having the same problems; and Operation Change is a national program, so why not have those kinds of meetings? And fortunately, when we spoke to

Verona and you, Rose, then you all were all for it and we began to have rotated virtual meetings.

Dr. Gonzalez: So why don't we hold on that? Let me turn to Yvonne and ask Yvonne:

What were you hearing from some of the - - your colleagues on the Operation Change Program from the previous participants were or anybody getting together or even in your small groups through it?

Yvonne: Well just before it became official that the world shut down, in February, we had just had a welcome back party. We had breakfast for the prior participants and they actually brought guests with them that they were signing up for the new upcoming session because we were going to kick it off in April and we did that and a lot of them were still pumped up because they had held the weight off, those that had lost weight, and a few of them who stopped smoking during the prior year of 2019 were happy to say that they still were not smoking.

Dr. Gonzalez: Wow.

Yvonne: And so it was really like a thumbs up. We just hit a zoom on that. And then when we had to turn around and let them know that it wasn't going to happen... And then right after the pandemic became what we knew, April was out, May was out and it wasn't happening for the whole year of 2020,

we reached out to them. We sent little - - a little care package - - note to let them know we're all - - and it surprised many of them that we're thinking of you. We're going to be in touch. And then after that, we did a Zoom call with a therapist on our call. I think it was in June we had the call. Yes, it was in June. And many of them, I think we had like 146 people on that Zoom call with Operation Change, not only Chicago but some of the other locations, and many recognized that they were battling depression for real, for real. And one lady said how she was going through the crying sessions and she had been isolated for so long, the ideal of even reconnecting again was almost traumatizing for her, so the therapist that we were supposed to be on like an hour call end up being two hours because we really realized that people needed help and so he got some of the locations where some of the different participants were on and told them: He would get back to them with someone, maybe he could refer them to or whatever and we were supposed to follow-up with another call a couple of months later. So that being said, we realized how much of leaning - - not - - I'm not even going to say, "leaning post." We was there to help build these women up and they got to the point they were feeling their own inner strength and then to be left totally alone again, I think another fear factor for them was: I don't want to go back to being the way I was before Operation Change...

Dr. Gonzalez: Oh regression.

Yvonne: ...came on my path, so we've got to keep this thing going.

Dr. Gonzalez: So I'm starting to hear a couple of common themes of fear, the isolation, some concern about retreating to old behaviors they had left behind and then the awareness that that program was suspended where they were looking forward to it, so that let down kind of led them to more depression and more isolation. What were your women feeling in St. Louis?

Darlene: It was interesting because we were transitioning our leadership, so I went from the role of an MI to the program manager and the executive liaison with a whole new team, so we were jelling as a collective and then we're trying to stay connected to the previous...

Dr. Gonzalez: Group.

Darlene: ...participants. And in doing so, what we found is that most of the participants didn't suffer so much from disconnection because they found ways to connect through their faith community. They just found new ways. So instead of going to church, they started using the conference call and the Zoom, but what they talked about most was the weight gain. A lot of people stopped moving and the Operation Change was so important with

the movement component and just giving various movements. And it happening when it's still cold in St. Louis...

Dr. Gonzalez: Right.

Darlene: ...so just that by itself, you're not going to move if it's 30 degrees outside.

You're going to stay in the house and then everyone is locked down, so the movement stopped and then they started to put on weight. And that can be depressing for women because we live in a society where the bigger you are, the less attractive it appears to be and so we had a lot of that and a lot of people were fearful of actually like they had grandchildren and so they didn't want to touch their grandchildren...

Dr. Gonzalez: Right.

Darlene: ...and that was so... For me, that was very hard because you love your grandchildren and the children don't understand, like: Why can't you hug me, grandma? Why can't you hug me, granny? Or whatever they call their grandmother or grandfather. And so that was like an overarching thing because most of our women are grandparents...

Dr. Gonzalez: Okay.

Darlene: ...so they're in that age and a lot of the grandchildren are toddlers or they're young children where you can't really explain that there's a global pandemic where you have to stay distant.

Hazella: Well it's not even for just the children, but also I think that the adults suffered from the same thing, not being able to see each other and love on each other and hug each other. I had been working as a companion to elderly people and I had to say goodbye to most of them via Zoom or Facetime, which they couldn't really conceive of what that thing was, that picture, seeing me in a little box somewhere, and they passed away from COVID, so it was hard. It's harder than normal death because typically you would be able to go to the person's bedside, hold their hand, tell them you love them, touch them.

