




**Wilder
Research**



Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program retention interviews



*A study of causes and opportunities to
address program attrition*

DECEMBER 2009



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Summary

The Blandin Foundation operates the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program (BRCLP). The BRCLP is a culturally-specific program designed to develop and sustain healthy reservation communities by building on community strengths and leveraging community assets. It consists of an initial five-day residential retreat, a two-day residential workshop (workshop I) three months later, and a one-day workshop (workshop II) six months after the initial retreat.

The Blandin Leadership Team has observed a steep drop-off in attendance among Reservation cohort members, from the initial retreat to the three-month follow-up workshop (Workshop I) and again from that workshop to the six-month follow-up workshop (Workshop II).

The Blandin Foundation contracted with Wilder Research in September of 2009 to conduct key informant interviews with program alumni to better understand the reasons for the attendance decline, and what Blandin might be able to do to improve attendance.

A total of 24 respondents from the most recent four cohorts were interviewed via telephone. Key findings from this study indicate the following:

- Overall, alumni are very satisfied with the BRCLP.
- The main barriers to attendance reported by those who did not complete the training were: difficulty with taking time away from work; having priorities more urgent than the BRCLP; and personal or work emergencies.
- In addition to these actual reported barriers, attendees and non-attendees also thought that the following might contribute to some people's lack of attendance: time constraints; lack of commitment; family and personal responsibilities; and location.
- The most important factors that helped people who were able to attend all or most of the training include: having a support system in place; being committed to the program; and having financial support available.
- The majority of alumni are in communication with alumni from their reservation and other cohorts, and do not feel that failures of communication are a significant reason for lack of attendance.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are made:

- Modify the recruitment process to include questions and conversations that help assess whether or not an individual is truly committed to attending BRCLP.
- Ask alumni in each reservation to mentor incoming leaders *before* the five-day retreat even begins.
- Make a concerted effort to teach the history of the Blandin Foundation to alumni early on (during recruitment or the five-day retreat) so that people know the history and good work that the foundation has been doing in Minnesota communities and particularly in Native American communities.
- Provide greater support and communication in the three months between the five-day retreat and workshop I to keep participants engaged.
- Make use of social networking sites such as Facebook to keep alumni engaged with the program and connected with one another.
- Alternate the location of the workshops or conduct them on the reservation to improve access and decrease driving time and time away from home.
- Consider breaking up the five-day retreat into two three-day retreats over several months and holding the workshops on the weekend so that participants do not have to miss work to attend.
- Make a concerted effort to re-engage those who may have missed workshop I to bring them up to speed in preparation for workshop II.

Background and methodology

The Blandin Foundation operates the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program (BRCLP). The Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program is a culturally-specific program designed to develop and sustain healthy reservation communities by building on community strengths and leveraging community assets.

Selected participants represent the diversity of the community. They come from a variety of professions, backgrounds, and positions of responsibility. Instruction is based on specific principles of community leadership, using a curriculum designed by the foundation and developed incrementally over time.

Since 2001, the BRCLP has provided leadership training to more than 160 leaders in 11 Minnesota Indian Reservations.

BRCLP is a residential retreat that involves eight days of training: an initial five-day residential retreat, a two-day residential workshop and a one-day workshop over a six to eight month period.

The following are descriptions of each of the three components of the BRCLP training:

Residential retreat

The residential retreat is the cornerstone of BRCLP training. It is not considered to be a workshop or seminar, rather it is a “break in the action” – a time to step back and look forward; to learn, reflect and talk candidly in a comfortable, confidential environment about what is happening, or not happening, in community life. The retreat offers an opportunity to establish individual development goals and to work on a Going Forward team. Going Forward teams are made up of small groups of participants that come together around an issue they would like to move forward in their community. This acts as a homework assignment, which gives participants a chance to practice, strengthen, and develop skills related to their own leadership back in their community. All Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program retreats are held at Ruttger’s Sugar Lake Lodge in Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

Workshop I

Workshop I is a two-day residential workshop that focuses on applying the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program Community Action Process to real-life challenges and opportunities explored by the Going Forward teams. It also focuses on

the skills of effective small group communication. Workshop I takes place three months after the completion of the residential retreat.

Workshop II

Workshop II is a one-day workshop in which participants focus on expanding their ability to mobilize action through effective public communication. The day wraps up with a commencement ceremony that includes BRCLP alumni. Workshop II takes place six months after the completion of the residential retreat.

The Blandin Leadership Team has observed a steep drop-off in attendance among Reservation cohort members, from the initial retreat to the three-month follow-up workshop (Workshop I) and again from that workshop to the six-month follow-up workshop (Workshop II).

The Blandin Foundation contracted with Wilder Research in September of 2009 to conduct key informant interviews with alumni from all of the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program cohorts trained in 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09. The goal of these interviews was to better understand the reasons for the attendance decline, and what Blandin might be able to do to improve attendance. This report presents the results of 24 interviews completed in October, November and early December of 2009.

Study approach

The primary data collection method used for this study was key informant interviews via telephone. To help develop the questions for the alumni interviews, Blandin staff conducted preliminary key informant interviews with program staff and advisory committee members who have firsthand knowledge of the dynamics of both the program and reservation communities. Their ideas about what might be contributing to the high drop rates, hypotheses for retention challenges, and feedback on ways to make alumni more comfortable with the survey were incorporated into the introduction and questions for the alumni in their interviews. Initial questions were piloted with the first 10 respondents (from the 2008-09 cohorts), then modified slightly for the remaining interviews (including individuals from 2006-07 and 2007-08).

Respondents were selected from the most recent four years of the program. For these years, the Blandin Foundation provided Wilder Research with names and contact information for:

- All alumni who attended any component of the training

- Individuals who were recruited and selected as participants but who dropped out before the start of the initial five-day retreat
- Individuals who were selected as alternates for the training program and subsequently dropped before being selected as trainees

Together with demographic information and information on training attendance, this information was used to select a sample of people to be interviewed. For the sample, individuals who had and had not attended the entire program were loosely matched based on their gender, age, job/career and the pieces of the training that they attended.

Alumni received an invitation to participate in the interview by both email and U.S. mail from the Blandin Foundation. Both these invitations described the purpose of the interview and informed alumni that they would be contacted by a Wilder interviewer in the near future. Professional survey interviewers were trained on the specific purposes and methods of the study. Phone calls were made to the alumni's home, work and cell phone numbers if available.

In most sections of the report, data are reported in aggregate (e.g., both pilot and phase two are combined). In other sections where the interview questions changed from one phase of the study to the next, the responses are reported separately.

Response rate

A total of 128 alumni or potential alumni were included in this study. Of these, we sampled 48 alumni total: 14 for the pilot phase and 24 for the second phase of interviews. During the pilot phase, 10 interviews were completed. During the second phase of the interviews we produced 14 completed interviews. We were unable to obtain current contact information (by email, U.S. mail, or phone) for three of the sampled alumni. There were four alumni who had outdated work and/or home phone numbers. None of the alumni or potential alumni that we contacted opted out of participating in the interview. Those who did not participate either did not return phone messages left by survey interviewers or had outdated contact information.

Based on the number of complete interviews, we had a response rate of 50 percent of those invited to participate (or 19% of all those in the eligible cohorts). The responses appear to adequately represent the range of opinions and experiences of the full group.

Please refer to the Appendix for tables describing the distribution of respondents by cohort/reservation, training year and indicators of how much of the training they completed.

Survey results

Characteristics of responding alumni

The 24 participants in the key informant interviews ranged in age from 25 to 70 years of age. Over half of the participants were female (14) and 11 of the participants were male (see Appendix). Based on data and background information provided by the Blandin Leadership Team, it appears that participants hold a variety of jobs and play a number of different roles in their communities. The range of careers included: police officer, educators, case managers, public health workers and administrative assistant. Participants reported being involved in a number of activities in their communities. Most often mentioned were: tribal council work, pow-wow committee, and volunteer work such as meals on wheels, coaching athletic teams, political activism, and involvement in youth groups and youth support.

Of the alumni interviewed, eight of the respondents attended all three pieces of the BRCLP (the five-day retreat at Ruttgers, Workshop I and Workshop II). Three respondents had been selected as participants in the program but declined participation before the five-day retreat actually began. One participant had not returned for Workshop I, nine did not return for either Workshop I or Workshop II, three had completed the five-day retreat and Workshop I but not Workshop II, and one had attended the five-day retreat and Workshop II but did not attend Workshop I (see Appendix for table).

Overall thoughts, experience and satisfaction with BRCLP training

It is clear that the BRCLP has an excellent reputation among the reservation communities. There is strong evidence from the key informant interviews that alumni are satisfied overall with their participation in the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program. Many participants first heard about the BRCLP via word of mouth from other alumni in their communities or because they were nominated for participation in BRCLP by a community member. Alumni described BRCLP as an important learning opportunity, a chance to develop new leadership skills, build stronger communities and provide Reservation communities with services in areas where they might be lacking.

The following quotes are statements from alumni, which describe both satisfaction with the training program as well as some of the reasons that individuals chose to participate in BRCLP.

...it was learning an effective way to better serve your community...the program was very informative.

Improving my community building and leadership skills.

It was an opportunity to learn more about using effective ways to work with your communities. Bringing back new tools and ideas to use.

Regardless of whether participants in the interviews completed the entire program (five-day training and workshops I and II) or only parts of it, all of the respondents reported that their experience was a positive one. No one reported not returning for Workshop I or II because they were dissatisfied with the training. Comments included strong appreciation for the opportunities to network with other community leaders and meet new people, being provided with good food and accommodations, and gaining useful tools to become better leaders.

The following are a few selected verbatim responses from respondents describing their overall experience with BRCLP:

I think it was one of the best experiences of my life. There were a lot of different aspects about it. I think that all of them were beneficial and helpful for me.

Overall it was a beneficial, a dynamic group experience.

It was wonderful. I got a lot out of it. I learned a lot about myself.

