

Leadership Asheville 26 Leadership Learning Teams

A component of the Leadership Asheville program is learning about leadership, teamwork and collaboration through a community service project. Utilizing this part of the program, we are able to provide the critical elements that the Center for Creative Leadership identifies for an effective leadership development experience: assessment, challenge, and support.

Since the early years of the Leadership Asheville program, a service team project has been a component of the program. These Leadership Learning Team projects are an important element of a leadership development experience. These team projects provide an opportunity for experimentation and practice, as well as exposure to different perspectives from team members. The experiences that can be most effective are the ones that challenge people.

Challenging experiences force people out of their comfort zone. They create disequilibrium, causing people to question the adequacy of their skills, frameworks, and approaches. These experiences require that people develop new capacities or evolve their ways of understanding if they are going to be successful. (The Center for Creative Leadership: Handbook of Leadership Development, 2nd Edition, 2004)

Community leadership development is no different. In fact, it can be more challenging because this context for leadership is unfamiliar to many. No longer is there any power or authority to contribute to one's leadership effectiveness. Also, the diversity in a community can be significantly greater than that to which one is accustomed, and social change tends to be the desired outcome which is often far more divisive an issue for stakeholders.

On the other hand, when the outcomes of the situation matter to people, they are motivated to work toward meeting the challenge. This means being competent in new areas, achieving difficult goals, managing conflicts, and easing the pain of loss and failure. Mastering challenges requires putting energy into developing skills and abilities, understanding complex situations, and reshaping how one thinks. (The Center for Creative Leadership: Handbook of Leadership Development, 2nd Edition, 2004)

Although frustrating at times, we believe this team project will contribute significantly to your community leadership development and end up being one of the most memorable parts of your participation in this program. It is also a distinguishing feature of this program when compared to other community leadership development programs around the country. Another aspect of this project is that it gives you the opportunity to make a difference in our community. Recent Leadership Learning Teams have taken advantage of this opportunity to make a difference in our community by undertaking a variety of projects (**See Attachment 1**).

Recognizing that meaningful service experiences increase the awareness and knowledge of participants while also making effective strides towards addressing root issues and causes of social problems, the Leadership Learning Team process gives participants ultimate ownership and thus responsibility. The opportunity for impact is present. The way those efforts are focused and organized is left to the Leadership Learning Team to determine.

Desired Characteristics of Projects

- Influence circles are created (i.e., others become involved as a result of the project)
- Enlighten dark corners (i.e., work focuses on high priority areas)
- Learning will occur as a result of working on the project
- There will be specific, identifiable and measurable outcomes
- If applicable, the improvement can be sustained
- Think big – start small
- Projects connect to the seven pillars of a healthy community

Ideal Team Sizes

Three to five participants

Time Commitments

Approximately 20 hours over nine month period

Criteria

Teams have considerable latitude in selecting a project. If more than one team is considering the same project from the proposals submitted, the first team which indicates it has selected a proposed project to the Director of Leadership Asheville will be given the opportunity to pursue it.

Projects must be consistent with the values of Leadership Asheville. Teams should choose a project which will develop their community leadership skills and be new and challenging to most, if not all, members of the team. Projects may not be partisan or religious in nature, but may be affiliated with a faith-based organization. Projects should have a primary focus, not a series of minor activities. Finally, projects should not provide a direct benefit to an organization employing a team member or having a team member on its board.

Pre-approved Projects

We have attached a list of projects which have been pre-approved by Leadership Asheville (**See Attachment 2**).

Funding, Public Relations, and Use of LA Logo

Any fundraising involving foundations or corporations, including participants' employers, must be project-related and must be cleared in advance, in writing with the Director of Leadership Asheville. This includes any requests for cash and in-kind contributions. Additionally, any press releases, advertising copy, brochure designs, or other publicity using the Leadership Asheville name must be reviewed with the Director of Leadership Asheville prior to being released.

Contributions for specific projects should be directed to Leadership Asheville. Funds raised will be held by Leadership Asheville in a restricted project fund. Disbursements from this fund will be made by LA upon receipt of invoices or requests for payment which have been reviewed and approved by a designated member of the Leadership Learning Team.

If a community organization will bear ongoing responsibility for the project, teams are strongly encouraged to collaborate with that organization to secure funding under its auspices. Financial obligations incurred by the team must be satisfied by the end of the program year. Teams must not commit to spending funds until they are secured.

