

Leadership Wisconsin  
University of Wisconsin-Extension  
610 Langdon Street, Room 331  
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*(Formerly Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program)*

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## MISSION

Developing Leaders to Strengthen Communities

## VISION

Strong Communities, Effective Leaders, in a Changing World

## VALUES

### Building Community

Growing diverse networks, collaborations and connections

### Encouraging Learning

Achieving personal growth and professional development

### Fostering Understanding

Respecting diverse points-of-view

Broadening the sense of community

Experiencing and applying a global perspective

### Acting with Integrity

Enabling personal & professional development

based on ethical behavior

Demonstrating a commitment to excellence

Accepting the challenge to act

## Graduates have communicated the following program results

Over the past two years we have gone through an indepth review process and a concurrent analysis of our marketing and branding strategies. Feedback was sought from fellows, alumni, specialists in leadership training locally and from around the country, as well as from community members who have witnessed the impact of alumni.

- 9 out of 10 alumni believe their experience was “very important” or “important” in increasing their leadership skills and abilities.
- 73% of alumni use the knowledge and skills they gained at least once a week.
- Alumni go onto be actively involved in leadership in their communities, organizations and businesses.

Since the program’s inception, we have wisely recognized the interconnection and value of offering a broad, diverse, global, cutting-edge curriculum to our fellows. For this we have been recognized as “*one of the exemplary leadership development programs in the nation.*”



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Updated 12/01/2008

## What have past participants said about their experiences?

The greatest lesson I have learned through the program is truly listening to other perspectives. I have grown a great deal through this experience and it has allowed me to expand my world.

*Leanne Ketterhagen, Group XI, World Teach Volunteer, Chile*

The learning environment is a positive and engaging one. It provides a constructive platform to challenge its participants.

*Tom Weston, Group IX, Banker, First National Bank-Viroqua*

The program was an invaluable journey of self-understanding, appreciation for the world around me, and confidence in the leadership role I can play in my community.

*Fariba Pendleton, Group VIII, Professor, UW Extension, Superior*

What a phenomenal experience! I cannot believe the two years has gone by already! The program creates an incredible public space to debate and discuss issues in a very respectful yet challenging forum. I do not know of any other place where I have experienced such a great diversity of people tackling such a diversity of issues in so many ways. The challenges this program presented me with came from areas I didn't expect, but I know for certain I'm a better person as a result of both the challenges and the support that I got to face them.

*Dennis Deery, Group X, Computer Consultant, Irish Rose Consulting, Menomonie*

## Impacts

**69%** hold or have held elected positions for school boards, town and county boards as well as the state legislature.

**87%** serve as board members for area hospitals, community and/or civic organizations.

**47%** are involved in organizations that support their professions or industries.

The following are responses to the most frequently asked questions about the **LEADERSHIP WISCONSIN**, formerly the Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program. Please feel free to contact our office with any other questions you may have.

## What is the goal of Leadership Wisconsin?

The goal of the innovative Leadership Wisconsin program is to develop leaders to strengthen communities. In order to meet community challenges and recognize opportunities, Wisconsin needs leaders who show initiative, listen intently, understand the breadth of perspective on issues, assume responsibility and exercise sound decision making. For over twenty-five years Leadership Wisconsin has provided communities, businesses, and organizations with leaders; leaders who have a broader vision, an understanding of themselves and the world, as well as a clearer appreciation of the interdependence of issues that impact it.

## Who is the program for?

Leadership Wisconsin is designed for Wisconsin residents from widely diverse backgrounds and experiences—rural, urban, and suburban. They all share a strong desire to actively participate in meeting the challenges facing their communities. Applicants are old enough to have demonstrated their leadership abilities but young enough to still be able to make significant future leadership contributions. This includes individuals in business, education, social service, religion and government, just to name a few. These are people who want to improve and increase their leadership capacity. The program is not a starting point, rather an opportunity for individuals who have already exhibited leadership capacity and are ready for the next level of intensive leadership development.

## Who benefits from the program?

The benefits of Leadership Wisconsin are clearly invaluable for the individual, for employers and for communities.

