



Mel King Institute
for community building

Mel King Institute for Community Building
Final Evaluation Report
Year Eight: July 2016 – June 2017

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advancing skills, knowledge and leadership

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The Mel King Institute for Community Building is a collaborative program of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and other public, private, and nonprofit community development partners.

Executive Summary

The Mel King Institute for Community Building concluded its eighth year (July 2016 – June 2017) of high quality training for the community development field. The Institute offered 30 courses, serving 584 participants, a significant increase from its first year when it offered twelve courses serving 243 participants. For the purposes of this evaluation, 28 courses (524 in attendance) were analyzed. 66% of this year's participants completed the day-of-survey to assess outcomes from each course, a lower percentage than prior year's response rate, which was in part due to problems with securing online surveys. The evaluation report summarizes and provides analysis based on the data obtained from the surveys.

The King Institute continues to provide high quality, affordable, and convenient training to practitioners in the community development field. Individuals who attend workshops leave with practical skills and knowledge they can readily apply to their work, and report increased confidence. The King Institute is helping to build peer networks, advancing professional development and sharing best practices across the community development field.

Demographics

The evaluation analyzes the demographic make-up of the audience.

- A decrease in the percentage of students from Greater Boston brings the overall percentages to 60% within Greater Boston, and 40% outside of the area or the state. This brings MKI closer to its goal of serving a statewide constituency than last year.
- This year saw a drop in the percentage of students who are under the age of 39, to its lowest level for the younger age group, which is in part due to a decline in the number of LISC Americorps members.
- More board members attended training this year, and there were fewer Americorps members (which correlates to the lower percentage of young people.)
- The distribution among members from different racial backgrounds remains relatively constant, with the overall balance continuing to be 65% white, 35% people of color.
- There was a slight increase in the percentage of MACDC members participating.

Process Results

Analysis of process outcomes indicates a high degree of satisfaction.

- 97% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that the presenters were clear, had expertise and knowledge in the subject area, and had an effective presentation style;
- 92% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that the training was well-paced and the structure was conducive to their learning.
- 97% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that the training was well coordinated logistically and the site was conducive to the group's learning; and
- 97% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that it was easy to register through the website or other means.

Impact Results

In examining the impact of the training on individuals and their organizations, ratings were also very positive, with many categories showing slight increases from Year 7.

- 96% of the participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that the content added to their knowledge base for their current role. This is comparable to prior years when the affirmative choices were "yes" or "somewhat" for a total of 98%.

- 90% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that they felt confident in applying knowledge and skills, a slight increase from Year 7.
- 88% of participants either strongly agreed, or agreed that they gained a broader perspective on the community development field from the training, reflecting a slightly higher overall percentage than in Year 7.
- The courses rated overall very well on the relevance questions: 88% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their current position, 91% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their organization’s work and goals, and 94% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their professional development. All of these ratings are on par with Year 7.
- Year 8 showed an increase of the percentage of courses with high ratings and a decrease in the percentage of courses with lower ratings as contrasted with YR7, but still below performance from YRs 5 and 6.
- 89% strongly agreed or agreed that they had meaningful interactions with their peers that was beneficial to their learning, a slight increase from Year 7.
- 83% said the course either exceeded or met their expectations, with nearly identical ratings from Year 7.

The King Institute enters its ninth year on solid ground. To prepare for its ten-year anniversary, it can consider gathering more qualitative data from interviews with participants, supervisors, and instructors. Moreover, it should use the upcoming MACDC strategic planning process as a way to further explore the role MKI plays in helping MACDC overall reach its vision for excellence in the community development field.

Section 1: Introduction

The Mel King Institute for Community Building fosters vibrant and thriving Massachusetts communities by advancing the skills, knowledge and leadership ability of professional practitioners and volunteer leaders in the community development field. The King Institute leverages collaborative educational partnerships that increase access, encourage innovation, and promote and institutionalize systemic success. The Institute is designed to bring community development professionals and volunteers the skills they need to be effective in their positions in the community. To reach its goals, the Institute sponsors trainings, innovation forums, mentorship opportunities, website resources, serves as a clearing house, and provides technical assistance.

The Institute is committed to evaluation and continual learning and as such, developed a theory of change illustrated in a logic model during its first year (2009 – 2010) and has evaluated its desired outcomes each year. In April 2015, the Institute revised its logic model to better align with its current work. For every course, participants are asked to complete a “day-of-survey” to evaluate the content, approach, and lessons learned that may have applicability to the participant’s professional development and to his/her organization’s ability to reach outcomes. The survey was revised during the seventh year of the program, and utilized again during the eighth year (2016-2017). These surveys are tabulated and analyzed at the end of each program year, and reviewed by the Steering Committee.

Evaluation Methodology

The Year 8 day-of-surveys were collected and the data analyzed by the MKI Program Coordinator Mariela Renquist who prepared an initial set of data used for this report. As the evaluation consultant, I reviewed the data, read the qualitative responses to questions on the day-of-surveys, and prepared this report with the highlights of the data, findings, and recommendations.

