

All right folks it looks like we're ready to get started.

Hello and welcome to RVC's House Cooling Party.

This will be our first virtual thought leadership event and we're so grateful to everyone here

today for joining us on this adventure. My name is Deserea. I'm a staff member here at

RVC and I will be your host for today.

I'm joined by all four of our magnificent co-ED's who will be chatting with us in just

a moment about their shared leadership journey together.

But before we dive in, a few quick housekeeping items. I want to direct attention towards

our accessibility notes, which we should be sharing on the slide in just a moment.

We have English CART services available as well as Spanish translation... or sorry, Spanish

interpretation. To access the English CART services, you can click the show captions

icon in the meeting controls toolbar below on your screen and for Spanish interpretation

you can click the interpretation icon in the meeting controls toolbar below and then select

Spanish. We also have a wonderful tech support team here today who is ready.

The RBC tech support team will be denoted in the chat by a moving box emoji um if you

have any tech needs or questions um you can

direct message our RVC tech support team and

speaking of the chat please feel free to utilize the chat

During our time here together today we welcome comments, emojis, questions. RVC chats are

known to get quite lively and they really help us get a sense of where people are at

with us today
So before we dive into our conversation we'd

also like to get a sense of who is in the room with us

We're going to take a look at the poll results in just a moment um how many people do we

have here in the room with us what's our total?

we have 56 total people so far

And of those people joining us, zero (percent) said that they're not sure what this is

17 (percent) said I know what it means but I would like to learn more (yeah)

4% said I'm in research slash learning mode
9% said I've done research and I'm interested

in proposing in my workplace um
17% said we are just starting to explore this

in our workplace and 52% said we are *IN IT* and curious about how others are tackling

them

wow we got a good good community with us here today! Um so before we get into our conversation

about shared leadership I want to actually
hand it to JoJo now, one of our four co-ED's

we'll get to know a little bit more later,
for our land acknowledgment.

Peace everyone. We want to acknowledge that
we are on the unseated and stress ancestral

lands of the Coast Salish peoples, the first
people of Seattle, specifically the Duwamish

people, past and present, are people still
here continue to bring light to their ancestral,

ancient heritage. We honor with gratitude
the land itself and the Duwamish tribe we

also pay homage and respect to the Black and
Brown communities of Seattle who have created

generational and cultural legacies for us
to follow and to continue to build power for

future folks of color and other folks on the
margin.

Thank you JoJo. So I think now we are going
to get into some introductions um we want

to get to know all of our co-ED's here with
us today so let's start with Chris

Good afternoon everyone thanks for joining
um Chris Rhodes (he/him) uh I am one of the

four co-ED's responsible for uh fundraising,
communications, and PR. Been at the organization

for a little over five years.

Hello everyone is so excited to be in community

with you. My name is Anbar Mahar, and use
she/her pronouns.

I've been with RVC for just about four years
and um with my co-ED hat I am, you know, the

finance lead and the lead for internal organizational
development and cross organizational ...

Hi my name is Roshni Sampath, I use she/her
pronouns. I have been here exactly as long

as Anbar, down to riding the elevator together
on our first day choose that and I split my

role between being a co-ED and a capacity
building lead at RVC. And in my coed role,

I do a lot of our thought leadership and sort
of wider work as well as liaison with the

board and do some internal strategic planning
for RVC

what's up y'all I'm JoJo Gaon, one of the
coeds... 1 of 4. um started...oh, he/him pronouns.

Started at RVC about four and a half years
ago. um started out as an operational support

program director and has since been down with
co-ED-ship with these folks

What are you the lead of?

What do you lead on as a co-ED?
The stuff they don't like how's that

two things I liked

I'm the fixer. [laughter]

So he does a lot of legal [inaudible], he
does some fundraising, community advocacy,

and uh engagement.

There are a lot of roles and responsibilities

that I think that are distributed amongst
the four of us uh and I think some of the

stuff that I've got are the the things that
they don't want, so.

I could say the same for finance
it is true

all right well thank you

before we launch into the Q and A section,
for folks that maybe have not been following

our journey with shared leadership, or in
general, or just learning about RVC for the

first time, would you mind like giving everyone
an overview and a brief update about what's

been going on at RVC?

