

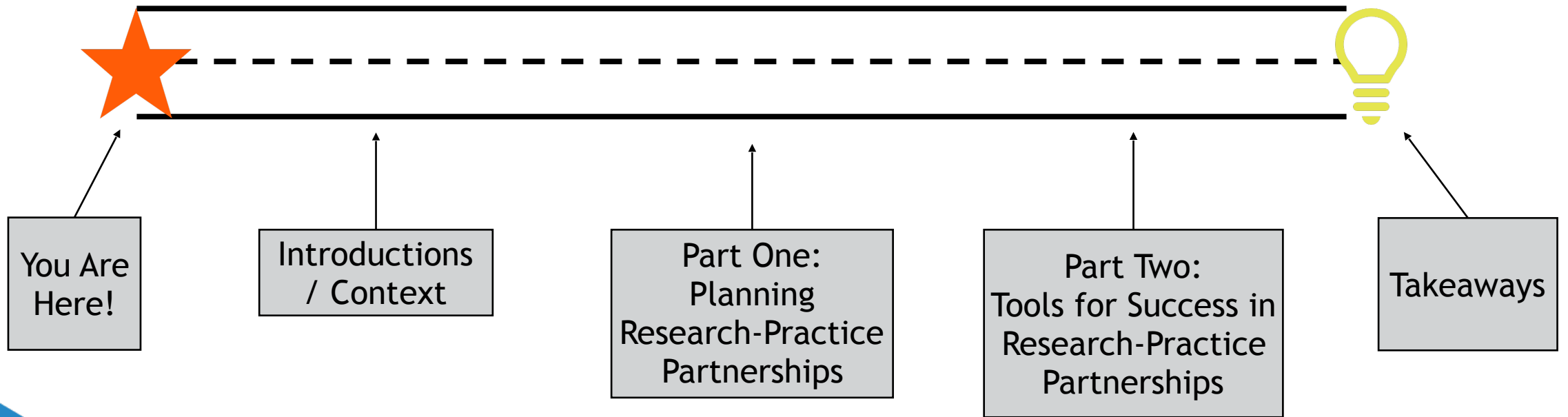
# **Driving Success within External Research Partnerships:** The Role of the Internal Evaluator

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Urban Initiatives  
Evaluation 2019



Icon By Hadi Davodpour, IR

# Road map for today's session



# Sneak preview of today's takeaways

- 1) Your organization's voice MATTERS!
- 2) The more you can plan in advance, the more effective your partnership will be.



# Introductions



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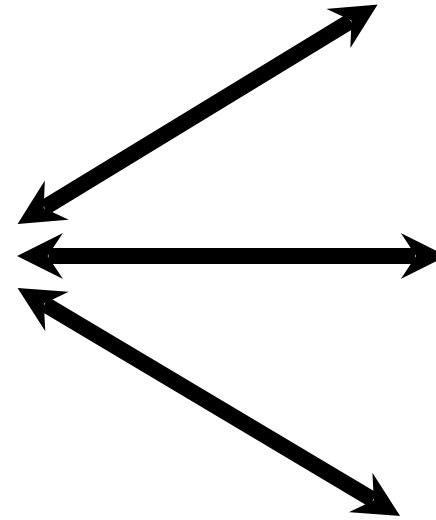


# About Urban Initiatives



- **We are:** Chicago-based nonprofit
- **Serving:** 16,000 youth in 56 schools
- **Using:** Power of sport and play
- **Working toward:** Increased social emotional learning, academic success, social capital for Chicago youth

# About Urban Initiatives



# About You!



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# Speed Lifeboats!

**Question 1:** What is your current professional role?

- Internal evaluator
- External evaluator
- Another role (please explain!)





# Speed Lifeboats!

**Question 2:** What is your experience level with research-practice partnerships?

- Beginner (brand new to this)
- Intermediate
- Experienced (multiple partnerships underneath my belt)



# Speed Lifeboats!

**Question 3:** To what extent does caffeine fuel your mornings?

- My mornings don't start unless I have [strong] coffee in hand
- Tea or decaf will do
- Caffeine doesn't play a role in my life



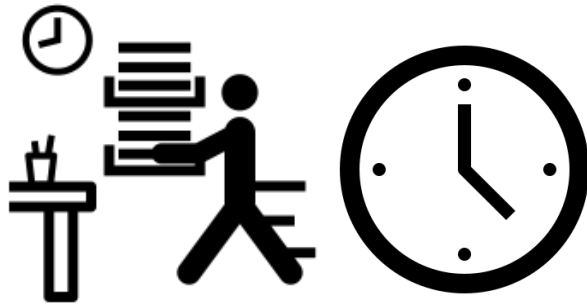
# Speed Lifeboats!