Reasons people are able to attend

Before discussing the barriers that prevented some alumni from completing the program, it is important to look at the things that made it possible for some alumni to attend. Gaining insight into these reasons might help us to create new ways to support those who were unable to complete the entire training program. It will be interesting to note if some of these reasons that people were able to attend are simultaneously reasons that others were unable to attend.

The following are the circumstances that respondents reported made it possible for them to attend BRCLP.

Support systems

It is clear from the alumni that we spoke with that having a support system in place is necessary in order to successfully attend the BRCLP. A wide range of support was mentioned, including:

- Support from employers and coworkers
- Support from spouses and family members
- Support from the tribal council and the community

Nearly all respondents who attended the five-day retreat and one or both of the workshops reported that what enabled them to do so was that they had an employer who understood the BRCLP and supported them in their participation. This enabled the alumni to miss work for a week without having to take a leave of absence or worry about work load and other work related issues. Alumni said it was helpful to know that they had coworkers to fill in for them while they were out of the office and supervisors who understood what they stood to gain from participating in the program. Additionally, this support from employers was framed around the fact that respondents were able to take the time off from work without losing pay.

Many respondents made statements similar to the ones below:

My employer was supportive of me coming. We had enough employees to cover things, while I was gone.

My work [made it possible for me to attend]. They really understood what the program was and how it could be helpful to our community.

Support from spouses and families was also an essential component of the support system that enabled participation in BRCLP. Respondents reported that having a spouse who understood what they were doing and why was crucial to their ability to be away from home for the training. Others described the need for having someone to take care of their children for the week, and that without it they would not have been able to participate.

Support from the community and support from the tribal council were mentioned as vital components to increasing a person's ability to attend BRCLP. Alumni expressed the importance of having the council's backing and approval before becoming a Blandin leader, explaining that it was another important piece that made it possible for them to attend.

Several of the alumni expressed the following:

I had support from the tribal council. At work, the tribal council was receptive to have us attend the training. It is very positive [for the] tribal council to pass a resolution to allow employees to be a part of something like this.

Support from the community that I came from. They were supportive of me coming.

Commitment

Many respondents explained that the commitment and dedication they felt for both the BRCLP and for improving their Reservations and communities was a factor in why they were able to attend all or most of the BRCLP. Additionally, several respondents mentioned that they were also aware of how the training could help their own interests, and for that reason they had a greater commitment to the program. Others explained that the recognition and responsibility conferred by being trained as a leader through BRCLP was an important piece of their commitment to attend the training.

The following are verbatim quotes from alumni who spoke about commitment.

The recognition it [BRCLP] brings. It was printed in our local paper that we attended and learned to become leaders. You get recognition for that and people begin to call on you as a leader, and that is a responsibility.

[I attended] for myself, my own interests and commitment to it.

When I signed up, and after the first week, because of what I had gained from that first week, I was committed to go to the workshops, even if they had run out of scholarship money.

Financial support

Financial or monetary support was mentioned as a very important reason for being able to attend the BRCLP. Many respondents explained that they would not have been able to attend the trainings if they were not able to have paid time off. For some, this paid time off came directly from an employer, while for others it came in the form of a scholarship provided from the Blandin Foundation. In addition to paid time off of work, some respondents mentioned that having their travel expenses covered as well as food and lodging enabled them to participate in BRCLP. Also mentioned, but by fewer alumni, was the need to have childcare expenses covered for the week of the five-day retreat at Ruttgers.

A few of the alumni described financial support in this way:

My employer gave me paid time off and travel expenses for there and back; without, it would not have been possible for me to participate.

The scholarship they made available [made it possible for me to attend] and the mileage [reimbursement]. My employer supported the idea of me attending, but would not support it financially. So I needed that scholarship and mileage in place of the paycheck, in order to be able to attend.

The scholarship and the mileage [reimbursement] again made it more possible for me to go and follow through on the commitment.

Perceptions of barriers to attendance

The alumni were asked to share their ideas as to why they think their peers may have dropped out of BRCLP before the five-day retreat, or decided not to return for Workshops I or II after completion of the five-day retreat. The perceived barriers to attendance most often mentioned included work and time constraints, lack of understanding about the commitment, and family and personal responsibilities.

Work constraints

Nearly all of the respondents speculated that work and job responsibilities might prohibit some of their peers from attending BRCLP. Respondents mentioned the possibility of deadlines at work, of offices being understaffed and of employers not being supportive of their employee taking the time off from work as things that might act as a barrier for some.

Time constraints

The first piece of the BRCLP is the five-day retreat where participants are asked to leave their homes and travel to Ruttgers for the weeklong training. Some respondents suggested that the length of time of the initial retreat might be too long for some people. One respondent explained that:

Honestly, the five days scares people...Reservation people don't like to go away from home that long.

Lack of commitment

There is a slight perception that those who do not complete all the pieces of the BRCLP training may lack the commitment to do so. While this was mentioned by a number of the respondents, it was not discussed in a negative way. Simply put, most respondents felt that perhaps there was not enough discussion up front during recruitment about the extent of the commitment that is involved in going through the training. One respondent pointed out that the reason she knew what she was committing to was because she had close peers who had previously gone through the training. Others made comments such as these:

I think that if they want to attend they will. If they don't want to attend, you can't force them to. You leave it open to them, and encourage them to, but if they didn't know right away what they were getting in to, they won't come.

You don't really get in recruitment materials, what they are asking of you, you don't really know what is expected of you, what your role is in all of this.

Family and personal responsibilities

Nearly all respondents stated that personal and family responsibilities may in many cases take precedence over the training. They acknowledge that deaths in the family, sick children and other responsibilities are all instances that might act as barriers to attendance and keep an individual from completing the BRCLP.

Location

While not mentioned as frequently as other barriers to attendance, location was mentioned by over a quarter of respondents. Alumni speculated that perhaps a barrier to attending the workshops was the distance and travel time to get there. Several explained that it might be a long ways to drive for such a short period of time.

Actual reported barriers to attendance

While there are a range of individual circumstances that acted as barriers for particular alumni to attend one or all of the training sessions, such as family emergencies, community crisis, and funerals, there are also barriers that were more common and have salience as the Blandin Leadership Team works to make improvements to the BRCLP.

During the background interviews conducted to help develop survey questions and methods, a list was created and tested of possible reasons why individuals might not be able to attend all or some of the training. Respondents who did not attend one or both workshops were read this list of reasons and asked to indicate the reasons that were most relevant for their situation. Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that a given reason was relevant for their situation. Half of respondents reported that they were unable to attend because it was difficult to take time away from their job. Slightly less than half (39%) said that a barrier that kept them from attending was related to a personal or work emergency. Half also reported not attending because the BRCLP training did not seem to be as urgent as other priorities in their life. Nearly 30 percent reported that they did not feel prepared for workshops I and/or II and therefore chose not to attend.

1. Reasons why alumni are unable to attend Workshop I and/or Workshop II

Barriers to attendance N=18-24	Number of alumni	Percent of total*
It was difficult to take time away from my job	9	50%
The BRCLP Training was not as urgent as other priorities in my life	9	50%
I had personal or work emergencies	7	39%
I did not feel prepared for Workshops I and II	5	28%
It was difficult to take time away from family	4	22%
There was a crisis in my community that prevented me from leaving	3	17%
My family/peers/boss did not see the training as a valuable experience for me	2	11 %
After completing the 5-Day Retreat at Ruttger's, it did not seem valuable for me to continue with the workshops	2	11%
I did not have the opportunity to use the training from the 5-Day Retreat at Ruttger's before Workshops I and II	2	11%
I did not feel that I had the support of my tribe/community	1	6%
The travel time and distance to get to the training was too much	1	6%
People in my community see the training as investment in me and not my community	1	4%
I had difficulty finding child care	1	4%

* Percentages do not add up to 100 because respondents were able to choose more than one response.

When looking specifically at the three respondents who were selected for participation in the BRCLP but dropped out before the five-day training, the reason most often cited as their main barrier was that it was difficult to take time away from their jobs. Two of the three reported personal or work emergencies and two of the three also reported that there was a crisis in their community that prohibited them from leaving. Consequently, all three reported that the BRCLP training did not seem to be as urgent as other priorities in their lives.

2. Reasons why alumni are unable to attend the five-day retreat

Barriers to attendance N=3	Number of alumni
It was difficult to take time away from my job	3
The BRCLP Training did not seem to be as urgent as other priorities in my life	3
I had personal or work emergencies	2
There was a crisis in my community that prohibited me from leaving	2
It was difficult to take time away from family	1
I did not feel that I had the support of my tribe/community	1
My family/peers/bosses did not see the training as a valuable experience for me	1

The role of communication in return rates

Communication among recruitees and the Blandin Leadership Team and among alumni with one another, may play an important role in understanding how engaged the participants become in the training and workshops. We assessed the role of communication in retention rates with a series of questions that asked respondents about their satisfaction with the communication they have had with the Blandin Leadership Team and their extent of communication with other alumni in their cohorts.

Communication with the Blandin Leadership Team

Overall, alumni are very satisfied with the communication they have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process. The majority reported having phone communication, email and mail communication with the Blandin Leadership Team. Well over half of respondents reported that email was their preferred method of communication, closely followed by phone calls.

Several respondents also mentioned how much they appreciated the face-to-face communication. For some, this was valuable during the recruitment phase, as they learned more about the BRCLP. For others, they mentioned its significance with respect to their employers, explaining that they were impressed that someone from the Leadership Team took the time to speak with their employer face-to-face about the program. Others mentioned the communication that the Leadership Team had with their spouses as very important. In particular, two respondents appreciated the communication via letter between the BRCLP staff and their spouses.

The following are a few selected verbatim comments about communication with the Blandin Leadership Team:

I think the communication is very good; the letters, the phone, the emails. And they [The Blandin Leadership Team] are very accessible, it's very open.

They [The Blandin Leadership Team] are doing an excellent job. They are cordial and open and encourage you to call....I have been able to be in touch with them with any questions.

...they [The Blandin Leadership Team] would always give us a heads up when things were being scheduled.