Evaluation Numbers

Over the eight years of the Mel King Institute’s existence, the evaluations have recorded the number of courses analyzed, the total number of participants in attendance, and the number of evaluations received. An evaluation survey return-rate has been calculated each year. Given that some individuals take more than one course during a year, the total number of unique individuals is calculated to analyze the demographics of the King Institute’s audience. Not every course collects evaluation forms, and therefore, the number of courses organized (and the participants who attend) are different in some years from the total number of **courses analyzed**.

As **Table 1.a.** illustrates, the King Institute has analyzed 179 courses over the eight year period, and reviewed 2,517 day-of-surveys. On average, the response rate has been largely consistent over the years at roughly 80%, although this year it fell to 66%.

According to MKI staff, there are a few explanations for the lower response rate. At the beginning of the year, a link to the online survey was being sent to participants and it was learned that some of these ended up in spam folders. Later, the staff relied more exclusively on paper surveys distributed at the end of the class which contributed to an increase in the survey response rate. In addition, it was difficult to obtain evaluations from the two webinars. Finally, it is common for some participants to leave the course before the evaluations are distributed. The King Institute staff is re-evaluating how they distribute these forms to encourage more people to complete them in future years.

Table 1.a. Evaluation Numbers									
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	All Years
Number of Courses Held	12	19	25	20	25	24	30	30	185
Number Total Participants	243	263	525	371	361	498	552	584	3,397
Number of Courses Analyzed	9	19	24	20	25	24	30	28	179
Number Participants in Analyzed Courses	157	263	462	371	361	498	552	524	3,188
Number Total Evaluations Reviewed	137	227	376	296	314	381	439	347	2,517
Unique # individuals reflected in evaluation results	108	160	275	270	256	310	364	275	N/A
Evaluation response rate	87%	86%	81%	80%	87%	77%	80%	66%	80%

Year 8 Courses Reviewed

Table 1.b. shows the 28 courses reviewed as part of this evaluation.

Table 1.b. Year 8 Courses Evaluated				
Name of Course	Location	Participants	Evaluations	Response Rate
Introduction to Implicit Bias, July 2016	Boston	20	12	60%
Senior Housing: Ensuring Health and Stability for an Aging Population through Development, July 2016	Framingham	28	22	79%
Webinar: Portrait of a Resident Leader: Apostle Vanessa Ward, July 2016	Web	38	16	42%
CDC Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership (September, October, November 2016)	Boston	11	8	73%
Introduction to Census Data: Finding the Numbers You Need, October 2016	Boston	6	6	100%
Transformative Board Governance (October 2016, April 2017)	Boston	17	17	100%
Fundamentals of Affordable Housing Finance, October 2016	Boston	33	21	64%
Getting the Most from your LIHTC Award, November 2016	Boston	19	11	58%
Real Estate Taxes and Affordable Housing- An Overview, November 2016	Worcester	28	14	50%
Internal Controls: Best Practices from a Board of Directors Perspective, November 2016	Boston	13	9	69%
Group Facilitation: Bringing Community Meetings to Life, November 2016	Boston	13	10	77%

Name of Course	Location	Participants	Evaluations	Response Rate
Community Organizing, December 2016	Boston	15	11	73%
Introduction to Census Data: Finding the Numbers You Need (Americorps), December 2016	Boston	6	6	100%
Grant Writing, January 2017	Boston	28	16	57%
Community Engagement, January 2017	Boston	20	17	85%
What's in the Numbers? Demystifying CDC Financial Statements for Board Members, January 2017	Boston	16	9	56%
Introduction to Community Economic Development, February 2017	Boston	16	11	69%
Webinar: Resident Leader Series: The Leadership Development Institute, February 2017	Web	21	4	19%
Data Storytelling: Back to Basics, March 2017	Boston	17	13	76%
Real Estate Development for Board Members (March, April 2017)	Boston	12	10	83%
Data Storytelling: Telling Your Data Story, April 2017	Boston	12	9	75%
Development Decoded: Real Estate Basics, April 2017	Framingham	24	14	58%
Construction Management Series, May 2017	Framingham	22	11	50%
Creative Placemaking, May 2017	Salem	20	15	75%
Construction Management Series, May 2017	Boston	20	16	80%
Forging CDC-Hospital Partnerships, June 2017	Northampton	10	9	90%
Creative Placemaking, June 2017	Worcester	15	15	100%
Creative Placemaking, June 2017	Holyoke	24	15	63%
TOTALS		524	347	

Section 2: Demographic Analysis

The evaluation looks at the participants from a number of perspectives – geography, age, position, race, and organizational affiliation. In order to accurately reflect the participant profile, participants are only counted once even though some attended more than one training. **275 individuals were included in the demographic analysis for this evaluation. (41 people took more than one course)**

The percentages illustrated below for each of the demographic data points reflect a portion of the participants. For each question, a varying percentage of people decline to answer.

Highlights

Every year there are some modest shifts in the demographics of the participants for the Mel King Institute courses. For Year 8, the following shifts are noted:

- **Geography:** A decrease in the percentage of students from Greater Boston brings the overall percentages to 60% within Greater Boston, and 40% outside of the area or the state. This brings MKI closer to its goal of serving a statewide constituency than last year.
- **Age:** This year saw a drop in the percentage of students who are under the age of 39, to its

lowest level for the younger age group.

