of course, a dearth of studies on our research topic which made our research more pertinent.

Fast forward a year later, and our first paper turned into our first presentation at the largest conference in our field. Scared and terrified we entered our roundtable presentation to simply have a conversation with other scholars on different topics and present our research. We arrived to our table first because we were eager and were also afraid of getting lost. We sat across the table from professors and advanced Ph.D. students all who had already published and presented. They seemed much more at ease than either of us. After we began, we slowly shifted from scared to comfortable and finally to proud. Here we were presenting our research and we were in fact the experts. We were surrounded by our friends and colleagues who came to watch us, ask questions, and engage critically with us. We left with more questions, suggestions and people who were ready to volunteer to participate in our study. More importantly, we left knowing that we not only belonged in this space but that we could contribute to it in important ways. We weren’t there only to represent ourselves as scholars, our department or our university. We went and we represented our families, our hometowns (Pomona & Inglewood) and every person that helped us along the way and that was the most beautiful part.