



**Mel King Institute**  
for community building



## Evaluation Report-Year Three 2012

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## Introduction

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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, serves as a clearing house, and provides technical assistance.

The Institute is committed to evaluation and continual learning. In the fall of 2009, the Steering Committee invested in the development of an evaluation system that could provide it with feedback about the Institute's impact. I was hired as the evaluator to facilitate the process and worked with a committee comprised of King Institute partners to develop a logic model (a visual representation of the King Institute's theory of change); develop survey questions and instruments to collect outcome data; and to develop an overall evaluation plan for the Institute. The Year One Evaluation report was issued in August 2010 and a Year Two Evaluation report was issued in August 2011.

During the third year of operations, the King Institute developed a business plan. As part of the initial phase of the planning, consultants conducted numerous interviews with CDC staff, leaders, and other King Institute stakeholders. To avoid duplication and overly burdening King Institute constituents, the Year Three evaluation did not incorporate any individual interviews as had been the practice in prior year evaluations. Findings for this report were instead gleaned exclusively from the evaluation surveys completed at the conclusion of each course offered by the Institute.

## Summary of courses

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From July 2011 through June 2012, the King Institute organized 24 courses, enrolling 525 participants. In addition, the King Institute partnered with other organizations in delivering ten other training events. For the purposes of this evaluation, only the courses where the King Institute took an active role (registration, evaluation, financial contribution, logistics, and staff supported curriculum development) were reviewed. (The list of courses reviewed for the evaluation differs slightly from the total list of courses offered due to absence of evaluation forms for one course. Also, it is important to note that not all students complete an evaluation form and therefore the total number of surveys reviewed is not identical to the total number of students.)

Courses reviewed for this evaluation:

1. Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects (9/11)

2. Undoing Racism (9/11)
3. Strategic Decision Making for Community-Based Organizations (9/11)
4. Introduction to Community and Economic Development (9/11)
5. Making Use of Local Census Data (10/11)
6. Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors (11/11)
7. Transformative Governance for Community Impact (11/11)
8. Transformative Governance for Community Impact (1/12)
9. Basics of Community Organizing (11/11)
10. Economic Development Credit Analysis (12/11)
11. Group Facilitation (12/11)
12. Smoke-Free Housing Seminar (12/11)
13. Introduction to Popular Education (1/12)
14. Building Leaders, Building Communities (2/12)
15. Real Estate Development Seminar for New Senior Managers and Execs (3/12)
16. Making Use of Local Census Data (3/12)
17. Making Use of Local Census Data (4/12)
18. Media Strategies for Community Development Practitioners (4/12)
19. Reaching and Engaging Immigrant Businesses (4/12)
20. Nuts & Bolts of Asset Management (4/12)
21. Community-Based Real Estate Development: An Overview for CDC Board Members (5/12)
22. Introduction to Grant and Report Writing (5/12)
23. Career Development for New CDC Professionals (6/12)
24. LISC Project Manager Seminar (6/12)

The participant count for the above listed courses equals 462. [Note: This evaluation does not include Organizing for Change – 77 participants, and does count the participants for the second Transformative Governance class – 14 participants, which explains why the total of 462 differs from the total of participants listed for MKI of 525.]

This compares with Year One and Year Two as follows:

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Number of Courses Analyzed	9	19	24
Number Total Participants	157	263	462
Number Total Evaluations Reviewed	137	227	376

The response rate is consistently high. Year One response rate= 87%; Year Two response rate=86%; Year Three response rate=81%.

## Demographic Analysis

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The evaluation looks at the participants from a number of perspectives – organizational affiliation, geography, age, race, and position in their organization.

In order to accurately reflect the participant profile, participants are only counted once for the purposes of the demographic analysis even though some attended more than one training. In Year Three, 275 unique individuals attended trainings out of the total 376 evaluations collected.

As the following chart illustrates, many took more than one course.

# of Courses	# of Participants
2 Courses	17
3 Courses	8
4 Courses	5
5 Courses	6
6 Courses	2
9 Courses	1
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	39

## Membership Affiliation

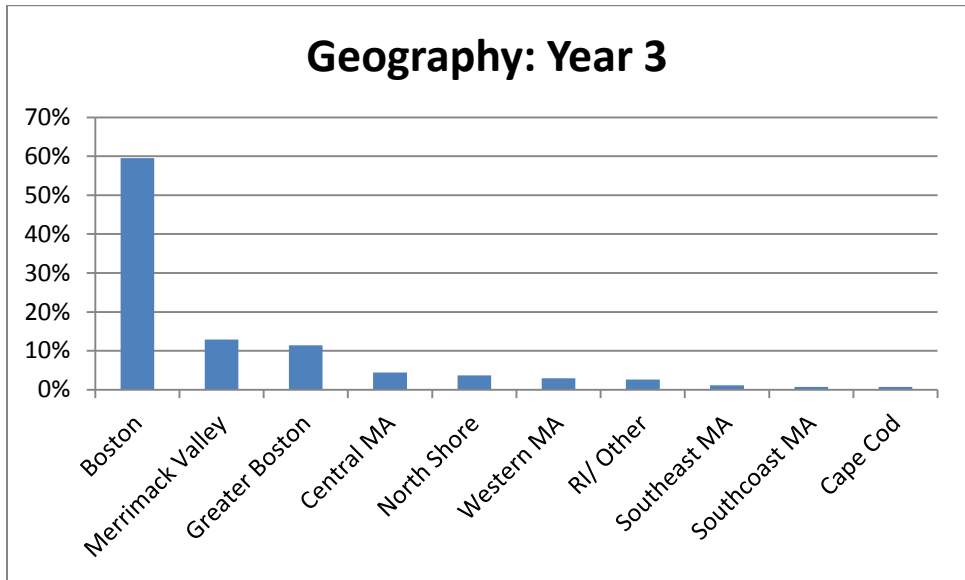
The day-of-survey asks participants to note if their organization is a member of MACDC, another nonprofit, or a public or private/ for-profit entity. In Years One and Two, the only data available pertained to whether the group was a member of MACDC or another nonprofit.

	MACDC Member	Other Nonprofit
Year 3	46	55
Year 2	43	33
Year 1	43	36

In addition, in Year 3, other types of organizations were listed as follows: 15 came from public entities and 11 came from for profit/ private entities. The comparison illustrates that the number of MACDC member groups participating was consistent, while in Year Three, the King Institute attracted more other nonprofits and other sectors than in prior years.

**Geography**

The Mel King Institute continues to serve participants from across the state.

