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Quotations from Graduates:

I simply didn't know what I didn't know. The CPI course opened my eyes to all the resources, data, and tools available to community groups.—**Kyle Wherrity, Spring 2015**

The subject matter that was taught during the courses should be provided city-wide, meaning, I believe that any citizen of Philadelphia would benefit from the knowledge I learned in the last six weeks.—**Mary Chicorelli, Spring 2015**

The CPI program has introduced me to the world of planning and development. This program should be adopted by institutions to introduce students to career options and civic engagement opportunities.—**Ricardo Newell, Spring 2015**

I met many people passionately working on projects to strengthen their neighborhoods and willing to share resources to make all of our projects better than if we kept working in isolation.--**Karisa Barlow, Spring 2015**

I found the CPI course to be energizing and the instructors to be generous and encouraging.—**Eileen Talanian, Spring 2015**

"I believe as time goes on CPI will be credited with having played a vital role in Philadelphia's renaissance." --**Ron Francis, May 2014**

"This course helps build a sense of civic responsibility..."—**Spring 2014 participant**

"...I just wanted to personally thank you for your time and talents you gave to all of us during the spring 2014 CPI course. This course has motivated me beyond what I thought it would. It has encouraged me to think higher and outside the box. The classes were well planned, fun, organized, engaging and very insightful."-- **Ted Smith, Spring 2014**

"...Thank you for creating a nurturing, constructive learning space for the past several weeks. I want to learn as much as possible so that I can help my neighborhood achieve...well, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. :) This course has been a fantastic introduction to city planning and many aspects of development. I will continue to build on the foundation CPI has laid out and I am beyond grateful to have had the honor to participate in this class."—**Antonio Romero, Fall 2014**

"... This class was great. It definitely broadened my perspective of what is important to residents in their neighborhoods and how all these neighborhood activities can weave together for "city-wide" improvement. You are also a great person to coordinate the class."—**Philippa Campbell, Fall 2014**

"I feel that this program is critical for our future as a City (and as a community, and as a community of communities), so I want to do my part in ensuring its continuation and success... It would be an understatement to say that I feel empowered now... we were provided with tools, people, connections

and other resources to guide us. Citizens need to be less reactive and more proactive, especially in a world that is growing ever smaller. And knowledge is power.”—**Anthony Fasano, Fall 2014**

“I didn’t realize how many resources were available and how many questions could be answered with a little research. Every night after class I’ve felt so excited and empowered and ready to share!”—**Fall 2014 participant**

“What a very excellent experience. I would like to say the best part for me was meeting so many competent leaders. Every person I met is working so hard and with such heart to DO GOOD! It raised my spirits about Philadelphia's future! CPI fully deserves its high ranking on the Philadelphia City Planning Commission website. Thank you for accepting my application to join in the great thing you have created with CPI. You truly must expand to other cities that are less privileged and could use some empowerment.”—**Sylvia Palms, Fall 2014**

“The structure of the course- presentations followed by interactive projects- allows participants to instantly apply knowledge gained earlier in the class session, and uncover questions and challenges we may face when applying these ideas in our communities.” —**Fall 2014 participant**

“The opportunity to network with people from diverse neighborhoods made the course invaluable for understanding how much we have in common despite geographic differences. It truly felt like 100% Philadelphia.”—**Fall 2014 participant**

“I wanted to take the time to say thank you for providing this program and being a part of my personal growth and development, I’m always on a mission! This program has made me more tuff, stronger, and more aware and better equipped for where I’m headed! I thank you and send you my blessings... I love CPI and I recommend this knowledge and skills for many people from my walk of life!”—**Halik Jackson, Fall 2014**

“I can't say enough good things about CPI thus far, it's been eye opening and a great was to meet people from other neighborhoods. I'm still very new and unfamiliar with the process, so I've taken the "you can learn a lot by listening" approaching.”-- **Jim Jennings, Fall 2013**