**Question 4:** What brings you to this session today?

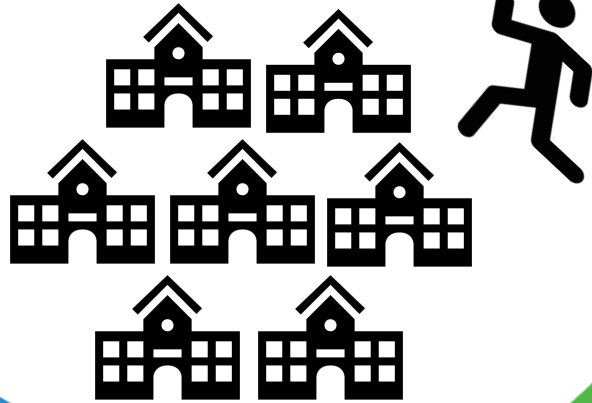
- My last research-practice partnership went swimmingly and I want to share my best practices with others!
- My last research-practice partnership went not as well as I hoped
- Never done this before--looking for tips and best practices in advance!
- Another reason



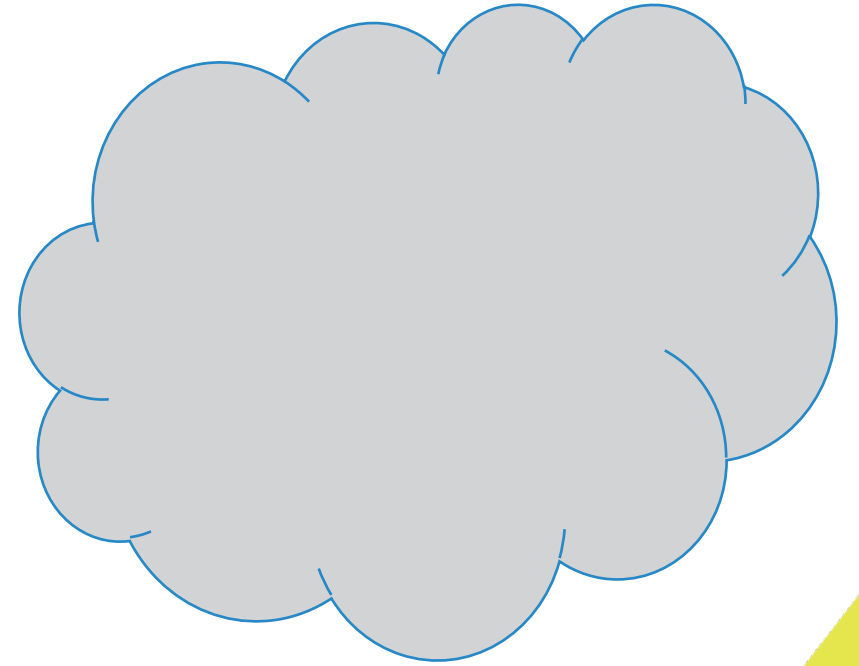
# Inspiration for this Session



Icon by icon4yu, TW



Icon by Gilbert Bages, ES





# Assumptions + Lessons Learned

## INCORRECT ASSUMPTION #1:



The research team knows more than my organization.

## GREAT LESSON LEARNED:



The research team and my organization both bring different and equally important information to the table.

# Assumptions + Lessons Learned

## INCORRECT ASSUMPTION #2:



The research team  
can read my  
organization's mind.

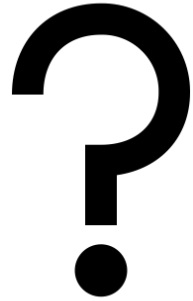
## GREAT LESSON LEARNED:



Proactive  
communication and self-  
advocacy for my  
organization is key.

# Assumptions + Lessons Learned

INCORRECT ASSUMPTION #3:



All relevant  
questions  
have been  
asked.

GREAT LESSON LEARNED:



The more questions  
you ask, the more  
you'll know.

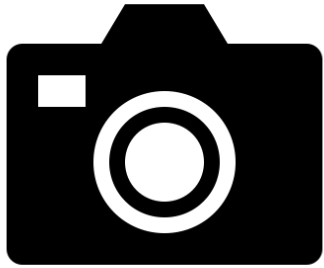
**Part One:**

**Planning research-practice  
partnerships**





# The BIG Picture



**KNOWLEDGE:** Understanding Your “Why”

**STAKEHOLDERS:** Understanding Your “Who”

**VALUES:** Your Context

**POWER & EQUITY:** Information and Ownership

# The BIG Picture: Power and Equity

- Think of a time when you felt empowered in your role in a partnership or collaborative work situation. What factors contributed to that feeling of empowerment?
- Conversely, think of a time when your partnership or collaborative work situation felt inequitable. What was happening that led to that feeling?



