
LEARN. CONNECT. LEAD.

PURPOSE OF LFS


The purpose of Leadership Fort Smith is to provide a program that will build a competent leadership pool for the Greater Fort Smith Region, motivate emerging and existing leaders, and develop the participants for community leadership and decision-making by exposing them to the realities, opportunities, and problems in our metropolitan area.

GOALS OF LFS

- Identify and select highly motivated potential/existing leaders to participate
- Systematically educate and challenge the participants as to the needs and opportunities of the community and the dynamics of social and economic change
- Develop an esprit de corps among the participants to provide a common ground for working together on present and future community projects
- Create a dialogue and rapport between the participants and existing community leadership
- Stimulate within the participants an increased level of commitment and participation in the community
- Develop a renewed sense of enthusiasm and “can-do” attitude in the community

THE PROGRAM:

Leadership Fort Smith is a 10-month program that offers participants a back-stage pass to the Fort Smith Region. The class will focus on the strengths, challenges, needs, and overall community issues that our participants can directly impact. Participants will also hone their leadership skills with the goal of leading our community into the future.



Each year, 25 individuals are selected to participate in the Leadership Fort Smith program. The year begins with a leadership workshop followed by a two-day/overnight retreat. The program runs from August to May with day-long sessions and ends with a closing retreat. A festive commencement banquet wraps up the year and sets our graduates on a course for community success.

Sessions provide opportunities for dialogue about community issues including history, education, state & local government, crime & courts, economic development, healthcare, community outreach, and more. Sessions are conducted by leaders and experts in various fields and attempt to address major issues in unique ways and exciting formats, which result in solutions and plans of action.

PARTICIPANTS:

Leadership Fort Smith welcomes and encourages applications from men and women from all walks of life. Nominations of individuals may be made for any person living or working in the Greater Fort Smith region for a year or more. Leadership Fort Smith selects a class of 25 individuals who represent a cross section of the greater Fort Smith area. These individuals are selected on the basis of demonstrated leadership ability as well as evidence of community interest and commitment. Successful candidates will exhibit the following characteristics:

- Demonstrated commitment and motivation to effectively serve in the community and an expressed interest in community service
- Demonstrated leadership ability in work and/or in community activities
- Potential for advancement to leadership positions within the community

Leadership Fort Smith will expose participants to things about the region that they never knew and would likely never see otherwise. Take time to nominate worthy individuals for the next Leadership Fort Smith Class. Self-nominations are also encouraged, and multiple nominations can be made.

TUITION:

Tuition for the Leadership Fort Smith program is \$1,500, and each applicant must pay at least \$250 of the total cost as a demonstration of his or her commitment to the program. Tuition is not meant to be a screening factor, and scholarships are available.



COMMITMENT:

Participants in Leadership Fort Smith make a commitment of time, energy, and money. Nominees must have the full written approval of their employer or the organization they represent. In addition, attendance at all sessions is required; members may miss no more than four 1/2 days/2 full sessions to graduate from the program.

The intent of Leadership Fort Smith is that graduates of the program make a commitment to continue their involvement in the community. This involvement may consist of serving on boards, working with various non-profit agencies, or undertaking a community project that addresses an identified need. This program is not meant to be a resume-builder, but a community builder. All classes are encouraged to complete a class project at the conclusion of their year together.

The continued success of Fort Smith depends on a constant in-flow of new leaders with fresh ideas and perspectives. Leadership is the single most important ingredient needed to develop a thriving and successful region. The future of the greater Fort Smith Region is more dependent than ever on our leaders' quality, commitment, and ability to work together.

