

Outcomes and Testimonials from CLI Graduates

Outcomes for 2008 Institute Graduates

- 95% graduated
- 100% developed a network of colleagues from other disciplines and types of organizations
- 100% know their leadership style, as well as what works and is challenging about that style
- 80% experienced greater ability to engage others and lead
- 40% expanded their role in community-based child and family initiatives
- 30% expanded their engagement in statewide child and family initiatives
- 35% indicated they had experienced career advancement since beginning the Institute

Past graduates had these things to say about their experience in the Institute:

“The . . . months of involvement with the Collaborative Leadership Institute have been enlightening. I’d even go so far as to say it’s been life-changing. . . The whole concept of leadership is different for me now. I [have learned] that leadership is a great deal of self knowledge and reflection mixed with an even greater amount of listening with your heart. It’s also about taking seriously the responsibility to be a leader for the sake of others, not for yourself.”

“What have I learned about leadership? I think that I’ve learned that I have more leadership skills than I was aware. It helped me to think about the differences between manager and leader – I don’t like to think of myself as a manager – although I realize that both are necessary. I really want to focus on the idea that everyone is and can be a leader from whatever position they find themselves! I think that I have learned a lot about myself and my own personal leadership style.”

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has” (Margaret Mead). This quote sums up my thoughts on the last eight months of my participation in The Collaborative Leadership Institute. The most significant experiences for me was participating in this experience with an amazing group who represent a continued need and interest to improve their communication and leadership skills and work to improve the lives of children and parents.”

“Since [CLI], I think I have just been more intentional and worked with a bit more integrity. I have recognized that [a] quote that I saw in San Antonio, “Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it” is really true and I want the portrait I paint to really reflect the person and leader I want to be.”

“I [recognize] opportunities to practice my leadership development. Now, I remind myself that its not always comfortable and I have been stretching myself when it comes to bringing a different view, being willing to speak up or say the “what if” and it really has had some benefits.

“I have been trying to take some extra time to reflect on what has changed – as we come to a close of our Institute. I do not know that the change has been visible to everyone, but I do feel more confident in myself in my role at my agency. Part of that just comes with time, but it is also due in part to the time that I have been allowed to spend focusing on myself, on my leadership skills . . . I feel that I have become more aware of myself and I have attempted to make my actions and words more intentional . . .”

“Another change is that I feel that I have been taking more risks and trying to engage in more conversations with staff at work! I really hope to have more time to be able to do this more frequently – but the attempts that I have made have been positive. I have tried to observe our staff members more during group meetings and trainings and to find ways to bring out their voices. I think we have a very supportive team and it seems that we are becoming comfortable with each other more and more.”

“As I reflect on this experience, I realize that stepping out of my comfort zone was a stepping stone to opportunity.”

“This has been a year of change and personal growth! . . . And I am growing as a leader and person . . . These changes and other events have pulled and pushed me to look at my core. I am not sure if my project is “team work” or “personal growth.” I seem to be working on both.”

“I want you, and those who made this class available, to know you may have created a monster. I even stood up and expressed my views at a meeting of all the movers and shakers of [name] county the other day. Can you imagine that? Your gentle guidance has empowered me (for better or worse).”

“Stories, respect, listening, understanding, reflection, power, management, diversity, compassion, service, modeling, vision, guide, authenticity, and of course, conversation are all words that have a new and enriched meaning for me because of the CLI . . . My life has changed because of this course. [CLI colleague] and I were talking today about how possibilities are happening right before our eyes. It's an exciting time and I feel blessed because I now know that I am capable of doing more than I ever thought possible. Thank you to all of you who have made this trip a reality for us. May your futures be as bright as the futures we all now face as a result of CLI.”

“Another lesson that will continue to resonate with me is realizing that learning and leading are congruent; the two are harmonious. Before coming to the CLI, I had forgotten that leaders are learners. This preconceived notion had led me to believe that leaders are perfect. I thought that leaders already knew everything, that’s why *they* were

the leaders! Needless to say, that is not the case. As explored at the CLI, leaders *are* learners . . . Most importantly, as a result of the CLI, I learned that everyone, including leaders, makes mistakes; it's inevitable. But it takes a leader to reflect on the mistake, learn from the mistake, and carry that lesson with him for the rest of his life. Realizing that leaders aren't perfect, more specifically that I do not have to be perfect, has enabled me to move out of my comfort zone and take those risks (risks that I never would have taken before), recognizing and embracing the fact that it is acceptable for me to make mistakes."