# The Details

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Staffing & Capacity
- ✓ Knowledge & Skills
- ✓ Financial
- ✓ Timeline
- ✓ Ownership & Legal Agreements



Source: [imgflip.com](https://imgflip.com)

## **Part Two:**

# **Tools for success in research-practice partnerships**





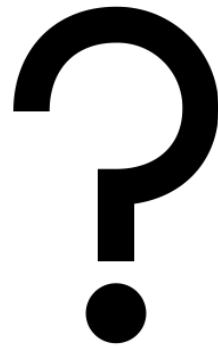
# Tools for Success

- ✓ Facilitating Organizational Buy-In
- ✓ Project Management



# Facilitating Organizational Buy-In

Who are we referring to when we say “organizational” buy-in?



# Facilitating Organizational Buy-In

**Answer: EVERYONE!**



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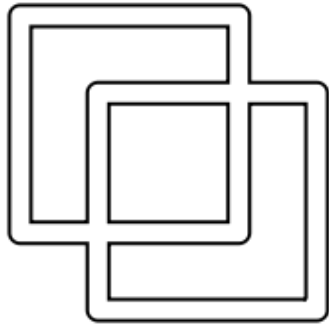
# Facilitating Organizational Buy-In

**How** can you make this happen?

**Answer:** So many ways (overall, plan, plan, plan!)



# Facilitating Organizational Buy-In

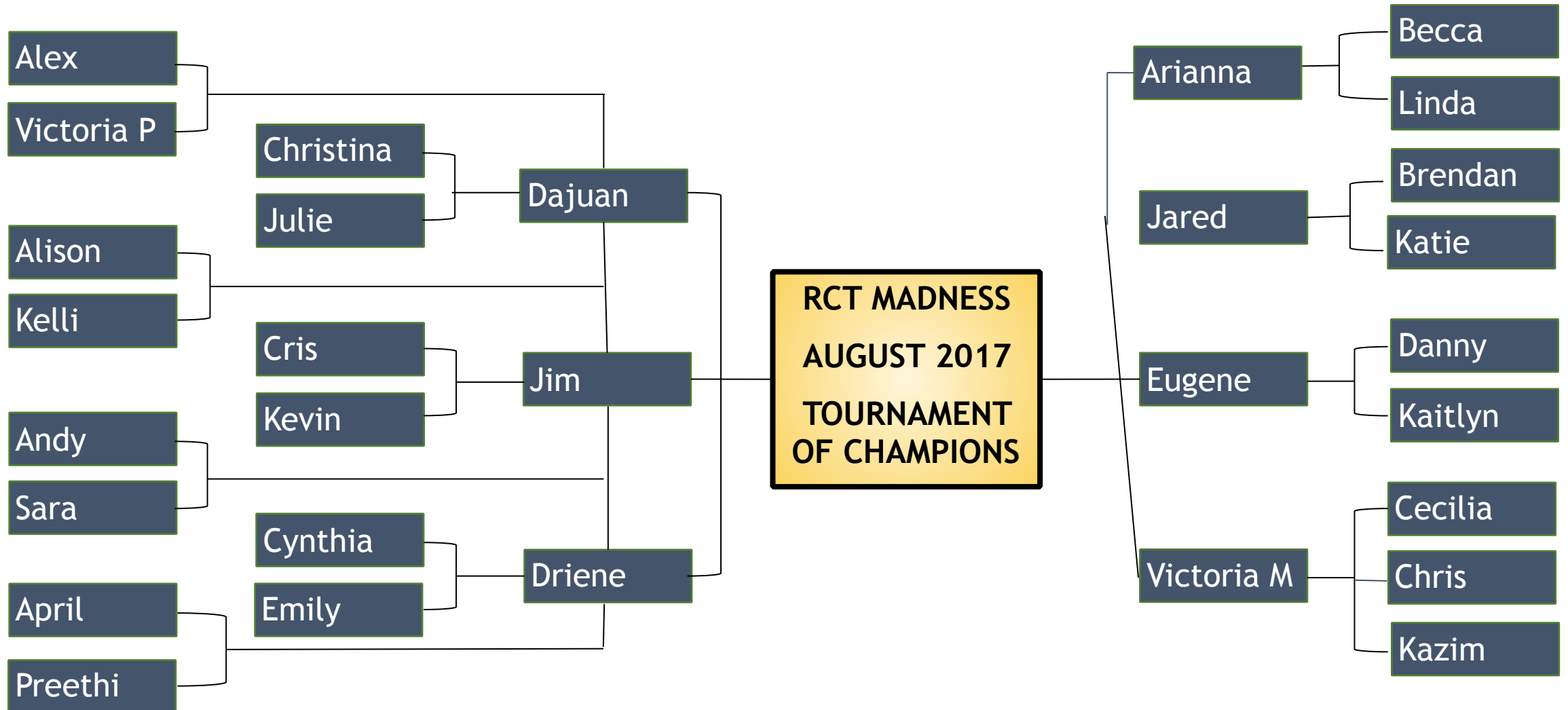


TRANSPARENCY

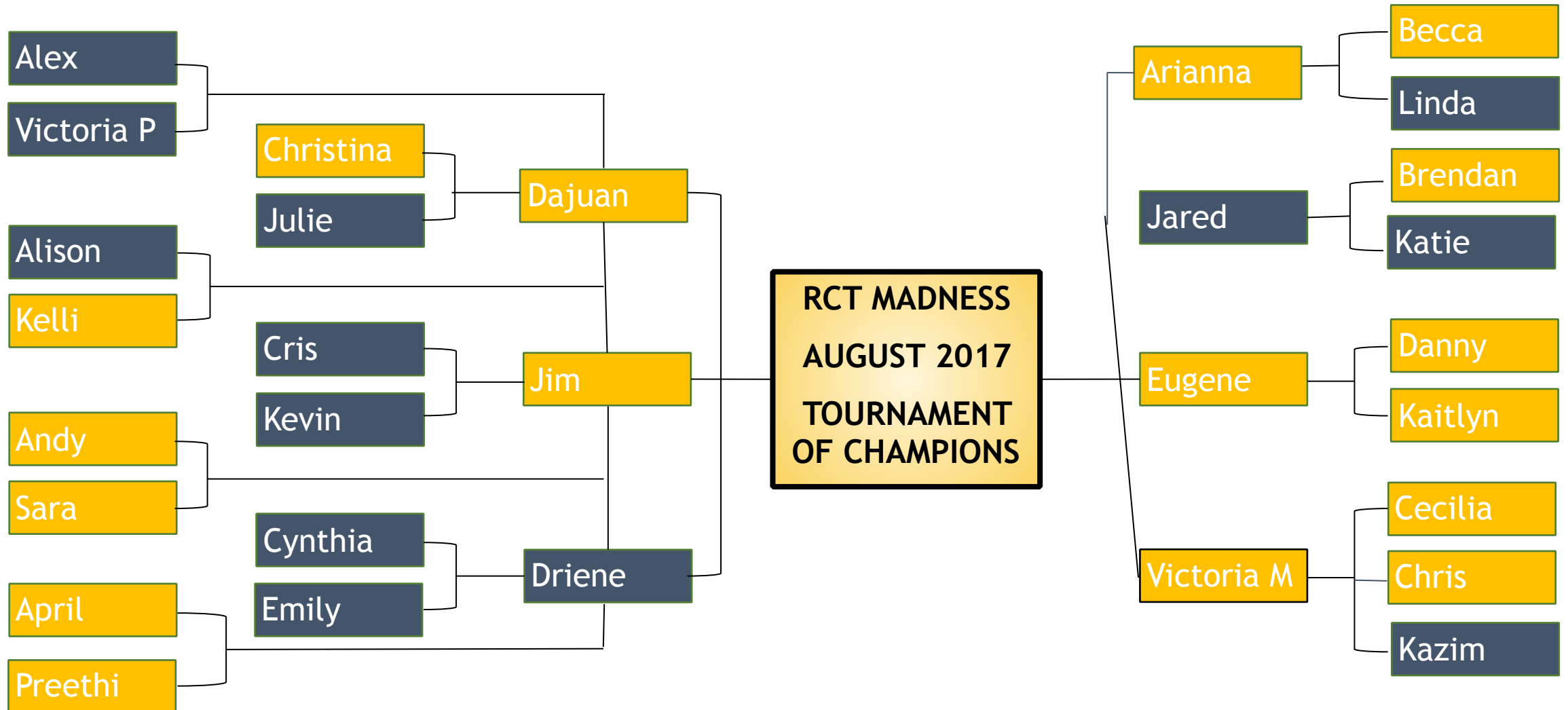




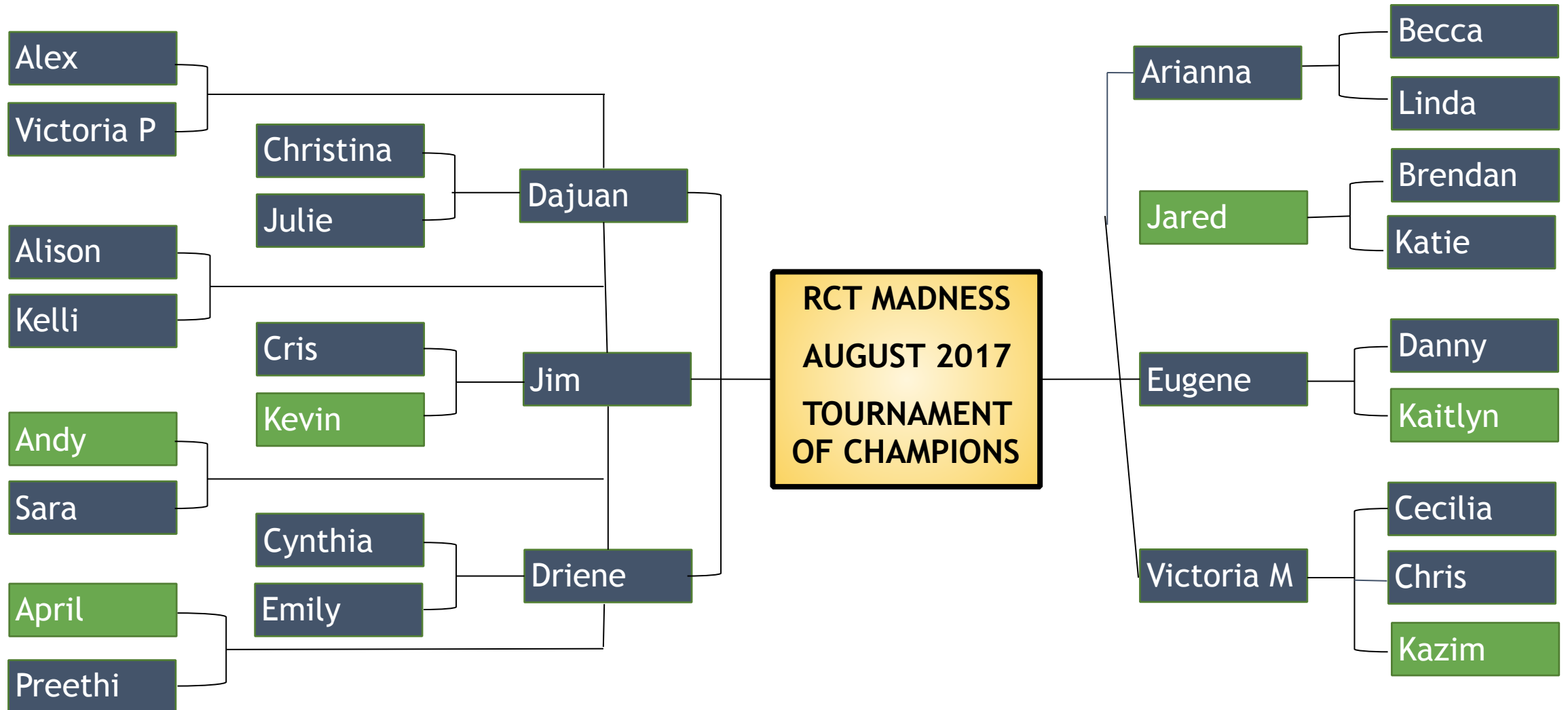
# #TheSquad



# #Team Recruitment

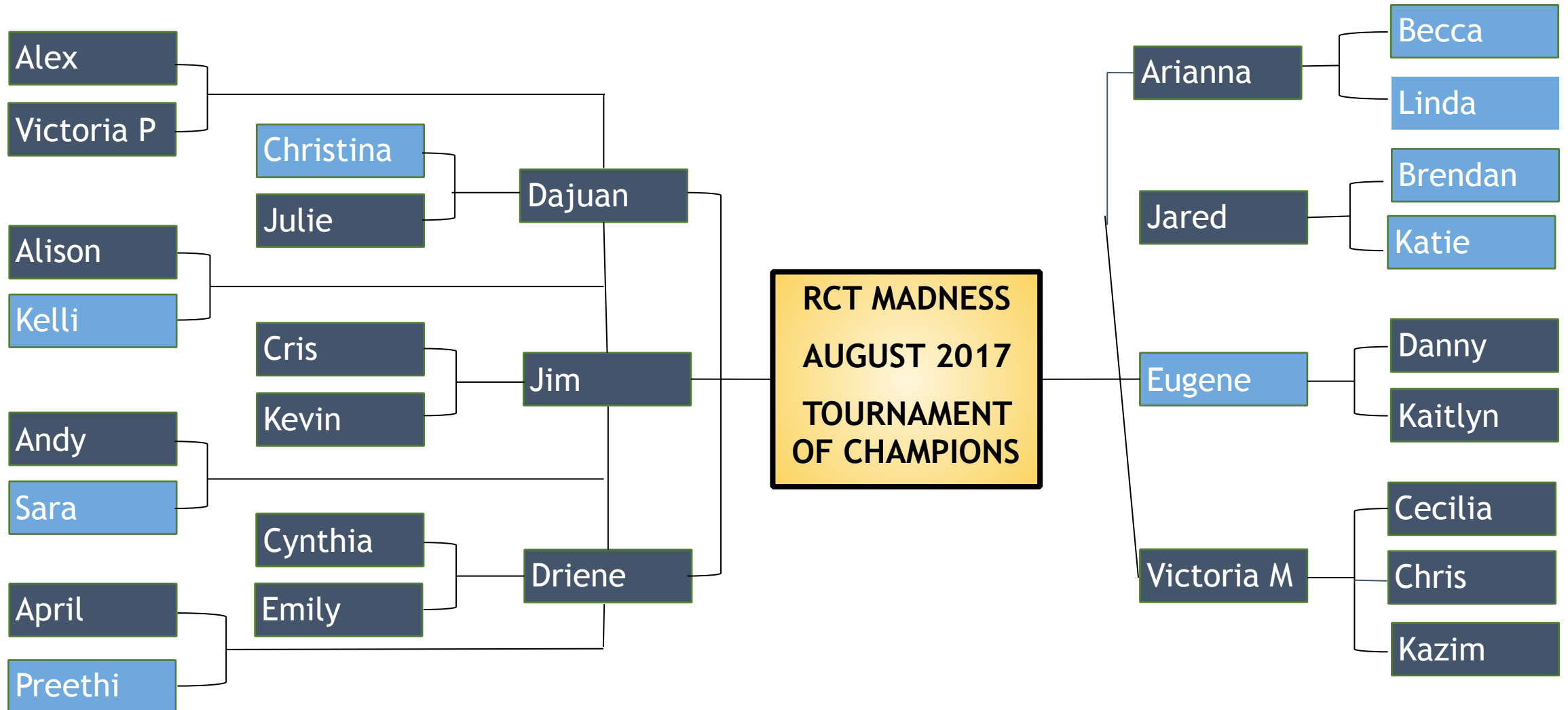


# #Team Data Collection Liaisons

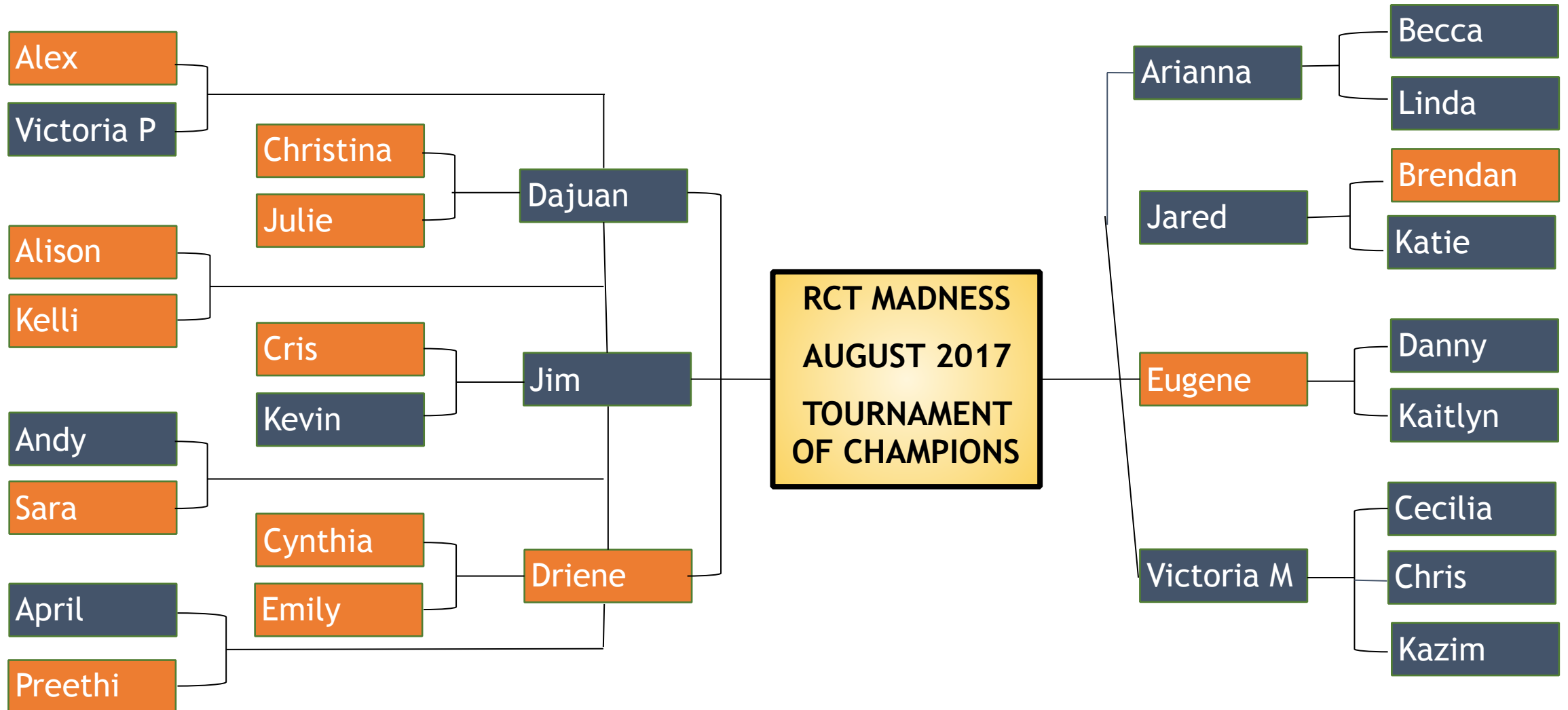




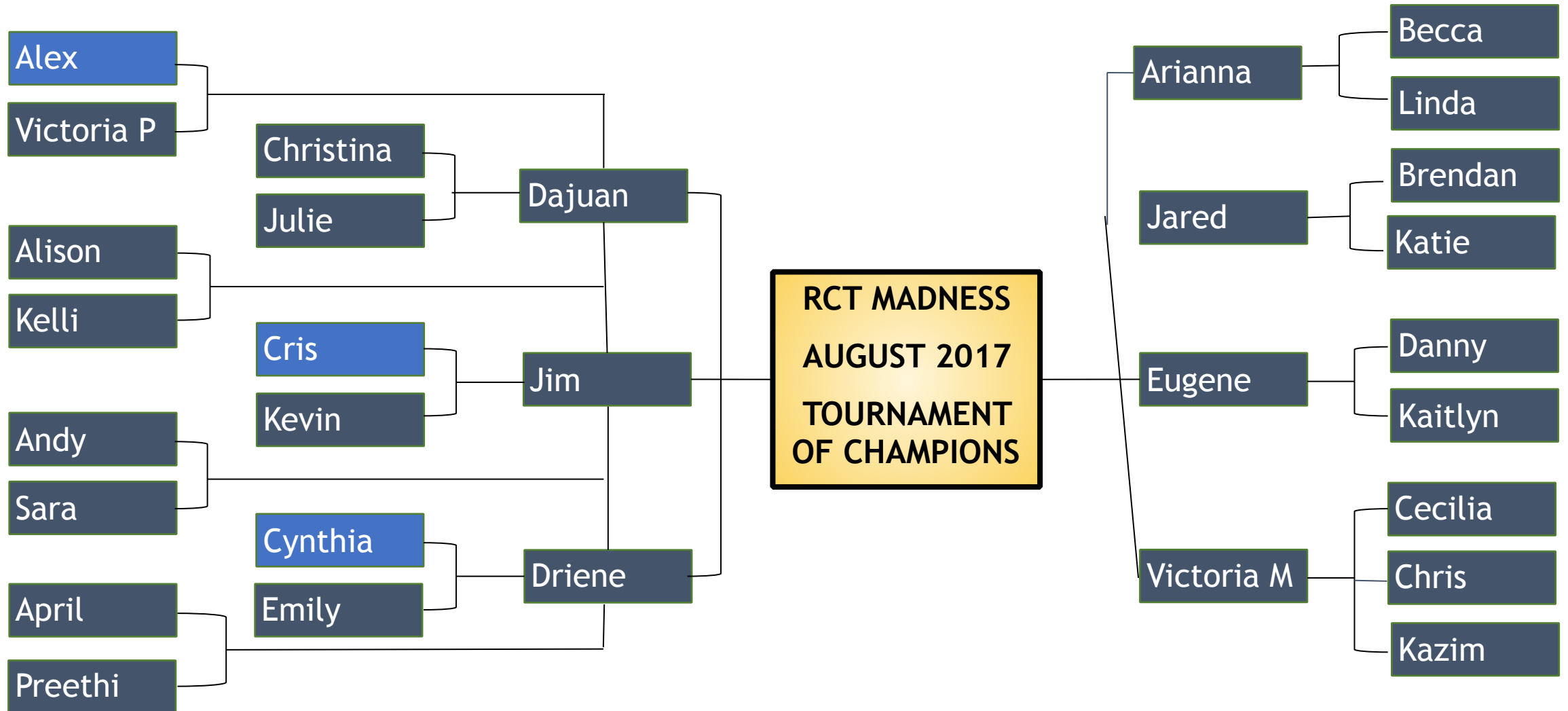
