

ENGAGED LEARNING

CIPA Capstone & Public Service Exchange

**Cornell Institute
for Public Affairs**



The Cornell MPA Offers

CIPA Capstone and Public Service Exchange Clients (partial list)

- 1492 Consulting Group, Ithaca, NY
- AFL-CIO, Washington, DC
- Africa Impact Group, West Africa
- Alternatives Federal Credit Union, Ithaca, NY
- American Red Cross, Ithaca, NY
- Appalachian Rural Poverty Initiative, Georgia
- Bekondo Foundation, Cameroon
- The Belize Zoo, Belize
- California Coalition for Clean Air, Sacramento, CA
- Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes, Ithaca, NY
- Centre d'Education Inclusif (CEI), Haiti
- City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Urban Renewal, Ithaca, NY
- City of Ithaca Department of Public Works, Ithaca, NY
- City of Ithaca Downtown Partnership, Ithaca, NY
- CityScience Outdoor Exploration and Learning, NYC
- Community Foundation of Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY
- Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY
- Cornell Prison Education Program, Ithaca, NY
- Cornell United Way, Ithaca, NY
- Cornell University International Students and Scholars Office, Ithaca, NY
- Dialogistica, Venezuela, US
- Early Childhood Collaborative, Ithaca, NY
- Economic Development Administration, NYC

ON THE COVER: CIPA students Kristin Szczepaniec '13 and Henry McCaslin '13 present their Capstone team's Collegetown parking study recommendations to the City of Ithaca's Planning Committee.


PHOTO: UNIVERSITY PHOTOGRAPHY

You a World of Professional Experience



e and Networking Opportunities

- Education Fund, New York City and Washington, DC
- Educate the Children, Inc., Kathmandu, Nepal
- Egbok Mission, Cambodia
- Finger Lakes ReUse, Ithaca, NY
- Friends of Warm Hearth, Armenia
- Fundación Quirós Tanzi, Costa Rica
- Green Empowerment, Port Au Prince, Haiti
- Greenhouse Gas Management Institute (GHGMI), Washington, DC
- Health and Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY
- Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia & Nizhny Novgorod, Russia
- Inter-American Development Bank / Salud Mesoamerica Initiative 2015, Central America
- Ithaca City School District, Ithaca, NY
- Ithaca Public Education Initiative, Ithaca, NY
- Ithaca Youth Bureau, Ithaca, NY
- INOMA Educational Products, Mexico
- Kadangas, The Netherlands
- Lake Placid—North Elba Community Development Board, NY
- Madison County Agricultural Economic Development, NY
- Mutual Housing Association of Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY
- Namaste Montessori School, Ithaca, NY
- Namgyal Monastery, Ithaca, NY
- Nature Iraq, Tigris River, Iraq
- New Orleans Recovery Project for the 9th Ward, New Orleans, LA
- New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NOLA), LA
- New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), New York City
- Pader Girls Academy, Northern Uganda
- Pipeline 4 Progress, Corning, NY
- Save the Children, La Paz, Bolivia
- Sciencenter, Ithaca, NY
- Stop the Silence, Glen Dale, MD
- St. Paul Catholic University Development Studies Center, Peru
- Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM), Mysore, Karnataka State, India
- Thrive, Nicaragua
- Tompkins County Department of Administration, Ithaca, NY
- Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY
- Tompkins County Office for the Aging, Ithaca, NY
- Upstate New York Safety Coalition Task Force, NY
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC
- Water Resources Institute, Ithaca, NY
- Village at Ithaca, Ithaca, NY
- YMCA, Ithaca, NY

A photograph of Laurie Miller, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a black blazer and a colorful scarf. She is smiling and gesturing with her hands while talking to Carrie Young, whose back is to the camera. They are in an office setting with a laptop and a potted plant visible in the background.

Laurie Miller (pictured here), Associate Director for CIPA Public Engagement, and **Carrie Young**, CIPA Public Engagement Associate and Instructor, mentor students closely on every capstone and public service exchange project. Potential clients who wish to propose a project can reach out to Laurie Miller directly:

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Phone: 607-255-4858



“The client for my Capstone team was the Belize Zoo, a nonprofit committed to the conservation of Belize’s wildlife and natural habitats. We developed a guidebook to help the Zoo increase its revenue stream and identify funding sources to build a new hospital. Through the Capstone, I gained experience working for an international client and learned a lot about funding systems, grant writing, and business strategy. I also gained experience in organizing effective social media and hosting major fundraising events.”

