



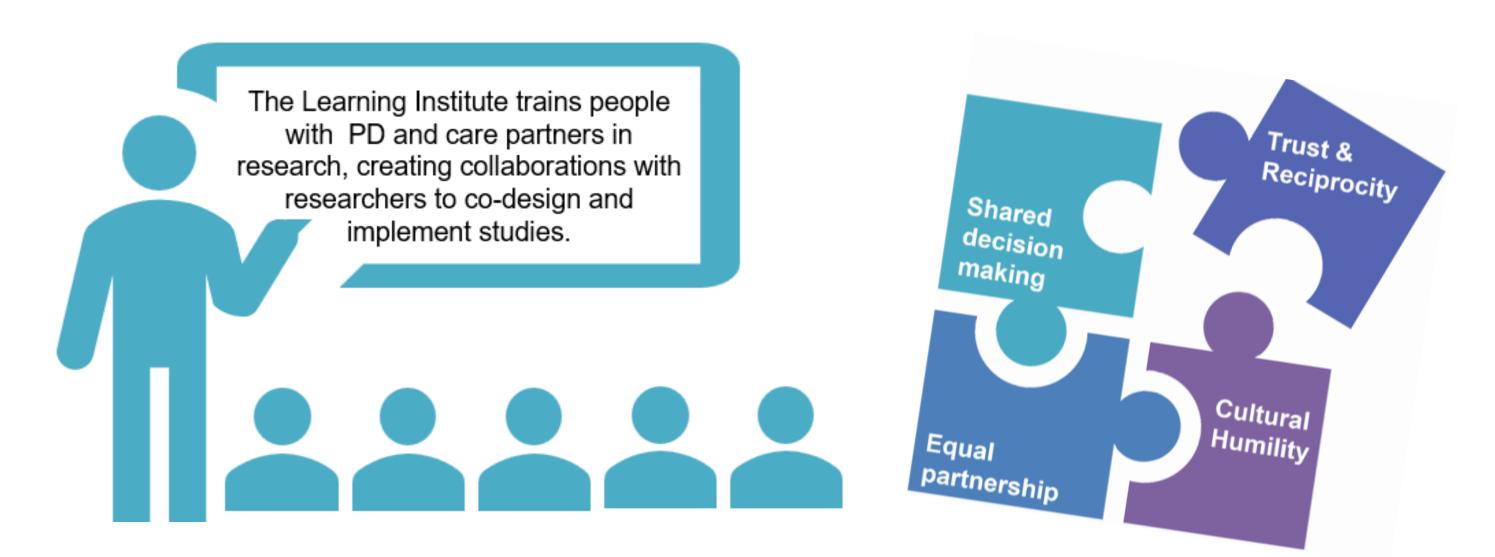


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### Background

- Black and African American people with Parkinson's disease (PD) face significant disparities in care, including delays in diagnosis and treatment, limited access to care, and historical exclusion from research.<sup>1,2</sup>
- To address these challenges, the **Parkinson's Foundation Research Advocacy Training** program, the **Learning Institute**, was tailored to engage, educate, and empower the Black community in Parkinson's research.





The Parkinson's Foundation Learning Institute was established in 2008 and has trained over 400 volunteers in research and patient engagement (research advocacy). We have created a national network of research advocates around the U.S. that are actively changing the face of Parkinson's disease research.

- Guided by best practices in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and patient engagement <sup>3,4</sup>, the Parkinson's Foundation built a coalition in 2020 led by Black and African American people with Parkinson's and their care partners.
- Black and African American clinicians, social workers, nurses and researchers were invited to join the coalition as key partners to driving systemic change among organizations and communities.

The first goal of the coalition was to *redesign and execute the* Parkinson's Foundation Learning Institute in a culturally responsive way for Black and African American communities and improve enrollment in **PDGENEration: Mapping the Future of Parkinson's Disease**, our groundbreaking initiative offering genetic testing, counseling and return of results at no cost to people living with Parkinson's. (See Figure 1)

# **Advancing Engagement of Black and African American Communities** in Parkinson's Research

### Figure 1: Redesign of the Parkinson's Foundation **Research Advocacy Training**

### LOGISTICS

- Coalition met biweekly for planning; the location and date was finalized – Atlanta, GA in Sept 2023
- Refined recruitment process to reduce potential barriers (e.g., modified application)
- Identified recruitment cohorts (FL, GA, NY, IL, NC) for sustainability - participants can continue research advocacy with support from Parkinson's Foundation staff. care network and partners

