

## Quotes from Physicists' Exit Reports

Assa Auerbach, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology

There is no other venue in the world which can substitute for the scientific exchange of ideas at Aspen.

Gil Refael, California Institute of Technology

The Center provides an opportunity for us researchers to jointly contemplate the directions our fields should take and to determine the most interesting problems we should research and address. I think that Aspen, in this way, is crucial for maintaining the fabric of our research community. Without it, our sense of common mission and direction would be significantly impaired, making our scientific process of research and discovery much more individualistic and significantly less effective.

Steve Simon, Oxford University

In short, I honestly believe that this was the best workshop I have ever attended. The brainpower of the attendees was spectacular, and the overlap of interests between all attendees was very high. Perhaps most unusually, there was an extremely friendly atmosphere among participants which gave the workshop a relaxed and very productive feel. Imagine summer camp with all of your friends – where you just happen to spend all of your days discussing the most interesting physics problems on your mind!

Gyan Bhanot, Rutgers University

I discovered that it is a truly wonderful place to meet people, move projects forward and reenergize ones "ideas" battery. I particularly liked that the talks were informal and were pitched at exactly the right level, assuming "zero knowledge and infinite intelligence." Finally, the hikes and nature walks were a delight. If there is a heaven for scientists, it probably is modeled on the Aspen Center for Physics.

Fiona Burnell, Oxford University

As a first-time participant in Aspen it was lovely to have the chance to get to know some of the major figures in my field in a friendly and informal setting. Particularly nice for me was the fact that there were, relatively speaking, a lot of other women around, women who are farther along in their careers than I and therefore in a position to answer questions about the road ahead.

Changbom Park, Korea Institute for Advanced Study

I am a first year's post-doc attending the Summer Program at the Aspen Center for the first time; the experience has been tremendous. It allowed me to meet many of the leading physicists in the field, whom I only knew by name before. I also had the opportunity to present my work in a formal talk. The contents were hotly debated during the talk and for the rest of the workshop. Not all physicists are willing to accept our ideas, and the topic remains controversial. Aspen is the ideal place to discuss such issues, since it appeals to many physicists over the world and the informal nature of the sessions allows for a much deeper discussion than is usually the case in formal, plenary talks.

Steven Cowley, University of California Los Angeles

The key benefit of Aspen is that it leaves a trail of ideas that will stimulate my thinking over the next year or perhaps two.

Veit Elser, Cornell University

Thanks to the Center's excellently maintained fleet of mountain bikes, I was able to get into "physical" shape by riding up to the Maroon Bells, Ashcroft or Independence Pass on each of my days here. Many of my best ideas are developed during the long, quiet struggle against gravity.

Erica Ellingson, University of Colorado

It took only two days at the Center before I realized that this was what I had always dreamed doing science would be like. The Center was an ideal setting to bring together a group with similar interests to work and talk about our results and our future goals. We had a minimal schedule of formal talks; most of the interaction was in lively discussions at the blackboard or at the tables under the aspen trees. It was especially nice to see how well the relatively junior and senior scientists connected in this open and informal setting. I've never had an experience quite like this and I bring back with me new results, insights and collaborations and -- best of all -- a renewed understanding of why I love science.