Yeah I can take that question um so I think

hopefully the one thing that's obvious is
that we're moving that's why it's called a

House Cooling Party uh uh event um we are
leaving our home here in International District

that we've been here for a little over five
years and we're moving back to our lives so

that back in Columbia City area in the Hudson
area um and so yeah this is kind of like our

last event in this building until we close
um until we actually close out the place um

you know our programs have been as active
as ever are we're in our fourth year fourth

cohort for our fellowship program which is

our leadership development program. I love

this program I always tell people the program
I wish I went through when I started out in

the sector. And we did something different
this time we gave ourselves about six months

to work with the host organizations to really
help them, not only be ready to onboard the

fellows that they're gonna host, but really
create a place for community and other types

of training and support for one another. Our
operation Support Program which is what we

call our fiscal sponsorship program um is
up, you know up and running is more than ever

we have about um actually I lost count we're
about 20 we're about 19 fiscal sponsors(sponsees)

right now and we know there's a long waiting
list waiting for people for us to open back

up excuse me we've had it closed um for a
while basically because of capacity and the

demand for it is really really high. So keep
your eyes and ears open for when we open that

back up. Our capacity building program um
it's just hired two more staff members. This

is the biggest our team has been, staff-wise,
to the creation of the team about six years

ago... so we're very excited about that um.
In addition to those three big programs, we

also have our initiative um called The Social
Justice League which is an initiative that

really um allowed us to bring together fun funders and create a full fund to provide

unrestricted funding for our partners over the next five well we're in such a second

year so total five years it's been a huge help for our partners and we're so thankful

for that initiative I'm so thankful for so many of you that might be in this call that

contributed to it and helping us getting that going. And you know we're all growing um RVC

about four or five years ago we you know maybe about four years ago we were about 10 staff.

As of right now actually I forgot we hired two people but we're about 25 people which

is huge for us and that's uh you know it's super exciting um and our partners are growing

too. I would say about a year ago, maybe a year and a half, we had about 100 employees

total, with all the fiscal sponsorships. As of now we're about 200 so we've doubled both

at RVC and and staff, and for our organizations um over the last uh couple years

um yeah I think that covers all the major things in case I I'm looking to my colleagues

if you got anything. Got the okay so I'm gonna hand it back to you to Deserea.

Thanks um so I'm wondering if one of y'all could also share just a little bit of context

on where we're at um kind of high level with our shared leadership Journey so far yeah

I can do that
um hi, again, Roshni. um so we started off

on the shared leadership Journey maybe for
the same reasons y'all are as well, that we

know the ED job can be impossible. A lot of
our jobs are really unsustainable. We really

have shifted to looking at wellness in our
staff and I think the pandemic pushed us to

do that more. And we wanted to get out of
this idea that there was just like this one

leader you know that can really take on an
org. And all of those things led us to doing

shared leadership, which we had done somewhat
informally since our since close to the beginning

of our uh founding. But the actual process
to move from that thought to where we are

now was two to three years with a lot of twists
and turns. First we had to get explicit that

we were going to do shared leadership and
that was a whole conversation. Then we uh

tried a board-staff committee that didn't
quite get momentum. We tried a recruiting

firm, that didn't quite work. And so we really
got momentum going when it's became a staff-driven

process that was being led by two awesome
consultants, Kad Smith and Michelle Gislason.

I want to give you a shout out who understood
our self-managing structure and what we were

trying to do um. And we studied models. So

our staff committee went out found a model

and kind of concluded oh we could do this four-person structure potentially. And at

the same time we just asked everybody who was interested... and four of us didn't say

no. I wouldn't even say we said yes, we didn't say no. um so between this official process

that was going on with all staff and this organic process of realizing four potential

people were there, we started talking about our roles, we started mixing them up. Trying

to look at like parity in our roles. What is the urgent labor, the emotional burnout

labor? What things even needed to stay with us at the orgwide level. That was a process

at one point I felt like we were playing like dominoes or Mahjong, and turning these roles

around. um but in the end it actually, for us, was a full organizational shift. That's

often what people can't tell. About 10 people went into new roles when we took on these

roles of ours that were hybrid. Like, most of us were mixing co-ED roles with other roles

we were in. uh you all were shifting out of leading programs, so even though you sit on

program teams, other folks took on leading those programs because we didn't want someone

to have both those roles and that much decision making together. um and now we're about 1.5

years into our structure. And the thing is from week one we got questions about what

we learned and we're like uh...give us at least a year and we'll tell you what we've

learned from our structure, so here we are to do that.