I thought it was good that they email, called, etc. They try to make all attempts to let me know about what was going on...They always made sure that they got a hold of me somehow. Just the right amount of contact was made.

Rick Smith did a lot of it [recruitment] and he did an excellent job. The communication was great. They were very accessible, they listened, and it was very comfortable. Just enough communication was made.

I got emails that kept me up to date. They were persistent enough to keep me pushing forward to attend those workshops.

Communication with other alumni

In order to better understand if the amount of communication with other alumni might play a role in retention rates, a series of questions were asked about the degree to which respondents are in regular communication with alumni from their cohort. Those participating in the pilot interviews were asked if they were in communication with any alumni (either from their own or other cohorts) on a regular basis. Nearly all respondents (89%) reported that they are in communication regularly with other alumni.

To better understand the nature and effect of this contact, in the second phase of the interviews, respondents were asked two separate questions: "Are you in communication with any BRCLP alumni from your cohort on a regular basis?" and "Are they from your Reservation, or from another Reservation in your cohort?" Similar to those who participated in the pilot phase, almost all (93%) of the respondents reported that they are in communication with other alumni. Over half (54%) of the respondents reported that the alumni they are in communication with are only from their own Reservation and 31 percent said "both" (Tables 3-5).

3. Pilot: Are you in communication with any alumni (either from your cohort or other cohorts) on a regular basis?

N=9	Number of alumni	Percent of total
Yes	8	89%
No	1	11%

4. Phase Two: Are you in communication with any alumni from your cohort on a regular basis?

N=14	Number of alumni	Percent of total
Yes	13	93%
No	1	7%

5. Phase Two: Are they from your Reservation or from another Reservation in your cohort?

N=13	Number of alumni	Percent of total
My Reservation	7	54%
Both	4	31%
Other Reservation in cohort	2	15%

Alumni were also asked if they were aware if the alumni they had been in contact with had returned for Workshops I, II or both. In the Pilot, three alumni (25%) reported that the alumni they were in contact with had returned to one or both of the workshops.

In the second phase of interviews, 25 percent of respondents said that these alumni returned, 17 percent reported that the alumni that they are in communication did not return and 58 percent said that some returned and others did not (Tables 6-7).

6. Pilot: Do you know if those alumni have returned for Workshops I and/or II?

N=9	Number of alumni	Percent of total
Yes	8	100%
Missing	1	-

7. Phase Two: Do you know if those alumni that you've been in contact with have returned for Workshops I and/or II?

N=12	Number of alumni	Percent of total
Some returned	7	58%
No, they did not return	2	17%
Yes, they returned	3	25%

Communication as a barrier to attendance

Overall, inadequate communication was not perceived to be a barrier to attendance by those interviewed. Only a small percentage of respondents (22%) report that the return rates could be increased by more or different kinds of communication. Additionally, as described in the section discussing overall satisfaction with communication, it should be pointed out that even those who did not return for one or both of the workshops reported that they felt communication between alumni and the Blandin Leadership Team was “just right.”

The following are several verbatim quotes from alumni regarding communication as a barrier to attendance:

- I don't think communication is the issue. I think that it is more of scheduling conflicts.
- There is plenty of communication. This shouldn't be a reason for people not coming.
- It's not a complete barrier. It really all depends on how busy people are in their community and if they are able to make arrangements to attend these types of trainings and workshops.

Engagement in other Blandin Foundation activities

Engagement in other Blandin Foundation or other Blandin Leadership activities was assessed. The responses to this series of questions provide us with some insight into whether or not engagement with the Blandin Foundation on a broader level has any connection to the retention rates for the BRCLP.

We found that only a small proportion (13%) of respondents reported participating in other Blandin Foundation or Blandin Leadership events outside of the BRCLP. Of these three respondents, one completed all three parts of the BRCLP training, one completed the five-day retreat and Workshop I and the third completed only the five-day retreat.

The events respondents were involved in ranged from a workshop about community issues, workshops about community involvement and decision-making and American Indian youth programs. The respondents had a variety of reasons for choosing to attend the event(s). All reasons were directly related to the content of the workshop or event and what they hoped to gain from attending it.

Given the small numbers, it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the relationship between engagement with other foundation activities and retention in the BRCLP.

Conclusions and issues to consider

Ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP

The Blandin Leadership Team seeks to better understand the causes for lower retention rates among the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program alumni. The key informant interviews suggest that responsibilities at work, other priorities that take precedence over BRCLP and family and other personal responsibilities are main causes or reasons why some alumni are unable to complete the entire series of training.

The following recommendations may be useful as the Blandin Leadership Team thinks about ways to improve both the overall experience of the BRCLP as well as the retention rates.

- Modify the recruitment process to include questions and conversations that help assess whether or not an individual is truly committed to attending BRCLP. This might include ensuring that potential participants clearly understand what will be expected of them and how it affects not only their own personal growth but also the betterment of their community and reservation.
- Be more informative during the recruitment process and the five-day retreat about what happens in workshops I and II and how vital it is to their training as a community leader so that participants understand what they will miss if they choose not to attend.
- Ask alumni in each reservation to mentor incoming leaders *before* the five-day retreat even begins. This will connect new leaders quickly, engaging them in the training process before it actually begins while also allowing them to gain knowledge from an elder or peer that has been through the experience.
- Encourage or host community gatherings that bring alumni together. They can then communicate among themselves about whom they see as the next generation coming along as leaders. These alumni might even begin to include these potential leaders in the gatherings, providing them with insight about the BRCLP and what it means to be a leader in their community. The sense of responsibility fostered among the participants in this gathering might also foster a sense of commitment to the training program.

- Make a concerted effort to teach the history of the Blandin Foundation to alumni early on (during recruitment or the five-day retreat) so that people know the history and good work that the foundation has been doing in Minnesota communities and particularly in Native American communities.
- Provide greater support and communication in the three months between the five-day retreat and workshop I to keep participants engaged. This might also include encouraging and providing alumni with the means to remain in close contact with one another after the five-day retreat so that they remain engaged.
- Make use of social networking sites such as Facebook to keep alumni engaged and connected with one another. Also, use social networking sites and/or newsletters to disseminate reminders to alumni on the importance of reaching out to their peers and networking. For example, along with the stories in the newsletter, include something about different people who have stayed in touch and how they have stayed in touch and have been able to help one another as a result of their connection.
- Alternate the location of the workshops or conduct them on the reservation to improve access and decrease driving time and time away from home.
- Consider breaking up the five-day retreat into two three-day retreats over several months. This might give alumni more time in between to digest information and to work on the project.
- Consider holding the workshops on the weekend so that participants do not have to miss work to attend.
- Make a concerted effort to re-engage those who may have missed workshop I to bring them up to speed in preparation for workshop II.
- Express to participants that even if they didn't complete the goals they set up during the five-day retreat that they should still attend workshop I where they can receive support, discuss the barriers to completing their goal, and share ideas, frustrations, network, etc.

Appendix

Tables of characteristics of responding alumni

Open ends

Interview instrument

Tables of characteristics of responding alumni

A1. Distribution of respondents by cohort

Cohort	Number of completed interviews	Percent of total
Bois Forte	7	29%
Fond du Lac	5	21%
White Earth	5	21%
Upper Sioux	3	12%
Lower Sioux	2	8%
Prairie Island	1	4%
Grand Portage	1	4%
Total	24	100%

A2. Distribution of respondents by year of training participation

Year	Number of completed interviews	Percent
2006	4	17%
2007	4	17%
2008	9	37%
2009	7	29%
Total	24	100%

A3. Distribution of respondents by amount of training completed

Training completed N=24	Number of completed interviews	Percent
Five-day retreat only	9	37.5%
All (five-day retreat, Wkshp I, Wkshp II)	8	33%
Five-day retreat and Wkshp I	3	13%
Dropped before five-day retreat	3	13%
Five-day retreat and Wkshp II	1	4%
Total	24	100%

Gender

A4. Gender of respondents by year participating in BCLP/BRCLP Training

Year	Number of male respondents	Male	Number of female respondents	Female
2006	1	4%	3	13%
2007	3	13%	1	4%
2008	4	17%	5	21%
2009	2	8%	5	21%

Open ends

A5. When you first heard about the BRCLP, what was it about the program that made you want to participate?

When you first heard about the BRCLP, what was it about the program that made you want to participate?

I guess learning how to be a better leader in my community.

I think that just having the opportunity to do something to help your community was something that I wanted to know more about and participate in. I gained new skills on ways that we can make the community a better place.

I thought why should I go? The recruiter came to the community and asked if I could go. When I was picked, I thought to myself, why should I go? I felt sorry for him, because when he was here, there were not a lot of leaders around. I went to the meeting and talked with the recruiter and we really had a connection. I then filled out the application, thinking that I was not going to get picked, but then I was picked. I didn't want to initially go because I thought that I had enough leadership training. I ended up really liking the program.

Well, my son participated in it and when they asked me to participate. I thought that we can obtain some funding for a project that I wanted to see happen.

When I first heard about it, Karen Diver asked me if I was interested. When the attendance was declined the first time and I didn't participate. I felt like I had missed out on something good. I didn't know anything about it; I just knew a couple people from our community had participated and I felt that it could be a valuable training

At the time I was unemployed and was looking for job opportunities. An understanding of and advancement of my own leadership qualities was what I was hoping to gain from the program.

It was an opportunity to be with other leaders in the area, and to meet up with them, rather than just by chance. I didn't even realize that I was nominated. When I was nominated, I was thrilled for the opportunity.

Maybe because that it was leadership based and I have heard positive comments about it. Leadership skills, communication in particular or should I say people skills. I didn't really know what to expect and these are the areas that I am weekend.

I'm in a director position, a staff asked for time off for the workshop. I was impressed with the training provided by an agency to develop the knowledge and skills for us to be leaders in the community.

I have seen the excitement from other people that attended.

I felt honored to be recruited. I was hoping to advance my leadership skills. In short...to improve my leadership skills and I really felt like the program was very culturally relevant.

Just learning more on how to be a leader and to develop my leadership skills. I work at a recreation center and I want to better my skills for the children. Learning more of how to be a leader was what I hoped to gain from the training.