- **Position:** More board members attended training this year, and there were fewer Americorps members (which might correlate to the lower percentage of young people.)
- **Race:** The distribution among members from different racial backgrounds remains relatively constant, with the overall balance continuing to be 65% white, 35% people of color.
- **Organizational affiliation:** There was a slight increase in the percentage of MACDC members participating.
- **Marketing:** More people were referred to training through MKI emails, fewer from supervisors/ coworkers; partners continue to be an important source of referrals.

The detailed charts illustrating the percentages for each demographic feature are listed below.

Geography

As **Table 2.1.** indicates, there was a decrease in representation from Greater Boston and increases in other regions in Year 8. The King Institute offered fewer courses outside of Boston than in prior years, but interestingly, attracted a higher percentage of participants from other locations.

Table 2.1. Geography									
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Greater Boston	59%	50%	71%	74%	76%	61%	72%	60%	65%
Other MA	33%	42%	26%	23%	23%	34%	28%	37%	31%
Other States	8%	8%	7%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	5%

	YR 6	YR 7	YR 8
% courses held outside of Boston	42%	37%	33%

Age of Students

The age distribution of participants shifted in Year 8, with a lower percentage of people in the under 25 age group and in the 26-39 age group, and higher percentages of people over age 40.

Table 2.2. Age Distribution									
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Under 25	29%	25%	23%	24%	16%	15%	17%	9%	20%
26-39	37%	28%	30%	43%	39%	39%	43%	39%	37%
40-54	27%	17%	27%	19%	28%	30%	24%	31%	25%
Over 55	7%	30%	13%	14%	18%	16%	16%	20%	17%

Positions

In Year 8, there was an increase in the percentage of board members attending, the fewest percentage of Americorps members since the first year (which might contribute to the lower percentage of people under the age of 39), and significantly more people who reported “other”. The lower percentage of younger people and of Americorps is due to the fact that the LISC program was cut from 17 participants in prior years to 6 participants this year. The increase in “other” is attributed in part to the Creative Placemaking workshops where the option of “other” included artists (26% of the people who selected this category attended one of these workshops.)

Table 2.3. Participant Positions									
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Staff	55%	32%	35%	42%	38%	41%	47%	37%	41%
Manager	40%	35%	29%	28%	32%	26%	30%	30%	31%
Americorps/Student/Intern	3%	18%	17%	14%	11%	19%	10%	6%	12%
Board	0%	5%	11%	5%	14%	8%	7%	10%	8%
Other	4%	10%	8%	11%	5%	6%	6%	17%	8%

Race of Students

As **Table 2.4.a.** illustrates, the Year 8 distribution of participants by race is consistent with other years with slight changes in the percentage of Black, Latino and Asian. Overall, the percentage people of color remains at the same level – 35%. See Table 2.4.b.

Table 2.4.a. Racial Demographics – All Categories										
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average	Mass. 2010 Census Data
White	65%	68%	56%	56%	56%	61%	65%	65%	61%	76.40%
Black	12%	13%	21%	20%	17%	11%	11%	19%	15%	7.80%
Latino	18%	11%	12%	13%	18%	15%	14%	10%	14%	9.90%
Asian	3%	4%	5%	7%	8%	9%	6%	3%	6%	5.60%
Other	2%	4%	3%	4%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2.00%

Table 2.4.b. Racial Demographics – Condensed Categories										
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average	
White	65%	68%	56%	56%	56%	61%	65%	65%	61%	
People of Color/ Other	35%	32%	41%	44%	44%	39%	35%	35%	39%	

Organizational Affiliation

Prior to Year 3, organizational affiliation was not collected. **Table 2.5** shows that participation from MACDC members increased slightly, while other nonprofit decreased and other entity representation increased. MKI has a goal to reach 50% MACDC members, 50% others and therefore Year 8, saw movement towards that greater balance than in Year 7.

Table 2.5 Organizational Affiliation							
	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	6-Yr Average
MACDC Member	36%	38%	59%	45%	39%	43%	43%
Other Nonprofit	43%	35%	35%	32%	41%	29%	36%
Other Entity	21%	27%	6%	23%	21%	27%	21%

Marketing

As part of the day-of-survey, participants indicate one or more ways they heard about a particular event. See **Table 2.6** for the percentages beginning in Year 4 when this data began to be collected. In Year 8, the percentage who indicated they heard about the Institute through MKI email increased by 7%, while supervisory/ coworker dropped by 8%. Partners continue to be an important referral source. In addition to the 5% who specifically selected this category, many of the referral sources listed under “other” were MACDC related partners.

Table 2.6. How Participants Heard about MKI							
	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average	
MKI Email	1%	34%	26%	34%	41%	27%	
Supervisor/ Co-Worker	29%	30%	33%	32%	26%	30%	
Other	11%	12%	20%	21%	12%	15%	
MKI Website/ Social Media*	14%	8%	7%	10%	13%	10%	
Social Media*	N/A	N/A	N/A	2%	3%	3%	
MKI Newsletter**	26%	10%	13%	N/A	N/A		
Partner					5%		

* In prior years, the survey asked about the MKI Website/ Social Media as one choice; beginning in Year 7, these were separated. Participants could choose either MKI Website, or Social Media, or both.

