

This event started at 9:30am with socializing and a free, delicious, hearty breakfast.

Dylan Tête (Bastion Executive Director and Founder) suggested we move the chairs to form a circle, and we did so. We then participated in a soft belly breathing meditation exercise led by Dylan to help get everyone in the right mindset. Dylan laid out his vision for the community through three “lenses”. 1.) We watched a video of an interview with Matthew Drake, who was the sole survivor of a suicide bomb attack in Iraq and who now lives with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). 2.) Dylan said he thinks of our community as a “Time Bank”, where the currency is service hours. He pointed out that when we give of ourselves, not only are we helping others, but we’re helping to take part in our own enrichment. 3.) His third lens was that the community is ours to make.

Michelle (Impact & Evaluations) spoke next, and while she wears many hats, a main focus of her job is to evaluate the success of the community and to provide numerical evidence to stakeholders and donors to show that the community is thriving. She does this through a variety of techniques, but the ones most relevant to residents are the “Community Connections and Volunteer Log” which we are required to complete and hand in to Jeremy at the end of every month, and the Resident Survey. If you have not yet received a survey, Jeremy will be in touch with you soon to provide one. These are crucial elements in the success of the community, and these metrics tie in to what Lauren had to say next.

Lauren (Fundraising & Development) spoke next, and she said that “my job is everyone’s job”. What that means to me is that as members of this landmark community, we are all responsible for the reputation of the community, for our own wellness, and for giving back. Additionally, she said that we can do some of our own grassroots fundraising. An example would be having a birthday party and asking that instead of gifts, all guests make a money donation to the Bastion 501c3 nonprofit organization. There’s a new webpage at <http://www.joinbastion.org/> for creating your own fundraising page. Every little bit helps. Lauren indicated that she is working on obtaining funding for Phase 2 (estimated cost: \$4.5 million), as well as for operating expenses such as staff payrolls. She said there’s going to be an “Evening of Appreciation” for community members on 11/09/17.

Next, Jeremy (Community Integration and Licensed Social Worker) opened with an inspiring quote by Marcus Aurelius to the effect that human beings are formed by nature to benefit others. He said that when you fulfill your 6+ hours of service each week, that could mean different things to different people. You could, for example: provide meals, rides to those without cars, a listening and sympathetic ear, or pick up trash around the community. He highlighted the upcoming 10/20/17 mindfulness class and weekly Mind-Body skills group classes which will begin on 10/04/17. He ended with a “call to action”, encouraging residents to give of themselves and get involved.

Community members present thanked the staff for the work that they do, and we gave them a round of applause.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this event! If you were unable to attend this one, please come next time and bask in the warmth of the community.