



**To: RWJF Leadership for Better Health Team**  
**From: TCC Group**  
**Date: May 17, 2021**  
**RE: Most Significant Change Trend Analysis Findings for 2020 Program Graduates**

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## Introduction and Background

In 2019, as the Change Leadership Initiative's first cohort (Cohort 2016) prepared to graduate from their programs, TCC launched a monitoring and evaluation method called Most Significant Change (MSC) to systematically capture – directly from program participants – the perceived outcomes derived from the Change Leadership Initiative. During this first year the full MSC methodology was employed, meaning that all of the participants' story submissions were iteratively reviewed by staff from each CLI program, directors of the four programs, and RWJF staff. At each level of review, the reviewing team held discussions related to the stories and selected a set number of stories that they felt represented the most significant change for the program and wrote a corresponding memo of their rationale. Subsequent to that process, TCC did a separate thematic analysis of all of the stories that were submitted.

In 2020, as the second cohort (Cohort 2017 and HPRS 2016-2017<sup>1</sup> graduates) prepared to graduate, it was decided that the full MSC methodology would not be employed, but that the MSC question would remain on the survey for graduating participants to continue to systematically capture their self-perceived outcomes from the program. The data is collected through the annual participant survey administered by TCC Group that the participants received as they were concluding their time in the program (collected September 2020-March 2021<sup>2</sup>). Participants were asked:

**"Please describe in one or two paragraphs the most significant change that has resulted from your involvement with the *[Clinical Scholars/Culture of Health Leaders/Health Policy Research Scholars/Interdisciplinary Research Leaders]* program."**

Participants were asked to present a story and to describe the situation, task, actions, results, or other details related to the change. Participants had the option to tell their story by video if preferred. Participants were also asked to select if their story represented a change related to (1) personal leadership development and individual growth, (2) organizational impact on the participant's or

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<sup>1</sup> HPRS, as the only four-year CLI program, graduated its first full cohort in 2020 rather than 2019. However, some HPRS participants may finish their program earlier if they complete their PhD on an earlier schedule. Therefore, during the 2019 year, some members of HPRS' 2016 cohort and one member of its 2017 cohort graduated from the program. During 2020, three members of its 2017 cohort graduated, while the remainder were from the 2016 cohort.

<sup>2</sup> Surveys across the four programs were administered at different times due to some programs granting no-cost extensions to their participants.

another organization, or (3) community impact, where “community” is defined broadly to include a geographic location, a defined group of people, a field of work, etc.

The table below outlines the number of submissions received across the four programs.

**Table 1: Most Significant Change Stories Received by 2020 CLI Program Graduates**

2020 CLI Program Graduates		
	# of survey respondents	# of participants that submitted a MSC story
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54 (54%)</b>

Using grounded theory, which identifies emerging patterns in data as they are analyzed<sup>3</sup>, and then matching the results to the existing CLI program theory (as shown in the CLI logic model), TCC Group then conducted a thematic analysis of each MSC story received. For comparison across program years, the same set of coding categories were used as in last year’s analysis, with new categories added where needed. This memo presents the findings from analysis of the MSC stories and is organized in two overarching sections:

- A. Overall Analysis—provides a synthesis of all the findings using the lens of the existing CLI logic model
- B. Theme Specific Analysis—provides a detailed examination of each of the thematic areas, grouped by the level of outcome: individual, organization, or community

## A. Overall Analysis

Analysis of the 54 most significant change stories submitted by outgoing CLI participants in 2020 showed alignment with several areas of the CLI logic model (see Appendix 2). A comparison of the 2019 and 2020 responses is shown in Table 2 below.

At the **Individual/Personal level**, we see stories related to the following outcome areas:

- **Self as leader (67 percent of stories):** How an individual sees themselves as a leader; their confidence, voice, and view of their work [*currently missing from the CLI logic model*]. This representation aligned with last year’s representation of these types of
- **Interpersonal competency and network (54 percent of stories):** Relationship building, boundary spanning, and community engagement competencies, and network building [*aligns with short-term outcomes on the CLI logic model*]. This category saw a large increase from the 2019 stories.