Participant: Yes, yes.

Hazella: But in this case, there was no contact. It was just they were gone and it's surreal, absolutely surreal.

Yvonne: You couldn't even go to funerals because the most people that can be even in a funeral was 10 people, so family couldn't even come together to bury other family members. And we had one member from Chicago, we loved her. She was one of the heaviest woman that joined and she had sleep

issues. She just had a lot going on with her and she was one of the greatest testimonies at the end of that 18-months. She was sleeping better. Her knees were better. She was... She couldn't do a lot of the exercises standing up when she came in because she used to sit in the chair and do what she could. She had better range of motion. She was happy and whatnot and that woman, her church went against the rules. They was still having service and not only did her bishop die, 11 members, including her, died. They came in.

Participant: Oh my god.

Participant: Wow.

Yvonne: They would still.. Because a lot of churches were still doing that unfortunately and overriding. We could say, "God said that we could come church, but not the rest," and we needed to obey the laws of the land. And when that got back to us, we took the time to let the other members of the community know as well and they got a chance to express. Like we called them individually to let them know Miss So-and-So had passed and we let them deal with the: Oh no or whatever, listen to them. Of course they wanted to know what happened and we just told them COVID-related and so that was something that... Because I would've loved to have gone to her service to pay respects and couldn't even think about doing it.

Hazella: My brother passed away in September and I couldn't go to the funeral. He was down in Texas and my other brother lives in Florida. My sister is in Pennsylvania. I'm in New York, so none of us could go to the funeral. We just had to patch in by Zoom; and he was a military man. They had a beautiful military solute at the gravesite and it was just - - it was unbelievable that we couldn't be there.

Dr. Gonzalez: There was a lot of isolation, this fear about the COVID and lack of understanding with grandchildren, change in behavior.

Hazella: There was also a lot of confusion...

Dr. Gonzalez: Confusion.

Hazella: ...because we didn't know what was true and what was false.

Participant: Yes, exactly.

Hazella: We were getting so many different...

Participant: You got to say that.

Hazella: ..variations of what was going on...

Participant: Absolutely.

Hazella: ...and how to protect ourselves from it....

Participant: Absolutely.

Hazella: ...and people would just going bananas.

Participant: Right.

Dr. Gonzalez: Right. Yes, so lots of uncertainties, lots of unknowns and as it is in science, it's an evolving process. Right? There's nothing concrete totally in science. It's an evolving thing. But when you're dealing with such uncertainty around you, you want to have something that's for sure.

Participant: Anchored.

Dr. Gonzalez: Right, to anchor you, right.

Participant: Very much.

Dr. Gonzalez: And here, their anchor had been Operation Change in some ways because they had learned how to kind of open themselves up, depend on each other. They had like this - - live even I would call them a family.

Participant: A family. Absolutely.

Dr. Gonzalez: And I would tell you, we're not a go in once and done. We're about longevity. We're about community and extending hand to others or make...

Hazella: Changing your behavioral lifestyle...

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes.

Hazella: ...your life, yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: We're part of your life and here we are at a critical point in our country's history where we have this huge pandemic and we're shut down. So. Hazella, you started to talk a little bit about what we then decided to do because we all felt isolated. We're trying to... I'm trying to reach out.

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: I was sending messages on a regular basis to everybody.

Participant: [Inaudible 20:09].

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes.

Hazella: You were. You were so good.

Participant: So motivating.

Hazella: I couldn't believe that you would - - yes, just lovely messages that you sent,
Rose, and long ones. You would tell us what you were doing and what the
dog was doing.

Participant: Walking the dog.

Hazella: You were baking, everything. It was good.

Yvonne: Because we needed to stay connected as well.

Participant: Exactly.

Hazella: It made us feel like we had a window into your life, but, like you said, it's still not like the real thing.

Dr. Gonzalez: It's not like the real thing and I was just reaching out to have some...

Because I too was alone. I was alone in my house and this - - you had all become my family too, so - - and I live in a place where my kids live far, so I'm like... And my family lives far, so I'm like: Well it's only so many walls I can look at and whatever, but I was trying to communicate in those messages how I was feeling and hopefully share connectedness with you so that you didn't feel alone...

Participant: You did.

Dr. Gonzalez: Because we kept thinking: When we can start? When can we start? But I think the brilliant idea, Hazella, of trying to connect us all and using Zoom was wonderful, so talk a little bit about that and what we started to do.

