

**CREATING VISION AND INSPIRING A HOPEFUL FUTURE THROUGH AN
APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY AT ARENA FIJIAN ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH,
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

Walter R. Peavy, Jr.

This project created a positive environment in which eighteen members of Arena Fijian Assembly of God in Sacramento, California used Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to participate together in dreaming of a hopeful and positive future and in casting vision for that future. The group consisted of both pastoral leadership and church members; the opportunity for inclusive participation was met with a favorable response.

In the three-hour AI presentation, participants utilized AI as a positive tool to identify the best of Arena Fijian Assembly of God. Members were asked to dream big dreams regarding their church, based on what they valued and appreciated about Arena Fijian Church. The AI gave opportunity for all members to participate, to share their desires and best hopes for their church.

Individuals provided a written response to a pre-session questionnaire, which gave each member an opportunity to reflect and respond to the best practices and values of Arena Fijian Assembly of God. Pretest and posttest surveys and post-session interviews also provided quantitative and qualitative assessment of the project.

This project recommended to Assemblies of God leaders—specifically Intercultural Ministries Directors and those ministering within a cross-cultural context—the ongoing need to intentionally build formal and informal relationships with ethnic pastors, churches and leaders. In cultivating attitudes of humility, trust, and mutual respect, foundations of successful cross-cultural ministries are more likely to occur.

Appreciative Inquiry could also serve as a useful tool for other cross-cultural settings—to create a hopeful future based on the best of a church's past.