I just wanted to see what it had to offer and what the program was. I heard from past alumni that it was a good training. I thought I would go check it out and I did. It was a pretty good experience I thought. To see what kind of leadership programs they have up there. I was being open-minded to see what they had. I guess it was something to do.

A5. When you first heard about the BRCLP, what was it about the program that made you want to participate? (continued)

When you first heard about the BRCLP, what was it about the program that made you want to participate?

My husband went the year before, so he put my name in. It is always good to learn new stuff. I didn't realize a lot of stuff that you do everyday really is leadership opportunities, sometimes you just don't realize that you're doing it.

It was just the opportunity to enhance skills. I hoped to gain a better understanding of the skill sets needed to become a better leader.

I guess it was my cousin. She was a big part of Blandin. What really appealed to me was developing your people skills. This was an area in my life that I had to work on. I would have to say that they do a pretty decent job of sharing with others and communicating with others.

I suppose it was the learning an effective way to better serve your community. I was hoping to become more aware of the effective ways to serve the community. The program was very informative. You learn a lot!

It was just an opportunity to learn more about using effective ways to work with communities. Bringing back new tools and ideas to sue within our opportunity. A learning opportunity. I knew whatever I would experience there would be a beneficial or helpful in gaining knowledge. I never thought about what I would gain from it. I knew it would be positive experience to meet other people from other communities.

I think it was mainly the recommendation by the person that nominated you. I didn't participate the first time I applied, because I was unable to go. I was selected as an alternate, but there wasn't enough time for me to participate. The second time, I did end up going. The person who nominated me said really positive things about the program. I met with Rick Smith and he answered a lot of my questions. After talking with these people I felt like it would be a really great opportunity for me. I think the main thing that I wanted to be more connected with my community and I thought that this would provide me with some ways to do that.

The positive feedback that I have received from other people in my community that have already attended the program. Community building and leadership skills. Just a lot of things that I have already been doing, I guess. Improving my skills.

I looked at the overall information, when one of the representatives came. I wanted the tools that Blandin had to offer. Being a small reservation, I wanted to better myself to be able to be a better leader in the community. When I got handed the pamphlet with the things they were wanting to train people in, I was really interested in what they had to offer. I am interested in continuing to go to Blandin Leadership events as long as they continue offering them.

Because it was for leadership. My co-workers have attended and have said positive things about it. (hoped gain) To better myself in my employment and better myself in leadership and advocacy for my tribe. I am already a leader. I wanted to improve my skills and be a better leader for my work and for my community.

A6. How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

It was good. I learned a lot.

Well the first few days, it didn't really seem like it was interactive. The last day, I felt was the most beneficial. I felt like I got more out of the last day, than anything. The other days were more like just a classroom type setting and there was not much activity. During the last day we were moving around and doing more things. I just thought that the last day was more interesting.

It was awesome, other than the fact that I became very sick. The recruiter was really awesome. He was very supportive. He was very caring and I don't think I could have made it through the week without Rick our recruiter. If he had not been a Native guy, I feel like I wouldn't have gone to him for help. It made me feel really comfortable. I made a lot of good social capital. I thought it is amazing on how you can build social capital, besides in your local area. I don't think I would have thought about doing that. Things like framing and social capital. Now, I feel like I can go back to the model that we learned and use it when I need to. It is a good support system for future endeavors.

It was fun. I enjoyed the people that were there. The intensive training was exciting. Meyers Briggs personal assessment was also something I enjoyed. Looking at the 8 different aspects of healthy community was another helpful activity that we looked at. It really opened my eyes. I realize that there are a lot more issues within a community than I thought there would be.

I really enjoyed it. The fact that we were able to set up a circular area and the people that led the workshops were familiar with a lot of us in the group. We mixed Fond du Lac with Bois Fort, so we had an opportunity to work with different people and bonded our teams together. This kind of mixture seems to work well for me.

Excellent. The instructor, the staff made you feel welcome. The place where it happened. The material we went through. Even though you were a leader in the community. I was amazed at the things they were teaching, the skills for listening for understanding, listening skills and speaking skills. Those were things that were new and amazing. In my naïveté, I didn't realize there was a retreat for Indian people teaching those things. I knew they taught those things in college, but as far as on the community, I am grateful to them for doing this for Indian country. It inspires. And then with the retreat, with the meals and all of that, I think it was an awesome retreat. I achieved over half the things I wanted. I encounter people who want to help the people. I wanted to be able to help with the mentorship programs for fatherless boys and those kinds of things. When you approach schools to use people who have been in prison or otherwise have turned their lives around, I run into problems for them to be mentors, because they can't pass background checks and things like that.

It was very good. Excellent being the next step up. I like the hands on activities we didn't just sit there the whole time. The whole day was filled with activities. The thing that I didn't like was the opening traditional ceremony they had...smudging and other things. Not all natives are traditional. There are some natives that believe in Christianity and other things. Besides the smoke made me choke my head off. I respect their beliefs, but I don't think it should be a part of the program, it should be separate. Maybe the ceremony can be done at separate space or done before the training starts.

It was extremely positive. The overall curriculum and the amount of growth you experience from the overall short time that you were there. Also the people that you meet there was a big part of it. It made it more fun and exciting.

I think that it was one of the best experiences of my life. There was a lot of different aspect about it. I think that all of them were beneficial and helpful for me.

A6. How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]? (continued)

How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

Overall, it was positive, beneficial, dynamic group experience. It was just a good opportunity to meet other reservations and share the experiences and ideas with other communities that participated.

It was wonderful. I got a lot out of it. I learned a lot about myself. Getting feedback from your fellow people out there. You don't really stop and take a look at yourself. You learn new ways on how to do things like this. The amenities were wonderful. The food was great. Besides gaining insights and things like that, you'd probably gain a few pounds too. They take good care of you.

I attended for 2 or 3 days and then I had to go. It was good I guess. They were really working with people coming out of their shells. They really work at really getting you to open up, I guess. Overall it was a good experience.

Excellent. I really like the location and facility and the instructors were great. The food was really good. The remoteness of the facility made it very enticing on what they were offering us for leadership training.

It was awesome. The food was great. I had a condo all to myself. It was pretty cool. It was good to see all the stuff that you are already doing. It was cool to see how everybody was in group. The one thing that I didn't like about it is talking in front of the whole group. It was really fun otherwise.

I thought it was great. I got to meet a lot of new interesting people that I don't think that I would ever meet. I thought it was good to get the different tribes together and talk about their unique stories. I thought it was a great experience just to get us all together.

It was interesting and educational. It was fun to go meet new people and learn new things. I thought the people who ran it did a pretty good job of getting their point across. They also kept it light hearted and fun so it wasn't real boring or anything.

Very good. The one that I went to was the Native American group. People were actually talking in their own language in the workgroups. You have never seen that before, not in a training session.

Very positive. I had some concerns in regards to, during the session, there were those of us who were not as active in the participation. When there were questions from those who were assertive, the accessibility to trainers was more. For those, thinkers than outspoken, when we did have questions, the time given was minimal. Overall it was a positive experience.

It was outstanding. I loved the interactions with other community leaders. I thought the curriculum was excellent. What was really relevant was interacting with other community leaders.

A6. How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]? (continued)

How would you describe your overall experience [with the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

For me, I came into this program a really shy, quiet person. I began just by observing the workshop and all the points they presented. It built my confidence in myself. Roxanne and someone else saw that. They said I came out of my shell. At first I was kind of intimidated by other people, because I didn't feel I was up to that level. I liked best the part about finding your stakeholders and your social capitalism. It was good to know what the source came from. (explain) I liked the teamwork we did. I was known as the introvert. They mixed introverts and extroverts for us to see how we see community topics and analyze it. I wanted to be more sociable as a community leader and hold my head up as a community leader, bettering myself. (what changed about you through the experience) I feel I am more confident in myself than before. When I am out in the community, I get to the point in saying what needs to be said, instead of beating around the bush, like I used to. (else) I guess I could say I understood a lot of it. It was very resourceful. I really liked all the speakers they had. And the whole group, how we got along, and how they introduced us as a group to each other, doing step by step exercises. (any one thing that made for the change in you) there wasn't really one thing, but all the things they had us doing. At first it was comfortable in being with my own group from my reservation. Then they had us working with people from all over.

I liked it. It was very positive. I enjoyed it. (in particular) I suppose it taught me a lot of different things and different aspects of leadership skills. It opened, broadened my horizon as far as what I thought a leader is. It opened up aspects of what a leader is. (what aspects) To be more of an open ended person. There are many ways of looking at an issue. Listen to learn and learn to listen. Blandin taught me how to look at every issue that could arise, and to look at every issue in many different ways. You even use the negativity as part of your plan. You don't just throw the negative part away. You are going to need those thoughts and those people down the road. (negativity meaning) When you have an issue, a lot of people don't see it your way and won't support it. They are being negative about it. Blandin taught me to use that negativity in a positive way. I used to think you should just forget about them because they are not going to be for your idea or help you. (why important) You don't want to push them away, because down the road, you are going to need them for some other issue for something. (how to work with them when against your idea) Normally I would not want anything to do with them. They taught me to listen to learn, putting myself into their shoes to understand why they think they way they do. They taught me to understand and to use the negativity to help you better understand the issue.

A7. What barriers prevented you from attending [the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

What barriers prevented you from attending [the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

My job duties. At that time, I was the only person writing grants. My job title is a "grant administrator." Grant deadlines prevented me from attending. That would not be the case now though, because now we have a whole planning department, if it were available again.

A8. What were some things that made it possible for you to attend and to stay for the whole time [of the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

What were some things that made it possible for you to attend and to stay for the whole time [of the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

My boss allowed me to go.

My job was really supportive of it and my tribe was also supportive. The Blandin Foundation had provided childcare and they also paid my salary for the week.

My spouse supported me. It was important that he understood that I was going to be gone for so long. He understood the importance and the purpose that I was going to be gone for so long. My boss was very supportive because she knew how good Blandin Leadership Programs have been in the past. In fact, she sent different staff from another program to attend, because she runs two different programs.