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<sup>3</sup> Glaser in Walsh, Holton et al 2015. <https://www.groundedtheoryonline.com/what-is-grounded-theory/>

- **Technical competency (46 percent of stories):** Tools, skills, and abilities beyond those specifically about interpersonal engagement, including leadership style, , research and advocacy skills, etc. *[aligns with short-term outcomes on the CLI logic model]* This category also increased from the last cohort’s MSC stories.
- **Formal role as leader (22 percent of stories):** Positioning the individual to have improved credibility as a leader, including awards, position advancements, nominations, and other forms of external recognition *[not explicitly articulated in the current CLI logic model, but would be in a space between short and long-term outcomes]*. This category saw a slight increase from the last cohort’s MSC stories .

Overall, 94 percent of the stories submitted contained an element that aligned with these individual-level outcomes. This is to be expected given the point in time in which the data was collected – as the participants were completing their respective CLI program. As participants leave their programs and are immersed in their communities, we expect to see more organizational and community-level outcomes reported as we did in our 2020 CLI Alumni survey.

At the **Organizational level**, stories show changes within the participant’s own **home organization**. Twenty-four percent of stories showed change within this domain. These changes align with long-term outcomes on the CLI logic model as participants changed policy, practice, and mindsets or beliefs within organizations with whom they had a relationship. This category aligns with the last cohort’s representation of organizational changes.

At the **Community level**, stories were related to two types of community change:

- **Local community change:** Change within one’s direct community, which may include a local system, geographic space, or intellectual community *[aligns with long-term outcomes on the CLI logic model]*
- **Broader community change:** Change outside one’s direct community, including state/national policy<sup>4</sup>, cross-disciplinary, or multiple geographic spaces. *[aligns with long-term outcomes on the CLI logic model]*

Eleven percent of stories reflect change within the community impact domain, with six percent being local community change and seven percent in broader community change (note, one story was coded for both local and broader change). As these changes align with longer-term outcomes on the CLI logic model, this is an outcome area we would expect to see develop further with CLI alumni.