“Through the CPI course I learned valuable insight into how city government works, and how clear methodical thinking to can set a future path -- both of which will be useful as I move to my next career. As a Philadelphia native and proud current resident, I thank you for the job you and your team have done to make the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection a great place to live, work, and play.” --**Desiree Wellborn Wayne, Fall 2013**

“Thank you again so much for your patience, and for all of the hard work you've put into CPI. It was a really fantastic opportunity, and I'm very glad that I was able to participate. You have been so helpful during the entire process, and I really appreciate your passion and desire to see people succeed! “ -- **Monica Manklang, Fall 2013**

“Thanks again for the opportunity to be a part of this co-hort, I honestly learned so much that I know will help me as I grow in this field of community work. If you ever need a volunteer or help with anything that I can be of assistance with please let me know. “ --**Stephanie Michel, Fall 2013**

“CPI demystifies the process of planning by pointing you to the resources necessary to make changes in your neighborhood. Whether you are a seasoned neighborhood leader or a new resident eager to be more active in the community CPI will help you in envisioning the necessary steps to create and follow through on a plan.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“Gained a feeling of forward momentum- that all things are possible and achievable at the level of community involvement- don’t need to depend on the ‘experts’ or the politicians.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“CPI enabled me to focus my energy and efforts toward actionable items that have proved successful in the past. The lessons learned and showed were most helpful to avoid the pitfalls and aim high for real and lasting improvement.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“I have learned so much from the great variety of guest speakers. I have a deeper understanding of planning and zoning (and other things!) that will help my neighborhood thrive. The expertise and willingness of the guest speakers to share insight is priceless.” --**Haley Dervinis- Point Breeze, Fall 2013**

“It is so easy to feel discouraged in a city where problems can feel so intractable. CPI, Donna and my fellow students, the wonderful presenters have created an atmosphere that is inspiring and hopeful; an important feeling to have to keep one going.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“With knowledge comes power. Through CPI I feel confident and ready to share knowledge with my neighbors so we can make educated decisions for planning that will best serve our communities needs.” **Haley Dervinis, Point Breeze, Fall 2013**

“There is a clarifying aspect to being in the presence of so many great leaders of our city and hearing what they have accomplished. That, alongside hearing the experiences and challenges that students have encountered, has created a space that propels me to think more creatively and strategically about my approach to community involvement and improvement.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“CPI has connected me with a network of neighborhood leaders for whom I can continue to learn from and collaborate with for positive change.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“CPI has built my level of confidence and knowledge in understanding planning and development of my community. Sharing ideas and processes with other community ‘leaders’ has been one of the best resources I’ve experienced.” --**Participant, Fall 2013**

“I encourage anyone with special interest to apply to become a “Certified Citizen Planner”. It’s a really cool and innovative initiative that most that pay attention to city politics might not expect to find in Philadelphia.” --**Luke Smith, Germantown, Spring 2012.**

“...It is people like you, and the work you do, that makes me proud of our city and very hopeful for Philadelphia’s future, for me and my children. I’d probably never leave this city anyway, but you make that path an easier one. I’m studying at Fels and you’re putting into practice the ideas that might otherwise be kicked endlessly around the halls of academia. It’s very encouraging, and I’m honored to be a part of it.” --**Luke Smith, Germantown, Spring, 2012.**

Attending the CPI class was truly a great experience. It provides the tools (knowledge) that helps to navigate through the myriad of processes that are critical to the success of any community planning. Collectively, the sessions provided me with the template for the creation of a meaningful plan that addresses all of the critical components for a comprehensive community plan. We now have a great starting point and tools available to shape our community thanks to the CPI.” --**Carolyn Moseley, Eastwick, Fall 2012.**

“This experience really helped me to understand the importance and impact of planning, get past my reservations of the unknown and know that as front line soldiers we are not alone and share the same vision; a better city and future for all.” --**Cassandra Green, Mill Creek, Spring 2011**

"Thank you CPI for helping me see my vision clearly, put it on the right path and bring it to fruition. Most importantly, I'm elated to have met so many wonderful and dedicated community leaders and faculty members. At this moment, I FEEL SO PROUD!"-- **Carol D. Tart, South, Fall 2011 (Facebook post)**