Just my employer allowing me to go, was the main reason I went. To get paid for the hours I was up there. My boss was very lenient about it.

Our reservation council approved it. They put their stamp of approval on it. When I was recruited, I was unemployed, during the time. Then I became employed. Those who were attending the retreat got the week off to attend, but I had to be approved by the reservation council first.

I was unemployed at the time, which made it a lot easier. And my wife had passed away recently. It helped me in that regard to get out of the home and be able to think about some other things, focus on some other things, even though I was still grieving every day. So I was able to get away to spend that time. And then the people were good and they provided food and things. Things can't happen right away. But seeds are planted and can begin to sprout and to flower. I think that is what it did for me. And then the recognition that it brings. It was printed in our local paper that we attended and learned to become leaders. You get recognition for that and people begin to call on you as a leader. And the responsibility. Overall, it is really positive.

My employer gave me paid time off and travel expenses for there and back. I was nominated to go from someone from a different reservation.

Well, from help from my family. I'm a single parent, so I needed to find someone to watch my kids for the week. My father and his wife helped me out. I was not working at the time.

One of the things was Jackson, the trainer, called my employer to explain the program. My employer wanted to know more about it before approving the leave time for it. Well, I think part of it is that the lodging and food was taken care of so that was really helpful.

Just the support from the community that I came from. They were supportive of me coming. My employer was also supportive. We had enough employees to cover things while I was gone.

It was more so with work. They really understood what the program was and how it could be helpful to our community. What they liked about it was that we came back with a different perspective on things.

One was the ability for my work to allow me to be gone for a week without taking leave. It was used as a work related activity. The other one was the support of my husband, he took care of the kids and the house while I was gone.

Because I have a great crew that works for me that could fill in while I was gone. I have grandchildren and they didn't like me being gone, but I called them everyday. The grandchildren took care of my husband when I was gone.

The thing that made it possible for me is that they let me get time off (the tribe I was working for) to do it and attend the courses and stuff.

A8. What were some things that made it possible for you to attend and to stay for the whole time [of the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]? (continued)

What were some things that made it possible for you to attend and to stay for the whole time [of the 5 day retreat at Ruttgers]?

The guy who runs the programs, came and talked to my employer at the time and got an ok for me to go. Yeah, my wife was pretty open with it too.

I had considered going to the session a couple of times before. The Five-Day deterred me from going for a long time, I am a single parent. My kids were older, that made it okay to attend.

The main things were that I had transportation, I had child care and I had got it cleared from work. This was just my particular situation. I was married at the time and my husband took care of the kids while I was gone for the week. There are the big things that really helped me attend this Five-Day Retreat.

There were not really barriers, except for the distance. I had support from the tribal council. At work, the tribal council was receptive to have us attend the training. That it is very positive that tribal council to pass resolution to allow employees to be apart of something like this. Support from the employer. Support from tribal leaders. Support from family. For myself, my own interests and commitment to it.

I lived 2.5 hours away, and it was very convenient that we could stay there. Our tribal council approved us to go with leave, and just go and take it as a training. I believe they are still approving for other people to go to the Blandin Reservation Leadership Program

The scholarship they made available, and the mileage. My employer supported the idea of me attending, but would not support it financially. So I needed that scholarship and mileage in place of the paycheck, in order to be able to attend.

A9. What barriers prevented you from attending the entire week?

What barriers prevented you from attending the entire week?

Well, we had 2 or 3 community members that had passed, so I came back for the funerals. I have gotten elected for the vice-chair position for the Reservation so I had to spend time with that.

A10. What were some things that made it possible for you to attend [Workshop I]?

What were some things that made it possible for you to attend [Workshop I]?

It wasn't as long as the first one. It was reasonable driving distance and wasn't too far. One of my other cohorts members went and we actually rode together.

That was the same thing. My boss allowed me to go. They know about the value of the training of the Blandin Leadership Team. I made some friends up there and I am really excited to get back up there and see what they have been up to.

I had some personal business to take care of, but I was still able to make it. I had intended to be there, but I had a son that needed me half the day. After that was done, it was only an hour and a half away, so I was able to make it for part of the day.

The same reason that I was able to attend the first one. It was a great follow-up to the first one and once again, I had the support of my community and my employer.

The work. My employer allowed us to have that time off to learn something new. I think that this is one of the most helpful things, then letting us take the time off to do these things. Also with family. They were really understanding and wanted me to grow. They also sent my husband a letter thanking him for giving me the time to go. They also sent a letter to our employer thanking them as well.

If I didn't have good people here at work to cover for me, then I probably couldn't do it.

It was shorter, only two days I had to take off.

That was in the spring or late winter, a 3-day one. Once you are engaged, you want to follow through the whole thing. With that psychological evaluation, my personality is to have visions and start things up, then fade out and needing other people to finish it. With this thing, though, you want to be there to the end. That person that brought out those things that came out about yourself is helpful even today. (how helpful today) It lets me recognize I am really energized at the beginning, but later, if it is the long haul, it is not there. But do you have the right people to get the job done. I need to bring in detail-oriented people that you need to be able to complete the job. Also, there is something that if you get some contrasting personalities, it can make it hard to get things done, so you need to get the right rhythm of people, the right feel of people, the right chemistry, the right verbiage. You need the right combination of people. There can be people who are only good for a time, but they end up stifling it, hindering progress. When they brought in the camera to video record us when we were presented with some problems, how we reacted as a group, to see how different people reacted to it. I realized it takes me awhile to get rolling when the camera and audio recording were on, but once I got loosened up, we started to go where I had envisioned it to go. I could get the group to see my way of seeing it and move in that direction. Once I heard all sides, and they spoke in length, then I could get my ideas across and convince others to see how I was seeing it and move in that way. It worked out good.

A11. What barriers prevented you from doing this [attending Workshop I]?

What barriers prevented you from doing this [attending Workshop I]?

I was just too busy; I had a lot of things going on with my life and my job.

It was something personal. I could not recollect on what it was...it may have been a death in the family or something. I don't remember, but it came up right before I was about to leave.

I would say that it would be my job. As vice-chair, I take care of education and other things. I really oversee a lot of things so it keeps me busy. Instead of digging myself in a deeper hole, I figured I would stay here and get my work done.

Being probationary period for my new job with the state, so I couldn't get time off. If I took time off, it would have been leave without pay. If it was during the weekend, I probably would have made it but it was all during the weekdays so I couldn't attend.

There was a conflict with work. One of my co-workers was also going, so if I went too, we would have been pretty short staffed. The other thing was that I just returned from a vacation and was out already so I didn't want to be gone from work any longer. I didn't want to leave my wife and daughter again for a few days. At the time, my daughter was only 3 years-old and needed care.

It was a work commitment.

My work. I am a grant writer, so I didn't attend the next session, because I had multiple grant deadlines that needed to be done. If we had another grant writer, I would have attended.

I was not able to go to that one, because my mother was sick, in her last stages of cancer. I felt that was more important. Blandin did send a packet of information about what went on there.

A12. Is there anything else besides the things that you mentioned in 5b (A7) that made it possible for you attend Workshop II?

Is there anything else besides the things that you mentioned in 5b (A7) that made it possible for you attend Workshop II?

Yes, the financial assistance they gave me. They paid my hourly wage, for the day so I could attend. They also paid for my mileage.

Yes. They got shorter over time, so it made it more possible to take only one day off to attend the program.

No, it was basically the same. It was a little shorter time as well, so it was easier on the family.

The reason I wanted to attend is to make it possible for the Quick Start grant to be possible.

Same things. The tribal council allowed you to take time off and attend the programs. We still got paid.

It was just the work schedule. My co-worker was attending the same stuff, so it just didn't work out.

This one I really wanted to attend, because I new that this was the last part of the program. I really wanted to have that sense of accomplishment. There was a commencement ceremony and that was really fun. I really felt like I accomplished something important.

I think there were two things, the all Indian alumni and the workshop. Both things made it enticing to come. I wanted to finish what I started. And like I said, I wasn't working at the time, so I was able to do that. My children are grown. Then after the workshop, there was the alumni gathering. I got a lot of names of people who were alumni. We were able to meet a lot of folks that had the same understandings. With this comes a lot of responsibility. And then Blandin is working to make a better world. I think what Blandin is doing is excellent, so I wanted to put out my best effort.

When I signed up, and after that first week, because of what I had gained from that first week, I was committed to go to the workshops, even if they had run out of scholarship money. The scholarship and the mileage again made it more possible for me to go and follow through on that commitment.

Knowing that our team from Bois Forte got our project approved by the Council and had our project going. Our project, applying what we learned. We went to the council and got approved to do the project to work with youth to make regalia and to dance. The graduation was overwhelming because of all the things people said. And I was able to get the day approved for leave by our Council.

A13. What barriers prevented you from doing this? [If Respondent already answered, ask: Was it anything different than the things that made it hard to come the other time(s)?]

What barriers prevented you from doing this? [If Respondent already answered, ask: Was it anything different than the things that made it hard to come the other time(s)?]

It was a work commitment.

Distance.

The second session in July, it was difficult to get there. Family emergency.

I could not attend this one because all of the "Recovery Grants" were due. It was a nightmare. I would have attended if I didn't have the multiple deadlines, but we brought in \$5 million in recovery money so I don't feel bad about that one.

Once I missed the follow-up workshop, I felt like I kind of lost touch and didn't think I should go.

A14. Can you please give a brief description of the events [have you participated in any other Blandin Foundation events other than BRCLP]?

Can you please give a brief description of the events [have you participated in any other Blandin Foundation events other than BRCLP]?

This one was different. They had a first Alumni gathering, it was pretty exciting to see others who have come through the program.

It was a workshop about community issues. They had 3 different topics and I picked one. It wasn't a reservation workshop; it was a community workshop for anyone.

I participated in two different ones that I can think of. The first was one that was also a leadership program, but it focused on different area. I cannot remember what the area's actually were, but that was one. The other was an American Indian Program, which I felt was relevant to the community. It was very fun.

