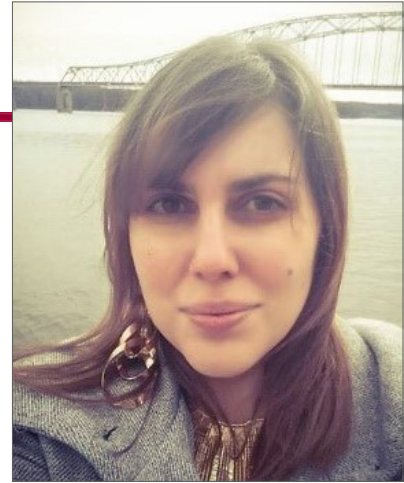


Ermina Soler

Ermina Soler was born into generational poverty and raised in the “projects” of Brooklyn, New York. She spent much of her young adult life raising her two children on the island of Puerto Rico where she experienced a “different kind of poverty.” In her quest for a better life for herself and her children, she relocated to Iowa in the Midwest, seeking the “All-American Dream,” where she came across Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin’-By World.



As a graduate of Getting ahead, Soler went on to lead and coordinate efforts in her community, co-implementing a community engagement model that brings together all socioeconomic class groups with the common goal of building relationships of mutual respect. Through her personal experience and knowledge of diversity, she offered weekly gatherings to share insight into the struggles and barriers individuals and families face when experiencing daily instabilities. Soler inspired and led that work for eight years.

“My aha! moment occurred as an investigator in Getting Ahead in 2008. While learning about the research continuum and the causes of poverty, I was able to accept where my individual choices had contributed to my experience living in poverty, and I was able to forgive myself for the circumstances that were outside of my control. I learned how phenomena like the cliff effect play an integral part in whether or not a person will ‘get ahead.’ I also realized the importance of understanding how systems operate, not only to get needs met, but to navigate through them without forming a dependency on them.”

Selected workshops presented by Ermina Soler

- ◆ Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities
- ◆ Workplace Stability

With consultants and publications around the world, aha! Process helps communities move individuals, families, and entire neighborhoods out of poverty and into sustainability and growth.



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