Community Partner

Each team may locate and work with a community partner to serve as the project's sponsor, beneficiary, or mentor, and, if a project is to be on-going, to assure that there is an organization in place, committed to assuming responsibility for the project and continuing it at the end of the team's program year. To ensure that the community partner and the team agree to the scope of work, the attached Community Partner Agreement must be completed by the community partner and submitted with the team's project proposal (**See Attachment 3**).

Contracts

In the case of video projects or other projects where contracts must be negotiated for artistic services, no contracts can be executed on behalf of Leadership Asheville before being reviewed and approved by the Director of Leadership Asheville.

Ownership

Products become the property of Leadership Asheville. Copyrights or patents should be filed in the name of Leadership Asheville. In some cases, shared or alternative ownership may be negotiated with community partners.

Accountability

Each Leadership Learning Team may request a coach from the one of the previous Leadership Asheville classes, who will serve as an advisor for the duration of the project. In this case, any problems with a project should be brought immediately to the coach's attention.

Timeline

- Leadership Learning Teams will be designated at the opening retreat in September. Groups can begin meeting to determine topic area, project proposal, and team goals, roles and processes.
- Written project proposals are due no later than Monday, October 15th. (**See Attachment 4**).
- At the final class in May, each team presents a written presentation which can be placed on the website and delivers an oral presentation of no more than 20 minutes. Each team member should have a role in the presentation. If applicable, one person from the "target" community/agency may be part of the presentation.

Evaluation

The team project evaluations are based on periodic assessments and the following:

- The extent to which the team and class members learned about a critical issue in the community
- The extent to which teams learned about teamwork and group dynamics
- The extent to which sound processes were established within the teams
- The extent to which the teams were able to propose and implement a solution

- The extent to which participants were able to engage in creative problem solving
- The extent to which the project encouraged the team members to demonstrate leadership, creativity, team building, and collaboration skills
- The professional manner of the final presentation and related materials
- The creativity of the final presentation

While the results associated with this project are important, our first priority is to make this a valuable learning experience, and we hope each team member will be effective as both a leader and follower during the course of this program.

Leadership Asheville 25

(PowerPoint presentations on these projects may be viewed at our website www.leadershipasheville.org under the projects heading.)

- *Community Calendar*
This team created a web-based community calendar that focuses on listing events from across our region that are of interest to our graduates and connect to the Seven Pillars of a Healthy Community.
- *Leadership Link*
This team created a web-based resource that will host information on the skills and interests of Leadership Asheville graduates and match those skilled volunteers with needs in our community that will test and further develop their leadership skills.
- *LeadWorks*
This team created a web-based resource that will host information on non-profit board, government commission vacancies, and other community roles that can benefit from the involvement of graduates of Leadership Asheville programs.
- *Leadership at Work Series*
This team worked on connecting leadership education with professional development. This is a program that brings working professionals together with member of the Buncombe County Youth Council in efforts to build skills and abilities.
- *Diversity Initiative*
This team worked on examining the need for a more inclusive representation of our community, this team will develop a plan for action based upon the resources and needs of our community.
- *Women's Work: Leadership for the 21st Century*
This team worked together by bringing women in the community together. This project will create a common space to learn and grow from our colleagues and friends. In addition to being a creative approach to networking, this program will encourage continued professional and leadership development of women in our community.
- *Leadership Action Team Process*
This team explored how to best structure the Leadership Action Team projects so that future program participants further their leadership development, make a meaningful contribution to the community, and expand their community network.
- *The LA Factor*
This team created an archive of the leadership history of our community and region by recording the perspectives of various graduates. In studying this archive, perhaps we will begin to understand how leadership has changed in our region and how it might affect our future.

Leadership Asheville 24

Opting to work together on a large scale community project, the Leadership Asheville 24 class developed, coordinated, and hosted the Building Collaborative Leadership forum. Open to community members from across the region, the forum was focused on the role that collaboration plays as our region plans for our economic development. Through the insightful words of keynote Dr. Jennifer James, breakout sessions, and panel discussion; the forum challenged participants to assess how to create opportunity, resolve challenges, and adapt to our changing world.