I think that's a good...did I forget anything?
All right

Thank you so much Roshni um so I think it's about time to start digging into uh the main,

you know, bulk of our Q&A. And I want to just say thank you to all the folks who submitted

questions when they registered for today's event. We're going to start with some of the

most common questions that our co-ED's get and then we'll kind of dig into some follow-up

questions. um if you want to add questions in the chat we encourage you to add them there

today. We'll probably focus more on any follow-up or clarifying questions and any new questions

we'll try our best to get to at hopefully some future thought leadership events. So

let's kind of start digging into some of our questions

All right. So our first question is kind of related to the fact that over and over again

we hear folks ask questions about how decisions are made and how power is shared on our team.

So could y'all tell us a little bit about how you make decisions?

I can step into that. Um part of the reason
I like to talk about how it was a big shift

for our org is that we built how we make decisions
on how RVC's decision making structure works

which is that we have a distributed decision-making
structure as part of being a self-managing

org. And if you're the lead of something -- that's
why we talk about this -- if you're the lead

of something, you um... like we were trying
to get JoJo to tell you what he was the lead

of... kind of hold the decision. You decide
how it's going to be made. You get a lot of

feedback. Sometimes you're the solo decision-maker.
Sometimes you're like it needs to be a group

decision. But that really matters. So for
us, getting our roles clear on what we were

leading on, and also on what we were on the
team on for other staff...you know, where

we weren't the lead, but we were going to
be in it with folks. Especially as people

who give feedback was real really really important.

So I like to say that and I like to say that
with alongside the thing about it being an

organizational transition because we really
lean into how we make decisions to do this

and it's going to be different for y'all.
I talk to a lot of people about this and,

for some folks, your decision-making structure
is really set. Some people are just trying

to work out how two people will split this role. But for us it really grew out of how

RVC makes decisions at all. So that's why the role-mapping became so important yeah.

And I think it works. Like we put in a lot upfront. We usually know who is holding something

but we often are making -- yeah we usually do!

and then um...we kind of bring it to each other a lot into the set

Oh I did good, okay.

The only thing I would add, y'know, is it's

about how...how much time we had to put into that. right like, if because so many many

of us and so many of our staff who also are all decision-makers for something... we all

were like in positions before that didn't give us that that empowerment to make decisions.

So I just want to emphasize if I really got to invest time on that because it's a new

muscle that for almost everyone um practice at an organizational level.

Thank you all right um so for our next question often folks tend to focus on the structure

of shared executive leadership but I know you all talk often about the importance of

your team culture um so could you talk about your team culture how you built it maybe some

practices you put into place and what it looks

like?

OK. All right, how you all doing? Yeah we're about to get into it now. I think... I think

the the important part of this question and I think well why I wanted to jump in um to

talk about is ... I was actually the last co-ED to sign on. um I wasn't 100 in. A lot

of it is uh I've had experience with shared leadership in other organizations and to to

to be um exact and they just didn't happen. It didn't happen uh the way that we had envisioned,

and we didn't allow for it to grow into uh and into something that is what we see here.

um I think to go back to what Roshni was saying about the culture uh RVC has a very specific

culture which may not work for your organizations but it has a very specific culture. One is

that we have a lot of uh love and trust in the work that we do across the board um. And

I think with that that kind of is the underlying foundation of like why um why we're working

on this why it's it's still an experimental form but it still feels good while we're doing

it. So there's the... let's see how long did it take for me to actually agree probably

I mean I was literally pushing deadlines for me and I was like, hold on we're not set yet,

we're not there yet, and I think that some of the learnings that I had was like, we needed

something that was going to build a lot of team culture. I wanted to make sure that we

were going to be in trust um all the way with one another. And to be told, we we started

out in terms of our executive search not on good standing. So there was a lot of factors

that kind of played into why we needed to create something, why we needed a long run

runway, and uh why it was important for me if I was to sign on, and for them to actually

sign on to becoming uh co-ED's. We already knew that we were going to be jumping into

something that we'd have to work and mold and create and also have a lot of feedback

and input from staff to see if we were going in the right direction or we were moving um

in the fact that RVC wants us to move. And not just RVC but also our partners, right?