Hazella: Well, yes, like I said, at Grace, we had begun to have those kinds of forums, so when Verona said she would buy in and we could just rotate, it was so wonderful that you ladies just jumped onboard, so we did what Grace did the first month and then St. Louis, then Chicago and then back to Grace, so it was just - - it was really nice to have something to look forward to. The women responded beautifully. Even though there was still a lot of

heaviness, we were able to talk about it. We were able to see each other and converse about what people were feeling and bring in specialists in some cases...

Participant: Absolutely.

Hazella; ...that were able to talk about it and help us pinpoint things and understand why we were feeling what we were feeling. What is the grieving process about? Why are we going through the racial disparities that have been going on? Well historical trauma, so there were a lot of different areas that we could delve into, not to mention nutrition...

Dr. Gonzalez: Right.

Hazella; ...because like someone said, everybody started gaining weight, including our family. My husband's a teacher and my daughter was a senior in college, very athletic, and all of sudden we were just all in the apartment together on Zoom all the time, so the butts were getting wider and wider and wider and it was like: Nope, got to do something here, so we decided not just for our health benefit, but also for our immunity sake to go on a plant-based diet and that worked out really well for us. So every time church members would see my daughter, my husband or me on Zoom virtually, they would

say, “You guys look like you’re disappearing. What’s going on?” So I got to share some nutritional tips as well.

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes, you did. That was a good one. What were you hearing, Yvonne, from Chicago?

Yvonne: Well one of the things I had to bring back to remembrance to the group because I keep hearing I think St. Louis was saying how the - - it got cold and people couldn’t go outside, but one of the nuggets I reinforced with everyone during the Chicago 18-weeks was: You can do this indoors. You don’t have to go to the health club. If you can’t get outside... Never... Not knowing that this pandemic was coming. If you’re at home, I’m not telling you to turn off the TV. Leave the TV on, but every time there’s a commercial, get up and at least march in place every commercial and so you figure in an hour’s time, there are at least 10 commercials, so you have been up and moving for 30 minutes without even realizing it. So that was one of the things that when we did do the Zoom call, I reinforced how many are still moving at home while you’re watching television and remembering when it’s a commercial, it’s not a commercial break for you just to sit there and do nothing, but get up...

Participant: Or get more chips and you know.

Yvonne: Right, exactly, or change the channel.

Hazella: Or like the program that Darlene did where she took us through yoga and the whole mind and meditation piece that calmed us down, that was wonderful.

Yvonne: Yes, so just reinforcing, bring back those nuggets so that that removes some of the excuse of: It's so cold, I can't go outside. Because one of the things that I even had to do because I was used to going to the gym or either being outside working out or whatever, I live in a 28-story building... I think I told you or Verona this...

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes, you told me that one.

Yvonne: ...and I made my own Stairmaster. I got out there and I went down and I came up and I went down and I came up.

Participant: God bless you.

Participant: That's what I said.

Yvonne: But learning to use what you had because I was feeling it too. You know, oh, I'm packing. I'm feeling extra little roll here or what...

Participant: COVID-15.

Dr. Gonzalez: Twenty, 30, 40.

Yvonne: Right, right. We all had to tap into what was available.

Participant: Right.

Yvonne: ...rather than to express what all I can't do. I can't do. I can't do.

Participant: Yes.

Yvonne: And even with walking, if it was raining outside, I didn't even let that be an excuse. I put on my raingear, put that hat on and I went outside and I walked. And when I looked up, I had got to 22,000 steps a day.

Participant: You were on a mission.

Yvonne: I was on a mission. I was not going to let COVID whoop me. That was my mindset.

Participant: There you go.

Yvonne: And that's what - - when thy would reach out to me, that's what I would pump them with. Don't let COVID beat you.

Participant: All right.

Yvonne: You've got the goods on the inside, and I do mean inside your apartment. You know what I'm saying, right?

Participant: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Yvonne: You can't get out. Oh, you know, oh, [inaudible 26:38], I forgot about watching the place. Well here, I'm here to tell you: Get back to... Leave that remote on and when that commercial comes on, you know... And some of them still text me to let me know: I'm doing it. I'm doing it. You can be proud.

Participant: Nice, nice.

Hazella: And another really cool thing about the virtual, the Zoom calls that we had, was that they were recorded and then we were able to get the recordings back, so whatever movement, activity had gone on, we were able to just play it back. I've been following yours.