"As I reflect on my initial Collaborative Leadership Institute (CLI) experience, one of the first things that I remember . . . is that the experience itself [was] more than some of my previous experiences with "learning events" involving the profession of childcare [where] I felt disengaged, bored and frankly thought why am I here? The CLI on the other hand, seemed to be different from the start. One of the initial differences that immediately stood out to me was the readings.... Having the chance to meet providers from all walks of life I really thought was an important piece. Hearing from providers that serve the entire state was another important piece of the CLI experience.... My CLI experience . . . has caused me to be introspective, in regards to how I lead the center. What I left the first CLI event realizing is that I was a good manager, and a so so leader."

"Through my experiences in the Collaborative Leadership Institute, I began to realize that a leader comes in many different forms. One doesn't have to be a dynamic superstar to be a leader. The Zander quote . . . shared with us . . . is one that will stay with me forever... *"A leader does not need a podium; she can be sitting quietly on the edge of any chair, listening passionately and with commitment, fully prepared to take the baton."* Before the Institute, I saw myself as an organizer and coordinator, not as a leader. Having been a part of the Collaborative Leadership Institute, I now see myself as a leader and have comfortably taken on more leadership roles within my community and workplace."

"CLI somehow got under my skin and has influenced me in ways that I didn't really notice until I sat down to write this summation of my experience. I didn't think it was having much of an effect because I've read and taken classes and attended workshops, etc. all having to do with leadership. I knew the difference, for example, between management and leadership and prided myself on being competent at both, which my position requires. However, I discovered I had a ways to go before the leadership/power coat, as you introduced Gendler's metaphor to us in April, fit comfortably."

"**R** is for the Readings required and how they added reframing, depth, understanding, investigation and knowledge to my life . . . **E** is for the wonderful Experiences I have had with the Institute. This has truly been a blessing. Working in the early childhood field has been my passion . . . You have embraced, empowered, believed and strengthened me . . . **F** is for Fears and Frustrations that I went through in the process of this last ten months . . . **L** is for the Leadership skills I developed through this process . . . Setting new goals and understanding that sometimes life just gets messy . . . **E** is for the new Empowerment that has come from the readings, the facilitator, my fellow comrades in

this adventure . . . **C** is for my Comrades, Coaches and Cash funder. To all of you. **Thank you!** . . . May I go forward believing in the good you have done for me and pass it forward to others. **T** is for the many great Teachers in this world. Children, families, advisors, facilitators, friends, colleagues and many, many others. I will watch, listen, engage and learn from you.

How have I initiated leadership within my organization? “I have made staff decisions that I would not have prior to attending CLI; I initiated leading a study group and have volunteered to co-facilitate a committee; Our entire lending library is now done electronically, based on my suggestion and implementation; I’ve convened a group of ECE stakeholders from [area of the state] to collaborate on provider training/education issues; I have taken the opportunity to try new things and to share more openly; I began a series of ongoing “team building” activities and topic driven conversations; I have been able to work with employees who are interested in developing their leadership skills; I am speaking with more self-confidence and self-assuredness; [I have] created a buzz and got people talking about the issue[s] . . . I am now the . . . representative for the SEIU Local; I joined an international conference committee.”

Have I gotten involved in state-wide child and family initiatives? “I’m involved with Washington Learns, Born Learning, and Building Bridges; I was a member of our local delegation team that attended Governor’s Summit for EL; I participate with an early literacy task force with other librarians across the state; my role in the Born Learning campaign continues to grow and I am excited to see where that goes; I was one of 25 family child care providers on the collective bargaining team for SEIU and Washington state; I now have a better idea of how I can participate directly and indirectly in state-wide issues. Being rural makes active participation costly in time and money. I now know how to make that happen anyway.”