I think I did a two-day thing in St Cloud. I believe it was 3 of them for me to choose from. I think it was about engaging yourself in community involvement, is what it had to do with. I can't remember exactly. We were able to select from 3 different tracks, and I only went to the one in St Cloud. I didn't get to go to the one in Alexandria or the one in Breezy Point. (why not able to go to others) I already had prior engagements that I had to attend – a family wedding and my scheduled vacation.

A15. What factors were involved in your decision to attend this event(s)?

What factors were involved in your decision to attend this event(s)?

The overall communication at all the other trainings. It is pretty exciting to get together as a community and talk about issues. It was really fun to see who is who and who does what.

I suppose just getting a better understanding of how to deal with the tough community issues that all community's face. I guess working with instead of against these issues.

With the first one, I felt like leadership skills can always be improved and with the second one, it was geared towards our youth and getting them involved. I feel like our youth are our future leaders and they should be part of this and we need to get them involved.

It had to do with making decisions in a community. I was interested because I sometimes have difficulty in making decisions in my position on the pow-wow committee. I liked that people shared their ideas on how you could improve. I am kind of a front line person here, at the Council offices, and need to know what is going on here. I feel that is important, too.

A16. Are there any reasons or situations you can think of that might have made it more difficult for you to attend (The 5 Day Retreat at Ruttgers/Workshop I/ Workshop II) that were not on the list?

Are there any reasons or situations you can think of that might have made it more difficult for you to attend (The 5 Day Retreat at Ruttgers/Workshop I/Workshop II) that were not on the list?

The distance was a big thing for me. I know that a lot of other tribes are located North. For me, it is like a 2-hour drive. I guess on other thing as far as the follow-up, it was difficult for me, because I was the only one from my community and the other communities had more than one person. Some of the projects, we had to team up with other cohorts and there was great distance between us. It was very difficult for me, because everyone had a connection within their community and I was just one in my community. It was hard for me to work on projects with someone that was so far away. We did some things online, but it was very difficult to follow up with my partner. I think that they should recruit at least two people from each tribes, so they can work together. There was another person that was supposed to come from my community, but they cancelled, so I was there by myself.

The only thing would have been if they would not have let me go on leave to attend, excused from work with pay. But they did let me go.

A17. Are you satisfied with the communication you have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process?

Are you satisfied with the communication you have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process?

Yes. I got to know some people. I got to have a better connection within my reservation with other people. I have all of those, [email, phone, mail] but there is not one that I prefer over the others. They all work for me.

Yes. Just the right amount of information. They sent out mailings. They called and asked if I was going to attend Workshop II, but that was it. I would prefer email the most. But I felt that after the Five-Day Retreat, we didn't communicate with the team. Communication was just not there between everyone after the Retreat was over.

Yes. I think it was just right. I would get email and regular mail and I also had some phone calls. It just reminded us on where we need to go and what we needed to do. I don't think it was too much or anything like that. I like communicating by email myself.

Yes, because I received notices in my email and in the community also from Rick Smith. Email is what I prefer or in person.

Yes, they were good from the introductory meeting, when I was told I was nominated by my community. They are very good about letting you know what you're doing and what they are doing. I still get emails today. I think that it is a good way of keeping us informed of what is going on. The more information that I have, I'm more grateful about hearing about it. The more, the better. Probably regular mail and email would be the ones I prefer.

Yes. They communicated through email and sending letters. They send them out far ahead of time, so we can clear out time for the meeting. Rick Smith and other leaders are people that I have worked with in the past. At times it can be a little overwhelming. Getting the information and sharing it at the workshop, then we bring it back and share the info with our co-workers. When we get the info, it comes at us all at once. It's like learning a new language. At times it can be too much. The type of communication that I prefer would have to be face to face.

Yes. Rick Smith was accessible. He frequently emailed participants and we were able to call him on his cell phone. It was easy to get a hold of him if we had any questions. Well the trainers, were always open to talk to the participants about the training or anything else. They were accessible as well. I think that we were receiving just the right amount of communication. I would have to say that email works best.

Yes. There was the right amount of communication. The mail and emails are fine. The phone calls, I'm not always available, so they are not always able to contact me.

Yes. I think that they were giving the right amount of information. I got emails that kept me up to date. They were persistent enough to keep me pushing forward to attend these workshops. Well, talking to then to a real life person on a phone. They would call to see if they could help me in any sort of way. They even offered financial help.

Yes. Theresa Peterson and Rick Smith did a wonderful job of communicating. Using face-to-face communication works best for me. I feel like they need to corner me in. I feel like they were giving the right amount of information. I knew what it was about when I signed up. You can't ask for much more than that.

A17. Are you satisfied with the communication you have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process? (continued)

Are you satisfied with the communication you have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process?

Yes, the recruitment was amazing. Rick Smith did a lot of it and he did an excellent job. The communication was great. They were very accessible, they listened, it was very comfortable. Just enough communication was made. The type that I prefer most is email.

Yes. It was fine. They had my email and all my phone numbers. They called me plenty of times to remind me that workshops were coming up. Any type of communication works for me it really doesn't matter.

Yes. For me. I'm a pretty simple guy. A newsletter every month is pretty good for me. This was what I usually looked for. If I had a question, I would send an email and usual get my question answered. I think I was getting just the right amount. Usually email is pretty good for me, I think.

Yes. I thought that it was good that they email, called, etc. They try to make all attempts to let me know about what was going on. They even mailed out fliers. They always made sure that they go a hold of me somehow. Just the right amount of contact was made. The mail communication was best for me.

Rick Smith comes out, definitely a big benefit. The email works best, personally. The email is number one. Mailing and newsletters is number two.

Yes, mail, email, phone, everything is good. Very excellent follow through. I forget to mark the calendar; the manner of communication was very helpful.

Yes. I feel like there was great communication. They would always give us a heads up when things were being scheduled. First they would tell us weeks before it was actually happening and then they would send us reminders when the date was coming closer. I think they did a good job with this. The information was just right. It was mostly through regular mail. The type that I prefer would have to be email. I know that this is the best way for me.

Yes. There was quick response to email, back and forth. The regular mail was very professional. I enjoyed that the group was all natives. I think we had got comfortable easier, than if we were a mixed race. And it was fun. Learning was fun. Email would be the one that I prefer over others.

As far as mailing and other things, there were plenty of things, but as far as follow-ups for us recommending others from our community, I felt there was not really any follow up to that. Even if I didn't get anything, you think that they would try to get in touch with me. This didn't happen and I got busy and things just didn't work out. If this happened all around, I can see why there is a lack of participation. Emailing and mailing is what I prefer.

They are doing an excellent job. (more) They are cordial and open and encourage you to call. They want you to get what you need. If there are any things in the way of being able to be there, they work to try to make it possible for you to be there. That shows care. That is why I liked it. It has been able to be in touch with them with any questions. And then the correspondence with them through the mail. Now it hard for me to do much with them, because I am working now 60 hours a week.

I think the communication is very good; the letters, the phone, the emails. And they are very accessible. It is very open.

The guy who came here was really friendly. He works at UMD. He was in contact with me to see if I was coming.

A18. Do you have any ideas as to why they [alumni you have been in contact with] might not have returned for Workshops I and/or II?

Do you have any ideas as to why they [alumni you have been in contact with] might not have returned for Workshops I and/or II?

I think the big part of it is taking off to work. This was the reason I heard from one of the other participants. She mentioned that there were too many things going on a work so she couldn't take it off.

No, not that I know of. I'm guessing they have had busy schedules at their communities and stuff like that.

I have no idea. My first assumption would probably be time.

They had to work or whatever. I'm sure that they were many reasons that they don't finish. I feel like if you didn't finish all of the Workshops, then you shouldn't graduate. Many of the individuals graduated, even though they didn't go to all of them and I thought this was kind of unfair.

Work and home schedules are hectic. Continual reminders would be good by email, mail, phone call with a message.

Because many of our families are isolated within their own. They don't have computers, many can't afford phones. They live in very rural isolated areas.

No, I guess I didn't really ask. After missing the first one [Workshop I], I really lost touch with our contact. I didn't really hear too much of what was really going on after that.

A19. Please explain why or why not [you think the return rates for leadership training could be increased by more or different kinds of communication].

Please explain why or why not [you think the return rates for leadership training could be increased by more or different kinds of communication].

Well, there was some alumni in my Reservation that I have spoken to that hadn't gotten an invitation to some of the workshops. There are some in my Reservation that want to move on and do the workshops, but said they did not get invited. I think it may have been that they did not have the correct address anymore, but I'm not sure. I just know that some of them have not been invited that really want to participate.

Just for the fact that the communication that they had was good. The people who have gone to the first session really knew the importance of the training. Those who didn't return probably couldn't return.

To me the communication is fine the way it is right now. Word of mouth is probably the best. I that is how I heard of the program. I wouldn't have known about it otherwise. I was nominated, so I went. Word of mouth is definitely how the word is spreading here.

I don't think that communication is the issue. I think that it is scheduling conflicts.

We were working on that project together. I let them know everything that I had and I didn't know if some attended or not. After that I was just busy with life. I was in contact with a lot of different people from the entire group. There was somewhere in the range of about 20 of us there and there were 3 that I worked on my project with.

A19. Please explain why or why not [you think the return rates for leadership training could be increased by more or different kinds of communication]. (continued)

Please explain why or why not [you think the return rates for leadership training could be increased by more or different kinds of communication].

I think the communication is fine. How much further could you get unless you were there with the person. You have phone and email and other ways. That is all a plus. I think that if they want to attend they will. If they don't want to attend, you can't force them to. You leave it open to them, and encourage them to. I do know that the ones with children, that can make it hard to be there.

You have certain deadlines to make. You want to make a phone call to them just before the deadline, but that would be the furthest you could go to get them. Like juveniles that don't show up for a hearing, unless you call them a couple days before. So if you make a call or an email up to that last minute that would be the only improvement I could see.

A20. Do you have any ideas for ways that might increase communication among alumni?