Leadership Asheville 23

- *Dating Abuse Teen Awareness*
This team partnered with a team from the Youth Leadership Asheville program to work on the issue of Teen Dating Abuse. This team in partnership with Helpmate produced public information announcements that could be viewed in local high schools and distributed flyer to make teens aware of the issue.
- *It's All About the Kids*
This team partnered with Children First to work on their annual Children's Fair. The annual fair is predominately run by volunteers so the team worked together to provided a manual for the implementing the Children's Fair that could be used in the future to assist with planning and development of this yearly event.
- *PALS Together*
This team in partnership with the Asheville City Police Department created a workshop for Latino students. The emphasis of the project was to help area Latino students build relationships with members of the APD thus becoming more aware and comfortable with the role the APD plays in the community.
- *Business Ethics: Creating Value from Values*
In partnership with North Buncombe High School introduced students to the importance of ethics and the role it plays in business. By developing case studies to help students build awareness the students were able to think about ethics in various situations and then relate it to their own lives. The session also provided students with the tools necessary for making ethical decisions.
- *Swannanoa Valley Youth Development Center-Sustainable Vegetable Garden*
In partnership with the Swannanoa Valley Youth Development Center this team worked with students to create a sustainable organic vegetable garden. This project provided students with an opportunity to design and work on a project that will be ongoing at the center.

Leadership Asheville 22

- *Economic Development Team*
The Economic Development Team of Leadership Asheville 22 partnered with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College to deliver an event for people interested in starting their own business. Called *Spring into Business*, this self

directed forum gave attendees access to information from a number of sources helpful for new or prospective business owners.

- *Education Service Team*
The Education Team developed a partnership of Buncombe County's Owen Middle School, City of Asheville Parks and Recreation and Warren Wilson College to provide a service learning experience for 6th grade at-risk boys. The end result of the program was that each student learned, through active experiences and community service, about his individual self and the role he plays in a group with a common goal. This partnership will continue annually. Next it will serve a 6th grade class of at-risk girls.
- *Government Team*
The purpose of this team's project was to increase voter awareness as well as the number of registering individuals in Buncombe County. A brochure was completed with voting locations, helpful websites and numbers, and basic information on who is eligible to register to vote in North Carolina. The information was distributed to the Board of Elections, DMV, libraries, all leadership participants, grocery stores, area high schools, and restaurants.
- *Infrastructure Team*
The LA 22 Infrastructure Team selected an ADA ramp and sidewalk inventory project. The goals of this team were to update and expand the current ADA ramp inventory, to develop a reporting format, and walk and bike selected area and record non-compliances of ramps and sidewalks, to identify areas of interest to compile a report for submission to Public Works, to involve and train neighborhood associations that might be interested in conducting similar inventories in their own neighborhoods.
- *Private Sector Team*
The Leadership Asheville 22 Private Sector Team designed a community project entitled "UPLIFT" which was a United Partners in Learning, Investing for Tomorrow Project. Project UPLIFT was a grassroots collaboration between the private sector, city/council school systems, principals, faculty, parents and children. The mission of Project UPLIFT was to facilitate partnerships between the private sector and local schools to provide basic school supplies to students.
- *Quality of Life Team*
The Quality of Life Service Team proposed the first Annual Asheville Alternative Spring Break for approximately 20-25 middle school students (preferable 6th graders) that attend the Asheville Middle School and reside in the predominately low-income neighborhood of the W.C. Reid Center for Creative Arts. This weeklong project held April 5-9, 2004, exposed disadvantaged youth to a variety of resources and areas of interest in our community such as nature/environment, education, health care, visual and performing arts, business, and the media in a fun, exciting, and interactive way.

**Leadership Asheville 26
Pre-approved Projects**

The following list of pre-approved projects provides a topic and short description for you to consider. We may also have other projects on this list by that time.

Women and Leadership (Part II)

This project entails picking up where a team from Leadership Asheville 25 left off. Their project was research focused and now it's ready to consider developing an action plan. The first step would entail meeting with the LA 25 team for a briefing on their work.

AB Youth Council

This Council is comprised of high school students from all city and county schools. These Councils exist throughout the state and the local council is going through a rebuilding process. A core group of students and an employee of the city are ready to build a new dynamic organization, but they need help (i.e., advice, guidance, planning, etc.)

eForum

Leadership Asheville is developing an eForum section on its website, but it needs a business plan for the development, promotion and use of what it believes could be a valuable information and communication tool.