I think a lot of our a lot of the way we move is going to be informed by our partners and

our community. So long story short, I think the beauty of what we have is we had the opportunity

to kind of build um not just the the job aspect of it but really build upon each other's friendship

and trust um in the work that we do which is crucial for when we're serving communities

right. And even beyond that and I know with the pandemic and with all the social uprisings

that has been happening a lot of it happened to be based on how we trusted each other.

we've...with one ED you cannot go deep. Right?
With two ED's you're gonna try to go deep

but you're still on the going wide with the
work that you're doing um. And what we're

even finding with four is that we are going
deeper but not as deep as we want to we're

still not fully in involved in our full roles
yet. um which is something that I think we're

working on. But I have the utmost trust and
respect for these four and the rest of staff

because I know that they have uh grace for
any of the failures or any of the missteps

that I may have. um and I think that that
is the culture that is is crucial to build

first before you jump into a shared leadership
role. um and then on top of that life happens.

And and the important piece of that is that
I know that whatever roles and responsibilities

that I have -- this stuff that they don't
like -- they will actually pick up. Because

I know I can trust that I can step away for
a little bit and they got me and um and that's

crucial that's crucial for anything to be
successful so.

I would definitely echo that. um you know
I think to both my colleague's point we were

very intentional about how we stepped into
this and so there were several meetings and

several sessions at the onset of even brainstorm

you know okay what do we want this to look

like how do we want to move um to get to know
each other so that when those times where

correction support need to be made we know
it's coming from a place of love we feel like

you know we're extensions of each other's
families and so we'll put the best that's

not only for the organization but for each
other first and foremost and that makes you

know coming to work easy it's why I joined
RVC so I continue to stay here um and we're

hoping that comes through uh you know from
the engagement today and hope you all stick

around for this journey with us

um practically speaking we also did like you
were saying some team building times because

I got into a room with you all and felt a
spark I like that spark and I think I still

feel it I would face things with you but then
we also had April Nishimura who used to work

at RVC take us through some team building
times and we've built a charter that about

what we center we talked about what we wanted
to prioritize we talked about one of the first

year to look like we came up with some real
meeting practices about like frequency and

how we check in on things um like certain
meetings where we make sure to just have conversation

about anything we're in we don't think each

other knows about. Stuff like that that really

helped form our team. But even today when I came to this I was like am I nervous I'm

not I'm doing it with you ball and I think that feeling was there for the beginning and

we really intentionally built on that. yeah and I would just add I think that team building

time was very crucial because even though we were all at RVC in a different position

before our current position, we knew each other but we didn't really know each other

meaning like our our work didn't overlap as much some of us more than others like for

example I was a cap lead (capacity building lead) before. I barely got to interact with

Chris and not because I didn't want to it's just our work didn't cross paths for example.

Whereas I got to interact with Roshni because we were doing the same role. And so that team

building time even when you hire internally was really important because you don't get

to always work that closely with each other in your previous positions. And that that

team building time was pretty key to building our team team culture.

thank you um so I think our next question relates to something that JoJo said a minute

ago about kind of still wanting to go deeper

um sorry um yeah so JoJo talks about like

still wanting to be able to go deeper as co-ED's

and I know that RVC has often said that the single ED job is just impossible um so do

you all think that doing shared leadership has made this a more sustainable job kind

of in reality and in practice

we're laughing because the other day we were at this and Jojo I think said 100%, and I

said no

yeah go ahead okay um you know Jojo did touch about this earlier about like going deeper

thing and I think in particular for RVC and this is I I don't know if we all agree but

my opinion is that you know we started with 50 co-ED/50 our programmatic work. So if you

really think about putting us for 50% together it's really only two people so as JoJo said

the two people still doesn't allow you to take what you inherited from the organization

you know can build on that infrastructure and go deeper but also build on it and do

other things that the organization needs as you grow so I think it is um you know we're

in this place where we're trying to like think about to change those percentages right and

I think at the end of the day no matter how many people you have the needs of the community

and the needs of the organization are always going to be so much you know sometimes I say

to my team man we just can't get there break
because it's like challenge after challenge

and um that's expected with the role but sometimes
it's just you know those challenges really

take a lot of your time and energy so I think
there is possibility for sustainability and

I think it's about getting really clear on
what each of our roles need to be and also

stacking up around us to really make sure
we're at the bright side so that's why I thought

the other day I mean he said no because the
four of us there's four of us and again because

we have the 50/50 split all of us are over
capacity right now at that I mean we're all

on the table I really think like we took about
three roles because we did have sort of an

informal shared leadership structure we took
like three roles and made them four like if

we think about our existing roles too so it's
good to be honest about how much capacity

you're really adding yeah and I don't think
we knew that but we took on the roads like

some of us were like we got training we were
blessed to have your previous leadership with

us to do the onboarding but when we slowly
went in and then we're like oh this is what

exactly needs to be done and that's a lot
more than me I think anyone and just

one of my roles is Community Partnership

And to be honest with you, I have not been able touch upon that in the last year. Again,

going on the deeper, wider...there's just aspects of the job that just doesn't allow

me to do that. I think for all of us we all, there's something on our list that we just

can't get to. I think it's really important to say that because it's it's all of us trying

to figure out how to calibrate so we can get to it, and um to be honest we're still learning.

