

McLeaders

McHenry County Leadership Institute

Six-Month Progress Report

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Introduction:

McHenry County has been noted as being the fastest growing county in the State of Illinois for the past three to four years. It has also been ranked as one of the five fastest growing counties in the Nation. With the tremendous influx of new growth, new challenges have also arisen. McHenry County is a county in transition. Like many growing communities the county faces the challenges of educating its children and providing programs and activities for its seniors; balancing funding for overpopulated roads in urban communities and less traveled rural highways in the western part of the county; and promoting new business and industry contrasted by supporting the existing small family businesses.

In order to adequately deal with these new challenges and the future challenges that the county will face, leadership must be developed. The McLeaders, a team of McHenry County local officials, was formed to look at developing a leadership institute that would be targeted toward individuals in government, business and not-for-profit organizations. In contemplation of such a program several questions came to mind. Would a Leadership Institute be visible in McHenry County? What curriculum would make up such an institute? Are there additional Institute models available in addition to the University of Illinois at Chicago's Mid America Regional Public Health Leadership Institute?

Kick-Off Meeting:

During the kick-off meeting last November the McLeaders put together the following value, mission, vision and goal statements to guide their project for the rest of the year. After participating in several of the MARPHLI Kick-off Sessions the group

thought that through the formulation of these basic statements they could model the leadership characteristics that they were themselves learning.

Value Statement: The residents of McHenry County are its richest resources. Our community would be enriched by developing the leadership potential of our residents. We Believe:

- Leadership can be learned
- Leaders are at all levels
- Learning is a lifelong process

Mission: Providing a leadership program for McHenry County Leaders.

Vision: To provide an institute for leaders of McHenry County to grow their leadership skills that will enhance their ability to anticipate the needs of McHenry County and create an infrastructure that responds to growth and quality of life challenges.

Goal: Develop a framework for the leadership institute.

Assessment of Existing Leadership Institutes:

With assessment being one of the foremost key components to good policy development, the McLeaders decided that a preliminary assessment was needed to help inform the group of existing leadership institutes. The group then researched several types of leadership institutes. Institutes ranged from community based to internationally based organizations. Some organizations were for profit entities and others were not-for-profit based programs. After gathering their information the group chose to interview the following institutes.

- Highland Community College Leadership Institute
- Greenleaf Institute for Servant Leadership
- Institute for Global Ethics
- Peter Drucker, Center for Not-for-Profit Leadership
- Springfield Leadership Institute
- Motorola Leadership Institute
- Disney Leadership Program
- Evanston Leadership Institute
- Greater Milwaukee Leadership Institute
- MARPHLI

The group then chose several categories and topics in which they wanted to cover in their interview for each of the institutes. From that topic list the following list of questions was derived and was asked of each of the institutes surveyed.

- Give a brief history of the institute.
- What are the overall goals and objectives of the institute?
- Who do you feel are the target market for the given type of institute?
- How does the institute market to these individuals and do they have a selection process of who can participate?
- What is the curriculum of the institute?
- What approach is used to conduct the institute?
- What type of assessment tools or evaluation process is in place?
- What changes have been made to the institute since its inception?
- How many participants have gone through the institute?
- What is the cost to the participant?
- What is the structure of the institute such as support services in addition to formal training programs?
- What is the overall budget of the institute?
- Are there any references that could be contacted regarding the institute?

Each member of the McLeaders Team was responsible for contacting two institutes and speaking with a member of the administration regarding their program. To date the information from each of these individual surveys is being compiled into a spreadsheet that can be used to look at institute similarities and contrasts as the group considers the structure and makeup of its own program.

Assessment of Local McHenry County Leaders and Citizens:

In addition to the assessment of existing leadership institutes, the McLeaders felt that an assessment needed to be done in their local community regarding the need for leadership training. A list of approximately 200 people from all aspects of the county community was compiled and the following survey was written to gauge their specific interests and comments regarding leadership development.

McHenry County Leadership Survey

Information:

McHenry County College is seeking input in the development of a leadership program. A six-member team is currently participating in a leadership institute offered through the University of Illinois at Chicago. This survey is an integral component of their research project regarding the feasibility and viability of a McHenry County Leadership program. The premise of our project is centered around the following three theories:

- Leadership can be learned
- Learning is a lifelong process
- Leaders serve at all levels

Please take a few moments to complete the following survey and return it as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope, but no later than XXXXXX. Thank you for your participation and cooperation.

Team Members: Pamela Althoff
David Hubbard
Nick Kachiroubas
Paul Laudick
Donna Schaefer
Aaron Shepley

1. Do you think some type of leadership program would be beneficial to :
(Please Circle your Answer)
A. You? YES NO
B. McHenry County? YES NO
2. Based on your current lifestyle and career path which program schedule would best serve your needs and interests?
(Please Circle your Answer)
A. A year long program with one day per month commitment?
B. A year long program with a three day per quarter commitment?
C. A year long program with a two day every other month commitment?
D. A year long program with three sixteen week semesters meeting one night per week?
E. Your Suggestion: _____
3. What type of information and/or topics should be included:
(Circle all that Apply)
A. Parliamentary Procedure
B. Goal Setting
C. Team Building
D. Conflict Management/Resolution
E. Budgetary / Financial Overview
F. Group Dynamics
G. Economic Development Issues
H. Marketing
I. Leadership Skills
J. Leadership Characteristics and Qualities
K. Core Values
L. Relevant McHenry County Issues (ex. Transportation, Workforce, Housing)
M. Other: _____

4. A. Some Leadership Institutes use a team approach to learning. Do you feel this approach would be beneficial to McHenry County and Leadership Development? If no, what approach would you recommend?

B. Please rate the following learning styles from 1 to 5 in the order in which you find most beneficial. (1=Most Beneficial to 5=Least Beneficial, rate each choice)

_____ Visual _____ Lecture _____ Group _____ Individual _____ Experiential

5. Would you pay a fee to attend a leadership program? YES NO
If so, how much? _____

6. Would you be more apt to attend if the costs were underwritten by your employer or organization via scholarship program? (Explain your Answer)

7. If the program were offered for free would you value the leadership program contents? (Explain your Answer)

8. Have you personally attended a leadership program? YES NO
Where? _____

Reason for Attending? _____

How was the Program Structured? _____

9. How large do you feel the class size should be? _____
What time do you prefer classes?(Circle) Day Evening Weekend

10. Describe your concept of a leadership institute, and what you would expect to gain from attending a leadership program?

Please provide the following information:

Gender: M F

Age: _____

Education Level _____

Leadership Experience: _____

A brief accounting of what led you to your community involvement:

Currently these surveys are being review by the UIC as part of their institutional procedures. The McLeaders hope to have this survey sent out and compiled in the near future. Their responses will be most helpful in later stages of the project.

Conclusion

For the next six months the McLeaders will be working on the final steps of the creation of a McHenry County Leadership Institute. After compiling the input from both the assessment of existing institutes and the assessment of local leaders and citizens, the group will start forming recommendations for an institute structure and curriculum. Recommendations regarding the funding of such an institute will also be evaluated. Once these items have been hammered out, the group will then look at some basic marketing strategies for the institute and target groups within McHenry County.

It is true that McHenry County is a county in transition. Each day new challenges arise and new issues that need to be dealt with. With the development of good leadership within the county, these challenges and issues can be overcome. By training members of government, business and not-for-profit organizations about the characteristics and qualities of good leadership, McHenry County can begin a path of collaborative and planned effort. Through the development of such an institute, we, the members of the McLeaders hope that as the county deals with the challenges it faces, the leadership will be able to make decisions that will positively impact the county for future generations.