Youth Centers

The challenge in Asheville and Buncombe County is to provide safe havens for young people to gather on weekends and after school. One answer to this challenge is to reopen youth centers that once existed in Asheville. This team would partner with a local nonprofit focused on this issue, but currently needs help.

Volunteer Fair

You can never have enough community volunteers. Research from the Pew organizations found that more than 90% of the citizens want to help their communities, but not knowing what to do was the number one reason given for not volunteering. A volunteer fair may be the answer.

Local Community Reports

Have you ever looked for the latest information or research on issues of local concern? As we endeavor to further educate citizens about our community, this project would identify what is out there, what are the gaps and provide links on the Leadership Asheville website to material that citizens should read.

The Economic Development Process

Are you curious about how our economic development process works and who is involved? This project focuses on researching the players and the process and then producing a piece that describes the findings in a way that every community member can understand.

"Influentials" Survey

This project first requires a team to identify who should make the “influentials” list. Who are the current and emerging centers of influence in this community? How inclusive is your list? The next step is to survey this group and identify their major concerns. Is there a consensus view of key issues and opportunities?

Infrastructure Report

This is a national as well as local issue. What is the status of our infrastructure (e.g., water lines, bridges, roads, etc.)? What information exists? Can a team pull it all together and provide a summary report anyone could understand?

Budget Summaries

Citizens often avoid or feel intimidated by community budgets. Can a team look at the city and county budgets and make sense of it all? Can this team provide a simplified version of the numbers anyone could understand?

“Knows Itself” Quizzes

One of the seven pillars of a healthy community is “knows itself.” How well do our citizens understand our community? This project is designed to identify a civics exam/rotating multiple choice questions of sorts we could offer on the Leadership Asheville website.

UTV

It is an incredible resource for the community. How could it be used to further community leadership and development efforts of Leadership Asheville? This team would first generate some programming ideas, then test them in the marketplace and finally produce a show.

Plans that Matter

Everyone has them: city, county, and nonprofit organizations. Which ones are important for Fellows and others to know? Is there a way they could quickly get up to speed on the substance of each?

Attracting and Retaining Talent

No communities will thrive in the 21st century without having an ability to attract and retain talented young people. How well is Asheville doing? What are some of the opportunities and challenges? What research is out there about this market segment?

AB 2020

Imagine the year is 2020 and Time magazine is sending a reporter to Metro Asheville to write a cover story on how Metro Asheville came to be regarded as the “model” or “ideal” region in the country – the region other communities around the country want to be like. This team needs to gather input from around the community and write a story which will be published in the newspaper. Could the input from around the community be boiled down to a few simple statements? What vision statements have been developed in the past?

**Leadership Asheville 26
Community Partner Agreement**

Community Partner:

What will be the scope of your involvement in this project?

Describe how you will support the team’s efforts for this project: (i.e. financial resources available, staff support, etc.)

As the Community Partner’s representative, I hereby confirm that I have reviewed the team’s project proposal and agree with the scope of the project as described. I also believe the proposed budget outlined in the proposal is reasonable for the scope of work described.

Agency Name (Please Print)

By: _____

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Title)

**Leadership Asheville 26
Outline for Project Proposal Report**

The following outline should be followed for the written proposal submission due no later than Monday, October 15th. All components included in this outline must be present before projects will be approved. If applicable, the Community Partner Agreement must be completed by the Community Partner and included with the project proposal before approval will be granted.

Project Title

Create a project title (i.e. “The Midas Touch”, “Gift of Food”; “Phone Friend”).

Subject Area

Identify the subject area focus of the project (i.e., economic development, education, at-risk youth, arts).

Leadership Learning Team Members

List all Project Team members.

Community Issue

Describe the issue the project is to address.

Project Goal(s)

State the goal(s) of your proposed project.

Outcomes

Describe the specific outcomes to be achieved.

Community Partner(s)

Provide the name of the community organization(s), if any, which will be collaborating with you on this project and the person(s) with whom you will be working with.

Action Plan

Provide high-level overview of the tentative steps, your timeline, contacts, assignments, etc.

Budget/Resources

If applicable, include proposed budget, fundraising requirements—both cash and in-kind, targeted sources of contributions, etc.