

## UNIT 2





# Unit 2: The Importance of Place

## UNIT OVERVIEW

Where did your community originate? What assets make your community valuable or meaningful to its members? Participants strengthen their connection to their local community by exploring its history, and discovering what influenced its current state. Participants begin to develop community asset maps.

UNIT 2		
2A	DESCRIPTION AND GOAL	MINIMUM TIME
Activity	<b>The Gift</b> Goal: To help participants recognize the unique gift they provide their community.	5 minutes
Lesson	<b>Defining Community</b> Goal: To explore key concepts and definitions associated with various communities.	10 minutes
	<b>Our Town</b> Goal: To help participants understand the life of their community in the broader context of history.	20 minutes
Reflection	<b>My History</b> Goal: To help participants understand history as a current blending of daily choices and decisions made by ordinary people.	10 minutes
2B	DESCRIPTION AND GOAL	MINIMUM TIME
Activity	<b>Rules Rule</b> Goal: To understand how rules provide a community structure toward obtaining goals.	15 minutes
Lesson	<b>Who Makes the Rules?</b> Goal: To understand the people and organizations behind a rule or law.	20 minutes
Reflection	<b>Power Source</b> Goal: To help participants understand laws and policies as part of a system that individuals can change.	10 minutes
<b>TOTAL UNIT TIME</b>		90 minutes

### Supplies:

- Envelopes (one per person)
- Small slips of paper (one per person)
- Pens/pencils
- Markers
- Flip chart or large pieces of paper
- One or more local speakers
- Journals
- One object per group of 4-5 participants
- Open space
- Phone books (from several areas, if available)
- Community Definition handout (page 50)
- Rules Rule handout (page 51)
- Power Source worksheet (page 52)



UNIT 2		
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## UNIT 2A: ACTIVITY

**The Gift****Goal:**

To help participants recognize the unique gift they provide their community.

**Description:**

This activity introduces participants to the concept of personal and community assets. Participants will examine and celebrate the assets or “Gifts” present in their newly-formed group. Each participant will take a moment and consider what “gift” they possess. Participants then write that personal gift (characteristic) on a piece of paper and place it in an envelope. Once the envelopes have been shuffled each participant takes an envelope, opens it and reads the gift to the rest of the group.

**Supplies:**

- Envelopes (one per person)
- Small slips of paper (one per person)

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Pens or pencils

Markers

### **Directions:**

1. Ask everyone to sit in a large circle. Keep enough space to allow for privacy as they write.
2. Give out a slip of paper, something to write with, and an envelope.
3. Say or paraphrase the following:  
"Every person is unique. And, each has a quality that is their own special characteristic, what can be thought of as their gift. It might be honesty, or being a good friend, or a good listener, or loyal, or a hard worker, or gets good grades, or they are funny. Take a minute and think about what it is about you that is special, that is a gift that you bring to this group. Even though you will probably have several gifts, write down the one that you like the most and put it in the envelope."
4. Have someone collect the envelopes.
5. Shuffle the envelopes and redistribute them to the participants.
6. Go around the circle and have each person read the gift in the envelope. If you included names, have them read those as well. If the group is new to each other, read the name first, have that person identify him/herself and then read the gift.
7. Have someone list each of the gifts on a separate piece of paper. Place an additional mark beside gifts mentioned more than once.
8. Gather up and save the envelopes.
9. Ask participants to look at the various gifts their group includes and give themselves a "round of applause" for the gifts they possess.

Sometimes sharing personal gifts can be uncomfortable. In this activity, gifts can either be kept anonymous or, if it is appropriate for the group, names can be included. The advantage of including names is that it connects participants with gifts and allows participants to connect with others who share similar gifts. The danger is that some might feel vulnerable as others might disagree with a participants' self-assessment or, worse, be ridiculed.



Notes:

UNIT 1A: LESSON

## Defining Community

### Goal:

To explore key concepts and definitions associated with various communities.

### Description:

Facilitator leads a group brainstorming to list key language and concepts used to define “community.” The group also discusses dictionary definitions of “community.” This activity will help participants discover the role they play in several community groups.