Ananda has shared with us an amazing amount of experience and knowledge, and I would say

like at least once a meeting, once a month, we're like, how did Ananda do this all by

themselves? uh Ananda Valenzuela was the managing director interim executive director before

we all took --

potentially listening to this right now

yeah I I think we were just amazed by how much Ananda was able to to take on all of

these roles so uh for us we're still learning and unpacking all of those things and still

trying to figure out how do we get to those parts of our jobs that we want to make sure

we attend to.

um yeah because depth is a real. Like there's

a lot of breadth being taken up. And as we like try to do our roles, especially at a

bigger size, I think they take more depth.
And I do also think that it is sustainable

in the sense of like the emotional burden
the responsibilities working through complex

issues we have each other a lot. um We've
all been able to take PTO or a sabbatical,

knowing other people can cover I think and
this has been true of a lot of folks in our

community have had really unexpected and big
things happen in our lives and our family

lives and have really been able to shift stuff
around so even if I can't get to certain things

in my job I, like, emotionally and energy-wise
feel like I feel like it's sustainable for

a while, often. So you know and that part
of it makes me feel like I never wanted to

do this job before it was a shared leadership
job ever.

And that's a shout out to Fabiola and the
GenOps (General Operations) team because I

think that's beyond uh just us having the
culture of making sure that we or have it

but really RVC is is time instead of making
sure that that is something that we have within

our culture. And so it allows us to do that,
right? um again some of the experiments we're

looking at, like 50/50 breakdown...we're changing
them right uh and some of us are going to

have to move to 100% because it's just not
even sustainable to be able to have uh us

sitting on and working on other programs.
And it's probably not fair to the other programs

um because we're not going to be giving the..."umph,"
the deepness of of the works and those programs.

So I mean I think there's a lot of things
that we're still learning um as as we kind

of experiment with the numbers that we have
now

I think he has it on the head. I think for
me just um you know this structure tends to

our humanity and I know it as someone who
went through a lot over this last year like

Roshni was saying. You know, I don't know
if I would have kept my sanity uh have been

in some other space and so I'm I'm grateful
um for, you know, team colleagues here and

then also RVC as a whole

Thanks y'all. So those are really like rich
discussion. I appreciate that. um we're gonna

kind of shift gears a tiny bit. I know we're
focusing first on some of the most commonly

asked questions now we're going to get into
some of the questions that folks asked when

they registered. um one thing folks asked
about a lot is the role the board plays in

shared leadership. um so what has our experience
look like and what advice would you give folks

who are kind of navigating the shared leadership
waters, specific to their board?

I'm the board liaison for our team -- another one of the roles. um and I get this question

a lot when talking to folks. So our board did a really good job of sort of moving and

following the process of the staff and also went through their own process of doing consent

principle with Kad on them on the model that we brought up. So in that way our board was

like very supportive and I think now they have the same question of like, how do we

best energize ourselves to support this self-managing... to support the shared leadership but also

the way that RVC has a self-managing org where the staff make a lot of decisions. um and

I think a lot of folks are trying to figure out like what the role of the board is, not

just in shared leadership, but in like having um a less like dominant structure board. So

for our board they were like but how do we support the coED's and how do we evaluate

them? So they're working on building that um like just a performance evaluation. I think

that there were certain committees that work like... the finance committee more works with

Anbar, but I think the fear is like --how do we make sure that we can.. the -- if we're

not just working with one person, how do we make sure we can like support them, hold them

accountable, blah blah blah...how do we know

how things are going with the four of you.

But I think that question is a question boards ask anyway. Like I'm like how are you supporting

your single ED currently in that? How are you getting accountability for that single

ED? A lot of ED's don't have that from the board, depending on what -- like, if you're

a working board, if you're a governance board...so um I think that the question isn't different,

you know? It's just, you're trying to think of -- you have to understand how we work together.