### **CURRICULUM & EVALUATION**

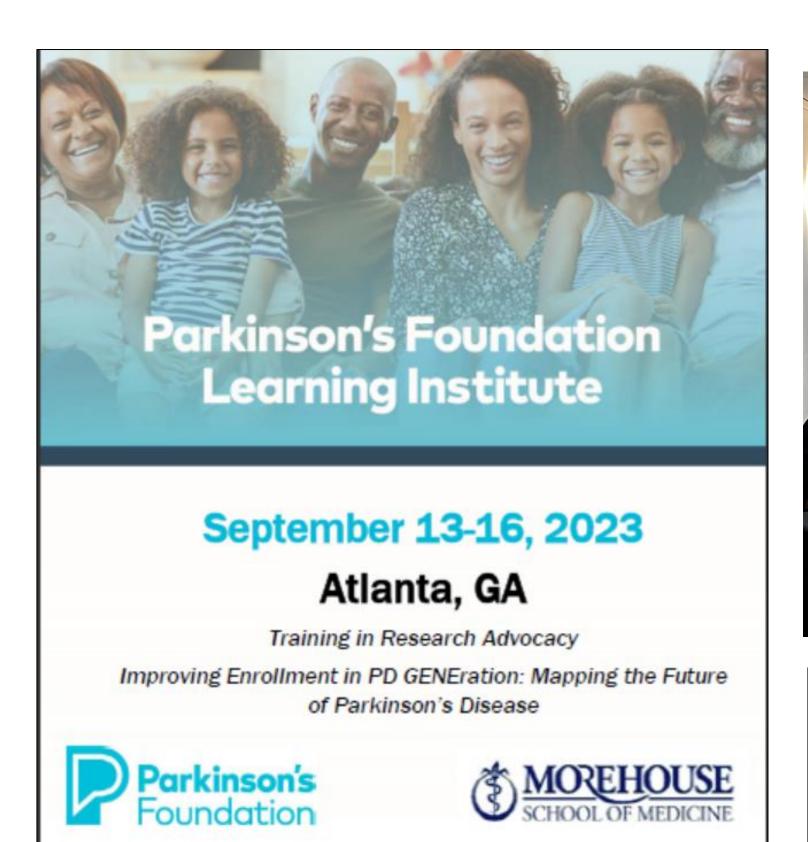
the Black and African relevant pedagogy)<sup>5</sup>

sustainability

Attendees (n=59) included members of the planning committee, faculty speakers and participants being trained as research advocates. 90% identify as Black or African American.

### Planning Committee/Faculty

- 5 people with Parkinson's, 4 care partners
- \*All are current Research Advocates, attended a prior Learning Institute
- 3 Movement Disorder Specialists
- 3 Patient/Research Coordinators
- 1 Social Worker
- 7 Parkinson's Foundation Staff \*Includes executive leadership, patient engagement team, research team



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Redesigned curriculum to align with the unique needs of American community (e.g., greater representation among speakers, less content and more discussion, culturally Expanded metrics to include pre and post measures of self-efficacy, experiences and attitudes towards research, acceptability, feasibility and

### OUTREACH AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Collaboration with Morehouse School of Medicine to advance equitable research
- Added a community day to the Learning Institute to
- engage community, health and faith-based organizations in partnerships and to provide information and enroll eligible individuals in PD GENEration
- Open House webinar was added before the Learning Institute to establish trust and build relationships

# Results

### Research Advocates

- 17 care partners, 16 people with Parkinson's
- 73% receive care from a Movement Disorder Specialist
- 73% female .
- Average age = 58 years old (range 30-79yrs old)
- Average years of diagnosis = 8 years (range 2-23 years)
- 90% live in suburban/urban area
- (recruited from Atlanta, Chicago, Charlotte)
- 71% have never been invited to take part in a . clinical trial



