



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Program Overview

What are the opportunities for participants?

The LA Program's unique format makes the community the classroom and LA Program participants are a diverse group, with a great mix of backgrounds, experiences, interests, learning styles, and social styles. This is why the program provides a variety of opportunities for participants, including the opportunity to:

- Become part of a broad, collaborative network of local leadership
- Understand the community as a system
- Broaden knowledge of the greater Asheville area
- Explore the diversity of local leadership styles
- Commit to a higher level of community service
- Forge strong relationships and gain a network of extensive contacts with their classmates, prior graduates, and those outside the LA organization who are program guests
- Provide informed leadership on community affairs and activities within their own organizations
- Meet and interact with the most engaged and influential local leaders
- Explore community issues, exchanging ideas and thoughts with classmates and experts
- Test and improve personal leadership, stewardship, and team skills by working on a small team project that will benefit the community
- Be viewed within your own organizations and within the community as current/emerging leaders

What will I gain from the program?

The program provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be part of a unique 9-month experience during which participants learn a great deal about themselves and about the place in which they live. They also make lifetime friendships with individuals representing the diversity of our community. At the end of the year, some graduates describe their experience as life changing.

Participants end the program with:

- A broader and more profound knowledge of the community
- A deeper appreciation for the potential of civic leaders to make significant contributions
- An increased understanding of the ways in which they can be effective collaborators
- A heightened appreciation of the value of working with diverse partners
- A more meaningful commitment to higher levels of community service
- A greatly expanded and diverse network of friends and colleagues



The program is just the beginning of an association with the Leadership Asheville organization. Graduates find that they are part of an ever-expanding network of regional leaders they can always call upon for advice and information.

Do you prefer applicants from particular companies or organizations?

No. The LA Program seeks a diverse representation of organizations from across the community and does not limit participation to an established list. These include professionals from financial services, education, manufacturing, healthcare, the arts, community organizations, government, and other sectors. A list of companies and organizations that have sponsored individuals in the past can be found in the “Employer Sponsors” section on our website.

Is the LA Program appropriate for those with physical limitations?

Applicants are encouraged to apply regardless of physical limitations. We invite class members to participate in all activities, which are designed so that individuals of all abilities can meaningfully contribute. Whether and at what level an individual chooses to engage in any given activity is ultimately a personal choice. We welcome input that provides individuals with options to tailor their experiences.

What commitment is required of me if I am selected for the program?

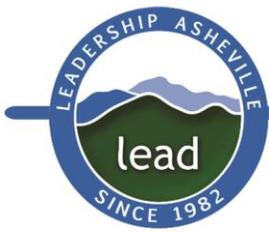
LA Program participants are expected to:

- Attend every program day
- Contribute at least 20 hours outside of class time to a small team project and other activities
- Bring an open mind; bring a willingness to listen; seek to understand other perspectives; and commit to community service
- Volunteer 20 hours of service over 2 years to Leadership Asheville and/or UNC Asheville programs, students, or classes following their program participation

I'm not sure if I can attend all of the program days. Can I still participate?

Attendance is mandatory for Orientation on September 2, 2015 , the Overnight Retreat on September 10-12 , 2015 and Graduation on May 11, 2016 . The retreat will begin at 6PM on Thursday, September 10th and conclude before lunch on Saturday, September 12th. If a participant is unable to attend these program days in full, they will be asked to withdraw from the LA Program. We understand that unforeseen circumstances do arise, however to be fair to all, we cannot make individual allowances. In the event that an excuse is necessary for emergency medical reasons or a death in the family, we will do our best to accommodate that request.

In addition, there are attendance requirements for the remaining program days, which allow participants 8 hours of excused absence for unexpected emergencies over the course of the year. Should a participant miss between 8 and 16 hours of the program, they will be required to make up those hours the following year by attending part or all of a program day. **If a participant misses over 16 hours of the program, or any part of one of the mandatory program days, he or she**



will be asked to withdraw and forfeit tuition. If you must voluntarily withdraw from the program before completion, we will be unable to refund your tuition.

Program Applications

How are candidates chosen?

A selection committee of LA Program graduates chooses approximately 50 participants from the applicant pool. We strive for a class with a diverse range of participants with respect to several factors, including occupation, leadership experience, ethnicity, gender, age, geography, cultural perspective, and time in the community.

There are times when applicants apply more than once before being selected. This can be due to number of applicants, commitment to community involvement, and the goal of creating a diverse class.

What is the cost of tuition?

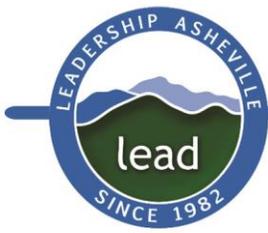
The tuition is two-tiered. For companies and organizations with 25 or more full and part-time employees, the tuition is \$2,800 and covers all meals and transportation, as well as the overnight retreat in September, and the graduation reception in May. In order to maintain the desired diversity in the class make-up, we do offer a discounted tuition of \$2,500 for individuals who are employed in organizations with fewer than 25 full and part-time employees.

Is financial assistance available?

Financial assistance may be available on a limited basis. Before requesting financial assistance, applicants must consider all other potential sources for funding, such as contributions from their employer and the organizations with which they are associated. Those seeking financial assistance should complete the Financial Assistance Request Form. Assistance will not be granted for the entire tuition amount. Award amounts are based on need, the number of requests received, and the available funds.