# #Team Teacher Outreach



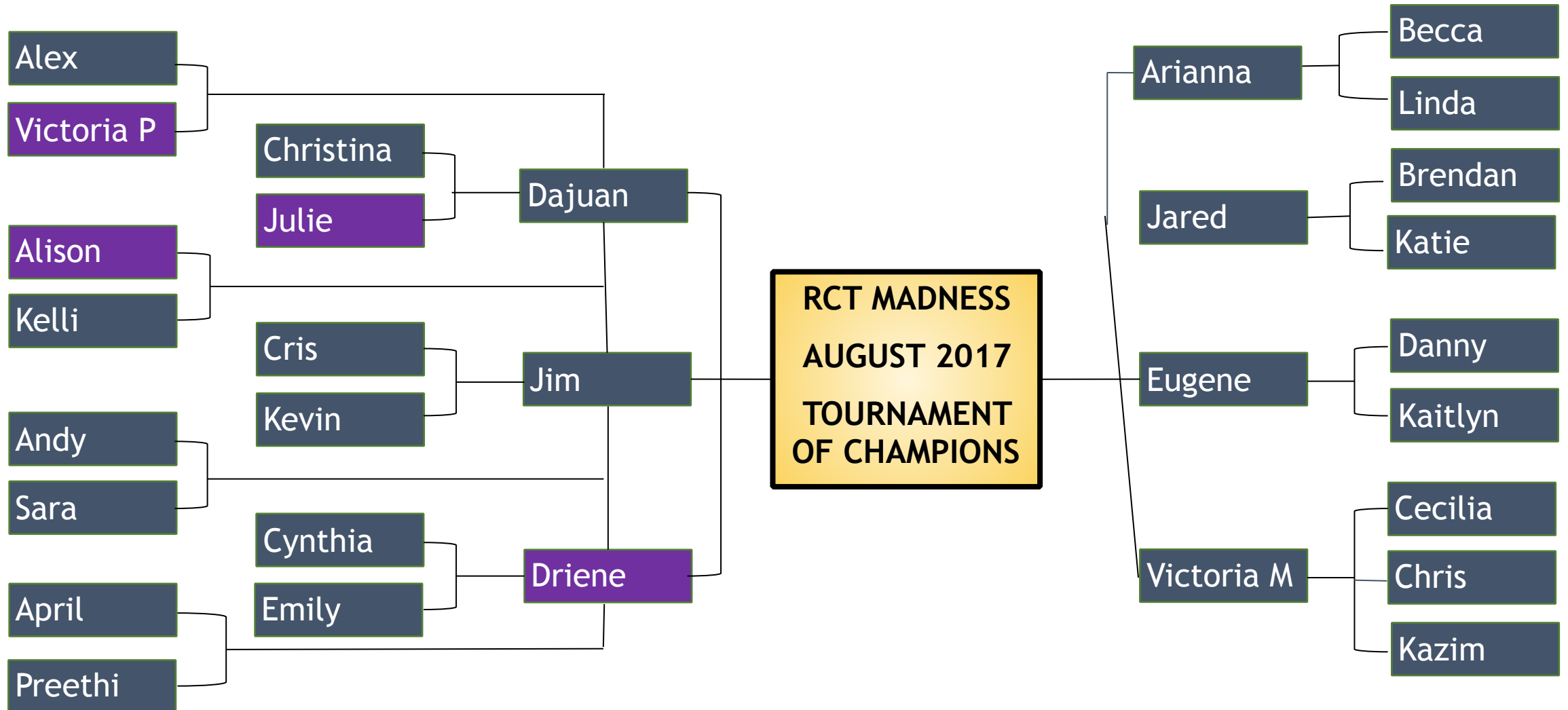
# #Team Roster Management



# #Team Parent Calls



# #Team Salesforce Entry



# Facilitating Organizational Buy-In



**INCENTIVES /  
GROWTH**



**TRAINING /  
PREPARATION**




**GRATITUDE**

Icons: “training” by Phansan Ubalee, TH  
“performance improvement by Bold Yellow, US  
“kind by Zoo Studios, GB


# Project Management

## **What you can do:**

- ✓ Create a project plan
  - ✓ Create a staffing plan that includes roles/skills and hours required
  - ✓ Create a budget and document all assumptions included in estimated costs