** Beginning in Year 7, the MKI Newsletter was not a choice on the survey.

Section 3: Evaluation Findings –Process Outcomes

The evaluation examines outcomes along two dimensions – **process outcomes** that are used to evaluate satisfaction levels during the training program itself and **impact outcomes** that are used to measure the impact the training has had on building the skills, knowledge, and overall abilities of participants that can enhance job performance, professional development, and advancement, and that can be used to identify the potential impact the training has had on organizational performance and effectiveness.

Highlights

- **Quality of presenters:** While the percentage of students who ‘strongly agreed’ that the presenters had expertise, clarity, and an effective presentation style dropped slightly in Year 8, taken as a whole, nearly all participants either ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ with this statement. This is highly consistent with all prior years of the King Institute.
- **Organization of the training:** Ratings are largely consistent for the structure, logistics, and site feedback when combining ‘strongly agree’ with ‘agree’, but on both questions, fewer people chose the ‘strongly agree’ option.
- **Registration process:** Ratings are still high for ease of the registration process, with slightly fewer people selecting ‘strongly agree’ but a continued increase of the highest rating on this question from years 1-6.

The detailed charts illustrating the percentages for each question are listed below.

Quality of Presenters

Beginning in Year 7, the Institute changed the survey instrument pertaining to the quality of presenters as noted below. Taken together, 97% of participants in Year 8 either strongly agreed or agreed that the presenters had expertise, clarity and an effective presentation style. This is consistent with prior years ratings, although this year, a lower percentage of respondents rated this question as “strongly agree” rather than “agree.”

Table 3.1. Quality of Presenters									
Past phrasing: “The presenters were clear, had expertise and knowledge in the subject area, and had an effective presentation style”									
Beginning YR 7 phrasing: “The presenters had expertise, clarity and an effective presentation style”									
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Strongly Agree	75%	75%	66%	72%	70%	64%	71%	65%	70%
Agree	23%	25%	34%	26%	30%	34%	26%	32%	29%
Disagree	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Strongly Disagree	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%

Nearly every course received an average rating of more than 3.0 out of a scale of 4.0; only one course was ranked below 3.0 (Data Storytelling: Visualizing your Data Story – average ranking 2.89), and many courses were ranked above 3.5. The highest ranked courses include:

- Development Decoded: Real Estate Basics (3.93)
- Construction Management: Project Managers (3.91)

- Forging CDC - Hospital Partnerships: Northampton (3.89)
- Getting the most from your LIHTC award (3.86)
- Creative Placemaking: Salem (3.86)
- Census Data (LISC Americorps) (3.83)

Quotes from the surveys illustrate how highly participants regard the quality of the MKI instructor pool.

“I felt Apostle Ward spoke with passion and experience about her leadership in her community. Her easy to follow tips as to how to give a block party were tremendous. What I really appreciated was the way she gave practical insight; being friendly, lead by example, and be willing to face rejection.” Webinar: Portrait of a Resident Leader: Apostle Ward

“I was truly impressed by the caliber of expertise, and teaching craft of the facilitator. He was very knowledgeable, structured the session well, and made the information not only informative and comprehensible, but very engaging. One of the best trainings I have ever attended.” Fundamentals of Affordable Housing Finance

“Henry Joseph was very knowledgeable and good at understanding and responding to participant questions--a great listener. Also, he put together a kick-ass panel, so that was an unexpected treat.” Getting the Most from your LIHTC Award

“I appreciated the way in which the presenters shared the incredible breadth and depth of experiences but also modeled deep listening.” Community Organizing

“The trainer was very knowledgeable as well as engaging. She was a 5 Star.”* Development Decoded

Training Structure, Content, and Logistics

The King Institute asks participants to rate various aspects of the structure and logistics of the training to gain a better understanding of how people experience the training. The questions on the survey have changed over the past few years in an attempt to separate out distinct components. Beginning in Year 7, two questions were asked about the structure and the logistics. See Tables **3.2.a.** and **3.2.b.**

Year 8 showed consistent ratings regarding the structure of the training, but lower ratings for “strongly agree” for the logistics and site. Yet, taken together, nearly all participants either strongly agreed or agreed with these statements.

Table 3.2.a. Rate the Organization of the Training: Years 7-8		
<i>“The training was well-paced and the structure was conducive to my learning”</i>		
	YR 7	YR 8
Strongly agree	59%	55%
Agree	32%	37%
Disagree	7%	6%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%

Table 3.2.b. Rate the Organization of the Training: Years 7-8		
"The training was well coordinated logistically and the site was conducive to the group's learning."		
	YR 7	YR 8
Strongly agree	71%	59%
Agree	25%	38%
Disagree	3%	2%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%

For comparison to prior years, see **Table 3.2.c.** [Note – the question was asked in a slightly different way in Year 4 and therefore those numbers are not included below.]

Table 3.2.c. Rate the Organization of the Training Years 1-6						
"The training was well organized and the site was conducive to the group's learning"						
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 5	Year 6	Average
Strongly agree	61%	67%	57%	53%	55%	59%
Agree	37%	33%	42%	46%	42%	40%
Disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Strongly disagree	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%

Participants shared feedback on pacing and style. Some were very positive:

"This training was extremely well done. All information was relevant. I did not feel like some sections were drawn out too much or skimmed over. Even lunch was really good. Great training."
Community Engagement

Others indicated that some courses would benefit from changes:

"He had expertise but style of presenting was not conducive to learning and dragged on more than needed." Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership

"There was some conflict between wanting to be responsive to the audience, and having an agenda to cover, at the cost of running over the scheduled time." Real Estate Taxes and Affordable Housing

"All good but too much on agenda. I wish we had a chance to hear more about the case studies. I would have rather done that than the collage exercise which I found to be a waste of time."
Creative Placemaking: Holyoke

A considerable number of participants across many courses indicated they would prefer a longer course.

