

## **Oji Bratcher, Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls**

Being a winner of the Etkin Johnson Scholarship has given me the opportunity to attend this year's ULI Fall Meeting. Located this year at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington D.C., a thriving city which is going through a development transformation fitting to host the event. Knowing the rich history of the city and spending time traveling through the streets of the city, it is always a joy seeing buildings going up in the city. Connecting the old with the new in real estate development is always a joy to witness.

Will Craig of Kasian Architecture, moderated the session *Adapting Real Estate and Unlocking Value by Designing Human Experience*. Explaining how Kasian Architecture is bridging the gap between human experience and the reuse of real estate. Combining the needs of businesses, real estate owners, local municipalities, and the surrounding population, into a full human experience beneficial to all. One project involved diverting pedestrian traffic from the street side of a business corridor under infrastructure construction. Taking the connecting rear alleys and transforming them into a haven for artists, vendors, and local residents.

The *Future of Real Estate Technology: How to Use What You Know and Stay Ahead of the Flow* session tackled the issues some building owners are facing with long term leasing. In an age where the pop-up model can now help a developer lease unused space to create temporary hotel space. New innovative companies are helping long-term assets investors reshape their business models through the use of technology, new ideas, and crafty start-ups. WhyHotel co-founder Jason Fudin explained his starting process and how his company has grown by taking advantage of these opportunities.

Having a construction background the *Smart Buildings 101* session opened my eyes to look at the use of technology in all aspects of the building. Not just the building process, but managing the building as an asset along with the stake holders that utilize the building. All being managed on or off-site. The communication within a "smart building" translates all the information needed to protect the investment all involved.

Many thanks to the Philadelphia Urban Institute, Philadelphia Young Leaders Council, and the Etkin Johnson Student Scholarship for making this ULI Fall Meeting attendance possible.