CBNO’s Citizen Participation Program (CPP) has worked to make the promise of democracy real in New Orleans by bringing diverse voices to civic life; advocating for policies that institutionalize citizen participation; and building the capacity of residents, community organizations, businesses, and government to effectively engage together in public deliberation and decision-making. Research has shown that meaningful citizen participation in democratic government improves the effectiveness and efficiency of government, reduces social inequities, generates economic activity and opportunity, reduces blight, and improves health, public safety and other quality of life indicators.

**Programs**

**Neighborhood Capacity Building** is critical to effective citizen engagement in city government. CBNO works with neighborhood organizations to ensure residents have the tools and organization to effectively interact with business and government to improve their community. Since 2009, CBNO has worked closely with the Gentilly Civic Improvement Association (GCIA), an association of Gentilly neighborhood organizations, to pilot a district council approach as a means to connect neighborhoods and government. CBNO has helped GCIA by providing board development, strengthening organization decision-making processes, cultivating new leadership, deepening their ties to individual neighborhood associations, helping facilitate effective input to city government on neighborhood issues, and assisting with neighborhood boundary-mapping to streamline neighborhood input into city planning decisions.

**Latino Community Engagement and Research**, conducted by CBNO in partnership with Puentes New Orleans, helps connect the fastest growing segment of New Orleans’ population with government and community.

“**I walked away from our meeting convinced that his organization [CBNO] was one of the best examples of stakeholder engagement and expectation management around civil society movements in the U.S.”**

- **Shivnath Thukral, Visiting Eisenhower Fellow, Mumbai, India**
Successful advocacy for the passage of the City Neighborhood Participation Plan (NPP), which ends “planning by surprise” and implements an “early notification system” that ensures development benefits businesses, neighborhoods and residents.

“Effective, vibrant communities can be likened to a three-legged stool, with city government, the business community, and residents participating in a CPP representing the three legs. They are the foundation of the overall community, and the CPP brings them together for the betterment of the city as a whole. Needless to say, if one leg is missing or weak, the stool collapses.”

- Valerie Abbott, Birmingham (AL) City Council Member and Former Neighborhood Association President

organizations. The Latino Community of Interest survey is the largest of its kind to assess attitudes towards government, civic engagement, and the needs and priorities of the Latino community. Results from the survey have already been used to improve access to health care information and services for Latino residents, along with access to healthy foods and recreation. The initial survey was followed by a comprehensive survey of Latino community health issues, obstacles and needs

**PROJECTS**

**Citizen Resource Guides** are published by CBNO to educate residents on how to effectively work with government and mobilize the necessary resources to address issues in their community. CBNO’s publications have included a Citizen’s Guide to City Government Services and a Neighborhood Organization Manual for residents wanting to form or strengthen neighborhood organizations as a tool to effect change. In 2014, CBNO published the Blight Resource Guide to assist residents in collaborating with neighbors, community groups and government agencies to address blight in their neighborhoods. The newest project is the Residents Guide to City Government, which will be a comprehensive compendium of government entities in New Orleans.

**The Diana Lewis Citizen Participation Awards** mobilize residents, business and governmental leaders to recognize and celebrate the outstanding leadership of local individuals and organizations who have worked tirelessly to increase citizen participation in New Orleans.

Timolyunn Sams receives the Diana Lewis Citizen Participation Award on behalf of Neighborhoods Partnership Network, flanked by keynote speaker the Honorable Moon Landrieu and CBNO President Keith Twitchell.