### Supplies:

- Flip chart or large pieces of paper
- Writing or marking pens
- Community Definition handout (page 50)

### Directions:

1. Begin by asking the question “what is a community?”
2. List participants’ answers on flipchart.
3. Help participants to be specific by asking clarifying questions such as:
  - “Can you explain what you mean?”
  - “Can you give an example?”
4. Once it seems that the group is out of suggestions, review the list and ask if there is anything that should be added.
5. Combine similar words or phrases with help from the group, and place the key elements on a separate piece of paper.
6. Distribute copies of the Community Definition handout.
7. Paraphrase the following lead-in:

“The goal of this unit is to help you gain a deeper understanding of the concept of community. Community is defined by a number of characteristics. Here is one dictionary definition.”

8. Read the definition or ask a participant to read it. Check for understanding.
9. Ask participants how their list compares with the dictionary definition. Have participants complete the handout describing similarities and differences between definitions.
10. Ask participants to identify the specific communities they are connected to. These will be used later as they design and construct their "Me Chart."



**Wait Time**

- Waiting for participants to contribute their thoughts or answers is one of the HARDEST things for facilitators to learn.
- Silence is okay!
- Silently count to seven before giving additional prompts or calling on another person.

Notes:

UNIT 2A: LESSON

## Our Town

### Goal:

To help participants understand the life of their community in the broader context of history.

### Description:

In this lesson, participants explore the history of the community and what “gifts” (personal, natural resources, financial, etc.) were necessary for the growth of the community. Activities and discussions will help participants understand the life of their community in the broader context of history.

### Supplies:

- One or more local speakers

### Directions:

Begin with an activity called Wagon Wheel. Wagon Wheel allows participants to share and receive information from each other by practicing active listening skills.

#### Wagon Wheel Directions:

1. Have participants count off by two's. Be sure that there are two equal groups. The facilitator can participate, if necessary.
2. Ask all number one's to stand in a circle facing in, with an arm's length between each person. Now ask participants to turn around and face outward from the center of the circle.
3. Have the number two's form an outer circle facing the number one's. Every person should have a partner. Explain:  
“I will ask a question. First one group will have time (usually one minute) to answer a question. The other group can only listen. No verbal responses are allowed. During this activity, you will not only be sharing your thoughts when it is your turn

to talk, each person will also practice active listening. What are some active listening skills (eye contact, nodding, smiling)?”

Once each group has answered the question, rotate the circles. You can have one circle move three partners in one direction (left or right) and announce the next question.

For a higher level of activity, have one circle move 3 or 4 partners left. Then have the other group also move 3 or 4 partners to the left. Then move one group back to the right, etc. At each stop, partners can introduce themselves before moving to their final spot where they actually answer a question.

Questions should target the learning goals of this lesson. Here are some possible questions:

- What is your favorite pastime? Why? (builds community, relationships)
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why? (builds connections to interests and helps to increase geographical awareness)
- What is your favorite food? And where is your favorite place to get it? (local community awareness)
- What do you like best about your town and your community? Why? (community connection)
- What is the best thing about your school? Why? (values, personal perspective)
- Who is your hero? Why? You don't have one? Why not? What should a hero be like? What would it take to become your hero? (personal values, history)
- If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be? Why? (personal values and motivation)

**Debrief:**

Ask volunteers to share some of the answers they heard to specific questions. If appropriate, have participants identify the individual who made the statement. For example, someone might say, "I heard Jennifer say that her favorite place to eat is Applebee's on 99<sup>th</sup> street." Or, "David would like to go to Alaska because he loves mountain climbing and wants to hike there." This can help build stronger connections.

Following the Wagon Wheel activity, have the group sit to "Hear the Story" of their local community from a guest speaker.

**Hear the Story:**

Have guest speakers share some history about the community.

- ✓ Be sure to properly prepare guest speakers so that they understand the goals and the time allotment. If possible, allow time for questions.



**Guidelines for Guest Speaker**

For the highest impact, the history of the community must be concise and specific. In advance, try to determine two or three of the most important pieces of information about your community history and ensure that the participants clearly understand those facts. Too much information will take too long and will likely be lost. Focus on a couple of key points or events. Also, include a brief account of what decisions led the speaker to the community.