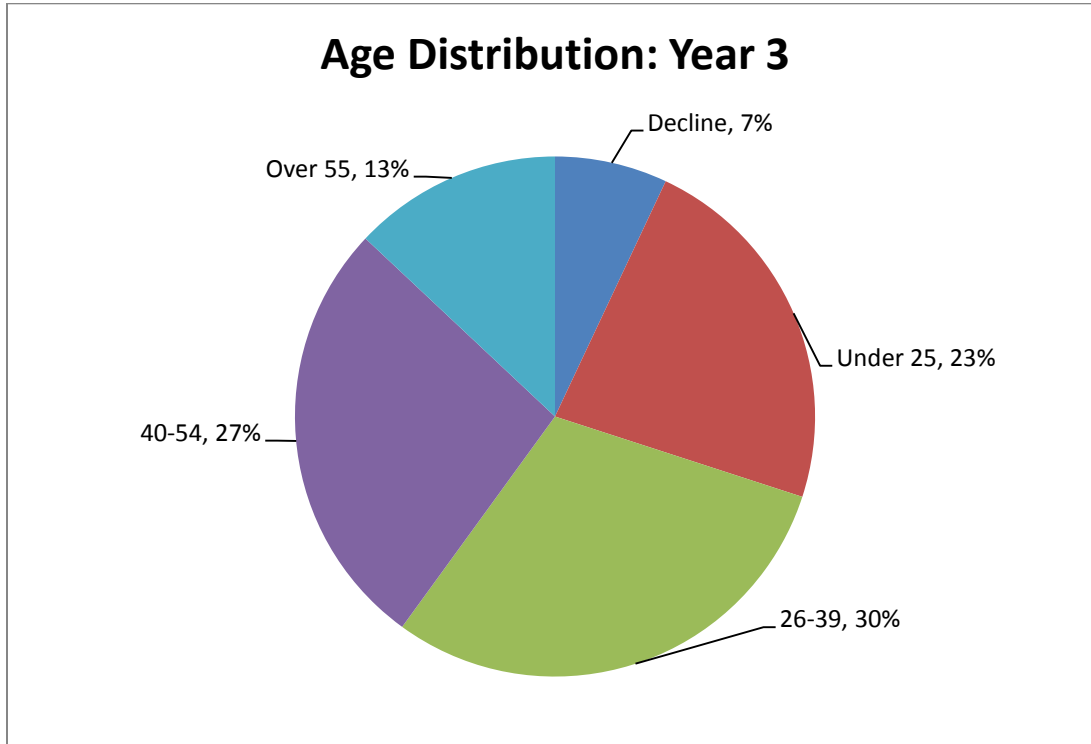


In comparison with other years, Boston and Greater Boston cities and towns had a higher representation among the student body in Year Three. In Boston alone, Year Three saw an increase from 62 students to 162 students. While, it is important to note that the number of students from other communities increased (Lawrence/Lowell sent 35 students in Year Three as contrasted with 10 in Year Two), it was not at the same level of increase.

Year	Greater Boston	Other MA	RI/ Other State
Year 1	59%	33%	8%
Year 2	50%	42%	8%
Year 3	71%	26%	7%

### Age of Students

The age of students is fairly balanced between those under 25, those between 26-39 and those between 40-54 as the chart below illustrates.

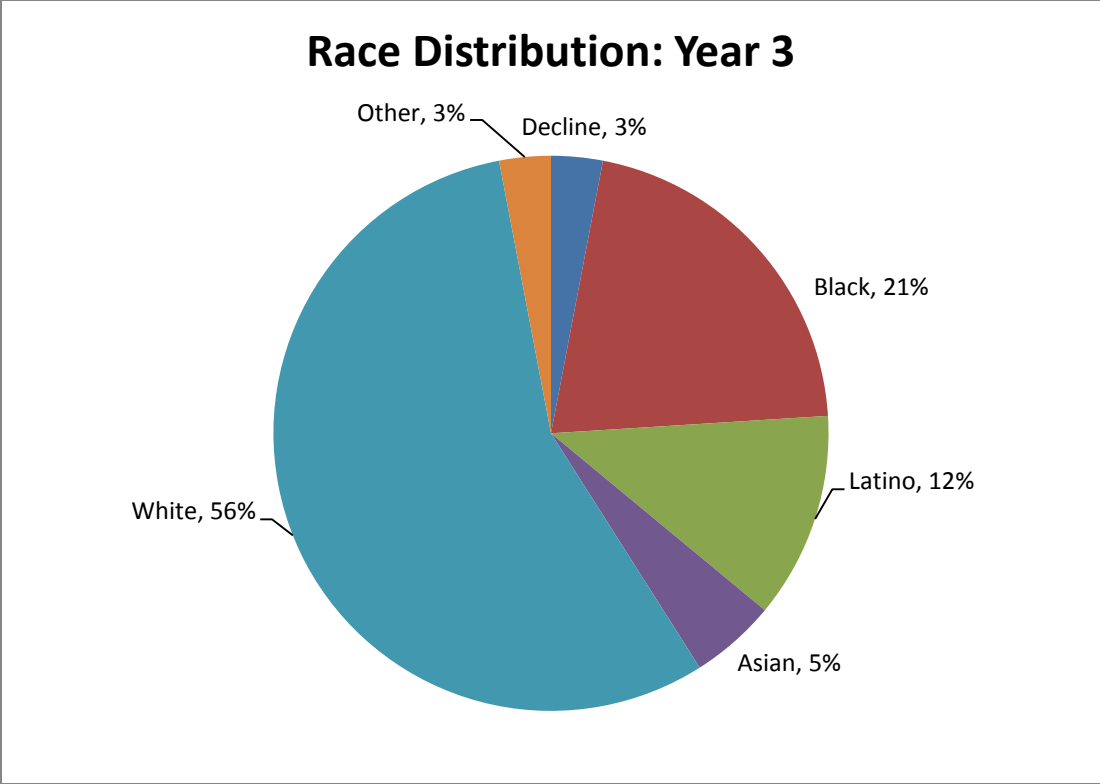


In comparison with other years, Years Two and Three are consistent in that 53% of the students were under 40, continuing a trend of a greater balance among the age groups. (In Year One, 66% were under 40.) Note: In year 3, an option to decline listing age and race was offered which was not included in the survey in prior years.