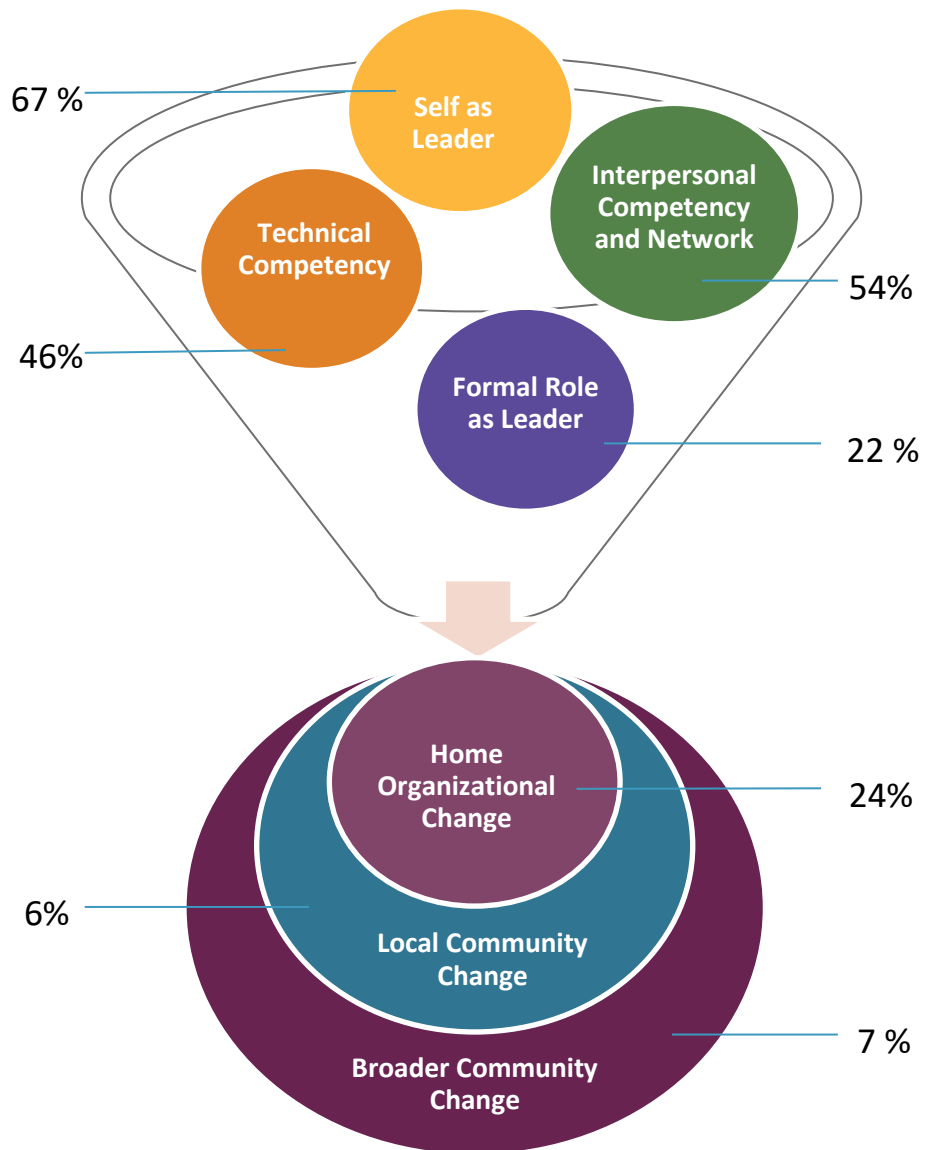
The following figure shows the relationship between these different domains and the amount of change for each domain represented through the stories. As CLI participants gain technical competencies, develop their interpersonal competencies and networks, gain confidence in themselves

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<sup>4</sup> All CLI participants agree to specific legal guidelines in their grant agreements which prohibit the use of grant funds for lobbying as defined by Section 4945(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code.

as a leader, and are in formal leadership roles, they are better able to facilitate Culture of Health changes in their home organization, local community, or in a broader community context.

**Figure 1: Outcomes Represented in Most Significant Change Stories<sup>5</sup> of 2020 CLI Program Graduates**



<sup>5</sup> Percentages shown represent the proportion of stories (representing 54% of CLI participants) that contained this element. Stories may have been coded across more than one category.

Overall, the types of changes mentioned by 2020 CLI program graduates were similar to those mentioned by 2019 graduates. Changes related to interpersonal competency and network saw a large increase in 2020. Table 2 shows a comparison of the percentage of stories that contained each type of change in both years.

**Table 2: Types of Significant Changes Mentioned by 2019 and 2020 CLI Program Graduates**

	2019	2020
<b>Individual/Personal level</b>		
Self as leader	67%	67%
Interpersonal competency and network	36%	54%
Technical competency	32%	46%
Formal role as leader	17%	22%
<b>Organizational level</b>		
Home organizational change	23%	24%
<b>Community level</b>		
Local community change	5%	6%
Broader community change	1%	7%

*Note: Percentages within this table refer to the percentage of MSC stories that were coded to this type of change. Stories may have been coded to more than one change category.*

## B. Theme Specific Analysis

The themes from the stories are organized by the level of outcome they represent: individual participant, organization, and broader community. For each of these three levels, we present a high-level summary of the category and a bar chart showing the frequency of stories by subcategory. This is then followed by a more detailed description of the most prominent subcategories.