Do you have any ideas for ways that might increase communication among alumni?

When we were there (Workshop II) we talked about having a Facebook group, but we didn't know how to get it started or how to get all the emails to everyone. I think that this is a good idea.

Facebook. I have our own little website. There are a few on Facebook that I have. Blandin contacts. It would be nice to have a Blandin website where everyone can go and chat. This would be helpful.

I think additional projects or updates to alumni would help. I think like some cohorts had certain projects that they worked on during the initial 5-day retreat. Many of the cohorts had some similar needs in their community. If there was some sort of joint thing they can do or some sort of small project they can work on to stay connected, I think that would be helpful.

There is plenty of communication. There shouldn't be a reason for people not coming.

I think that it is up to each individual group. Up to the first project, I really kept up with a lot of individuals, but after I missed the first workshop, I really fell out of touch. As far as the info that we all shared with each other, they really try to keep us connected and available to these things.

Unless you are in communication through emails, unless you are working on a program together, there can be shyness. You have the contact information that was freely given, but you have to break the ice. In the correspondence that is put out, encouragement to them to reach out to each other, to different communities and such. It is kind of like when you show up and do well when you are there. But when you leave, you get caught up in the world out here, which is a change from how things were there. So you need reminders and encouragement to reach out and network. They always have stories in that newsletter, so if they put in something about different people who have stayed in touch and how they have stayed in touch and have been able to help each other and do things through that.

Get together to discuss how things are going and what tools they are using. It could be a checkup.

A21. Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops?

Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops?

I would think that maybe if the workshops were not so far away from each other and if it was possible for people to get actual Paid Time Off to attend them. Some people do and some people don't. I think that maybe it would be nice to get away for a week or so. It would be nice if they had the programs on the Reservation. It is kind of defeating the purpose if you have to leave the Reservation. Sometimes people have children and can't get away.

I guess, maybe if they [alumni] felt like they were more prepared for it. We didn't do any of the goals that we were supposed to do after the Five-Day Retreat, so I felt like why should we even go, if we didn't accomplish anything?

I think that they don't understand what is fully involved and neither do their supervisors. Maybe they better hear from some of their cohorts or really get talked to about what is going on there. Maybe they [the Blandin Leadership Team] should see what people are writing on these evaluations. I don't think [alumni] they know what they are missing if they don't go, if they are in that mindset. I had this mindset at first and I DID go. I don't regret one minute of it. The main things are that they really need to inform these people on what happens at these programs.

Maybe if they weren't so long. Maybe if you split it into two (especially the Five-Day). Splitting it up into two different sessions may help. Like having two 2.5 day retreats, twice a month.

Provide transportation for those who don't have it. Possibly have alumni get out there and spread the word about training.

I know people have commitments and things. What I've seen is it's a lot of personal things – someone passes on; someone may be in the hospital they are committed to. There can be prior commitments that you can't do anything about. There really isn't anything you can do about that other than the encouragement. Maybe in psychological things, maybe some questions when you recruit, about whether you are committed to attend. You don't really get in recruitment materials, when they are asking you, you don't really know what is expected of you, what your role is in all this. They could help you in a good way to tell you what they need you to do, that they want you to learn all this and go back to the community and be leaders. For many of them, in Indian country this is true, that they don't realize others in the community recognize them as leaders. As younger people, they need to be schooled along and mentored along. (what could help them see this and see that they should participate) I think the alumni in each reservation could mentor them and be like an outreach that is really committed, has hands on in the community, and knows the people who are on the list. I think it would be an idea to have at least one or two at least who are really committed and would encourage them.

You could have a potluck, too, to bring people who are alumni together, to keep them together. They could then communicate among themselves about who they see as the next generation coming along as leaders. They would see that youth voice and recognize them and even start to bring them into the potluck gatherings.

You could have Blandin staff let it be known that they are going to be in the community and bring them together in the community and invite them there, to a potluck and prayer to come together. That is the way things are done in the Indian community.

I don't know, really. Maybe have it at a different season. (when) I think the first one is in September. Then there is one in February. That would be hard to attend because of the weather. I am from one of the Dakota communities, further south. For us, it would be the weather that could make it less accessible. So maybe if they could hold the sessions somewhere that could be closer for the southern communities.

A21. Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops? (continued)

Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops?

Well, like with my situation things came up and I had to prioritize. Things came up with my son that I had to take care of. When I knew that he was somewhere safe, I made my way. It is like life. When you double book, you need to pick something that is more important and try to make the best out of the situation. This was my situation, I don't know about other people. I did notice that at the first workshop, there was a big drop in attendance.

Not off the top of my head. Rick goes around to the community and meets with the employer. I think this is a big help. Maybe keeping up email communication with people, so they remember that it is coming up and that it is important.

No I don't. All I know is that a lot of people's schedules are what keeps people from participating. Their schedules may have other commitments in other things. I don't think this is a huge obligation to make time for.

I don't know. That's a tough one I suppose. With the economy now days, I think more helpful with the mileage and things like that would be a little helpful. Some sort of stipend or reward maybe. It may not have to be through Blandin, but maybe another organization.

One of the largest motivators for me is having a Quick Start Grant. One of the drawbacks was that we had to go back again. It seems to be kind of a lot. Maybe if they rotated sites that might be more appealing for people to show up. I think location is a big think. If you have to drive a half a day to get somewhere it makes it harder.

No. I guess, you can tell them, that if they don't go through the retreat that it is a one-time thing and that they will not be able to do it again. I realize people have lives, but if you say that you are going to do something you should finish it.

Well, usually, if you can have the workshops on weekend's maybe, people may attend more. They wouldn't have to take a leave of absence. If it would have been on the weekend, I would have gone for sure. I couldn't take time off at work. Each Reservation is unique in their own way. Weekends would be one of my ideas. It's kind of hit or miss whatever happens. If people can attend the first retreat, I don't see why they couldn't make it to the others, but things come up I guess.

No. I don't know how you would work around that [scheduling conflicts]. A lot of people have different schedules so its difficult to work around that.

When I went, everybody was there most of the days. It seems to be very good when I went. Our group might have been an exception. There was only one person that had to leave early when I attended.

I think that they should talk to employers and have them give incentive to employees who attend the workshops. I think it is relevant and important for these people to attend. If there was more incentive, it would get more people to go.

Maybe put recruitment on the radio. Otherwise it was very easy to go to the meeting. They paid for everything. All the meals were there, lodging, etc.

A21. Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops? (continued)

Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops?

I think as far as initial training, better follow up with attendees. They really need to work on their recruiting systems. For some of us, we are closer to the cities here. I know that would be a longer drive for some, but alternating locations to where we meet, especially the one and two day retreat. I guess no matter where you move it, it is going to be difficult for somebody. Rather than having things all separating everything, put everything into one main event for a week. It is easy for someone to say no to a one or two-day retreat, but if it is longer it gives them less chance to say no. It should be a once a year thing. For me, one day to driving up to Grand Rapids would take a lot of energy and time. If it was more than one day, it may have been worth my drive.

A22. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that we have not asked you in this interview?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that we have not asked you in this interview?

Overall, I am really satisfied with how things are taking place and happened. I really learned a lot about myself and to become a better community leader. Overall, I am very happy and honored that I got to be a part of it.

The experience there at the training. I am just so grateful for being a part of it. I am really looking forward to the Alumni Gathering, if they are ever going to do that again.

Well, I felt that the incentives from time away from the regular routine and the overnight stay at the Sugar Lake or Ruttger's really made you want to go. I enjoyed the hospitality of the staff and Sugar Lake. Meeting the Fond du Lac really expanded our networking opportunities. I had a good experience, we had unstructured time in the evening and it was an enjoyable social time. There were opportunities for people staying back, like campfires, movies and other things. You had your choice of staying back or going out. You really had the choice on picking the group that you wanted to socialize with. I guess an observation is the opportunity for us to have this leadership and go back home and share this with our co-workers. We will get our mention in our paper, but we have to go forth from there to develop our area of expertise in the community. It is always moving and always developing, whether its toward the positive side or the negative side. With employment, I don't know if I will be employed next year, I know it feels good to have employment now. What can come next? At times, I become pessimistic instead of continually optimistic.

I just really enjoyed the program. I wish there were more programs. I wish there were more programs that helped government officials or elected officials, like in our community. I think that some of them can really use some of these tools to help them with their work.

The Wilder Foundation and the surveys are such a useful tool and that is why I participated in this one. We really need to look at how we can help the reservation also continue to gather information for their own community, and I know that Wilder has these services. I really need someone to help with our strategic plan, but I don't have time or the funding if there were other programs available that would be spectacular.

A22. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that we have not asked you in this interview? (continued)

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that we have not asked you in this interview?

It was quite a while ago when I went. The biggest part I thought was good was the networking, connecting with different tribes. The networking was one of the biggest things I got out of it. There was some more but this was the most memorable that I could think of.

Honestly, the Five-Day scares people. Break it up into 3 day chunks this month, three day chunks the next month. More time in between to digest information to work on the project and less days thereafter. Reservation people don't like to go away from home that long. Lives are stretched to the max.

It was an excellent training. The trainers were very good. I'm really using what I have learned at Rutgers.

I made time initially because I thought it was really important. I felt like I learned a lot of good info at the five-day retreat. For me, once I missed the first one, I felt like the importance was lost for me. The importance wasn't there for me to drive far for a one-day retreat. It would take a lot of time and energy.

Along with having the mission statement of what Blandin is all about, it would also be good to have the history, to know the history of the good works they have been doing. It is always good to know the history of what you have been doing, and help them to see the role in the community. That history is very important in Indian country. It helps you know who they are and that they are there for the long haul. And knowing the good things that have come about because of what Blandin does.

Keep up the good work. I am glad to be part of it. And if Valerie and them are interested in any of my ideas, they are welcome to get in touch with me anytime.