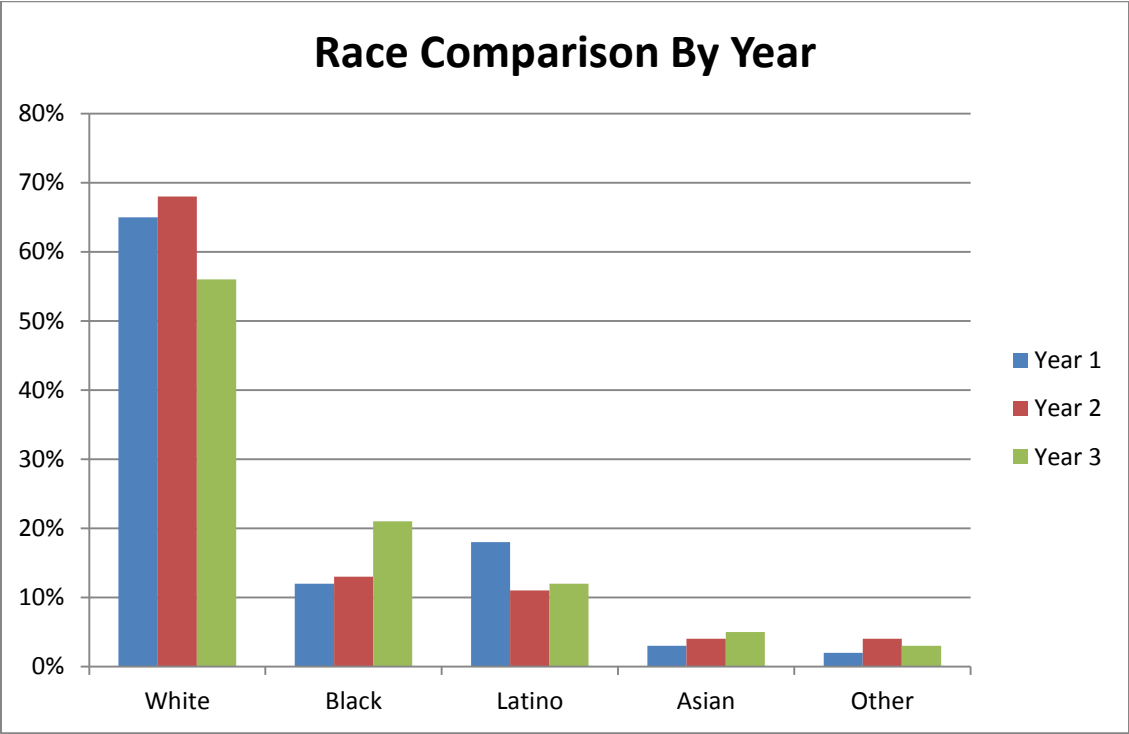
### Race of Students

In Year Three, the King Institute student body showed an increase in the number of people of color, especially among Blacks as illustrated in the pie chart below.

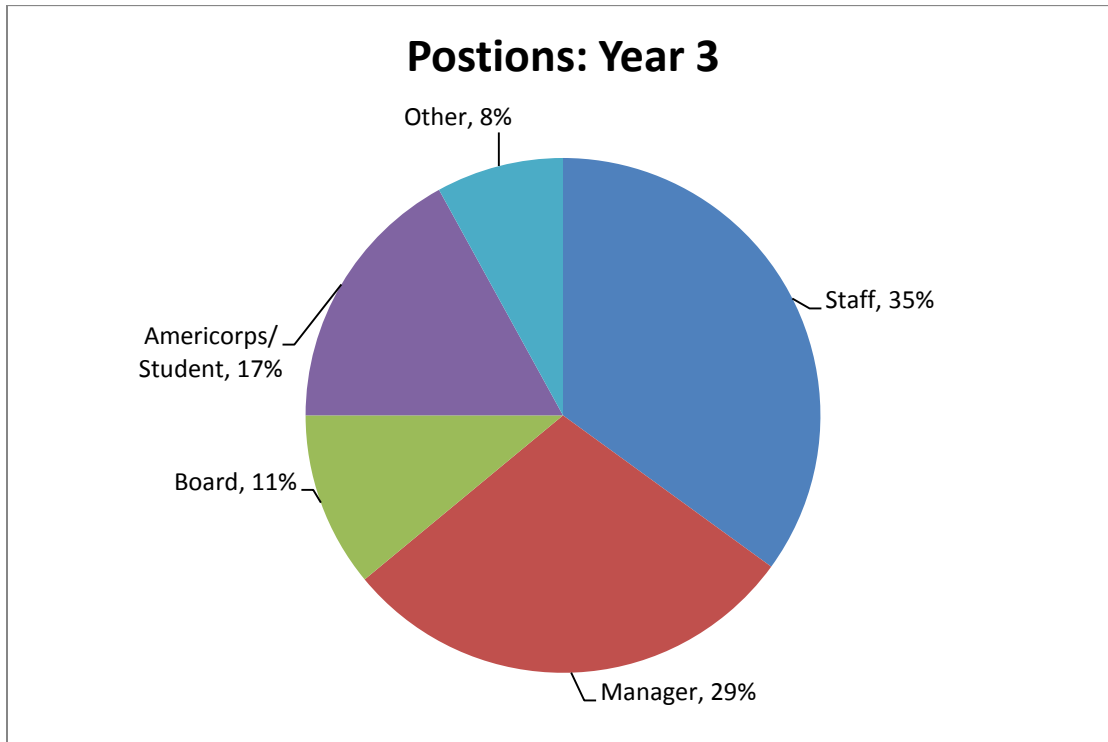
	<b>White</b>	<b>People of Color</b>
Year 1	65%	35%
Year 2	68%	32%
Year 3	56%	41%



When comparing the three years of the King Institute, Year Three showed an increase in the number of Blacks and Asians, and a decrease in the number of Whites and Latinos.



**Positions**



Year Three data shows an increase in the number of board members participating which is due in part to the two courses offered on transformative governance which included board members (board members comprised 64% of the first session and 58% of the second) and the course entitled Community Based Real Estate Development for Board Members in which all but one of the participants was a Board member. In other ways, the data was consistent with Year Two.

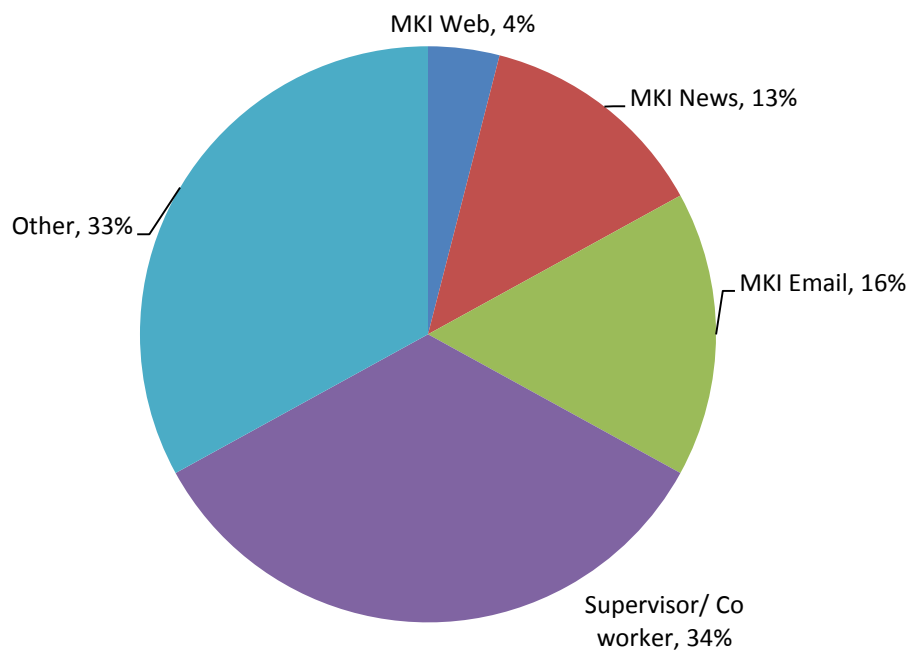
Year	Staff	Manager	Board	Americorps	Other
Yr 1	55%	40%		3%	4%
Yr 2	32%	35%	5%	18%	10%
Yr 3	35%	29%	11%	17%	8%

**How participants heard about the training**

Participants were asked on some but not all of the surveys how they heard about the training session. For those that responded to the question, the majority either heard about it from a supervisor/ or co-worker (34%) or from another source (33%). Of the forms of outreach conducted by MKI, email (16%) and news alerts (13%) were the most common responses.