"This was a great start, but I would have appreciated a longer session that gave more specific strategies to reduce bias. " Introduction to Implicit Bias

"I would love to take this info deeper, like actual funding mechanisms, coalition building, profit/non-profit partnerships, RE development, etc. as they apply to creative placemaking."
Creative Placemaking: Worcester

Other courses where participants suggested a longer format, or more opportunity for in-depth learning included:

- Senior Housing
- Fundamentals of Affordable Housing Finance
- Getting the Most from Your LIHTC Award
- Internal Controls
- Community Organizing
- Grantwriting
- Introduction to CED
- Creative Placemaking: Holyoke

The King Institute is also interested to learn how participants view the registration process. [Year 4 is not included below as the question was dropped from the survey in Year 4 and then added back in for Year 5 and beyond.] There was a slight decrease in the percentage of participants who rated this question as “strongly agree” yet, taken as a whole, nearly all participants rated this question as either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree.’

Table 3.2.d. Registration Process								
“It was easy to register through the website or other means.”								
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Strongly agree	55%	55%	55%	59%	58%	80%	71%	62%
Agree	43%	42%	43%	38%	41%	18%	27%	36%
Disagree	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%

Section 4: Evaluation Findings – Impact Outcomes

The King Institute is interested in helping participants learn new skills and then apply those practices to improve their performance and ultimately, to improve organizational effectiveness. Using the day-of-survey, it is possible to assess the King Institute’s success at helping participants learn new tools or knowledge, the degree of usefulness in the curriculum, whether the course might help the participant advance professionally, and the degree of peer to peer interaction. During Year 5 and continuing into Year 8, the Institute added some questions to gauge how well the course met the participant’s expectations, and in Year 7, several of the questions that assess knowledge gained were also changed.

Highlights

- **Training content:** a total of 96% of the participants agreed to some extent that the content added to their knowledge base for their current role. This is comparable to prior years when the affirmative choices were “yes” or “somewhat” for a total of 98%.
- **Confidence level:** 90% of participants agreed to some extent that they felt confident in applying knowledge and skills, a slight increase from Year 7.
- **Broader perspective:** 88% of participants agreed to some extent, reflecting a slightly higher overall percentage than in Year 7.
- **Relevance:** the courses rated overall very well on the relevance questions: 88% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their current position, 91% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their organization’s work and goals, and 94% rated the courses as very relevant or relevant to their professional development. All of these ratings are on par with Year 7.
- **Usefulness:** Year 8 showed an increase of the percentage of courses with high ratings and an decrease in the percentage of courses with lower ratings as contrasted with YR7, but still below performance from YRs 5 and 6.
- **Peer to Peer Interactions:** 89% strongly agreed or agreed that they had meaningful interactions with their peers that was beneficial to their learning, a slight increase from Year 7.
- **Course expectations:** 83% said the course either exceeded or met their expectations, with nearly identical ratings from Year 7.

Learning and Applying New Skills

Prior to Year 7, the King Institute asked participants if they learned about new tools or gained knowledge that would be applicable to their position. The ratings have been consistently very high as **Table 4.1.** illustrates.

Table 4.1. Learned Applicable Tools Years 1-6							
“Did you learn about new tools or gain knowledge that is applicable to your position?”							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Average
Yes	84%	85%	86%	90%	84%	84%	85%
Somewhat	16%	15%	13%	10%	14%	14%	14%
No	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%

Beginning in Year 7, the Institute asked two related questions pertaining to learning outcomes. As **Table 4.2.** illustrates, more people overall either strongly agreed or agreed with this question than in the past year, with fewer people selecting ‘strongly agreed’ but also fewer people disagreeing to any extent. When combining “strongly agree” and “agree” in Year 8, a total of 96% of the participants agreed to some extent that the content added to their knowledge base for their current role. This is comparable to prior years when the affirmative choices were “yes” or “somewhat” for a total of 98%.

Table 4.2. Training Content Years 7-8		
“The training content added to my knowledge/ skill base for my current role”		
	Year 7	Year 8
Strongly agree	55%	46%
Agree	35%	50%
Disagree	8%	4%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%

Nearly all courses rated above a 3.0 average out of a 4.0 scale, with many rating above 3.5.

The highest ranked courses included:

- Forging CDC - Hospital Partnerships: Northampton (3.78)
- Getting the Most from Your LIHTC Award (3.78)
- Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership (3.74)
- Construction Management: Project Managers (3.64)
- Development Decoded: Real Estate Basics (3.60)

The courses with scores below a 3.0 included:

- Implicit Bias (2.83)
- Internal Controls: Best Practices (2.91)
- Real Estate Taxes and Affordable Housing – an Overview (2.95)

There are many comments that illustrate the type and degree of knowledge participants gained through the content.