Participant: Yes.

Participant: Yours.

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: Dr. Donna from New York.

Participant: Right.

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: So one of the interesting things that happened to you, Darlene, in St.

Louis is - - was that you were now going to transition into program
director, right...

Darlene: Right.

Dr. Gonzalez: ...and we were all excited getting you up to speed and you were getting
your team together...

Darlene: Right.

Rose And then COVID hit.

Darlene: Right.

Dr. Gonzalez: But I saw that you did a great thing when you did your first St. Louis...

Darlene: Virtual session.

Dr. Gonzalez: ...virtual session, yes. That you invited...

Darlene: All the team members to do it together.

Dr. Gonzalez: ...the team together.

Darlene: Yes, yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: Yes.

Darlene: So one thing that I wanted to do is to solidify us as a team and for everybody to see us as a team and not: Oh, I'm the leader and you're my underlings is because the only way it would work is if it works as a team because it's brand new. I'm new to this. I don't know and I'm not going to pretend like I know and the ladies, because two were already MIs...

Dr. Gonzalez: Right.

Darlene: ...and another one took over the MI group that I had and so they had a connection with these ladies. They have a connection with the community. They was chosen because the community, they - - they're out there. They're connected with the community and I just have to thank Hazella like so much. I love her so much.

Hazella: I love you too, buzz.

Darlene: ...because when she first emailed the group, she sent that weekly message and she emailed the group like: Oh well, Grace is doing this virtual program and it's so wonderful. And it's like: I wish I could something like that. And then Verona's like: Okay, all the teams are going to have virtual meetings. Okay, well I guess we doing it. Thank you, Hazella, for doing it, but I know that you and Verona say, "Reach out to Hazella." And I did reach out to her initially, asked her for her advice, connected with her. She gave me wonderful advice. She talked to me. I text message her. She text message me and I really... If it wasn't for that, I don't think I would've connected with her honestly because this is like my third year coming to the conference. I've seen her.

Dr. Gonzalez: Right.

Darlene: I've seen other people, but it's just kind of like moving through life, moving through the conference, but the virtual meetings gave me an opportunity to connect; and it like brings all the programs together...

Participant: Yes. Yes.

Darlene: ...so it's not like: Oh, it's Operation Change St. Louis or it's Operation Change New York.

Hazella: And I believe that's something that I had mentioned I think one time is that I've been coming to the caucuses, what, five or six years now and of course we just started Operation Change in 2019 at Grace, but I didn't know the other team - - the program directors.

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: So I said, "Well it would be nice..." And Verona was like: "Well they're there at the caucus. You haven't seen them?" I said, "I don't go around looking at people's badges [inaudible 30:22]."

Participant: Hi, Eugene.

Participant: Are you? Are you?

Hazella: Right, so this was to me just invaluable...

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: ...because now we're not just Grace in a microcosm. It's like one big family and
we can see the differences in our little cultural areas...

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: and what we're doing differently and what we do the same.

Participant: And get nuggets from each other.

Hazella: And get nuggets from each other. That's right.

Participant: Yes, absolutely.

Hazella: But we've learned a lot from each other.

Participant: Absolutely.

Hazella: So I pray that we be able to continue this on some scale even after we get back in person.

Dr. Gonzalez: I think it's important to have that connection.

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: For us, it's a little bit unfortunate we can't. We don't have Hazard, and I'll keep bringing them up, and San Diego. San Diego was a program we did entirely in Spanish. So with... Yes, it was all done in... Because we're culturally and linguistically appropriate and that was what we wanted.

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: We had Spanish speakers for them, so it was hard to get them all. But these three groups, the African American, more leaning towards African American women and so you have a lot of commonalities. Hazard, we had a Zoom call with Hazard, but we only had it with them and we had a small turnout and we haven't been able to connect all of the groups together because there's some challenges and we're trying to keep it all culturally appropriate.

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: And I think one of the things that the women, and I've learned through podcasts before, the women, and I saw this happening on that Zoom call, they were able to see each other during COVID because the isolation of you maybe only contacting one or two people via Zoom, your family, whatever, and now these women, maybe they haven't had - - been able to see them in six months, eight months, nine months, a year, now they're like: Oh, how you doing? They can reconnect and they see that they're okay because that was the other thing. What's happened to everybody?

Participant: Yes.

Dr. Gonzalez: Where did everybody go?