## How Participants Heard about MKI



## Evaluation Findings

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Data analyzed from the surveys were compared with several prioritized outcomes on the King Institute Logic Model. The information gathered from participants is broken into two primary areas:

1. **Process outcomes:** the degree to which participants were satisfied with the presenters, the organization of the training, and the King Institute registration process.
2. **Individual outcomes:** the degree to which participants learned new skills and felt that the knowledge could be applicable to their current position, potentially helping them advance professionally; and the degree to which the course offered the opportunity to work with peers.

Note: due to the fact that this evaluation did not include follow-up interviews with participants or supervisors as in prior years, it is not feasible at this time to ascertain the impact on the organizations or how the new skills were used to increase the effectiveness of the CDCs work in the community.

## **General feedback**

In general, the feedback from the participants was very positive. In particular, participants shared their appreciation for the opportunity to learn from and with expert presenters and their peers, the excellent quality and organization of the training sessions, and the high degree of usefulness for the tools and information shared during the courses.

“We are so appreciative for this training and thank you - it was very informative!”

“Excellent skills; constructive information given and shared; connections made.”

“Superb, practical, we're stealing your ideas!”

“Very well organized, clear objectives, and timed well. Honest discussion and helpful tips/models that we can use in our organization.”

“One of the most useful training programs. Great mix of advice and USABLE TOOLS.”

“I would strongly recommend this training to anyone who is interested in getting a better understanding of asset management.”

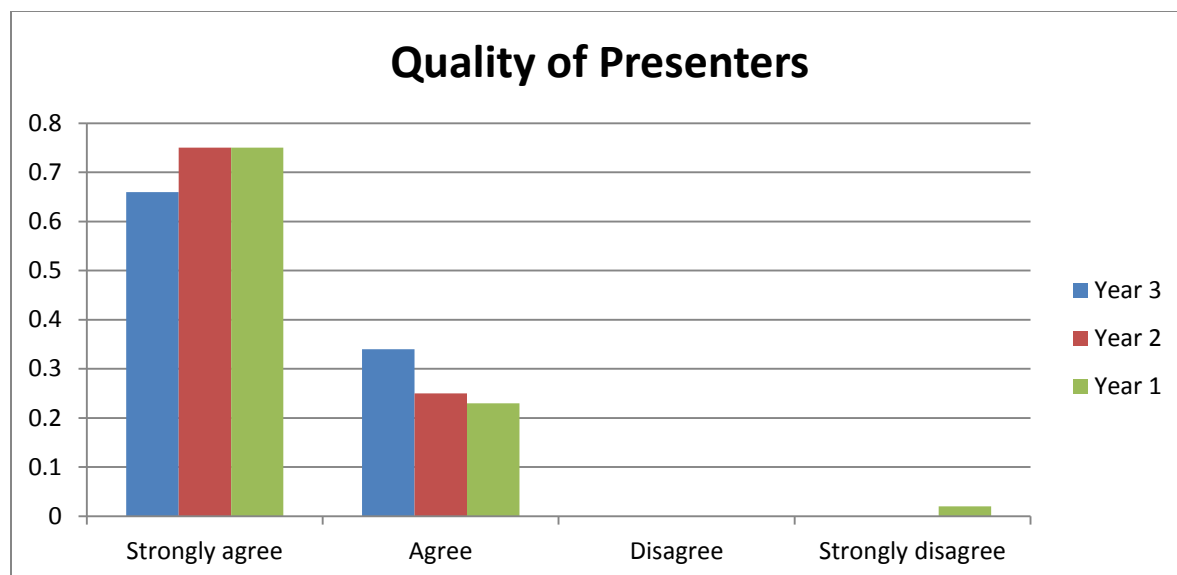
## **Process Outcomes**

The survey included questions about the presenters, the training, and the registration process.

**Quality of Presenters:** *Please rate the quality of the presenters. The presenters were clear, had expertise and knowledge in the subject area, and had an effective presentation style.*

Participants used a rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

In Year Three, an average of 67% of participants strongly agreed with the above statement, and 34% agreed – illustrating that all participants rated the presenters highly. These numbers are slightly lower than in the previous years – see chart below – however, given that no participant rated the presenters at the lower end of the scale, this result is still a strong indication that the King Institute is working with quality presenters.



The courses with the highest ratings for presenters were:

- Smoke free housing seminar (100% strongly agreed)
- Census data 10.11 (100% strongly agreed)
- Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects 9.11 (100% strongly agreed)
- Nuts and bolts of asset management (94% strongly agreed)
- CBO Real Estate REB 5.12 (80% strongly agreed)

The courses with lower ratings for strongly agreed were:

- CED 101 (29% strongly agreed)
- Strategic Decision Making for CBOs/ NPC 9.11 (38% strongly agreed)
- Introduction to popular education (43% strongly agreed)
- Transformative Governance for Community Impact Day 2/ 1.12 (42% strongly agreed)

“The presenter has in-depth knowledge of the subject area. The presentation style was interesting as it was a mix of discussion, powerpoint, small group work and presentations.” *Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects*

“Well-organized, good pace, informative, practical.” *Making Use of Local Census Data*

“The presenter was extremely knowledgeable on the subject and was able to make complex and difficult information easy to understand.” *Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors*

“Facilitation was excellent! I appreciate the connection to "real world" situations and interactive style. The presenters were very helpful. I would have liked some more movement (physical) activities.” *Basics of Community Organizing*