I have nothing but positive things to say. I would recommend it to others to attend, if they can. It is beneficial and eye opening. It teaches you the kind of person you are. (kind of person) They do a test with you that tells you which of the four types you are, and how you do different things. Then they teach you ways you can go about things, the kind of person you are and how to use the skills you have. It betters your skills, bringing them out more. You learn about yourself – how you think, why you think like that, what is easier and harder for you, how you can learn to work with people opposite to you and be able to work with them. (else) I wish they would have it more than just once a year. It might be better if you had it two times a year, so more could do it. I know I was turned down the first time that I applied, then was accepted the second time I applied. Maybe that is something they could look into doing.

Interview instrument

Hello, may I speak with [RESPONDENT]?

Hello [RESPONDENT]

My name is [INTERVIEWER NAME] and I am calling on behalf of the Blandin Foundation. Wilder Research is working with the Blandin Leadership Team to help them improve the program. I believe you have had some contact with the Reservation Community Leadership Program in the last year few years, is that right? [GIVE TIME FOR RESPONDENT TO REPLY].

I would like to start out by thanking you for taking the time to talk with us today. We hope to help the Blandin Leadership Team to better understand the reasons for attendance decline among individuals selected to participate in the Reservation leadership cohorts. By better understanding why this is happening, the Blandin Leadership Program hopes to learn some ways to work more effectively at meeting the needs of communities and community leaders.

We appreciate your honesty. All of your answers to our questions will remain confidential and only the evaluator at Wilder Research will know who gave which responses.

While we value your feedback, you should know that you are not required to participate in the survey and have the option to decline or opt out at any time during the interview process. The interview will take about 30 minutes, depending on how much you have to say to me.

Would you be willing to participate?

IF YES: Is now a good time? Do you have any questions before we begin?

IF NOT NOW, ASK IF THERE IS A BETTER TIME TO CALL AND RECORD DATE AND TIME ON FACESHEET

IF REFUSED: Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

1a. According to our records, you were part of [NAME OF COHORT] in [COHORT YEAR] year, does that sound right?

Yes (GO TO Q. 2)..... 1
No..... 2
Refused..... (GO TO Q. 2)..... 7
Don't know (GO TO Q. 2)..... 8

1b. Which Cohort and year were you a part of?

Cohort: _____ Year: _____

Refused..... -7
Don't know -8

2. When you first heard about the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program (BRCLP), what was it about the program that made you want to participate? (**PROMPT:** What did you hope to gain from going through BRCLP?)

3a. Did you attend the initial 5 day retreat at Ruttger's? [**PROMPT:** This is the 5 day (Monday through Friday) retreat at Ruttger's (in Grand Rapids). **If more explanation is needed:** The residential retreat is the cornerstone of BRCLP training. It is not a workshop or seminar. It is a break in the action" – a time to step back and look forward – to learn, reflect and talk candidly in a comfortable, confidential environment about what is happening, or not happening, in community life. The retreat offers an opportunity to establish individual development goals and to work on a Going Forward team. All BRCLP retreats are held at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge in Grand Rapids, MN.]

- Yes (GO TO Q. 3b)..... 1
- No..... (GO TO Q. 3d)..... 2
- Refused..... (GO TO Q. 4a)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 4a)..... 8

3b. How would you describe your overall experience?

3c. Did you achieve the things you hoped to get out of it?

- Yes (GO TO 4a)..... 1
- No..... (GO TO 4a)..... 2
- Refused..... 7
- Don't know 8

3d. What barriers prevented you from attending? [**PROMPT:** For example, was there something with your job that would have made it difficult to attend?]

(GO TO Q. 5a)

4a. Were you able to stay the entire week?

- Yes (GO TO Q. 4b)..... 1
- No..... (GO TO Q. 4c)..... 2
- Refused..... (GO TO Q. 5a)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 5a)..... 8

4b. What were some things that made it possible for you to attend and to stay for the whole time?

4c. What barriers prevented you from attending the entire week? [PROMPT: was there an emergency, etc.]

5a. Did you attend Workshop 1 three months later [Prompt: This is where the going forward teams came together to talk about what they learned and next steps. **If more explanation is needed:** Workshop I is a residential workshop that focuses on applying the BCLP Community Action Process to real-life challenges/opportunities explored by the Going Forward teams, and on the skills of effective small group communication.]?

- Yes (GO TO Q. 5b)..... 1
- No..... (GO TO Q. 5c)..... 2
- Refused..... (GO TO Q. 6a)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 6a)..... 8

5b. What were some things that made it possible for you to attend?

5c. What barriers prevented you from doing this? (Prompt: If "nothing" probe for motivation issues such as I did not have the time, it was not a priority at the time, I did not think it would be a valuable experience)

6a. Did you attend Workshop 2, six months after the retreat [Prompt: This is where the group came back together to talk a little about the going forward teams and to celebrate all of their work with a commencement ceremony at the end of the day.

- Yes (GO TO Q. 6b)..... 1
- No..... (GO TO Q. 6c)..... 2
- Refused..... (GO TO Q. 7a)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 7a)..... 8

6b. Is there anything else besides the things that you mentioned in 5b that made it possible for you to attend Workshop 2?

6c. What barriers prevented you from doing this? [If R already answered 4c or 5c, ask: **Was it anything different than the things that made it hard to come the other time(s)?**]

7a. Have you participated in any other Blandin Foundation or Blandin Leadership events, other than BRCLP and the Workshops?

- Yes (GO TO Q.7b) 1
- No (GO TO Q. 8)..... 2
- Refused (GO TO Q. 8)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 8)..... 8

7b. Can you please give a brief description of the events. (**PROMPT:** what was the event called, when it was, where it was?)

7c. What factors were involved in your decision to attend this event(s)?

IF ANSWERED "YES" TO 3a SKIP TO 9

8. I would now like to read to you a list of some of the reasons why some people are not able to attend or complete the 5 day retreat at Ruttger's. Could you please respond with "yes" to the reasons that you feel are most relevant for your situation.

- It was difficult to take time away from family..... 1
- People in my community see the training as investment in me and not my community..... 2
- It was difficult to take time away from my job 3
- I had personal or work emergencies..... 4
- I had difficulty finding child care 5
- The BRCLP Training was not as urgent as other priorities in my life 6
- I did not feel that I had the support of my tribe/community..... 7
- The travel time and distance to get to the training was too much 8
- My family/peers/boss did not see the training as a valuable experience for me ... 9
- There was a crisis in my community that prevented me from leaving..... 10
- Other (Please explain: _____)... 11
- Refused-7
- Don't know-8

IF ANSWERED "YES" TO 5a AND 6A SKIP TO 11

9. I would like to read to you a list of some of the reasons why some people are not able to attend Workshop 1 and/or 2 after completing the 5 Day Retreat at Ruttger's. Could you please respond with "yes" to the reasons that you feel are most relevant for your situation. [same comments as above]

- It was difficult to take time away from family..... 1
- People in my community see the training as investment in me and not my community..... 2
- It was difficult to take time away from my job 3
- I had personal or work emergencies..... 4
- I had difficulty finding child care 5
- The BRCLP Training did not seem to be as urgent as other priorities in my life... 6
- I did not feel that I had the support of my tribe/community..... 7
- The travel time and distance to get to the training was too much 8
- My family/peers/bosses did not see the training as a valuable experience for me 9
- There was a crisis in my community that prohibited me from leaving 10
- After completing the 5 Day Retreat at Ruttger's, it did not seem valuable for me to continue with the workshops..... 11
- I did not feel prepared for Workshops 1 and/or 2 12
- I did not have the opportunity to use the training from the 5 Day Retreat at Ruttger's before Workshops 1 and 2 13
- Other (Please explain: _____)... 14
 - Refused.....-7
 - Don't know-8

10a. Are there any reasons or situations you can think of, besides what you told me earlier, that might have made it more difficult for you to attend (The 5 Day Retreat at Ruttger's /Workshop 1/Workshop 2) that were not on the list?

- Yes..... GO TO Q. 10b).....1
- No..... (GO TO Q. 11)..... 2
- Refused..... (GO TO Q. 11)..... 7
- Don't know (GO TO Q. 11)..... 8

10b. If yes, can you please describe them?

11. Are you satisfied with the communication you have had with the Blandin Leadership Team during recruitment and other phases of the BRCLP Training process? (**PROBES:** not enough; just right; too much what kinds of communication? e.g., regular mail, email, phone, other; is there a type of communication you prefer more than others?)

12a. Are you in communication with any BRCLP alumni from your cohort on a regular basis?

Yes	(GO TO Q. 12b).....	1
No.....	(GO TO Q. 13).....	2
Refused.....	(GO TO Q. 13).....	7
Don't know	(GO TO Q. 13).....	8

12b. Are they from your Reservation, or from another Reservation in your cohort?

My Reservation	1
Other Reservation in cohort.....	2
Both.....	3
Refused.....	7
Don't know	8

12c. Do you know if those alumni that you've been in contact with have returned for workshops 1 and/or 2?

Yes, they have returned.....	(GO TO Q.14).....	1
No, they have NOT returned.....	(GO TO Q.12d).....	2
Some did return and some did Not return	(GO TO Q.12d).....	3
Refused.....	(GO TO Q. 14).....	7
Don't know	(GO TO Q. 14).....	8

12d. Do you have any ideas as to why they might **not** have returned for workshops 1 and/or 2?

13. Do you think that return rates for leadership training could be increased by more or different kinds of communication?

Yes	(GO TO Q.13b).....	1
No.....	(GO TO Q. 13b).....	2
Refused.....	(GO TO Q. 14).....	7
Don't know	(GO TO Q. 14).....	8

13b. Please explain why or why not? (PROBES: communication from Blandin; communication among alumni)

14. Do you have any ideas for ways that might increase communication among alumni?

Yes	(GO TO Q. 14b).....	1
No.....	(GO TO Q. 15).....	2
Refused.....	(GO TO Q. 15).....	7
Don't know	(GO TO Q. 15).....	8

14b. Please describe these ideas?

15. Do you have any other ideas around how to reduce the drop rate for BRCLP Training and the workshops?

16. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that we have not asked you in this interview?

Do you have any questions about the interview or about the overall evaluation project?

Thank you for your time.