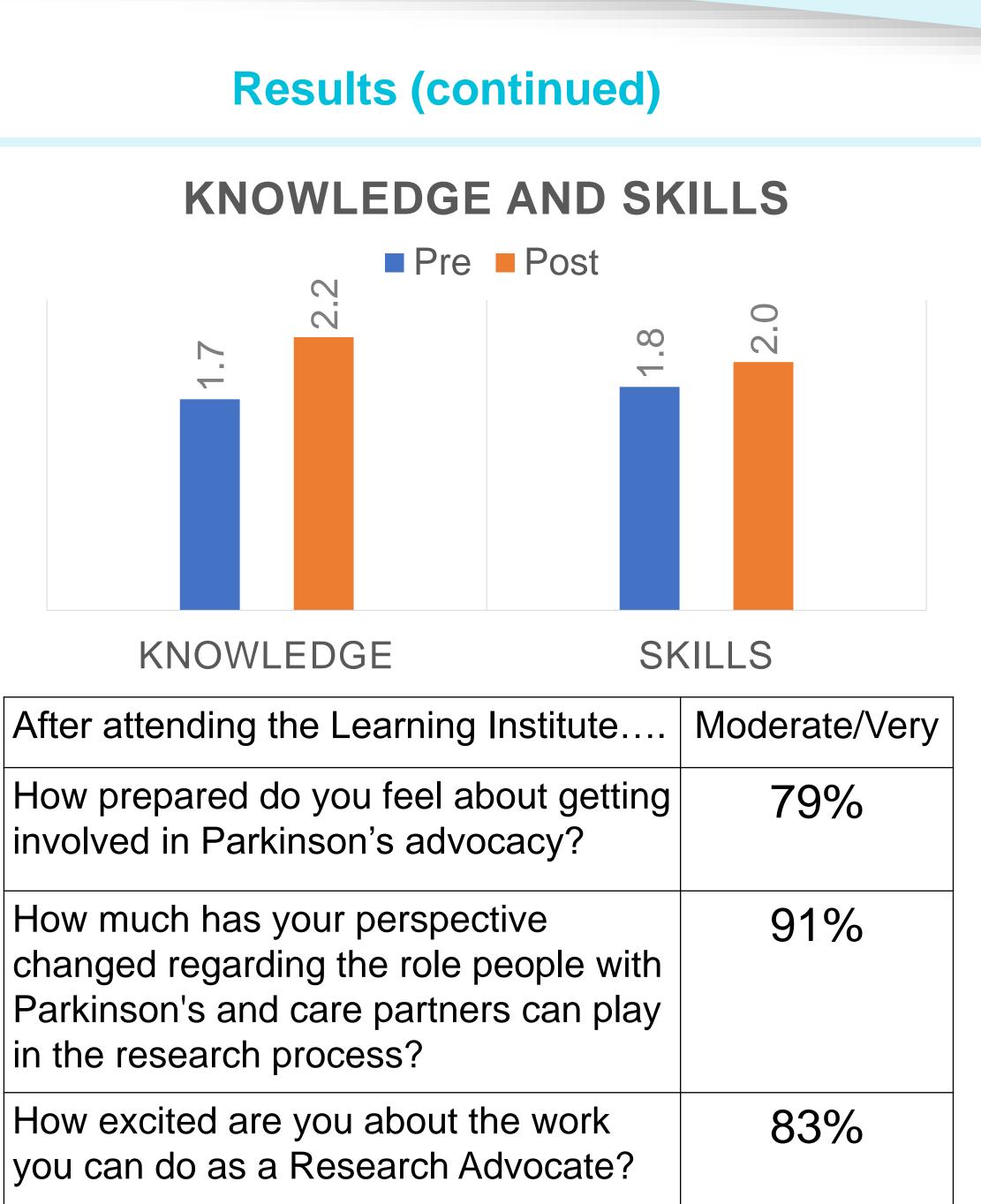
Quote from a participant "Blessed my relationship with my wife, a light went on because she was able to talk to other individuals, things that I have been trying to tell her for so long."

By the end of the Learning Institute, all eligible participants enrolled into PD GENEration. Quote from a participant - "PD GENEration will be worth" the try in order to achieve new medication to help Parkinson's patients."

## **Conclusions: Looking Ahead**

- treatments.
- and care.

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Engagement of the Black Parkinson's community as Research Advocates is important to advancing health equity. Continued education and skill-building on research and patient engagement is needed as research advocates form partnerships with researchers and scientists developing

The Parkinson's Foundation Learning Institute is a model to provide tailored training, shift perspectives, and generate excitement to help bridge the gaps in Parkinson's research

### References