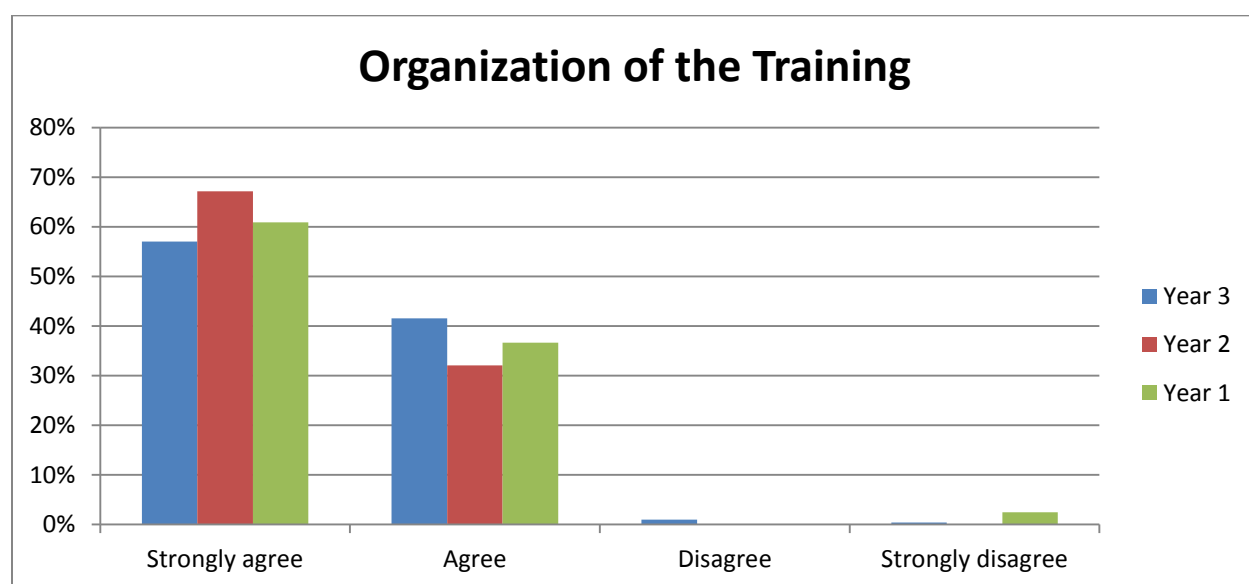
“Excellent! The presenter demonstrates the facilitation he encourages. Lots of opportunities to engage in activities!” *Building Leaders, Building Communities*

“The presenter did an awesome job teaching this course. He kept our interest up and engaged the class. His presentation was very effective and his personal style as a teacher.” *Nuts & Bolts of Asset Management*

**Organization of the Training:** *Please rate the organization of the training itself. The training was well organized and the site was conducive to the group's learning.*

Participants used a rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

In Year Three, an average of 57% of participants strongly agreed that the training was well organized; 42% agreed; and 1% disagreed (which represents only 4 surveys.) Therefore, nearly all participants agreed that the trainings were well organized. Again, these numbers are only slightly lower than prior years.



The courses with the highest ratings:

- Smoke free housing seminar (86% strongly agreed)
- Census data 10.11 (89% strongly agreed)
- Nuts and bolts of asset management (81% strongly agreed)
- Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects 9.11 (80% strongly agreed)

The courses with the lowest ratings:

- Intro to grant and report writing (35% strongly agreed; 59% agreed; 6% disagreed)
- Real estate development seminar (17% strongly agreed; 83% agreed)
- Introduction to popular education (52% strongly agreed; 43% agreed; 5% disagreed)
- Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors 11.11 (52% strongly agreed; 43% agreed; 5% strongly disagreed (1 person))
- CED 101 9.11 (23% strongly agreed; 73% agreed; 5% strongly disagreed (1 person))

Some comments were shared on the food, room temperature, and facilities.

*“The food could have been better”* (Exit Strategies for LIHTC, Transformative Governance for Community Impact Part 2) or *“the food was great”* (Introduction to CED, Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors). *“The room was too cold”* (Strategic Decision Making for CBOs, Making Use of Local Census Data 3.12) or *“the room was too hot”* (Introduction to CED, Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors).

As the percentage of those who either strongly agreed or agreed with the survey question indicates, most participants were satisfied with the organization of the training.

*“The training was well-organized and the panel discussion was especially helpful.” Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors*

*“Good job - useful learnings, great to have board and ED together, good food and room. Thanks Shirronda.” Transformative Governance for Community Impact Part 1*

*“Convenient, great location! Julie always has everything so well organized!” Building Leaders, Building Communities*

With regard to presentation styles, some comments illustrated that there could have been more opportunity for discussion or a change of format.

*“The presenters didn't always leave enough time for questions. There weren't scheduled breaks included in the schedule. It would have been interesting to hear more from presenters at CDCs and different engagements they've worked on, about success/failures.” Introduction to Community and Economic Development*

*“I wish we'd had more discussion/activity and less lecture. We would have benefitted from more experiential learning.” Undoing Racism*

*“More interactive presentations. Not powerpoint based. More discussion.” Introduction to Community and Economic Development*

*“Sometimes the way he presented anecdotes did not totally relate to the topics. It was distracting.” Introduction to Popular Education*

*“Excellent peer knowledge, not enough time to network or connect.” Reaching and Engaging Immigrant Businesses*

Some other comments were made related to the length of the day or the facility.

*“9-4 is a very long day, so thanks for shortening it a little. I think it could still be a little shorter without negatively impacting the content.” Basics of Community Organizing*

*“The afternoon portion seemed much longer than necessary.” Group Facilitation*

*“Lots of trainings and long days were a bit exhausting, but the plus side to that was that we covered a lot of ground.” Real Estate Development Seminar for New Senior Managers and Execs*

“I liked the agenda that was clear and detailed. The room was not especially conducive to a group feeling and it was hard to see some of the displays. Also, I would like to have the materials before the training starts, or all at the end.” *Introduction to Popular Education*

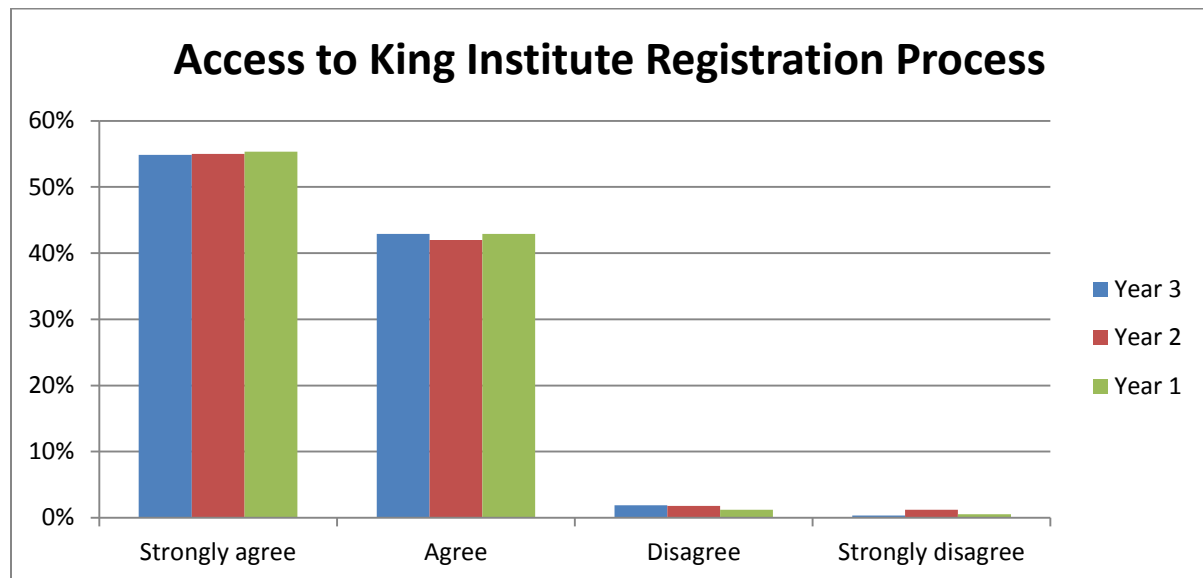
“Though I'd recommend a session for executive directors only or a session for those (ED and otherwise), with some experience in real estate development - I found the first two sessions a little too elementary.” *Real Estate Development Seminar for New Senior Managers and Execs*