And so we were able to have me be the liaison, but I do think there's some stuff around the

performance that's really important and making sure folks know their leads are for the types

of work you're building ... and there's this question of like

ok, but...there's this new question of like, if we're not needed for this top-down way

quite the same way because we're getting a lot of support from each other...one thing

is, also, each of us supervise each other. We have a supervisory structure and we're

the only ED's I know that have like weekly supervisory meetings. Like where you're getting

a lot of ability to also get your soundboard time. So I think the question then becomes

like what can the board do to understand the org to make sure that we're staying values

aligned and like supporting our community.
So. But I do hear a lot of fears around that

piece about like, if it's more than one person,
how do we work together? um but I think you

just examine how you're trying to work with
one person, and then think what needs to get

shared, and who -- and who can hold the majority
of it

Like, we're very much in the middle of this.
Very much in the middle of asking about like

what's the board 2.0 look like.

Thanks Roshni. um so for our next question
-- and I kind of have a feeling I know which

of you may answer this one -- um a lot of
people asked: What have donors and funders

thought about shared leadership transition?

uh I'll take that, yes

um it's been... it's been extremely supportive.
I mean, um from trying to gain an understanding

of what we're doing to just asking the questions:
how can we engage with you, or continue to

engage with you? We've had a lot of folks
who might have started out supporting RVC

come back and and find their niche again with
us, which has been great. um I think really

trying to gain an understanding of what this
is going to look like, and what this next

iteration of the organization and our work's
going to change...and then, who should I talk

to? That's one of the biggest uh questions like, where do I go with this, you know? I

think um one of the takeaways from this uh process thus far is that, you know, obviously

it's like, you know, kind of the rising tide lifts all boats right? It's better to have

multiple hands able to support one another than just some two-handed or one hand alone

right? And so it's great to be able to actually have think partners with my colleagues and

say okay, what does this look like? Now, RVC has a very unique culture. I know we do some

things that are traditional and fundraising. So, we try to make sure that we are always

thinking about partners in our communities, first and foremost, you know when we're making

uh funding decisions or accepting resources from outside entities. And so, it's great

to be able to have my colleagues to bounce these ideas off of and say, you know, is this

how we really want to show up in this space? Are these really partnerships and engagements

that are going to benefit the whole and not just RVC itself so um. You know, I think that

we're on a great trajectory, you know, getting a lot of support but we always need more and

um yeah.

I think there's a lot of hunger for this, also, to understand models because a bunch

of funders also see that like..

having a sustainable, robust enough non-profit sector that can do what we're saying we want

to do, or undo what we're trying to do, and then be done. um is.. is also a big push by

funders as well, I mean, a big push by a lot of our partners, right? And so I think there

is a lot of -- I hear a lot of hunger for shared leadership out in

the world, in the organizations, folks here... and I think that is also reflected with a

bunch of partners and then it's like inviting in the folks that don't quite haven't yet

experienced that model.

Great. So another thing a lot of people asked about were, you know, communication and strategic

team practices to be on the same page. Would y'all speak to that a little bit as well?

Sure. um I think this goes back to what we were saying earlier about really spending

that time beforehand to not just ...um build the culture and do team building, but from

there we named, you know, how do we want our meetings to look like? How often do we want

to meet? And what does that look like in terms of, you know -- obviously, there's room for

a lot of emerging issues -- because anyone who's an ED on this call know there's a lot

of emerging issues -- but there were certain things that we wanted to make sure that we

always had in place, right? Like our supervision structure. And our meetings giving us some

time to talk about what are our high priorities. Or, having time to think about or talk about

what are some of the conversations that we're having with staff. Because in a normal single

ED structure, you would know everything. But since there's four of us, each of us holds

something in order to really make really good decisions, you want to make sure we have time

for that. And I would also think that, you know ... evolving process right? We're only

a year and a half. There are not a lot of models out there that have four people. Usually

it's two to three. And even if there was, I think every organization is different, you

know, think about what are the needs of your organization? How you meet those needs? And

so, as times goes on, we realize we have different needs, or we realize we have needs that we

didn't realize we need to have met. What I mean by that is, for example, just a few months

ago we decided one hour a week does not work. So we have a day-long meeting every month

called the co-ED day. And basically that allows us to have more time to dig deeper on something

that is on our plate. Something that needs more strategy and visionary thinking, or just

just having more spaciousness to talk about something. So those are like some of the bigger

practices that are coming up, and I think more will come up as time goes on. And then

all our practices. We just realized, you know, pretty quickly...We realized, yeah, we can

all take PTO, but two of us can't take... no more than two should take PTO at the same

time, right? Because it was too much for one person to cover all three of us, right? So

there's both those big and small things that we named in the beginning, and also continue

to name as things go on because... you know, even if we had all the practices at the beginning,

our surrounding environment is always changing and the needs of our organization are changing.

