

## Goals Assessment

### WCU in Philadelphia Human Rights Film Series

#### Goals of Project

The WCU in Philadelphia Human Rights Film Series (HRFS) engaged the Center City campus community in conversations about complicated human rights issues. The series was intended to provide a safe, respectful space for students, faculty, and staff to engage in dialogue about issues such as disability rights, community violence, mental health, poverty, and healthcare. Furthermore, by offering students the opportunity to join in discussions following each film, and thus bring their valuable professional experiences to the conversation, this film series responds to the University Forum's goal of "develop[ing] a pool of individuals who are well equipped to facilitate these discussions" in our community. Finally, the film series contributed to the strong branding of WCU in Philadelphia as an accessible, high-quality institution of higher education in Philadelphia.

The Fall film, *Crip Camp*, was screened on November 3, 2021. The film focused on the evolution of the disability rights movement. Attendees were engaged in a discussion related to the often-overlooked rights of persons with disabilities. The Spring event held on April 21, 2022 was an opportunity to engage with the Walkies Film Production Team and screen two of their documentaries about Philadelphians who found success after incarceration. This event was especially impactful for attendees who were able to interact with the producers on a personal level to understand how the topics and individuals featured were selected and how the documentaries are a narrative justice tool used in advancing human rights and empowering persons formerly incarcerated. Given that the films were about Philadelphians, attendees were also able to consider the films within the context of our campus location.

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In many ways, the WCU HRFS program was a huge success. Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and gun violence epidemic, we shifted the series to an on-line offering. This allowed us to engage with participants and facilitators, who may not otherwise have felt comfortable or safe to attend in person, in important dialogue about our community here in Philadelphia. The group discussions were productive and contributed to interdisciplinary conversations about serving Philadelphia communities. We feel strongly that attendees left the screenings empowered to have conversations about human rights with clients, community members, and other area social justice stakeholders.

As a multi-semester project in Philadelphia, the program also had its challenges and revealed opportunities for better collaboration with WCU services and resources for future initiatives. For example, when first designing the program, we intended to facilitate the series in person, but realized that shifted the series to an on-line offering would encourage greater participation. Technology provided some challenges with sound for the faculty and staff on-campus, but we were able to make adjustments to ensure the experience of those online was not disrupted. Future grant recipients in Philadelphia should consider how to best utilize technology and WCU in Philadelphia technology should also be assessed for upgrades to accommodate hybrid offerings. Future events and screenings will be opened and advertised to the public to better use our space and engage community members in these important conversations and learning opportunities.