### 1. Changes Related to Personal Leadership Development and Individual Growth

**Changes that were related to personal leadership development and individual growth were the most commonly cited significant changes across the four programs.** Fifty-one of the 54 stories reviewed (94 percent) mentioned a personal change. The most frequently cited changes had to do with an increase in their technical competencies to be able to directly apply new tools or skills to their work, and their personal development in seeing their work in a new light. Leaders also frequently talked about cultivating meaningful relationships within their program or the broader CLI network and developing confidence as a leader. These results were closely aligned with those cited by last year’s group of graduating participants where 90 percent mentioned a personal change and the most common changes were increased confidence as a leader and seeing their work in a new light (appearing in the fourth and second positions this year, see Chart 1). Cultivating meaningful relationships in the

program and applying new tools or skills were both more prominently mentioned from this year’s group of participants.

The chart below provides the full range of coding categories under the personal leadership development and individual growth domain and the number of stories that were coded to each category. Stories may have been coded to more than one category. Following the chart is a short description of the top five categories.

**Chart 1: Personal Leadership Development Changes in 2020 CLI Program Graduates**



- a. Leaders frequently talked about applying tools or skills from their program to their work.** Twenty-two stories described the use of CLI tools or skills and there was a wide range of skills mentioned. Some participants described a new ability to frame their work or articulate the change that is needed. Some talked about an increased ability to listen, bring others to the table and/or empower others. For some, they had increased engagement in advocacy at multiple levels, they felt better able to see “the big picture,” and were engaged in bringing together different stakeholders to address systemic inequities. Several stories described how participants were applying Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) frames and working to create more inclusive environments. Some spoke of engaging in more coaching or applying new skills to leading or working in teams. Others applied new skills in self-reflection and/or self-care.
- b. Twenty-one leaders told stories about seeing their work in a new light.** Some spoke of seeing a more expansive view of leadership, having their thinking “pushed”, or “rejuvenating” their approach to their work. Some also shared that they felt validated by being around other similar-minded and inspiring professionals working to create a Culture of Health and that they now had a sense of belonging and saw themselves as a “change agent”. Many spoke of how their new perspective and framing of their role had motivated them to apply their new skills to their work (described above) or use their voice (described below).
- c. The exposure to diverse leaders and the cultivation of meaningful relationships was important for many participants in CLI programs.** Twenty-one participants described stories of being inspired by and learning from others in the CLI and some spoke of the moral support they felt from other leaders as they faced both personal and professional challenges. Some specifically called out the support of coaches and mentors, which even inspired some to see themselves more as a coach or mentor to others.
- d. Increased confidence was described by leaders in several ways.** Seventeen participants talked about increases in their confidence. For some, it was about better understanding their own strengths and weaknesses, seeing themselves as a leader despite feeling different (e.g., as people of color, first generation college students, or those from immigrant families) from what they viewed as more traditional leaders, or just believing that they can be a changemaker. These increases in confidence led participants to be better able to lead projects, get involved in new partnerships or take on new responsibilities, better able to speak out against the status quo (described below), or have a belief that their perspective matters and motivation to share their thoughts (described above and below).
- e. Thirteen leaders told stories about getting more comfortable with using their own voice and then finding the right platforms to use their voice.** Participants sometimes described a new ability to “harness” their voice or to articulate “the vision of change that is needed.” Some participants talked about using their voice within academic settings or with policymakers, or to talk about interdisciplinary work with public health audiences. Some participants talked about a

new ability to become an advocate for themselves, their team, or their community. They employed their voices to “have difficult conversations” and to negotiate. For some, this meant speaking through social media or developing thought leadership through forums such as op-eds, issue briefs, book chapters, or manuscripts. For others, it was about speaking up in meetings or discussions to raise issues of importance to them.

## 2. Changes Related to Organizational Impact on Their Own Organization

About a quarter of CLI participants provided stories related to organizational changes. Changes within this domain were mentioned in 13 of the 54 stories reviewed (24 percent), which was similar to last year’s graduating cohort where 23 percent of stories cited organizational changes.

Participants talked about changes within their own organizations such as partnership development, changes in how they were using data more strategically, changes in organizational awareness or culture, and changes in approaches to how services were provided, or research was conducted. The most frequent types of stories from last year’s cohort were about changes to how research was conducted or how services were delivered.