Co-ED day has been a dream, too. I think. So it allows our other meetings to just be

more feedback, what we need to get done ...versus the deeper thinking stuff or the bigger issues

we're trying to tackle. um we also talked a lot about what I consider a lot of that

invisible labor and coordinating labor. About switching around facilitation in our meeting.

Switching around note-taking. Having a certain kind of check-in where we -- like I said,

we have a check-in about conversations we're in. And since we're on programs, I think we

have a pulse. Like, we have different views

of it. And if that changes, then we'll have

to see like where we're hooked into, and where aren't we... to make sure we are. So I think

that there's been a lot of that everyday labor, too, that we are intentional about that helps

us be smooth.

Yeah, and I think one of the things I think we named in our charter -- but I think it's

really important for us to be intentional in naming now -- is to make sure, with all

of that, we center joy. We give time for check-ins. We give time to just, you know, have fun with

it. um I think you probably missed it in the beginning but we were kind of really energetic

before. I think because we're talking about -- now we're talking a bit calmer, but we

can get really just like, we were in tears laughing. And I think there's just that

piece of making sure we have time for that. You know, we have a group chat to check in

on each other, both in personal and um work level. That also really helped us have really

good communication with each other. And you know I think all of those things help us.

And another thing that I told them I have to talk about today is when you have these

practices and build a team culture that's how you were able to have a team to like...

talk and have multiple conversations to color

coordinate our clothes for events like this

and send pictures and things like that. so
um anyways I just wanted to add like it's

really important for us to make sure -- I
know we're talking about all the tactical

pieces, but even with all of that, we make
sure to have room for joy and jokes and just

checking in on each other as individuals.

This may be the quietest we've ever been...
we are understood

Thank you. Well we have about four minutes
and we're gonna try to get through two more

questions, one that was submitted in the chat,
and then one to wrap up. So the question that

was submitted in the chat today is: how did
you communicate the changes of staff roles

and models and how did you get buy-in for
the changes?

Assuming that means for the community and
our partners? Maybe? Or staff?

Um I think it's about how do we communicate
the changes to staff? And then maybe you could

speak to like other stakeholders as well.

I think...so Roshni said it earlier. I think
it was staff driven that where we found success

for looking at this type of model.
And not just -- it was staff driven in the

beginning, but it's actually... We still really
rely on staff um leading us and where they

would need us.

I was thinking about it uh on my drive here

that this wouldn't have probably been as possible
if there wasn't for staff who have always

checked in on us as individuals, right? And
how are you doing, how is the co-ED, Co-ED-ship?

How is the team doing? Understanding, like,
the process is going to be hard. And even

seeing that they're impacted by how we kind
of um decide to move. And I think that's what's

been really helpful for us. And in terms of
continuing like the experiments and the evolutions

of the type of work we're doing, I also uh
see it as an opportunity for staff to see

a plan for themselves, if they were to looking
at uh kind of joining uh or coming into place

for this position. The four of us as much
as we love working together, we're not going

to be doing this the whole time. And I think
these these opportunities to kind of see how

we we are developing is also opportunities
for staff to see: oh that's something I can

fit into, or I'm interested in. um and so
there's always that that give and take. Now

to talk about the communication piece because
sometimes the four of us we get so caught

up and like oh shit, we gotta do this and
that, uh we gotta respond here, we gotta respond

there. Sometimes we forget. And staff have

been the ones who are telling us: all right

can you give us an update on on how the four of you are doing? So now that's another piece

that we want to make sure we implement every month, and Anbar's been very good about: we

need to communicate to staff.

Anbar's often really good about it...

I don't know if there's anything else?

I think we also communicated a lot about where you're gonna go. uh about the role mapping

we did in the beginning. And we each talked about our asks for accountability or feedback,

or our asks for what would support us in our leadership. And so we didn't have to communicate

internally so much our model -- that was more external, which... there was a blog and a

nice lily pad drawing of our structure. Thanks again, Ananda.