UNIT 2A: REFLECTION

## My History

### Goal:

To help participants understand history as a current blending of daily choices and decisions made by ordinary people.

### Description:

Participants identify two or three events that have influenced their lives. Then, time permitting, they will picture their future history and identify choices that will lead to that future history.

### Supplies:

- Journals
- Pens/pencils

### Directions:

1. Pass out journals.
2. Then say or paraphrase:  
"Each person is here today because of decisions that were made by them and by others. Think about what decisions had to be made for you to be here. What decisions were made that brought you to this community? (e.g., Family moved to town for employment, to be closer to other family, etc.) In your journal, write the following statement - "If my \_\_\_\_\_ (or If I) didn't \_\_\_\_\_ then I wouldn't have \_\_\_\_\_."  
Fill in the blanks (or draw a picture) in your journal.
3. If time allows, ask:  
"Think about your future. Where do you want to live? What do you want to do? What kind of decisions would you have to make to reach those goals? Write in your journal: In the future I hope to \_\_\_\_\_. In order to do that, I need to \_\_\_\_\_."

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UNIT 2		
2B	DESCRIPTION AND GOAL	MINIMUM TIME
Activity	<b>Rules Rule</b> Goal: To understand how rules provide a community structure toward obtaining goals.	15 minutes
Lesson	<b>Who Makes the Rules?</b> Goal: To understand the people and organizations behind a rule or law.	20 minutes
Reflection	<b>Power Source</b> Goal: To help participants understand laws and policies as part of a system that individuals can change.	10 minutes

### UNIT 2B: ACTIVITY

## Rules Rule

### Goal:

To understand how rules provide a community structure toward obtaining goals.

### Description:

This activity demonstrates the importance of knowing the rules in order to successfully accomplish a goal -- in this case, successfully completing the relay. As small teams, participants will be asked to complete a simple relay without knowing the rules. Every time a rule is broken the team must start over. Rules will be revealed incrementally.

This activity demonstrates how difficult and frustrating it can be to try to accomplish a goal when the process is not clearly understood, particularly if participants do not get to create the rules or if the rules seem confusing.

This game is a simple relay (but with unusual rules) that requires members of a team to move across an area and retrieve an object. On the surface it seems like an easy task. However, there are very specific rules for moving, for picking up the object and for returning it.

**Supplies:**

- One object per group of 4-5 participants
- Open space
- Rules Rule handout (page 51)

**Directions:**

1. Break the group into small teams of any size. Three to five members to a team is ideal.
2. Set the objects opposite from the starting line at least 20 feet away, but not so far that participants get too tired.
3. Have each team identify themselves with a number or a name.
4. Say or paraphrase:  
"As a team, you will send one member at a time to retrieve the object and return it to the start line. Continue until all team members have retrieved the ball and returned it to the start line.  
  
"This game has a catch. There are specific rules that you must follow, but you have to work together to figure out what they are. Each step has its own rule. If you break a rule, I will ask you to begin again. The first team that retrieves all of the objects wins."  
  
5. Line up in a row. When the first participant is ready, shout "go!"
6. When a rule of the game is broken, shout out the team's name and ask them to start over. Give each participant two attempts to successfully retrieve and return the object. After two attempts, the participant should move to the back of the line and the next participant will try.

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7. After three team members have been unsuccessful, allow the next person in line to come and obtain a copy of the list of the rules, listed in random order (Rules Rule handout).
8. The participant returns and shows the rules to the other team members.
9. Team members must decide which rule is first and then the next team member in line tries the selected rule.
10. If unsuccessful, the team member must return and attempt a different rule. Since all teams are using the same set of rules, teams can learn from each other's success (or failure).
11. Once the proper order of the rules has been discovered, each team member must complete the relay.
12. The first team to have all members complete the relay wins.

### **Rules:**

**Step 1** (to reach the object). Hop twice on one foot and then twice on the other.

**Step 2** (once the object is reached). Circle the object twice.

**Step 3** (to return the object). Using feet and walking backward, push the object back to the start line.

**Step 4** (to replace the object). Pick up the object and skip back to replace it for the next team member.

**Step 5** (to complete). Run back to the start line and tag next team member.

Groups may get frustrated and want to quit. Encourage them to continue. However, quitting is acceptable; in fact, that is the point. People often quit because they get frustrated when they try to make a difference and don't know the process.

