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Cynthia A. Hedge
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Community Leadership Programs:
Where They Have Been and Where They Are Going
by

Cynthia A. Hedge

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

December, 2007

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

Community Leadership Programs:

Where They Have Been and Where They Are Going

Community leadership programs have been a part of the landscape of communities across America for nearly 50 years. This project looked at 14 aspects of community leadership programs: (1) their history; (2) purpose; (3) goals; (4) program participants; (5) alumni; (6) sponsors; (7) funding; (8) tuitions; (9) formats; (10) program faculty; (11) curricula; (12) their impact on participants, organizations, communities, fields and systems; (13) evaluation processes used to measure their impact; and (14) their future.

Cynthia A. Hedge
December 10, 2007

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State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

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Dates of Approval:

December 10, 2007

Mary C. Murdock
Associate Professor

December 10, 2007

Cynthia A. Hedge
Student

To my family

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Section One: Background to the Project

Purpose

This project was designed to examine the current profile of community leadership programs in the United States. With this information, sponsors, administrators and organizers of community leadership programs may be assisted in adopting best practices for their organizations.

Description

This project was a comprehensive look at community leadership programs across the United States. Specifically, it documented many aspects of community leadership programs: their history; purpose; goals; participants; alumni; sponsors; funding; tuition; program formats; curricula; their impact on participants, organizations, communities, fields and systems; evaluation processes; and finally, their future. The project was part of my overall plan to assist my own community leadership program and to consult with persons from other leadership programs.

Background

My interest in community leadership programs started with my own leadership program, Leadership LaPorte County. It was similar to many community leadership programs across the nation. Its purpose was to educate participants about local issues and to teach participants leadership skills, thereby encouraging them to become better leaders in government, business and non-profit organizations.

Leadership LaPorte County has served its community of approximately 110,000 citizens for the last 23 years. This non-profit agency boasts over 700 adult graduates from all walks of life. Each year, about 30 students are selected to participate in the non-

partisan, 10-month program. The first session is a 2-day retreat whereby participants get to know one another and begin the learning process. Another session is devoted to visiting the Indiana General Assembly in Indianapolis. While there, the students talk with state officials and observe parts of the legislative process. The remaining eight 1-day sessions focus on hearing speakers who represent local government offices, education, law enforcement, non-profits, health care and economic development.

Leadership LaPorte County functions on a shoestring budget. Each student or his/her sponsor pays tuition, currently \$600. This tuition funds only a fraction of the total cost of operating the program. Additional revenues are generated through fund raising and grants. On the debit side, the major program expenses are salaries for a part-time director and an assistant. Additional services are provided by many volunteers, including the members of the Board of Directors.

At the end of each year, the new graduates informally evaluate the value of the leadership program. However, Leadership LaPorte County has never completed an in-depth evaluation of the overall effectiveness of its programs.

At this point, Leadership LaPorte County is ready to reevaluate its programming. Without key data, it is difficult, if not impossible, to refine the program. Absence of change may eventually affect the credibility of Leadership LaPorte County. In turn, funding may be jeopardized, as donors want their dollars to make a difference.

Rationale for selection

As a professional for nearly 30 years, I have held many positions of leadership in my community and region. These opportunities have been in the context of non-profit organizations, government, law and business. When serving in public office, I spoke at

Leadership LaPorte County sessions. I encouraged my employees to participate in the program and sponsored several of them. Also, I facilitated a strategic planning retreat for the members of the Board of Directors. In short, I believed in Leadership LaPorte County. Furthermore, I believed the program has always been run by good people wanting to do good things for the community.

These leadership experiences brought me to the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership of the State University of New York, Buffalo State College. As a student, one of my primary goals was to become a more effective leader by meshing my practical experiences with leadership theory taught at the Center.

The third reason I chose to work with Leadership LaPorte County was my concern for the direction of my community. I worry that the community is headed in the wrong direction. This opinion is shared by many other citizens, representing many segments of the community.

In addition, I believed this project could help Leadership LaPorte County advance to another level of service. By doing so, program participants may be better equipped to integrate leadership knowledge and skills into their everyday activities. Hopefully, this process will not only enhance the quality of the lives of participants but help them become the effective leaders the community needs.

What this project adds creativity and how it improves the quality of life

This project was a significant step forward in my development as a change leader. With the data discovered, I expanded my toolbox. Not only have I become a more effective change leader, but also a better leadership trainer. I now have a comprehensive understanding of where community leadership programs have been and where they may

be going. This knowledge can be shared with Leadership LaPorte County and other leadership programs. In turn, the data shared can help leadership programs adopt best practices in the field. By improving their programming, leadership organizations may develop stronger leaders who help their communities face complex challenges in the 21st Century.