“Internet access would have been helpful to allow for typing notes to send to the rest of the executive board.” *Reaching and Engaging Immigrant Businesses*

**Registration Process:** Please rate your access to the King Institute's registration process and website. It was easy to register through the website or other means.

Participants used a rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

55% strongly agreed, 42% agreed, and 2% disagreed. The ratings for Year Three are nearly identical to prior years.

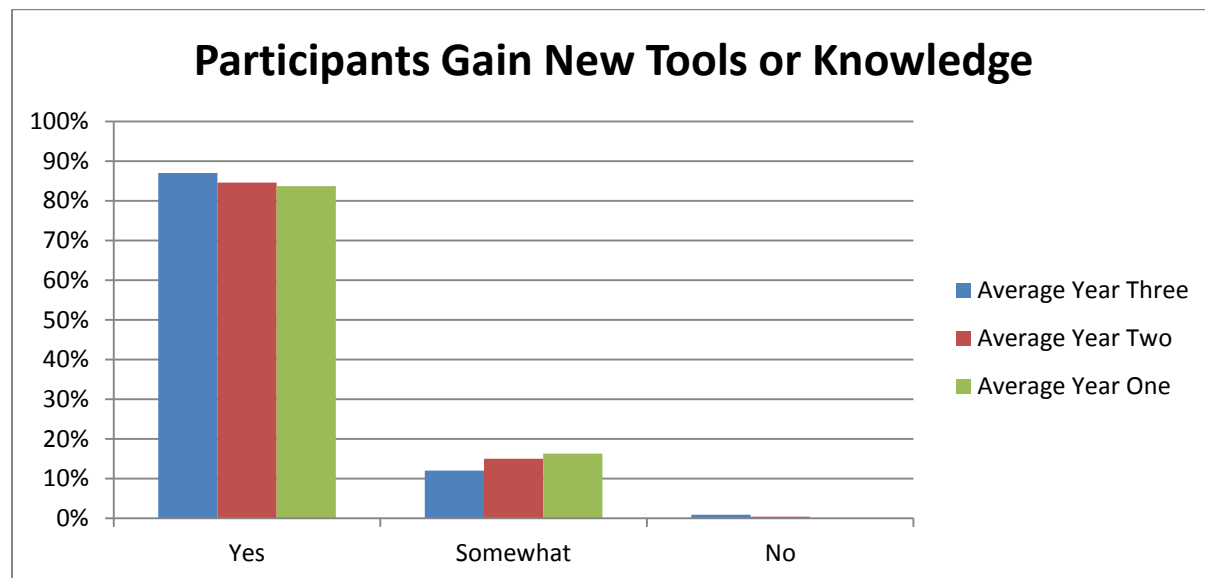


## **Outcomes for Individuals**

The King Institute seeks to build the skills and capacities of individuals working in the community development field and to improve the performance of their organizations. Therefore, the day-of-survey asks participants about the degree to which they learned new knowledge, how useful the information was to their current position, and the degree to which they believe the training will help them advance in the community development field.

**Learn new tools or knowledge:** Did you learn about new tools or gain knowledge that is applicable to your position? Participants were asked to answer Yes, Somewhat, or No.

87% of participants reported that they learned new tools or gained knowledge, 12% replied 'somewhat', and 1% reported 'no' to this questions. The findings were very similar to prior years.



The courses with the highest ratings were:

100% of participants in seven courses responded 'yes':

- CBO Real Estate REB
- Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects
- Census data 10.11
- Transformative Governance for Community Impact 11.11
- Economic Development Credit Analysis
- Smoke free housing seminar
- Making use of census data March 2012
- LISC Project Manager Seminar

In another seven courses, over 80% of the participants responded 'yes':

- Nuts and bolts asset management
- Media Strategies for Community Development Practitioners
- Making use of census data 4.12
- Reaching and engaging immigrant businesses
- Transformative Governance Day 2/ 1.12
- Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors
- Building Leaders, Building Communities
- Strategic Decision Making for CBOs/ NPC

The courses with the lowest ratings were:

- Group Facilitation (63% yes, 32% somewhat, 5% no)
- Intro to grant and report writing (68% yes, 32% somewhat)
- Introduction to CED (68% yes, 32% somewhat)
- Intro to Popular Education (70% yes, 20% somewhat; 10% no)

“I definitely gained basic knowledge that already allows me to be more effective during board/committee meetings.” *Community-Based Real Estate Development: An Overview for CDC Board Members*

“The presenter was clear and concise, relieving my worries about the grant writing process. As a new member to the nonprofit field, I feel more confident entering this fundraising strategy.” *Introduction to Grant and Report Writing*

“Very informative and very engaging. Very good suggestions regarding building strong community organizations.” *Basics of Community Organizing*