UNIT 2B: LESSON

## Who Makes the Rules?

### Goal:

To understand the people and organizations behind a given rule or law.

### Description:

Participants will discover who makes various rules, how they are made and who enforces them.

### Supplies:

- Flip chart paper and markers
- Phone books (from several areas, if available)

### Directions:

1. Say or paraphrase:  
"Are rules good or bad? Why? We all have rules we must follow. But who makes the rules? Let's make a list of who makes the rules."
2. As the responses are listed ask:
  - "What rules do they make?"
  - "Who enforces the rules?"
  - "How can they be changed?"
3. Make four columns on flipchart paper or a whiteboard. One will be for the Rule Makers, one for the Rules, one for the Enforcers and one for Change Agents. Then add:  
"In order to make a change, we need to recognize that policies and laws are part of a process, part of a system. To make a change requires that we understand that system and to know who actually is responsible for making the decision, for enforcing that decision and how those decisions can be changed. For our discussion, we will talk about four elements

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of that system: Rule Makers, Rules, Enforcers, and Change Agents. Rule Makers are those who actually determine a policy or a law like speed limits, dress codes, curfews, recycling, or graduation requirements. Rules are the official policy, law or rule created by the Rule Makers. Enforcers are the ones responsible for making certain the laws are obeyed or policies are enforced. The Change Agents are the various methods we can use to influence the Rule Makers' decisions.

4. Then ask: "Who makes the rules in our community?"
5. Using the phone book (and phone calls if necessary), determine what kind of local government exists (manager, mayor, city council, commissioner).
6. Determine if there are any state agency offices in your community.

Have some examples ready that the group can identify with. Rule Makers could be government, school boards, parents or employers. Rules could include speed laws, dress codes, curfews, school attendance and work schedules. Enforcers could be police, school principals and bosses/managers. Change Agents could include changing laws, changing elected officials, negotiations, advocacy and direct action.



Notes:

UNIT 2B: REFLECTION

## Power Source

### Goal:

To help participants understand laws and policies as part of a system that individuals can change.

### Description:

To understand how laws and policies are created, it is necessary to understand who makes certain policies, who is responsible for enforcing them, and how policy makers can be influenced. Using the Power Source Worksheet, participants identify up to three laws or policy issues that they are interested in, consider who the Rule Makers and the Enforcers are and try to identify possible Change Agents.

### Supplies:

- Power Source Worksheet (page 52)
- Pens/pencils

### Directions:

1. Pass out the Power Source worksheet.
2. Explain:  
"This is a worksheet that will help us better understand how we can affect change in our community. Think of one, two or three rules that you can chart on the worksheet. They don't have to be only rules you disagree with or that you want to change. The goal is to figure out how the rules fit into the community system."
3. Write the rule or law in the Rules column. Then, try to determine who made the rule, who enforces it and how it can be changed.
4. Have participants fold their worksheets and place them in their journals.

# Community Definition

Community is defined by a number of characteristics. Here is one dictionary's set of definitions of community.

**com • mu • ni • ty**

1. A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government. The district or locality in which such a group lives.
2.
  - a. A group of people having common interests: the scientific community; the international business community.
  - b. A group viewed as forming a distinct segment of society: the community of color, senior citizens.
3.
  - a. Similarity or identity: a community of interests.
  - b. Sharing, participation and fellowship.
4. Society as a whole; the public
5. A group of plants and animals living and interacting with one another in a specific region under relatively similar environmental conditions. The region occupied by a group of interacting organisms.

SIMILARITIES TO YOUR LIST	DIFFERENCES FROM YOUR LIST

**Rules Rule:**

Run

Hopping twice on one foot, then twice on the other

Push

Walk backward

Circle twice

Skip

---

**Rules Rule:**

Run

Hopping twice on one foot, then twice on the other

Push

Walk backward

Circle twice

Skip

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**Rules Rule:**

Run

Hopping twice on one foot, then twice on the other

Push

Walk backward

Circle twice

Skip

# Power Source Worksheet

## Understanding and Charting Laws, Policies and Influence

Use this chart to identify laws and policies. Identify who makes them, who enforces them and how they can be changed. Begin by identifying a law, rule or policy and place it in the Rules column. Then find out who made the law or the policy. Why was this rule made? The phone book and a phone call can usually provide the answer. How is this law or policy enforced? Then try to determine how to influence those who make the laws, rules and policies.