“I gained knowledge in how to empower my residents and give them the tools to start their own initiatives.” Webinar: Portrait of a Resident Leader: Apostle Ward

“I learned new ideas on how to structure board meetings to facilitate more strategic conversations; use of a board portal to facilitate exchange of documents and information.” Transformative Board Governance (Part 1)

“I have a greater understanding of the differences between conventional real estate development and affordable housing development which I can then pass along to board members who have RE/business experience but not affordable housing experience. Also, I had confirmation regarding the complexities of financing and ways to help explain that to board members.” Fundamentals of Affordable Housing Finance

“I learned most about individual styles in community meetings/teamwork situations. I will be helping to facilitate a few community meetings, and I think I have learned some effective ways to handle some behaviors.” Group Facilitation

"I have a far better understanding of the mechanics of the capital account and the details that may or may not be included in an RFP. I also gained insight on how some of the highly skilled and experienced actors in our region are looking at these transactions." Getting the Most from Your LIHTC Award

Beginning in Year 7, the King Institute added Q5.b (**Table 4.3.**) to gauge participant level of confidence in the application of new skills. This year there was a decrease in the percentage of people who chose 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' and as a result, 90% of participants agreed to some extent that they felt confident in applying knowledge and skills.

Table 4.3. Confidence Level		
I feel confident in applying the knowledge/ skills I learned today at my organization		
	Year 7	Year 8
Strongly agree	41%	41%
Agree	44%	49%
Disagree	13%	9%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%

"I came to the job knowing nothing of the real estate side, but between our consultants and this course, I feel confident that I can do the job." Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership

"I didn't know the first thing about grant writing, but now I feel confident to make my first attempt at it." Grantwriting

"I gained reassurance that I'm far more comfortable with data than I was willing to give myself credit for." Data Storytelling: Back to Basics

Perspectives and Relevance

Perspectives

As reflected in the revised logic model, the King Institute strives to impact the field of community development by establishing a shared understanding of the knowledge and values at the core of the sector, and helping to broaden participant's perspectives about the community development field. Beginning in Year 7, the Institute asked participants to consider if the training had helped them to gain a broader perspective on the community development field. As **Table 4.4.** shows, 88% of participants agreed to some extent, reflecting a slightly higher overall percentage than in Year 7.

Table 4.4. Broader Perspectives		
The training helped me gain a broader perspective of the community development field		
	Year 7	Year 8
Strongly agree	47%	45%
Agree	36%	43%
Disagree	11%	11%
Strongly disagree	6%	1%

Relevance

The King Institute asked participants to rate the relevance of the training to their current role, the organization's current work and goals, and to their own professional development. **Table 4.5** shows that

relevance in the participant’s current role is nearly identical to last year, with a total of 88% in Year 8 agreeing to some extent.

Table 4.5. Relevance in Current Role		
Please rate the relevance of the training to your current role		
	Year 7	Year 8
Very Relevant	53%	51%
Relevant	33%	37%
Somewhat Relevant	12%	12%

The same comparison between Years 7 and 8 is true for relevance to the organization’s work and goals and to the participants professional development as **Table 4.6.** and **Table 4.7.** illustrate.

Table 4.6. Relevance to the Organization’s Work and Goals		
Please rate the relevance of the training to your organization's work and goals		
	Year 7	Year 8
Very Relevant	60%	56%
Relevant	32%	35%
Somewhat Relevant	6%	8%
Not at all Relevant	2%	0%

Table 4.7. Relevance to Professional Development		
Please rate the relevance of the training to your professional development		
	Year 7	Year 8
Very Relevant	62%	59%
Relevant	31%	35%
Somewhat Relevant	6%	6%
Not at all Relevant	1%	1%

Given that Questions 6a-c were new in Year 7, we cannot offer comparisons with exact wording from prior years. However, **Table 4.8.** shows that in prior years nearly everyone felt to some degree that the trainings would help them advance professionally in the community development field.

Table 4.8: Professional Advancement Years 1-6							
“Do you believe that the new skills or knowledge you gained today will help you to advance professionally in the community development field?”							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Average
Yes	78%	85%	83%	80%	80%	79%	81%
Somewhat	14%	14%	17%	15%	17%	18%	15%
No	2%	1%	0%	5%	3%	3%	2%

Participants offered thoughts as to how the courses helped them in their current role, for their organization’s work, or potentially in the future.

“I will apply this knowledge when I attend community meetings relating to development projects in the neighborhood and will use the concepts when advocating for more affordable housing opportunities.” Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership

“It helped me know where to get the correct data and use the tools which can help both my professional development and organization.” Intro to Census Data (1)

“This training will advance me to the next level and prepare me for things to come in my not so distant future.” Internal Controls

“This training has helped my professional development because I’ve learned to listen to community members better.” Community Organizing

Usefulness of the Curriculum

For each training, participants rate the usefulness of major topics in the course to strengthening their current work. Before each training, the instructor provides a list of learning outcomes for the training that are included in the evaluation under the question, “Please rate the degree to which the information presented was useful to strengthening your current work in your current position.” Participants rate the learning outcomes as either “Extremely Useful,” “Useful,” “Somewhat Useful” or “Not at all Useful.”