  - ✓ Facilitate a conversation about working styles & communication preferences
  - ✓ Document all meeting notes and major decisions
- 
- Decorative geometric shapes in blue, green, purple, and yellow at the bottom of the slide.

# Project Management

**Crucial** in order to:

- ✓ Be as transparent as possible with your staff
  - ✓ Be as transparent as possible within the partnership
  - ✓ Meet deadlines and expectations of all parties involved
  - ✓ Balance your project workload with the rest of your job!
- 
- Decorative geometric shapes at the bottom of the slide: a blue triangle on the left, a green triangle in the center, a purple triangle on the right, and a yellow triangle on the far right.

# Project Management

Resource Examples:

- [Sample project plan](#)
- [Sample staffing plan](#)





# Activity Time: Speed Consulting!



Source: imgflip.com

# Today's Takeaways – One More Time!

- 1) Your organization's voice MATTERS!
- 2) The more you can plan in advance, the more effective your partnership will be.



# Additional Resources

Chicago Beyond (2019): [Why Am I Always Being Researched?](#) (report examining dynamics of power and equity between community organizations, researchers, and funders)

William T. Grant Foundation: ["Research-Practice Partnerships"](#) (resource website with a ton of information and examples/best practices)

William T. Grant Foundation (2019): [Five Ways RPPs Can Fail and How to Avoid Them.](#)

[National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships](#) (website with clearinghouse of resources)



# Thank You!

I would love to hear from you! Please reach out. 😊

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Urban Initiatives

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