— **Amanda Ward**
student consultant, Belize Zoo

Professional Development & Real-World Good

Some of the world’s brightest minds are drawn to Cornell’s MPA program because of the emphasis placed on experiential learning. When asked, graduates regularly list their involvement with CIPA’s Capstone and Public Service Exchange (PSE) as key in helping them develop the skill-set they need to be successful in their future careers. Both the Capstone and PSE provide students with real-world project management and consulting experience.

The CIPA Capstone is an in-depth, semester-long program designed for second-year students. As participants in this program, students engage in rigorous consultancy projects for domestic and international clients. For each Capstone project, students form consulting teams that propose relevant and actionable solutions to well-defined policy or management problems posed by their client. The Capstone projects are multidisciplinary and experiential in nature, and students have the opportunity to learn from each other and from resources across the University, as well as from CIPA’s contacts in the field. During the program, students learn about managing projects and undertaking policy analysis within the constraints of various political environments and

organizations. They also gain professional and public service experience and learn how to manage a team project. The Capstone course fulfills the professional writing/analysis requirement of the MPA degree at Cornell.

The CIPA Public Service Exchange is designed as a service-learning partnership. Students engage with a wide variety of government and nonprofit client-organizations to work on pro bono consulting projects. As with the Capstone projects, Public Service Exchange clients may be locally, nationally, or internationally-based. Students gain valuable, hands-on experience while partnering with these clients to mitigate or solve agreed-upon public policy or management problems. Many of these partner agencies and non-profit organizations offer internships or ongoing consulting opportunities to students growing out of the coursework, and a number of students volunteer for work with these organizations after the coursework ends. This program is open to both first and second-year students.

Both of these courses are energetic, challenging, and transformative, offering students the opportunity to grow personally and professionally while making a real-world difference.



“Infrastructure has been of interest to me since I began my MPA studies, and the Capstone offered me an opportunity to gain experience in this area. Along with another student, I consulted for the Water Resources Institute (WRI) on a project related to the City of Ithaca’s water infrastructure. We were tasked with creating a cost-benefit model, a written report, and a presentation of findings to the WRI. I gained subject matter knowledge in short order, in addition to professional experience as a consultant.”

— **Karan Kalhan**
student consultant for the
Ithaca Water Resources Institute

The Capstone Experience

Making a difference globally

From Washington...

Environmental Protection Agency Washington, DC

The EPA asked CIPA students to conduct research on its Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) program. The TRI program maintains a database with information on the disposal and releases of over 650 toxic chemicals by thousands of U.S. facilities. One of the primary purposes of the TRI program is to inform communities about toxic releases to the environment.

CIPA students examined the uses of TRI data by the EPA and potential stakeholders, including how the information is being used by communities in Ithaca, Syracuse, and Binghamton, as well as its effectiveness.

Students presented recommendations on ways to increase community awareness and use of environmental information through education and outreach in a workshop at the EPA's National TRI Training Conference in Washington DC, in 2012.



Bekondo Foundation Bekondo, Cameroon

The Bekondo Foundation is a start-up, non-profit organization founded in 2013, which is dedicated to improving the lives of cocoa farmers in Bekondo, Cameroon. The Foundation strives for international



social justice and sustainable development by partnering with smallholder farmers to strengthen the knowledge, education, skills, and training needed to create a financially stable and thriving local community.

Students on the Fall 2014 Capstone team developed a strategic plan for the Foundation based on findings from a variety of strategy assessment tools, such as SWOT, stakeholder analysis, and logic model.

The Spring 2015 Capstone team focused on fundraising efforts, providing a thorough analysis of Bekondo's current grant writing strategy and offering a recommendations for potential funders.

The team also carried out an in-depth analysis of Bekondo's online fundraising campaign, and made detailed recommendations for strengthening the Foundation's reporting.

to Haiti...