**Participants** (Fellows) will have the opportunity for contacts with influential, top thinkers and decision-makers who provide an in-depth understanding on important issues and experience critical and creative thinking. Fellows grow as individuals with confidence, motivation and commitment to promoting positive change for Wisconsin. Fellows have the opportunity to explore potential new leadership roles through group dynamics, education and exposure to new issues through a wide variety of local, state, regional, national and international leaders.

**Communities** gain committed, knowledgeable and action-oriented people to serve as catalysts in promoting positive changes—people willing to roll up their sleeves and work to make Wisconsin a better place. The program encourages creative partnerships and initiatives between the public and private sectors.

**Businesses** will have employees with increased organizational, leadership and problem solving skills. It offers new insights into the community, identifying where strategic alliances might be forged and gives organizations a unique perspective on how to become involved in their communities. Employers demonstrate internally and externally their organization’s commitment to the development of their employees by investing in them and thus their organization’s future success.

### **What are the selection criteria?**

The Board of Directors has a commitment to ensuring diversity within each group including geographical, professional, gender, ethnicity and other diversities, which greatly enrich the growth and development of the fellows and the group as a whole.

Applicants are selected based on the following criteria.

- Demonstrated leadership ability,
- Leadership potential and commitment for the future,
- A breadth of perspective on issues,
- A knowledge of Wisconsin,

Fee payments are spread out over the course of the first 18 months as follows:

### **Payment Schedule**

Upon Acceptance, Spring 2010	\$ 500 (non-refundable)
July 2010	\$ 700
September 2010	\$1,000
January 2011	\$1,000
July 2011	\$1,225
September 2011	\$1,225
<u>January 2012</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>
Total	\$6,650

### **Are sponsors for the program difficult to get?**

During the Orientation session, fellows will receive training and information on how to seek out and obtain sponsorship.

### **What if I still feel I can’t afford to participate in Leadership Wisconsin?**

We choose fellows based on the criteria regardless of financial ability. We have a strong commitment to creating a community of leaders/learners reflective of the people of Wisconsin—rich in diversity and backgrounds. Yet, we understand that it can be difficult for leaders from financially strapped situations. Therefore, Leadership Wisconsin maintains a Financial Aid fund and assists fellows who need financial assistance. A fellow may apply for financial aid during the second year of the program, after an assessment of their progress in seeking sponsorships.

### **Are there other costs associated with the program?**

Business attire is required and for some this may mean additional costs. There are also travel costs to and from the Wisconsin seminars. After the Orientation Session, most fellows work out a carpooling schedule. Occasionally, fellows will be asked to pay for some of their meals.

## **As a fellow what can I expect from my participation?**

We work with individuals to capitalize on their leadership potential. The program helps participants to meet the challenges of leadership by:

- Broadening their understanding and perspectives of political, economic and social issues,
- Building upon and deepening their leadership skills and abilities,
- Meeting and networking with key state, national and international leaders in a wide variety of fields,
- Learning more about themselves – their leadership strengths, values, personal and professional goals, and
- Gaining a broader understanding of the world, its peoples and their relationship to our communities, first-hand through state, regional, national and international travel seminars.

## **Can I get credit for my participation in Leadership Wisconsin?**

Fellows receive a total of 48 CEU's for their complete participation. Academic undergraduate or graduate credit hours can also be pursued by the participant through a university or college; there will be additional fees for this level of accreditation.

## **What are the costs of the program?**

The total program cost per fellow is \$18,000. Included in these costs are all faculty, facilitators, and speakers; program materials; most meals; all seminar lodging and all out-of-state and out-of-country travel. Fellows are responsible for \$6650—approximately 1/3 of the costs. There are several options to fulfill this fee obligation. Some fellows pay a portion themselves; some receive employer support and/or receive local sponsorships. We encourage fellows to seek out at least one half of their fees through sponsorships. In some cases, fellows have solicited enough sponsorship to pay for the entire amount.

- An open mind,
- The ability to work effectively with people, and
- A commitment to fully participate in the program.