Using this chart will help focus activities on the proper source. For example, if the school board sets the dress code policy then the principal and teachers are responsible for enforcing the policy. Appealing to the principal or teachers (Enforcers) to change a dress code policy will most likely be ineffective unless they are also the Rule Makers. To change a dress code policy would require appealing to the school board. In order to be effective, the area of influence (Change Agents) must be identified. Then an action or activity can be designed to target that area of influence for maximum change effect.

Rules	Rule Makers	Why	Enforcers	Change Agents
List the law or policy.	Who is responsible for setting policy or passing law?	Why was the rule made?	Who is responsible for ensuring compliance?	How are the Rule Makers influenced?
Laws, policies, rules, guidelines, regulations.	Boards, agencies, legislators, citizens, federal government.	Event, situation, circumstance, precedent.	Police, schools, governmental agencies, organizations.	Elections, advocacy, boycott/boycott campaigns.

UNIT 2A: THE GIFT

## Gift Quilt

### Description:

This project uses art to help students represent their gifts, keeping the mood fun, and encouraging them to open up.

### Supplies:

- 6" x 6" card stock in various colors
- Markers, colored pencils, magazines, any other creative art supplies
- Colored duct tape

### Directions:

1. Break students into groups of five or six.
2. Paraphrase or say:  
"Each person here has a unique gift. You bring that gift to our community. Through combining all our unique gifts we will create an amazing project. Right now we are going to construct a Gift Quilt to illustrate the diversity of the talents or gifts that make up our community. For thousands of years, all over the world, quilts have been used to tell stories and to represent communities. Each one of us today will design at least one patch to represent the unique gifts they bring to our community. When our quilt is completed it will tell the story of how our community formed."
3. Pass out squares and art supplies, and have the students spread out around the room.
4. Give students 5-7 minutes to create patches, then collect them.
5. Construct quilt using Duct tape as bonding. (This can be done at end of day.)
6. Present quilt before Unit 4 and have it visible for the rest of the units.

UNIT 2A: DEFINING COMMUNITY

## Art Project

### Directions:

Break into small groups, preferably with a facilitator with each group, especially with younger ages. Give each group a large piece of paper and art supplies and ask them as a group to artistically represent their community. They are not limited to the paper, can use poetry, skits, whatever gets their point across. When all groups have finished, have each group explain their artwork to the other groups.

UNIT 2A: DEFINING COMMUNITY

## Common Ground

### Description:

This game reinforces the theme of community and the understanding that a community can be more than just where you live.

### Directions:

1. Set up chairs in a circle with a chair for every participant but none for the facilitator (so there is one less chair than total people). Each person is seated with facilitator standing in the middle. The facilitator explains that the goal of the game is to see what kinds of communities and interests are shared within the group.
2. The facilitator should explain, "I share common ground with people who..." and complete the statement with something that is true of him/herself. If the statement is true for any seated participant, they must get up and change places with another person at least 2 seats away. *(For example, "with people who wear glasses" and all those with glasses must find a new chair.)* After the scramble, one new person is left without a chair, and the process repeats. Make sure to set safety guidelines before beginning!
3. Often it is best to start this out lightly ("...with people who have lived in another state") then work into deeper issues depending on the maturity and safety of the group with whom you are working ("...with people who have been affected by poverty"). The facilitator can do this by purposely getting stuck in the middle and introducing a deeper topic. Younger kids may do best sticking to lighter topics.
4. Finish by debriefing with them, talking about what they saw, what communities exist within their little community, what they all have in common.