Yeah so we did a lot of trying to set up this thing as: we're in a supportive environment

and what do we need to be supported in our jobs? So I think we communicated a lot about

that and our roles in the beginning.

um I just want to add or emphasize that staff were involved in every single part of the

process. So when we named the kind of structure we wanted, it was a staff retreat. When we

had um a transition committee, staff were

on it, even before we all opt in, Jojo and

Chris were on it with other staff. When we had a proposal on the table it was another

staff meeting, a retreat. And going back to what Roshni described earlier about the decision-making

model. We had used the consent principle. So every single staff member had to agree

with the four of us agreeing to the position and the roles we were taking on. And if they

were like had any questions, they like...there was one-on-ones in order to like make sure

everyone was fully on board. So staff were very very involved from A to Z in great detail.

And that might not be your situation, in which case I would just stress the over-communicating

and the thinking behind why you split things the way you did. And which piece you can feel

clear on and don't. Because I've talked to folks that are a small team doing this and

then communicating it out

All right, thank you! um we're gonna do one more quick question because there are few items we need to get to at the end um. So in like two sentences, what is one piece of advice you'd give folks who are already in, or considering moving to shared leadership?

so I'll start. yeah um set your foundation. You're building a structure. You take time. You're very intentional. Just make sure that you set your foundation. And be very intentional about how you build on that.

Thank you so much. um I say, really take time to understand what are the needs of your organization and what capacity --what's the right sizing of it, so you can understand what kind of structure could be really helpful around that.

And I would say just have fun with it at the same time, and make sure that you, like, you have fun with it with the team that you decide to do it with.

um I have something similar so

sorry no it's fine I had another thought

I um I do think -- don't launch another new thing if your shared leadership is a big thing,

you know, let that be your project. And um and also there is a real sense that our roles have a lot of parity in them. There are things they do, as JoJo's mentioned, I don't want to do, but I think there are things I'm handling that you're like, "thank god that's Roshni."

And that you feel that. We're not like, oh I have all this and you -- and you get all the fun stuff, you know. and so I -- and we were intentional. So I think that's great.

And then, yeah, face it with your team. I think a commitment on the team to each other

and to the model even if it changes... like
there's a real commitment that we have, so

that we can experiment. And it's not one of
us dragging the other one into it. So those

are mine.

I actually don't have anything to add. The
three of them said it all.

Can I say something real quick? [laughter]
you're like, I'll take JoJo's. Hold on, Anbar's

got something to say.

I was gonna say, building off of what was

said before, it's so so important to build
in time for team building with your co-leadership.

like it's really easy to get um you know like
JoJo was saying earlier. Like, oh, we have

to respond to something, you have to do this,
you have to do that. Team building has to

be priority because that's what really builds the fluidity of shared leadership to work.

um you're going deeper in a shared model, so don't be surprised if you're like, oh,

no one's been in this room! There's a lot of work to do in this corner that looks small

um it'll get bigger yeah and Roshni will email you

[laughter]

take us home!

Thank you so much for all your answers in the bridge conversation um before we wrap

up I know we want to express some gratitude. First off gratitude to all the folks who have

been so essential to this shared leadership journey. you know. Of course the big thanks

to our co-ED's for getting into the weeds today, um we really appreciate you. um we

also want to give a shout out to all of the RVC staff

[clapping]

as our co-ED's have mentioned, this whole

process would not be possible without them. We also want to give a shout out to the folks

who are already doing the co-directorship life um. Kudos to Communities Rise for launching

their co-directorship this week. We also want to share gratitude to those who made today's

event possible um special shout out to Rae,

Mandie, and does anyone and Penny, Uyen, and

all of the staff who helped make today possible.

We also want to thank Progress Alliance for

hosting us on their Zoom today. And then last
but certainly not least thank you to everyone

for coming today! It's so good to see other
organizations and folks exploring distributing

power and exploring these liberatory structures.
um so a few final notes I know we're just

about at time we wanted to let folks know
that if you're local and you'd like to celebrate

with us we'll be at happy hour at Optimism
Brewing today from four to six pm so please

feel free to join us. We'll also be sending
a follow-up email which will have the recording

and some of the remaining questions that we
want to get to in future blog posts or other

thought leadership events. And then finally,
we're going to be dropping a link to a survey

um so please please please fill that out if
you have a moment um your feedback is essential

to future events like these. So yeah thank
you so much everyone!

Whooo!
thank you

thank y'all
bye

byeeee
goodbye I love you all

[laughter]

[music]