## **How can I express my interest or submit my nomination?**

Leadership Wisconsin accepts self-nominations or you can nominate someone you know who meets the selection criteria by simply contacting our office via regular mail, phone, fax, email or through our website.

## **After my interest in Leadership Wisconsin is known, what happens next?**

You will be placed on our mailing list. Approximately every 6 weeks thereafter, you will receive information from us describing more about the program experience and encouraging you to fill out the application form.

## **How does the application process work?**

Essentially, there are four steps. First, each individual completes their application by Nov 1, 2009 which includes a written application and three letters of reference. Secondly, the pool of applicants is screened. Thirdly for those invited an individual interview will be held. These are conducted by subcommittees and held in various locations around the state. Finally, the recommendations of the subcommittees are passed onto the Selection Committee and to the Board of Directors for final selection. Group XIV then begins with an orientation session in the spring of 2010.

## **How can I get an application?**

You can go to our website and download an application at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wrlp/about/applic.cfm> or you can contact our office and an application will be mailed to you. The application requires sufficient time to fill out properly. So please be sure to allow ample time to prepare the

needed materials to meet the November 1 deadline. Applicants are selected for an interview based on the information they provide in the application and the letters of reference. Every response is important.

### **What is the timetable for selection?**

Applications are due Nov 1, 2009. Invited applicants are scheduled for interviews in Jan/Feb 2010. The new group is approved by the Board of Directors and individually notified no later than the end of March 2010.

### **How many fellows are selected?**

Every two years up to 35 fellows are selected. Due to restricted capacity some qualified applicants may not be chosen for inclusion in a particular group. Individuals are strongly encouraged to reapply in subsequent years.

### **What is the design and format of the program?**

The program consists of eleven seminars conducted throughout the two-year period. Through partnerships with the University of Wisconsin System, business and community leaders, Leadership Wisconsin employs a variety of educational strategies that help fellows to encounter a variety of cultural, social and economic settings. It's like having a backstage pass to a concert or theatre production. Through a range of educational strategies Leadership Wisconsin exposes you to people, ideas, and issues you would not otherwise encounter. You travel to other parts of our state, our country, and the world to broaden your perspective on a range of current, cutting-edge themes and issues. You gain analytical tools, sharpen your communication skills and engage in a growing network of leaders. Over 400 resource people from varied disciplines and professions present during the seminars annually. To see photos and to read descriptions of our seminar experiences written by fellows, visit our website and click on "Groups".

### **What kind of time commitment is expected for this program?**

Over the course of the two-year period there will be 11 seminars. In all, this requires approximately 55 days. All Wisconsin seminars begin on Wednesday and end Friday afternoon. The National and Regional seminars typically run 7 days, departing on departing on Saturday and returning on Friday. The International seminar is approximately 14 days. In addition, there is prep work for each seminar.

The time commitment for the program should not be minimized since fellows are expected to take part in **all** seminars. As a result, self-employed applicants must demonstrate their willingness and ability to be away from their enterprise for the necessary time. If an applicant is not self-employed, in view of the time that will be spent away from the job, the applicant must have the written support of his or her employer. In addition, spouses/partners are asked to provide a written statement which shows they have discussed and understand the time commitment the program will entail.

### **Schedule for Group XIV (2010—2012)**

ORIENTATION	April or May, 2010
STATE GOVERNMENT	July 28–30, 2010
LEADERSHIP	Sept 15-17, 2010
URBAN/RURAL ISSUES	Nov 10-12, 2010
RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS & COMMUNITY	Jan 19-21, 2011
NATIONAL	Mar 12-18, 2011
TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION	June 15-17, 2011
REGIONAL	Sept 10-16, 2011
GLOBAL ECONOMICS	Nov 9-11, 2011
INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION	Nov 11-12, 2011
DIVERSITY: FINDING COMMON GROUND	Jan 11-13, 2012
INTERNATIONAL	Feb-March 2012
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	July 11-13, 2012
RECOGNITION CELEBRATION	July 14, 2012