Section Two: Pertinent Literature

Introduction

For this project, I reviewed several categories of references. The main category was written materials, mostly articles and studies published in periodicals. For example, the *Journal of Extension* and the *Journal of Community Development Society* were two sources of considerable information. These were logical sources, considering the history of community leadership programs. Extension offices of land-grant colleges and universities, for instance, were instrumental in sponsoring community leadership programs across the United States.

Another category of sources came from organizations focusing on community leadership programs. An example in this category was the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, which has sponsored studies and projects related to program evaluation.

Sources were also discovered through the perusal of references made in other studies and articles. In one instance, I learned of a paper entitled, "Contradictory Views of Community Leadership: A Research Agenda and Practical Applications," which was presented at the 2004 National Communication Association Conference (National Communication Association, 2004). A search of databases for this study was unsuccessful. However, I obtained a copy of the work by tracking down and contacting one of the main authors, Dr. Joann Keyton, Ph.D., Professor at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. In less than 24 hours, she e-mailed me a copy of the paper. The critical look at community leadership programs turned out to be a valuable source of background information.

The least amount of information was found in books. Of course, there were hundreds of books on the general topic of leadership. However, very little was found on the narrower topic of community leadership programs. An exception was the book, *The Handbook of Leadership Development Evaluation*, (Hannum, K. M., Martineau, J. W., & Reinelt, C., 2007). In this, 30 authors collaborated to write about the evaluation of leadership development. The most pertinent chapter to this Master's project was entitled, "Evaluating Community Leadership Programs" (Behrens, T. R. & Benham, M. K. P., 2007, pp. 284-314). It provided a sample of how one program, the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change (KLCC), was evaluated. The chapter also showed a trend that started in the late 1990's among funders such as the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Increasingly, they have been seeking data that demonstrated verifiable program impact.

The following selected bibliography was compiled to provide valuable information about community leadership programs. While the sources were not always pertinent to this project, they were worth reading for background. The sources also provided me with ideas for future study.

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Section Three: Process Plan

Introduction

Unknowingly, my interest in this Master's project started in June 2006. I had just returned from classes at the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership, Buffalo State College (SUNY), in Buffalo, New York. As a follow-up to my summer studies, I met with Jim Jessup, Director of Leadership LaPorte County (Indiana), the leadership program in my community. We talked about the local program and how we might work together to build on its almost 25 years of service to the community. Once I decided to continue my graduate studies at the Center in June 2007, identifying Leadership LaPorte County as the subject of my Master's project was very easy, natural and logical.

My next step was to obtain academic approval of my general concept. This was completed by early June 2007 while attending summer classes in Buffalo. Within several days of returning home, Jim Jessup and I met again. I explained some general ideas for the project. We both agreed the project could be mutually beneficial.

In July 2007, I drafted the first version of my Concept Paper (Hedge, 2007). Initially, the project included these major components:

- I. Survey all graduates of Leadership LaPorte County and analyze the survey and programming purposes.
- II. Research community leadership programs through web sites, studies, articles and books. The purpose of this activity was to scan the literature and use the information to enhance Leadership LaPorte County and other community leadership programming

- III. Interview a specified number of Leadership LaPorte County graduates to determine the impact of the program.
- IV. Interview several directors of other community leadership programs to glean information that might be helpful to Leadership LaPorte County and other community leadership programs.
- V. Develop an advanced leadership program curriculum that Leadership LaPorte County might offer.
- VI. Teach the advanced leadership program for Leadership LaPorte County.

The initial Concept Paper was submitted to Dr. Mary C. Murdock, my faculty advisor, of the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership; Jim Jessup, local director; and several of my friends who are very active and knowledgeable about my community (Hedge, 2007). Interestingly, one of these friends asked her visiting friend, a professional program evaluator from Minnesota, to review the Concept Paper. Everyone agreed that the original proposal was huge.

By late August 2007, I began narrowing the size of the project. This was a challenge. On the one hand, I wanted the project to be manageable and meaningful. On the other hand, my intentions of helping Leadership LaPorte County and of obtaining my personal objectives were important to me. My Master's project finally was paired down to researching community leadership programs: their past, their current status and their future. The findings would then be written up.