Table 4.9. shows the percentages for courses in order of rankings. Note: 3 courses did not include data on this questions – Undoing Racism, Introduction to Census Data: Finding the Numbers You Need, and Immigrant Rights Workshop.

Table 4.9. Usefulness of Training Topics Year 8				
Training	Extremely Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not at all Useful
Intro to Census Data (Americorps)	83%	17%	0%	0%
Forging CDC-Hospital Partnerships	78%	14%	8%	0%
CDC Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership	77%	21%	2%	0%
Getting the Most from LIHTC Award	77%	23%	0%	0%
Creative Placemaking: Worcester	63%	36%	2%	0%
Creative Placemaking: Salem	62%	38%	0%	0%
Intro to Community Economic Development	59%	39%	2%	0%
Senior Housing	59%	36%	5%	1%
Fundamentals of Affordable Housing Finance	54%	36%	10%	0%
Construction Management Series: Fair Wages	52%	46%	2%	0%
Real Estate Development for Board Members	52%	46%	2%	0%
Development Decoded	51%	42%	7%	0%
Community Engagement	51%	45%	4%	0%
Webinar: Resident Leader Series	50%	50%	0%	0%
Group Facilitation	48%	30%	23%	0%
Creative Placemaking: Holyoke	47%	43%	10%	0%
Transformative Board Governance	43%	43%	14%	0%
Construction Management Series Project Managers	43%	50%	7%	0%
Community Organizing	42%	39%	18%	0%
Grant Writing	42%	42%	13%	4%
Webinar: Portrait of a Resident Leader	40%	40%	21%	0%

Data Storytelling: Back to Basics	36%	50%	14%	0%
Real Estate Taxes and Affordable Housing	26%	51%	19%	4%
Introduction to Implicit Bias	22%	44%	28%	6%
Internal Controls	18%	56%	27%	0%
What's in the Numbers	17%	61%	22%	0%
Data Storytelling: Telling Your Data Story	11%	41%	48%	0%

As **Table 4.10.** shows, Year 8 showed an increase of the percentage of courses with high ratings and an decrease in the percentage of courses with lower ratings as contrasted with YR7, but still below performance from YRs 5 and 6.

	YR 5	YR 6	YR 7	YR 8
% of courses: 90% responses 'extremely useful' or 'useful'	71%	75%	55%	59%
% of courses: Less than 80% rated "extremely useful" or "useful"	8%	8%	21%	22%
% of courses: Any ratings of "not at all useful"	21%	21%	41%	15%

Peer to Peer Interactions

One of the goals of the King Institute, as more clearly articulated in the new 2015 logic model, is to foster connections across the community development field. Trainings can be an opportunity for community development staff to meet with and learn from their peers at other organizations. Prior to Year 7, the survey asked to ascertain the degree to which participants had an opportunity to work with their peers. As **Table 4.11.** illustrates, most participants in the prior years reported at least some opportunity to work with peers that was beneficial, but the average who said “extensive” was less than 50% and on average was slightly less than 40% of participants.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Average
Extensive	41%	45%	39%	44%	38%	29%	39%
Some	56%	54%	56%	53%	48%	63%	55%
None	3%	1%	5%	3%	13%	7%	5%

Beginning in Year 7, the question was rephrased to assess whether there had been meaningful interactions that were beneficial to the participants learning during the course. As **Chart 4.12.** shows, 44% of the participants strongly agreed with this statement, and another 45% agreed, for a total of 89% which is slightly greater than the total for Year 7. Given that the question is worded differently and the answer choices also have greater delineation, it is difficult to compare to prior years, but it is noteworthy to see that a higher percentage of people this year gave this question the highest ranking as compared with all other years and with the average for the past six years.

Table 4.12. Meaningful Peer Interactions		
I had meaningful interactions with peers that were beneficial to my learning		
	Year 7	Year 8
Strongly agree	46%	44%
Agree	38%	45%
Disagree	12%	9%
Strongly disagree	4%	1%

Some courses were praised for the peer to peer interactions:

"I loved the opportunities to work with peers and the conversations we had as a collective group. I would love to see more opportunities within the training for this!" Intro to CED

"I talked to some wonderful peer and I will try to connect with them offline." "Great connections!" "Met several people I may work with to take next steps." "Invaluable networking." Creative Placemaking: Salem

And for other courses, some participants would like to see even more peer to peer interactions.

"I wish we had more of this at the training and had more time to get to know the other participants, why they were there, and how they were dealing with overcoming their (our) own biases. The discussions we had were very general about the issue and I wish we had more time to go deeper into it and explore how we've been affected by unconscious bias." Introduction to Implicit Bias

"I expected more of a give and take session between the participants and the presenters about the problems that are common to the assessment process as it applies to affordable housing. I think some attention to a better format for the session other than lecture might be considered for future sessions of this type. There was minimal interaction with peers within the lecture format that the presenters chose." Real Estate Taxes and Affordable Housing Finance

"I wish more time had been made to talk with people about the work each person has been doing and what challenged they've come across/what strategies they've used." Community Organizing

Participant Expectations for the Training

Starting with the Year 5 survey, participants were asked whether the training met their expectations. The percentages are roughly equivalent to prior years although the Institute received slightly higher ratings for exceeded expectations in Year 8, but taken as a whole, the ratings are largely the same.