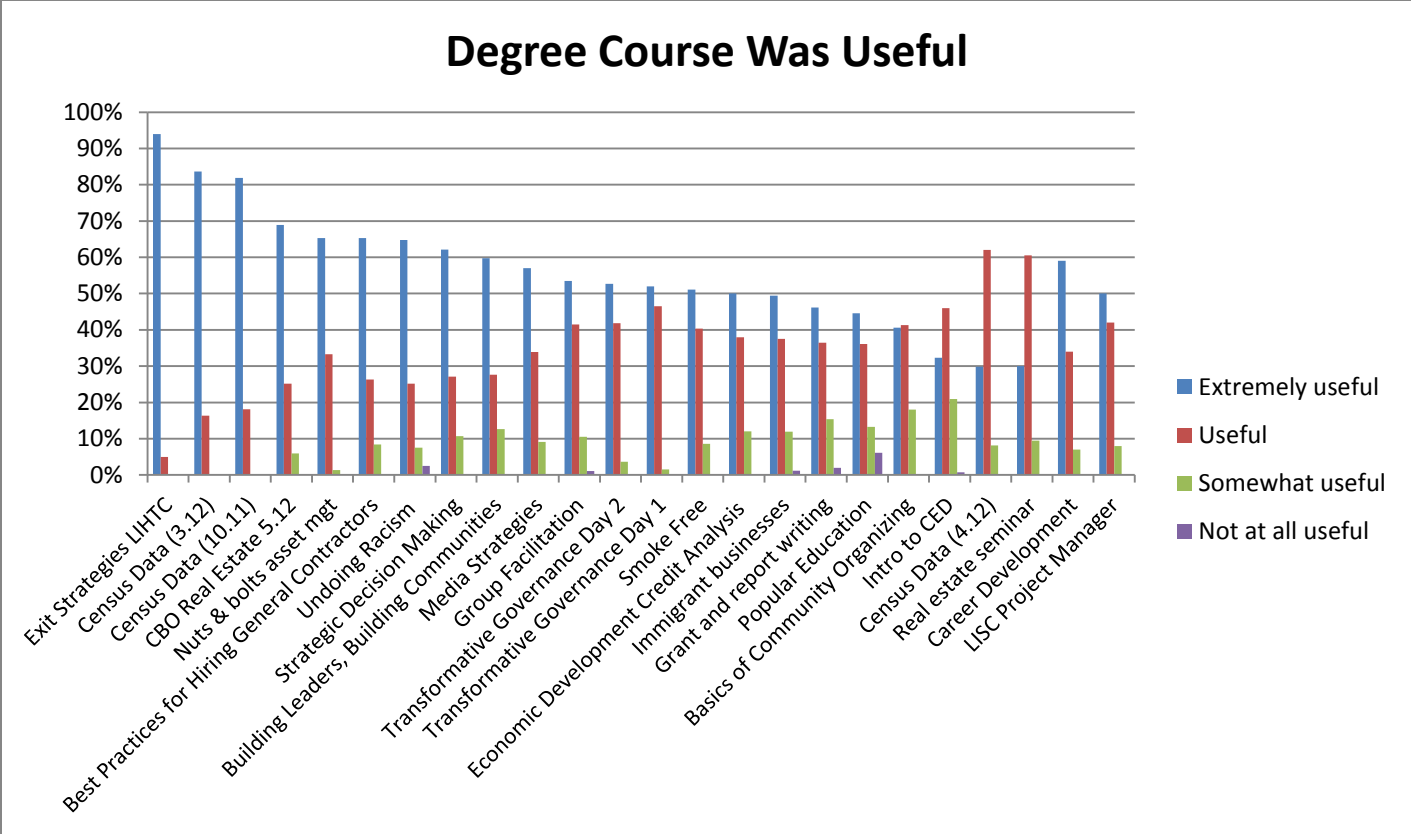
“It was helpful to discuss the issues of race in connection to social problems and challenging social institutions. More strategies to do this last part would have been great.” *Undoing Racism*

**Degree of Usefulness:** *Please rate the degree to which the information presented was useful to strengthening your work in your current position.*

For each course, participants were asked to rate major topic areas as ‘extremely useful’, ‘useful’, ‘somewhat useful’, or ‘not at all useful’. Across all subjects and all courses, 56% of participants rated the course as ‘extremely useful’ and another 35% rated it as ‘useful’. Another 9% responded ‘somewhat useful’ and only 1% stated the information was ‘not at all useful.’ Year Three indicates a slight increase in the percentage of students who rated the course ‘extremely useful.’

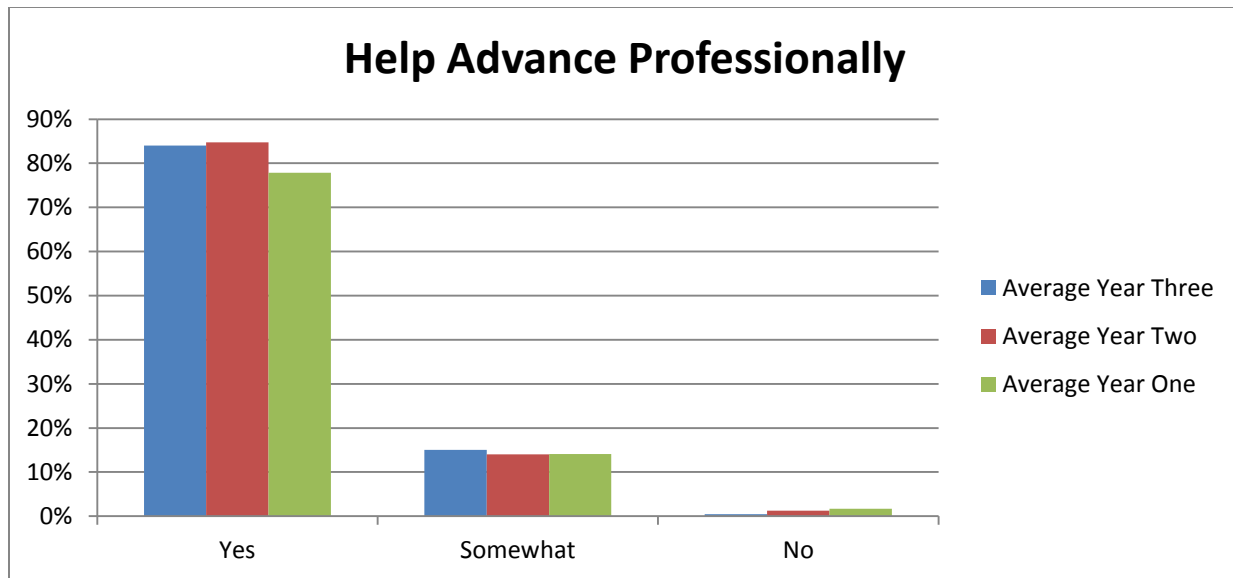
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Extremely Useful	53%	53%	61%
Useful	36%	37%	38%
Somewhat Useful	11%	9%	9%
Not at all Useful	1%	2%	1%





**Advance Professionally:** *Do you believe that the new skills or knowledge you gained today will help you to advance professionally in the community development field?*  
 Participants were asked to answer Yes, Somewhat, or No.

84% of participants responded that they believed the new knowledge would help them advance professionally, and other 16% replied 'somewhat' to this question. No one responded 'no.' These ratings are slightly better than Year One and fairly consistent with Year Two.