"Since graduating from CPI, I have felt more confident in discussing planning issues and contributing to my community. It has actually inspired me to explore new careers in urban commercial development and has broadened my initial interest in my civic association...I am also encouraging friends to apply to the CPI program and anyone who LOVES Philadelphia would benefit. I look forward to continuing my education with CPI and sharing my knowledge. Thank you!" --**Jennifer Devore, Newbold, Pilot 2010**

"I am proud to be a graduate of the CPI! I truly had a wonderful experience and learned so much that will be of practical application. Will recommend this course to others in the future." **Thomas El, Brewerytown, Fall 2011, (Facebook post)**

"Absolutely wonderful to the very end. Thank you sincerely for selecting me to be among those to participate in this extremely valuable course. I loved the graduation, appreciate the photos and look forward to participating and being of assistance in any way that I can as you move forward. Thanks again!" --**Sandra Broadus, Ogontz, Fall 2011, (Facebook post)**

"The CPI is a dream-come true for me to actually be able to study in a more formal structure, surrounded by both the people who really know the concepts/process and those who have come to the CPI to learn because they love their communities so deeply.....Being able to step up my education, take it back to the Neighborhood, spread the word and get folks young and old involved at this critical time is such a blessing." --**Jeff Carpineta, East Kensington, Pilot 2010**

"This course of study is an opportunity for me to be more effective in my community...what is changing, what needs to change to preserve, protect and celebrate historic elements, diversity and design within Philadelphia..." --**Cynthia Temple, Queen Village, Pilot 2010**

"CPI is a unique and timely course that brings a careful balance of theory and practice to city planning." --**Betty Turner, Germantown, Pilot 2010**

"I am writing to say how much I enjoyed the CPI program and in talking with my classmates, they did too. I recognize that this was a huge amount of work for you and your colleagues, but it is exactly what the City should be doing to help equip and energize citizens. Thanks for your good work and that of those who assisted." --**Joseph R. Synchron, PE, PLS Pilot 2010, President & CEO, Schuylkill River Development Corporation**

"Overall, this course definitely empowered me...I have so much more to learn and I hope that I can be part of the reason my Civic organization turns around and brings my community to its full potential." --**Candice Prendergast, Wissahickon, Pilot 2010**

"(this course) has been invaluable and timely to the needs of our organization...I could see many dots connecting in terms of how to holistically address the needs of the community." --**Dawn Ang, Chinatown, Spring 2012**

"Philadelphia's greatness depends largely upon the level of participation in the planning process by those who live and work here."—**Sister Elaine George, Juniata Park, Pilot 2010**

"The course really opened my eyes to the process...This course was worth my time and effort and then some. I believe this program has the potential to re-create our communities." (survey comment)

"It (CPI) is the best thing lately...to build a first class city of informed citizens actively participating in developing healthy, safe and beautiful neighborhoods that are strong-- economically, socially and politically. Excellent!" *(survey comment)*

"I just wanted to say thank you for having me in the class this semester. I learned a ton, and the program has inspired me to build new connections in my community and to think about ways that I can play a bigger role in developing it. It's also enabled me to participate in development discussion on a deeper level because I have a much better understanding of the zoning and planning process..."
-Will Waggenpack, Old City, Fall 2012

"Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in such an excellent and well run program. I loved interacting with people from across the city, hearing from a myriad of highly engaging experts, and starting to apply the perspectives I gained from the CPI courses to my own neighborhood. I've actually been inspired by my experience with CPI to pursue graduate studies related to urban and environmental planning, design, and policy. Fascinating stuff! I look forward to attending more CPI electives when I return to Philadelphia in a couple of years."—**Arianna Hall-Reinhard, Fishtown, Fall 2012**

"...I was very inspired by the various groups from neighborhoods that I never heard of before and their ability to make so many positive changes within this city. It was great to be able to meet with such positive thinking people. All the speakers were very professional and giving in their presentations..."-
-Cindy Masiejczyk, Fox Chase, Fall 2012