The chart below provides the full range of coding categories under organizational impact and the number of stories coded to each category. Stories may have been coded to more than one category. Following the chart is a short description of the top categories.

**Chart 2: Organizational Changes Reported by 2020 CLI Program Graduates**





- a. **Four leaders spoke of new partnership development.** Participants' stories of new partnerships included partnering with Indigenous youth to start an educational nonprofit, creating new relationships to replicate work across the country, understanding more about successful community-academic partnerships, and building internal partnerships for adopting a new mission focused on community engagement.
- b. **Three leaders described changed in how their organization engages in strategic planning, evaluation or using data.** Examples included using community-level data to clearly define their intervention and target audience, engaging youth in presenting their own data and interpretations, and using data to provide evidence for a more community-engagement oriented organizational mission.
- c. **Three leaders spoke of changes in organizational culture.** Participants described specific norms that they had seen change within their organizations, two of which tied back to their increased use of data and strategic planning. For example, the use of data to provide evidence for a community-engagement orientation led to the approval and adoption of a community-engagement focused strategic plan. In another example, the use of data to define an intervention and target audience led to organizational norms in using explicit messaging that they were supporting black entrepreneurs. An additional story spoke of putting someone in a leadership role with a commitment to "DEI and building inclusive communities." This led to a revamped training curriculum and more intentional efforts around DEI, supervision, and mentoring.
- d. **Three leaders told stories about changes to service provision.** Service provision stories included the replication of a service model to other communities, the development of a patient-centered triage system and a free telehealth clinic for youth with behavioral health concerns, and a youth services program endorsed by Tribal Leadership.
- e. **Two leaders found they were able to change research practices in their work.** For one, they applied new skills in framing equity-focused research for a broad audience and used that in their research translation work. For another, their team incorporated new methods to "amplify the voices for the voiceless" and by "adding an equity lens to every aspect" of their research.
- f. **Two leaders spoke of being able to bring new financial resources to their organization's work.** This included using skills from their program to increase their organizational funding streams and leveraging the financial support from the program to contribute to growing a new organization.
- g. **One leadership description spoke of advocacy for organizational change within an academic setting.** One story described advocacy within their university to change structures that undervalue community-based research.

### 3. Changes Related to Community Impact

Six of the 54 stories reviewed (11 percent) cited changes related to community impact. This was nearly twice as many references to community change as seen in the previous cohort (6 percent of stories).

Community impact was described in two ways:

- Local community change: Change within one’s direct community, which may include a local system, geographic space, or intellectual community
- Broader community change: Change outside one’s direct community, including state/national policy<sup>6</sup>, cross-disciplinary, or multiple geographic spaces.

Four of the stories spoke of broader community change while three stories described local community change. Examples of these community changes are provided below.

Chart 3: Community-Level Changes Reported by 2020 CLI Program Graduates



- Three leaders talked about their involvement with advocacy, although they did not cite any specific policy changes that had occurred yet.** One participant talked about their training in communications enabling them to successfully craft and deliver messages to media and policymakers. Some participants shared stories of connecting multi-level advocacy (including testifying for Congress) to help children within communities, and advocacy on a local police reform commission and in a case regarding soda taxes.
- Three leaders spoke of launching a new community-based organization or initiative within their community.** One example was the creation of a new educational nonprofit in partnership with Indigenous youth, another was a new health-focused nonprofit, and the third example was from a participant heavily involved in building out the work of RWJF’s Community Change Leadership Network (CCLN).
- One story provided an example of research that was developed that amplified community experiences and was being used to influence decision makers across the state.** This story spoke of a documentary that had been produced about adverse childhood experiences and resilience which incorporated listening to and learning from communities experiencing trauma.

<sup>6</sup> All CLI participants agree to specific legal guidelines in their grant agreements which prohibit the use of grant funds for lobbying as defined by Section 4945(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code.

# Appendix 1 – CLI Logic Model