Table 4.13. Course Expectations Years 5-8					
"Did the training meet your expectations?"					
	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Average
Exceeded expectations	37%	33%	32%	35%	34%
Met expectations	53%	55%	52%	48%	52%
Partially met expectations	9%	11%	13%	15%	12%
Did not meet expectations	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%

Highest ranked courses on instructor, content, and usefulness

Many of the courses that ranked highly in one major category did so in other categories. The highest ranked courses in all 3 categories (sorted by usefulness first) are listed below (Table 4.14.)

Table 4.14. Highest Ranked Courses			
Course	Usefulness (% extremely or useful)	Content Ranking	Instructor Ranking
Getting the most from your LIHTC award	100%	3.78	3.86
Intro to Census Data (LISC Americorps)	100%	3.58	3.83
Creative Placemaking: Salem*	100%	3.33	3.86
Creative Placemaking: Worcester*	99%	3.43	3.53
Construction Management: Project Managers	98%	3.64	3.91
CDC Real Estate Development for Senior Leadership	98%	3.74	3.19
Development Decoded: Real Estate Basics	93%	3.60	3.93
Forging CDC - Hospital Partnerships	92%	3.78	3.89
Creative Placemaking: Holyoke*	90%	3.14	3.69

* These three workshops had overall the same content, with the afternoon portion varying due to community customization and case studies.

Section 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

The King Institute concluded its eighth year with a strong track record of excellence. From the day-of-surveys, evidence shows that participants are learning important skills to improve their performance in their current job, to support organizational goals, and to advance professionally. The King Institute is helping to build peer networks and sharing best practices across the community development field. Most participants reported that the course either met or exceeded their expectations.

After having a consistently high response rate in the low to mid-80s, this year saw a drop in the response rate to 66% when taking into account the courses that did not collect surveys. The MKI staff provided explanations for this drop which is due in part to problems with securing online surveys. The staff is reconsidering their approach, including encouraging people to complete the day-of-survey even if they have to leave the course early.

There were slight shifts in the demographic profile of the participants, with the most noteworthy drop in the percentage of students under the age of 25, and between the ages of 26-39. This partially attributed to a drop in the number of Americorps members. Other demographic characteristics saw slight shifts in one direction or another which has been a common pattern from year to year.

The process outcomes – or measures of satisfaction – continue to be largely very positive. Nearly all of the participants rated the quality of the presenters highly. The same is true for the other process outcomes measuring satisfaction with the organization of the training and the registration process. As in past years, some courses rate lower than others, and some comments point to suggested changes in format to increase learning opportunities.

The impact outcomes – or measures of results – are also a strong indicator of the success of the King Institute this year. Participants are gaining applicable skills that are relevant to their current position, to their organization's goals, and to their own professional development. Percentages were either on par with Year 7, or in some cases – confidence level, gaining a broader perspective, usefulness, and meaningful peer to peer interactions – were slightly higher than last year.

As in prior years, participants are often looking for more in-depth content including longer courses. Many participants also request level 2 or more advanced courses on similar topics to the course they took this year.

Suggestions for future courses were offered:

- Implicit bias in housing related activities
- Design and financing of senior housing
- Working with mentally ill tenants
- Workforce/ non-age restricted rental housing
- Combatting neighborhood violence
- Intercultural community engagement
- Real estate financing
- One-Stop applications
- Advanced grant writing
- Advanced financing housing developments
- How to keep resident leaders active

- Real Estate Development and Placemaking

In specific, some people suggested the following:

- More trainings on housing development for both development and non-development professionals. CDC specific finance especially as it relates to risk and fiduciary responsibility for both board and accounting staff.
- Longer, more in depth financial analysis skills and training with best practice tools, indicators, and metrics.
- Understanding how different communities learn and come together (race/culture) for community organizing and leading initiatives
- Development Decoded Level 2 and/or Level 3
- Further construction management trainings
- More real estate practical trainings
- Would love an opportunity to gather with other placemakers maybe 2x a year to talk through challenges, successes, etc.
- I'd like to learn more about actually implementing placemaking activities, especially from the angle of placeholding and placekeeping.

The evaluation did not surface any major concern about the organization or the content of the training. A few recommendations offered include:

- Re-evaluate strategies to obtain the highest percentage of day-of-surveys and continue to encourage instructors to obtain evaluation forms prior to students leaving the class;
- Look at the courses that rated lower on multiple scores and consider how to improve; and
- Review the courses where participants asked for more in-depth, longer, or more advanced courses when considering the curriculum for Year 9.

Year nine begins with the Institute on solid ground. As the Institute moves closer to the ten-year mark, it can consider strategies to help gather additional input to position itself for even further success in the tenth year. In Year nine, the Institute may want to consider:

- Interview participants and supervisors to gather feedback on how the Institute's courses have impacted organizational growth;
- Interview instructors, especially those who have led multiple courses over the years, to learn how the Institute can further support them in course development and to gather other feedback from them about overall improvements the Institute should consider; and
- Use the upcoming MACDC strategic planning process as a way to further explore the role MKI plays in helping MACDC overall reach its vision for excellence in the community development field.

Finally, keep up the excellent work of providing a high quality, affordable training program to the community development field!