UNIT 2A: OUR TOWN

## Worksheet

*Worksheet for younger ages to reinforce understanding and get them thinking about their community and their place within it.*

### Directions:

1. Create worksheet with the following questions:
  - What do you like best about this city?
  - What do you like least about this city?
  - Describe your favorite place to visit in this city?
  - What groups of people in this city might need our help this year? List three.
  - Write three sentences describing a time you helped another person in your community.
  - When you finish the questions above, turn this paper over and draw a map of your neighborhood.
2. Have participants fill out worksheet.
3. Afterwards, youth can share their answers and talk about their community, either before the speaker comes in or at another time in Unit 2. Some groups might not be excited about doing a worksheet, but these questions you could be used as discussion or as prompts for art pieces, charades, or presentations. The important thing is to get them thinking and to bring these concepts into their familiar world to help them understand.

UNIT 2A: MY HISTORY

## Worksheet

### Directions:

1. Create worksheet with the following questions:
  - What country do you come from? (example: United States)
  - What city and state were you born in?
  - Have you lived in this town your whole life, or did you move to this town? If you moved to this town, what state or city did you move from?
  - Do you or someone in your family speak a language other than English? If yes, what other languages do you or your family speak?
  - Think about your future. In three sentences, describe where you would like to live when you grow up and what you would like to do to make the world you live in a better place. (Example: I would like to live in Texas, and become the first female president so that I could pass laws to help people get better paying jobs.)

### Note:

Of course, these are just examples. Any questions that you think would help the youth better think through these issues would be excellent.

UNIT 2A: MY HISTORY

## Life River

*A substitute using art to help students reflect on where they have come from and where they are going.*

### Directions:

Give each student a large piece of butcher paper and various art supplies. Instruct youth to draw their life as a river (alternatively you could do it as a map), noting important events, where they came from, where they are now and where they are going. These “Life Rivers” can be shared with the group if youth feel comfortable. Dialogue should focus on the recognition that the choices people make affect their own lives and the lives of others. Everyday decisions change history. You might even use a historical example to show that choices made and actions taken can influence large scale events.

UNIT 2B: RULES RULE

## RULES RULE CARD GAME

Using a card game instead of a relay can accomplish the same goal and might be more appropriate for some groups. Here are instructions for one specific card game, but any game that the youth don't already know would work.

### Supplies:

- Enough decks of cards for each group of 4 or 5 to have one
- Plastic Baggies
- Strips of paper—each one with one rule of the game written on it

### Directions:

1. This game, called Mao, is similar to Uno but has a lot of hidden rules, and the point is that to learn the rules, you must get them wrong and earn a penalty first. Nobody tells you up front what all the rules are.
2. Divide into groups of 4-5, each with a deck of cards and a bag with 8-9 strips of paper, each with one rule written on it. One piece of paper also says, "You are the Chairman."
3. Play runs like Uno—Each player starts with 7 cards in their hand, and the rest are face down in a stack in the center. A card from the center stack is turned over, and the player to the dealer's left must play a card from their hand that is the same suit or number as the card showing. If they do not have a card in their hand that will work, they draw from the stack until they get one that works. After they have played, the person to their left does the same thing with the new top card, and it continues around the circle. The first person to run out of cards is the winner.
4. But, there are hidden rules written on the papers in the bag. Instruct the youth to draw the papers out of the bag so that each person has 1 or 2. They should not show or tell anyone what is on their papers. Each person now has 1 or 2 of the hidden rules. Nobody knows all the rules—just the ones that they have drawn from the bag. If

someone breaks a rule that you have, you say “Penalty,” and the rule breaker has to draw a card. After you say “Penalty,” you read out loud the rule that they broke. You are in charge of enforcing your rules for the entire game.

5. Ask each group for the Chairman to raise their hand. If there is a question about what a rule means or if it has been broken, the Chairman decides the outcome.
6. Examples of hidden rules: These rules should be written out ahead of time on separate slips of paper. Feel free to make up your own fun rules.
  - To talk, first say “point of order” and everyone must put down their cards. Anyone who speaks without saying “point of order” or who does not lay down their cards when they hear “point of order” earns a penalty.
  - When a 7 is played, person playing it must say “Have a nice day” or get a penalty.
  - When someone has just one card left, they must say “Mao” or earn a penalty.
  - If someone lays a jack, everyone must clap or earn a penalty.
  - 8’s are wild. If someone lays an 8 and does not call a suit, they earn a penalty.
7. This game could generate some great discussion about Rules, the importance of knowing them and how frustrating it is to break rules you didn’t even know about.