Who is typically awarded financial assistance or scholarship?

Selection to the LA Program is made without regard to financial circumstances. Requests for financial assistance are confidential and have no bearing on the selection process. A request is considered only after the LA participant selection process is complete and will not influence consideration of your application. Priority for financial assistance is given to participants who are employed by small nonprofit organizations, public sector entities, or self-employed. Participants employed by large, private-sector companies are not eligible for assistance.



How do I best complete the application process?

We encourage applicants to begin their application well before the deadline, using it as an opportunity to consider their talents, accomplishments, goals for their community and workplace, and what they hope to gain for themselves and those they interact with through participation in the LA Program. A few suggestions to successfully complete the application include:

- Reviewing program dates and commitments to ensure you can fulfill them before moving forward with the application.
- Not sending additional pages, bios or resumes.
- Contacting us with any questions at 828.255.7100 or leadershipasheville@unca.edu
- Submitting application materials well in advance of the deadline. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

What questions are asked on the application?

The application is designed to lead applicants through a process of reflection about their own civic leadership experiences and future service goals.

Personal reflection questions include:

- In your judgment, what is the most pressing problem or opportunity facing our community today? Why? Give your recommendations for approaching and resolving this problem/opportunity.
- What are you seeking from your LA Program experience?
- What unique strengths, background, experiences, and attributes will you bring to the LA Program?

What do selected participants do before the program begins in September?

Upon acceptance, selected participants complete a few items of pre-program work during the summer. This includes reading a few articles on community leadership as well as filling out a Participant Profile Form, Administrative Items Form, and Commitment Statement.

Program Participant Sponsors

What are the benefits of sponsoring a participant?

The LA Program sharpens participants' abilities to lead by giving them an opportunity to interact closely with a diverse group of people with multiple perspectives. Participants are exposed to an extensive network of community executives and decision makers. Sponsoring a participant heightens the visibility of both the participant and the sponsoring organization. Companies, organizations, and public agencies find that sponsoring participants provides an opportunity to elevate their civic profiles, while they expand employees' leadership potential and ability to contribute to civic affairs.



What is the sponsor's commitment?

Sponsors support their employees in the program to the best of their ability by giving them the time to participate and contributing to tuition. For-profit, private sector sponsors are encouraged to contribute additional funds to the Leadership Asheville Program in order to provide financial assistance to those participants who are employed by small nonprofit organizations, the public sector, or are self-employed. Unrestricted contributions of this type to the program are 100% tax deductible. Those interested in supporting in this way can call us at 828.255.7100 or email us at: leadershipasheville@unca.edu

Do you accept more than one applicant from a particular company or organization?

In any given year, the number of applications received may exceed the number of applicants that can be selected for the program. For this reason, the selection committee will rarely accept more than one individual from a single organization in the same year.

Do some companies or organizations have an internal selection process?

Many organizations regularly send participants through the program and have developed an internal identification and selection process. If appropriate, the sponsor's chief executive officer, human resources director, or board chair may nominate the individual. We encourage applicants to check with their employers before submitting an application to discuss the nomination and application process.

Are other corporate sponsorship opportunities available?

Yes. Tuition alone does not cover the cost of the Leadership Asheville Program. We welcome donations from organizations and individuals alike. In addition to donating to the program, special event sponsorships are available. Leadership Asheville community wide events include the *Summer Buzz Breakfast Series*, *Annual Luncheon*, and our *Graduation Reception*. For more information about sponsoring Leadership Asheville events, or donating to the program, please contact us at 828.555.7100.

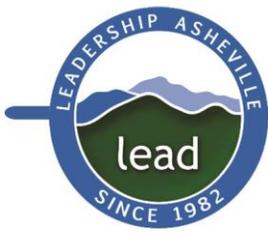
Post-Graduation Involvement

What is expected of LA Program graduates?

Leadership Asheville is successful because of the graduates who volunteer. Graduates are expected to lend their expertise and perspective, volunteering for Leadership Asheville and/or UNC Asheville programs, students, or classes, for 20 hours over 2 years following their program participation.

What opportunities are there for graduates?

Graduates have the opportunity to attend exclusive LA Alumni gatherings in addition to unique continuing education programming. They are invited to the Annual Luncheon Celebration and the



Asheville Buzz Breakfast Series, receive an alumni newsletter, participate in a community leadership matching service, and more. All Leadership Asheville programs and services are designed as continuing educational opportunities for community awareness and personal leadership development.

They join a diverse network of over 1,200 graduates, becoming part of an ever-expanding network of regional leaders they can call upon for advice and information, benefitting them long after graduating.

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2015/2016 CLASS CALENDAR

APPLICATION DEADLINE	ACCEPTANCES ANNOUNCED	* ORIENTATION MANDATORY	* OVERNIGHT RETREAT MANDATORY	CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY
MAY 29 2015	JUNE 8 2015	SEP. 2 2015	SEP. 10-12 2015	SEP. 30 2015	OCT. 14 2015	NOV. 18 2015	DEC. 16 2015

CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY	CLASS DAY	HOLD FOR MAKE UP DAY	* CLASS DAY GRADUATION MANDATORY	GRADUATION RECEPTION
JAN. 13 2016	FEB. 17 2016	MARCH 16 2016	APRIL 13 2016	MAY 4 2016	MAY 11 2016	MAY 12 2016

*MANDATORY ATTENDANCE