**Applicability:** *How do you envision applying the new skills or knowledge you gained today to improve your work or help your organization?*

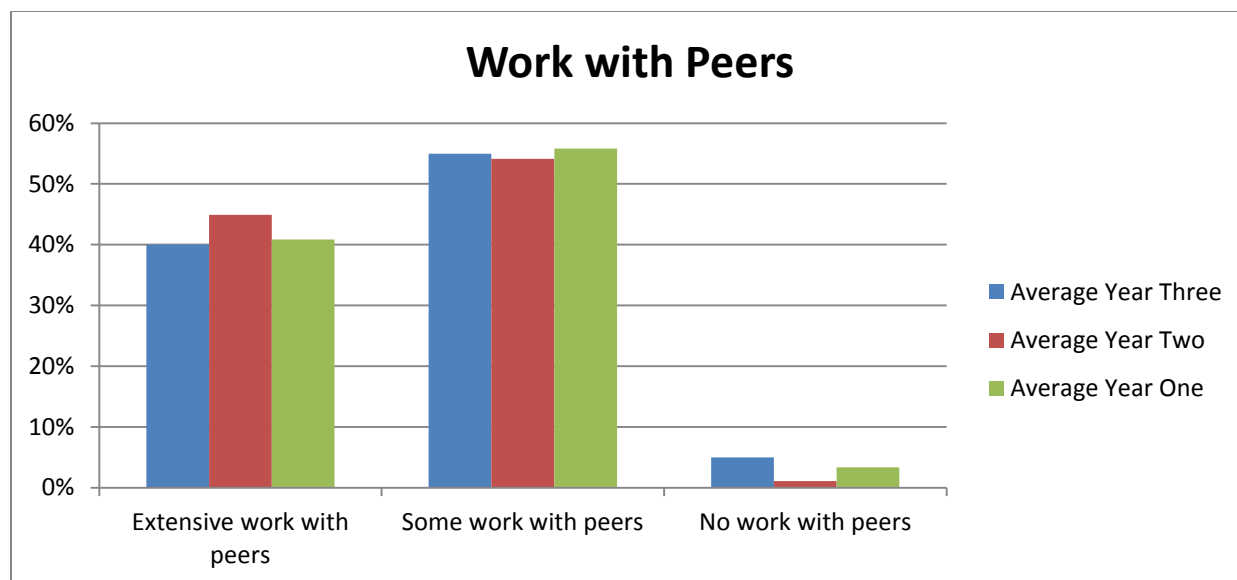
Participants were asked to share ideas about how they might apply the new skills they gained during the training. A sample of comments is listed below.

- The focus for me is currently transitioning to asset management and refinancing properties within our portfolio. The timing is great. *Exit Strategies for Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects*
- Greater awareness of the links between poverty and race in program planning. Addressing race more directly within the organization and with those we work with. *Undoing Racism*
- We are right in the early stages of planning for next year (and beyond) and I really wanted to take our clarity of purpose and implementation to the next level. This is going to make a big difference in making that a reality. *Strategic Decision Making for Community-Based Organizations*
- Understanding the economic aspects will help my financial training and understand the multi-faceted approaches necessary to do my job successfully. *Introduction to Community and Economic Development*
- The incredible value of this training was its balance of: 1. being very specific/focused (local census data) 2. serving the needs of professionals working in diverse roles in organizations, so relevant to different areas of community development. *Making Use of Local Census Data 10.11*
- This week I worked on reviewing a small contract for a retail tenant and his contractor...I wish I'd had this knowledge last week! It will be helpful for similar small contracts in the future. I'm also starting to work on a new housing project, so these are great tools to have at this stage in the game because I can implement them soon. *Best Practices for Hiring General Contractors*

- Supporting board members in executing their work - taking more responsibility for engagement - connecting more strongly with community. *Transformative Governance for Community Impact 11.11*
- Through strengthening my relationships within the board. Advocating for best practices such as term limits. *Transformative Governance for Community Impact 1.12*
- Realized that organizing is about thinking creatively, challenging status quo. Hopefully this inspires me to be more effective. *Basics of Community Organizing*
- Apply credit principle to prospective borrowers. Economic Development Credit Analysis
- My organization is full of (for the lack of better words) 'old-fashioned' thinkers, this will help me change that. *Introduction to Popular Education*
- Power analysis and strategy session for future campaigns. *Building Leaders, Building Communities*
- Using ACS survey data will help support our mission and enable better formulation of agency goals. *Making Use of Local Census Data 3.12*
- We work extensively with immigrant entrepreneurs and hope to use to improve our data collection and student volunteer program. *Reaching and Engaging Immigrant Businesses*
- Better supervise property management company. *Nuts & Bolts of Asset Management*
- I am a new board member and the timing of this training was perfect!! I believe I will be able to add value to HCA and their staff by better understanding what support, questions, and other interactions I can take - because of what I learned. *Community-Based Real Estate Development: An Overview for CDC Board Members*

**Peer Interaction:** *During the training, did you have an opportunity to work with peers that you found beneficial to your learning?*

Participants were asked about the opportunity for working with peers: 40% responded that there was extensive work with peers that was beneficial; 55% said that there was some work with peers that was beneficial; and 5% replied that there was no work with peers that was beneficial.



The highest courses ranked for peer interaction are:

- Transformative Governance Day 2 (91%)
- Real estate development seminar (67%)
- Building Leaders, Building Communities (67%)
- Transformative Governance Day 1 (64%)
- Economic Development Credit Analysis (60%)

There were a handful of participants in a few courses who felt that there was not useful opportunities for work with peers during the course. Those included the three courses offered on Making Use of Census Data and the Undoing Racism course where two people each selected this rating. [See comments above under “Organization of the Training” where participants note the need for more peer interaction.]

## Conclusion

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The King Institute for Community Building continues to offer high quality courses in a wide range of subject areas to hundreds of participants in the region. The student body is increasingly more diverse with an increase in the number of people of color attending and an increase in participation among Board members. The Institute continues to serve a broad geographic area.

Nearly all of the students expressed value in the courses. 87% of participants reported that they learned new tools or gained knowledge and over 90% of students rated the information provided as either extremely useful or useful in strengthening their work in their current position. In Year Three, a higher percentage of students rated the course work as extremely useful. 67% of participants strongly agreed and the balance of 34% agreed that the presenters are of high quality. 84% believe the course will help them advance professionally in the community development field. These ratings indicate that nearly all of the participants in King

Institute courses in the third year found it to be beneficial and useful to their work. The only question where less than 50% rated in the highest category pertained to working with peers in the session. Overall, the King Institute should be very pleased with these findings.

The Year Three Evaluation was limited in that it only examined the day-of-surveys so as not to overly burden participants and stakeholders who were interviewed for the MKI business planning process. The day-of-surveys are an important tool to gather immediate feedback on the quality of the presenters, the organization of the training, and the students' first impressions about what they have learned and how they might apply that knowledge to their work. These surveys cannot however investigate how the learning was used in the field to improve the effectiveness of their organizations.

Therefore, it is recommended that the Year Four Evaluation focus exclusively on the questions of longer term impact. During the course of the year, the MKI staff should continue to review the day-of-surveys on a regular basis to collect important data and to make any necessary mid-course corrections. The end-of-the-year evaluation can focus its methodology on evaluating the longer term impact of the courses through interviews with students, supervisors, Executive Directors and Board members. This process can help to ascertain how the King Institute is contributing to organizational capacity building to increase impact at the community level.