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APPLICATION INFORMATION – LWC CLASS OF 2018

Program Concept

The core leadership program was established in 1987 under the name Leadership Hagerstown, in cooperation with the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. In 2006, the organization became the Washington County Leadership Development Program, Inc., a separate 501 (c) 3 non-profit, know as Leadership Washington County within the community. The organization began as a response to a need for a common meeting ground of shared concern among leaders in all sectors of the community. A community's greatest assets are its people and that is certainly true in Washington County, MD. Graduates of Leadership Hagerstown and Leadership Washington County can be found as board members of non-profits, running for office, mentoring area youth, chairing events, managing projects, and helping their own organizations develop and prosper.

Program Goals

The objective of Leadership Washington County is to develop and enhance community leadership by offering participants from diverse backgrounds a unique opportunity to explore, up close and personal, the challenges and issues facing the Washington County community. The Leadership program takes a select group of individuals from diverse backgrounds through an intense nine-month program during which they develop or strengthen their network of contacts and actively engage in issues around topics such as economic development, history, art and culture, education, religion, politics, and social service needs.

Impact

In a very unique way, Leadership Washington County is helping to build a better, richer community by tapping into the talents, passions, and intellectual capital of the women and men who live and work in the Washington County community. The program's curriculum encourages critical thinking and creative problem solving. As a result of the experiential and cooperative learning opportunities, aspiring leaders return to their organizations more connected to the community overall and more knowledgeable about being a servant leader. Most significantly, participants in the program develop and increased interest in local issues, which often leads to increased civic engagement.

Program Design

The Leadership Washington County program begins with a **mandatory two-night retreat, September 22-24th** and continues with a series of sessions meeting one day each month from October through June. The curriculum for these program days features prominent speakers who address specific issues impacting Washington County, MD. Topics covered during the monthly sessions include Human Services, Education, Local Government, State Government, Business and Economic Development, Arts/Religion, and the Cultural Heritage of Washington County. Each year there is also a “hot topic” day addressing an issue of current importance in the community as well as a day devoted to Boardmanship and Governance. Four of the nine program days are planned by the LWC board of directors and staff, and five are planned in small teams by the class members with guidance from the LWC staff. To accomplish the objectives of the program, the full participation of each individual is required and attendance during program days must be free from personal and business responsibilities.

Selection Process

Leadership Washington County seeks potential leaders as well as individuals who have already attained leadership positions in the community and/or their place of employment. A group of approximately 30 participants is selected annually from the for-profit and non-profit business sectors as well as representatives from government, education, and religious organizations and other community groups. Nominations are welcome from the community, but not required for application to the program. A selection committee comprised of LWC board and committee members interviews all applicants and submits a list of selected applicants to the entire LWC board of directors for approval. Interviews are conducted during the month of April, and applicants are informed of their acceptance in early May. The class of 2018 will be selected from applicants who have submitted the application, resume, letter of recommendation, application fee, and any scholarship criteria by March 31, 2017.

Tuition

Tuition for the 2017-2018 program year is \$3,000 and may be paid by the individual or sponsoring organization. A \$50 non-refundable application fee (***from personal funds***) must be submitted with the completed application. If selected, you will be billed for the full tuition amount of \$3,000. The application fee represents your personal commitment to the program and is required of each applicant. The application fee is in addition to the tuition amount. A limited number of scholarships are available to non-profit leaders and small businesses.

Benefits of Graduation

The Leadership Washington County experience extends beyond graduation. Non-profits from the area look to graduates of the program to serve on their boards and to chair community projects. Graduates of Leadership Washington County enjoy many networking opportunities, the possibility to mentor future class members, and the chance to become a member of an esteemed community leadership program with 840 graduates.