Project Final Timeline

The Master's project itself consisted of researching and writing my findings on community leadership programs in the United States. A chronological sequence of activities that made up the project, as well as related parts, appear below:

- I. Phase I: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I assisted Leadership LaPorte County in conducting a survey of graduates of Leadership LaPorte County. In July 2007, I completed research on several surveys used by other community leadership programs. With this information, I assisted the director in drafting the survey questions. Leadership LaPorte County mailed the surveys to over 400 graduates in October 2007. The responses were analyzed by the director in December 2007.
- II. Phase II: This was my Master's project. It consisted of several parts:
 - A. First, I researched community leadership programs primarily through studies and articles. The work included finding alternative ways of obtaining research material (such as contacting an author directly) and seeking permission to cite certain references. This research was conducted in late August, September and October 2007. This period of research consumed over 60 hours of my time.
 - B. Second, I reported my research findings in the following manner:
 1. A draft of Sections One through Three was submitted November 5, 2007.
The draft was started in September 2007 and took approximately 20 hours to complete.
 2. A draft of Sections Four through Seven was submitted November 19, 2007.
These sections were started in late October 2007 and required approximately

45 hours of work. The bulk of that time was spent on writing Section Four, which presented the outcomes of my Master's project.

3. On November 28, 2007, I presented my Master's project to members of my cohort. The presentation and preparation for the presentation took approximately 18 hours to complete.
 4. The final version of my Master's project write-up was written and submitted on December 10, 2007. This part of the project consumed approximately 30 hours of my time.
 5. The Master's project was bound and submitted to the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership, Buffalo State College (SUNY), Buffalo, New York, in January 2008.
- I. Phase III: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I agreed to interview three Leadership LaPorte County graduates and write case studies. These short case studies will be utilized to assist Leadership LaPorte County in its marketing and fundraising. This phase was started in October 2007 and will be completed in the spring of 2008.
 - II. Phase IV: After the Master's project is completed, I will use the data collected in the project to develop and teach an advanced leadership class for Leadership LaPorte County. This phase will be completed as an independent study course during the 2008 Spring Semester.

Section Four: Outcomes

Introduction

This section contains 14 content outcomes of my project. These outcomes, all related to community leadership programs, were: (1) their history, (2) purpose; (3) goals; (4) program participants; (5) alumni; (6) sponsors; (7) funding; (8) tuitions; (9) formats; (10) program faculty; (11) curricula; (12) impact on participants, organizations, communities, fields and systems; (13) evaluation processes used to measure their impact; and (14) their future.

The discussion on two of the outcomes, impact and evaluation, contained more detail than on the other outcomes. Several reasons accounted for this extensive treatment of impact and evaluation. First, much information about the other outcomes already existed. There was general agreement about the accuracy of the facts underlying these outcomes. For example, no one argued that community leadership programs have similar goals, formats or funding. However, when it came to impact and evaluation, little has been universally agreed upon. A second reason for the detailed discussion of impact and evaluation was rooted in my initial interest in this project. I wanted to find out if community leadership programs were effective.

Background to community leadership programs

Community leadership programs have been on the American landscape for nearly 50 years. The earliest program began in Philadelphia in 1959 (Keyton, Bisel, Ozley, & Randolph, 2004, p. 2). Different sources cited varying historical facts and told different stories about the origins of the first programs (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 55). Many of these stories pointed to the race riots of the 1960's, which resulted from racial

discrimination in America. One result of this turmoil was the start of community leadership programs, designed to “create mutual understanding of the issues and problems facing the community” (Azzam & Riggio, p. 55). Other stories attributed the formation of community leadership programs to other events. For instance, the Fredricks’ article (as cited in Azzam & Riggio, p. 55) told the story of a 1988 airplane crash that killed most of Atlanta’s young leaders. That dramatic event created a leadership vacuum that prompted the founding of Leadership Atlanta (Azzam & Riggio, p. 55).

Over the years, the popularity of community leadership programs grew. Starting a program was often a response to local people believing that a lack of leaders was standing in the way of community development. As Flora, Flora, Bastian, and Manion (2003) stated in their work:

In depressed communities, there is often a sense of the inevitability of decline. All the “leaders” have left. There is no hope within the community. If only a leader would come, someone would build a factory, or someone would build a road, then the community situation would improve. (p. 1)

To some degree or another, communities hoped a leadership program could cultivate the kind of leaders critical to the demands of an increasingly complex society. No longer were communities only looking to people in traditional leadership positions to solve problems. Instead, people recognized the need for all citizens to be leaders.

Today, there are approximately 750 community leadership programs in the United States (Wituk, Warren, Heiny, Clark, Power, & Meissen, 2003, p. 76). Some of the programs have had ties to national, regional or statewide leadership initiatives. Examples

included the Indiana Leadership Initiative; Georgia Rural Development Council (GRDC) Community Leadership Initiative (<http://www.fanning.uga.edu>); Iowa's Horizons Community Leadership Program (<http://www.extension.iastate.edu>); Missouri's Developing Community Leaders: The EXCEL Approach (<http://extension.missouri.edu>); and Wyoming's EVOLVE (Ehmke & Shipp, 2007).