Hazella: The other end of the spectrum was a lot of people would say, "Oh, I'm all Zoomed out. I don't think I can do another Zoom." But then I would say, "Well you do want to support your sisters and you did go through the program," so they could come on for someone else and they'll be the main ones calling me after we were done saying...

Participant: See.

Hazella: ...I am so glad that I was in that meeting.”

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: “I got so much out of it.”

Participant: Yes.

Darlene: I can cosign with that. A lot of... At first, a lot of people: Oh Zoom, I don't want to do Zoom or... But when they started to come onto those virtual meetings, they love... They looked forward to it.

Participant: That's good to know.

Darlene: Like a lot of the ladies were like: When you have that next meeting? And they tell their friends and it spread like wildfire because I think we consistently have about 60/70 people every month...

Participant: Yes.

Darlene: ...on the virtual meeting. They're very consistent and they're very... They look forward to it because it's so diverse. So the speakers, the movement, Everything is so diverse, so you're not getting the same things. It's not

preachy. It's not over their head. It's very down to earth and it's just a beautiful thing.

Hazella: It is. I'm so looking forward to getting back in person.

Dr. Gonzalez: I think we all are. I think we've all missed it. I think we will continue to do some of these virtual meetings until we can actually meet up again.

Hazella: Actually, Darlene, aren't you up for November?

Darlene: Yes, in November, St. Louis will present and we're doing holistic healing from the inside out and so we're having an acupuncturist who owns her own healthcare center...

Participant: Oh I love it.

Darlene: ...who was previously the executive liaison of Operation Change, so she's very familiar with the program. Ethyl Brownley*, she's going to present. And actually the speaker that St. Louis had before that talked about her weight loss from 400 pounds to 178, she's going to come in and do movement and so...

Participant: Yes.

Darlene: ...we're... It's going to be a very, very exciting program. And one thing about Ethyl, she's recently been certified in THC, cannabis and CBD, so she sells that and I think there's a lot of misconceptions about this, so she's going to address what they are.

Hazella: And really get us the facts.

Darlene Right, because there's a lot of things that so - - they say, "Oh, the CBD" and it's not or that this is not okay and it is, so she's going to address that as well.

Participant: Great.

Darlene: What I would like and I probably shouldn't say it on the podcast, cut it out, but I would really like for the programs to do a joint effort for a virtual meeting. So instead of like St. Louis host it, like your doctor, I really would like a group, a panel of medial professionals who are also fitness professionals to come in and talk about the dynamics of the health component of movement and fitness, as well as the fitness component of it.

Hazella: And you mean nationally so that it's not just one site presenting.

Participant: Yes.

Hazella: But nationally, okay.

Participant: Yes, but we could talk.

Participant: All of us on one Zoom call.

Darlene: Well just all the panel.

Dr. Gonzalez: Planning.

Participant: Planning.

Participant: Yes, right.

Dr. Gonzalez: Planning so that the group will plan it. That's what I hear, that the group...

So this is kind of exciting. I like the thought because it's exciting because now you've known each other. You've seen each other's programs.

You've gotten to know some of the women from the Zoom and now you're trying to address the needs broader and you figure putting your minds together to kind of plan something instead of taking the onus on one group, but for all of you to plan something...

Participant: I love it.

Dr. Gonzalez: ...takes the responsibility off of just one person and you have then a true collaborative. I think it's a fantastic idea.

Participant: I do too.

Participant: So...

Hazella: Well I think it's just a blessing that you've got...

Participant: I second that emotion *[sic]*.

Hazella: We've gotten to the point that we do - - are one accord, you know. That's the beauty of the whole thing for me as a program director.

Dr. Gonzalez: Well, ladies, I want to thank you. Sounds like we're growing. We continue to grow, which is positive.

Participant: Yea!

Participant: Yea!

Dr. Gonzalez: There's a saying in Spanish that says, "Nothing bad happens that something good doesn't come out of it." And even though we haven't been able to meet on a regular basis, we have found other ways. We're resilient and found other ways to connect with our Operation Change women and we have much to look forward to in the future because we will be starting the programs hopefully in 2022 and so I expect great things from all of you. I want to thank you all for joining us today.

Participant: Thank you, Rose.

Dr. Gonzalez: And let's keep it moving, ladies. Yea!

Participant: All right.

Participant: Yea!

Participant: Ohhhhh!

Participant: Yea!

(End of recording)