Centre d'Education Inclusif (CEI) Petit Goave, Haiti

Centre d'éducation Inclusif (CEI) is a collaborative effort to design, build, and implement an inclusive primary school for children in Petit Goave, Haiti. Several different departments at Cornell have joined forces to support this organization. CIPA students in the Consulting for Government and Nonprofit Organizations and Capstone classes are helping CEI to develop partnerships with community members,

nonprofit agencies and government ministries in Haiti (all are advising on the development of the school); understand and address the challenges of transferring ownership of land; develop and establish a governance and administrative structure for the school together with partners in Haiti; and navigate the requirements for setting up a 501(c)(3) and conducting international fundraising.



The Public Service

Exchange Experience

"Working with CIPA adds great energy, integrity, skill, and excitement to projects which we could not do otherwise. The students are resourceful, self-directed, positive, entrepreneurial, and always exceed my expectations... CIPA students help us reach greater levels of achievement in our work."

—George Ferrari, Executive Director, Community Foundation of Tompkins County

The Public Service Exchange (PSE) assists with a wide variety of domestic and international non-profit and government organizations with timely research and recommendations.

The projects on the following pages highlight recent work by CIPA student consultants in the PSE course.



Tompkins County Department of Administration

Students assisted with the establishment of an organization-wide performance measurement system to enhance communication between managers, supervisors, government officials, and elected representatives about the impact of County programs and services.

City Science Outdoor Exploration & Learning

Student consultants assisted with the improvement of hands-on science education for children in New York City through the proposal of actionable solutions to help capture, maintain, and communicate program evaluation data.

Tompkins County Community Foundation

A two-person student team assisted with project development and fundraising recommendations to improve socio-economics in the county through strengthened networks and trust among community members, i.e. "social capital."

Cornell United Way

Student consultants worked on the analysis of current giving trends among University faculty and staff and created marketing and communication strategies to help improve participation (accounting for 40% of the total Tompkins County United Way campaign).

“ The CIPA team did a remarkably in-depth job of conducting the Sustainability Analysis for Foodnet Meals on Wheels. The matrix map they created enabled our [stakeholders] to easily visualize our mission impact and financial strategies... We will be presenting the findings of the project to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Tompkins County Legislature to show how our strategic decisions are financially viable and provide a significant community benefit.”

— Steve Griffin, Executive Director, Foodnet Meals on Wheels

Inter-American Development Bank/ Salud Mesoamerica Initiative 2015 Panama

A student consulting team worked with IADB to carry out in-depth analysis of country-level survey data to inform the Bank, SM2015 donors, and governments for decision making and policy change around healthcare in Latin America.



Foodnet Meals on Wheels

Consultants assisted Foodnet Meals on Wheels with the preparation of a sustainability analysis measuring profitability and impact of eleven of Foodnet's business lines. Foodnet plans to use the results in making strategic decisions to maintain and enhance its service quality and efficiency.



Lake Placid – North Elba Community Development Board, NY

Student consultants worked on GIS mapping and a set of recommendations for the Community's Comprehensive Plan that will promote and enhance the quality of life of the town of North Elba and community of Lake Placid.



“In a time of limited resources for local governments, students in the CIPA consulting course have offered Tompkins County a unique opportunity to acquire quality consulting and analysis at no cost. They’ve met with department directors and managers to discuss programs, develop measures, collect and analyze data, and create reporting tools. Without their help, the Performance Measurement Program would not be where it is today.”

— Kevin Sutherland, Executive Assistant, Tompkins County Administration

Madison County Agricultural Economic Development, NY

Student consultants assisted with the development of a 5-year Strategic Direction Plan, Comprehensive Development Plan, and compilation of external resources and models for improved marketing and communication.



Africa Impact Group West Africa

A six-person consulting team worked with the Africa Impact Group, a leading non-profit advisory firm in West Africa, to carry out a feasibility study of Social Impact bonds in order to strengthen impact investing efforts in the region.



YMCA Wilderness Area Project Ithaca, NY

An energetic four-person student consulting team assisted with planning and creation of an outdoor adventure area and programming to help teach youth about environmental sustainability and health issues through outdoor activities.



To learn more on CIPA's Public Engagement, visit:
www.cipa.cornell.edu/engagement



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