Many community leadership programs have joined others through affiliate organizations. For instance, The Community Leadership Association (formally known as The National Association for Community Leadership) was organized in 1979, and it continues to serve its leadership program membership across the United States.

(<http://www.communityleadership.org/>) Some states also formed associations of local programs. One such group was the Indiana Leadership Association founded in 1988.

(<http://www.indianaleadership.com>)

As community leadership programs popped up all over the United States, so did interest in the impact of the programs. For some time, community developers, researchers, educators, sociologists, funders, sponsors and program developers have looked critically at community leadership programs (Langone & Rohs, 1995, p. 253). Much of this research has focused on graduates' perceptions of changes in their attitudes and knowledge and their level of leadership involvement.

Description of community leadership programs

Community leadership programs have a variety of characteristics. They were the most common way for communities to develop local leadership (Wituk, et al., 2003).

Generally, they “represent a mechanism for the development of leadership skills and concepts” (Wituk, Ealey, Heiny, Clark, & Meissen, 2005, ¶ 1). Local leadership

programs reflected their own community history, needs, issues and interests. Azzam and Riggio (2003) defined them as:

... formal leadership development programs sponsored by local community agencies with the aim of training future and current leaders in the skills necessary to serve their communities. These programs attempt to foster an understanding of events, people, and organizational entities that shape a community, while providing skills and knowledge to be more effective leaders. (p. 55)

As a result, the programs were unique yet similar at the same time. Many of these similarities were the product of contemporary views of community leadership.

Features of community leadership

A number of community leadership experts have described features of today's community leadership (Wituk, et al., 2005, ¶ 7). A major emphasis was on continuous, influential and collaborative relationships between people (Robinson, 1994, pp. 44-48; Langone & Rohs, 1995, p. 252). Thus, to some degree or another, all community leadership program participants practiced leadership.

Today's features of community leadership have differed from traditional leadership paradigms in other ways as well. For example, community leadership was no longer seen as something exercised by a few persons who held certain positions or exercised certain behaviors (Wituk, et al., 2005, ¶ 8). Instead, communities needed leaders who worked to empower others. Contemporary leadership required individuals to work with others as a "coach, mentor, motivator, and/or role model; being able to make tough decisions; and understanding how organizational politics work to achieve organizational effectiveness" (Tackie, Findlay, Baharanyi, & Pierce, 2004, ¶ 1).

Another feature of contemporary community leadership was the absence of “specific rules and clear boundaries of right and wrong” (Wituk, et al., 2005, ¶ 9). In contrast, groups were comprised of overlapping networks, which required people to collaborate.

A final feature of contemporary leadership was its departure from the top-down, reactive decision-making model. Instead, today’s groups participated in democratic and creative processes that built capacity, creating new learning experiences. Thus, many people must be taught new skills that will help them become effective leaders. Such skills came from community leadership programs.

Goals of community leadership programs

The goals of each particular leadership program varied, depending on the unique needs and issues in its community. Nevertheless, some common goals typified many programs.

They included:

- Providing networking opportunities;
- Creating closer bonds between people;
- Giving people information about their community’s strengths, problems and needs;
- Adding to the pool of local leaders who can apply their leadership knowledge and skills in their respective professions, businesses, organizations and communities;
- Visiting and discussing specific community sectors, such as government, health care, economic development and education;
- Teaching leadership skills;
- Inspiring participants to become effective leaders;
- Promoting volunteerism; and

- Positively impacting non-profit and for-profit organizations, fields, communities and systems.

Participants in community leadership programs

Participant make-up.

Adults from all ages, genders, occupations, races, ethnicity, education levels and backgrounds made up community leadership classes. It was not uncommon for local programs to run classes for youth as well. The demographic make-up of participants was frequently tied to the sponsor, the geographic area, or the focus of the program. For example, one study looked at leadership programs in the state of Georgia; these were not sponsored by Chambers of Commerce (Taylor, 1997, p. 6). Nonetheless, the study noted that, when Chambers of Commerce sponsored the leadership programs, participants were mostly college-educated. They often were educators, attorneys, educators, realtors and bankers. In the Taylor study, the primary racial composition of participants was African Americans and Caucasians; they were also predominately male (p. 6). Notably absent in this study were small business owners. Taylor attributed this gap to participants having to pay their own tuitions (p. 6). “Employers most often pay this fee for the employees because employers reap business contacts and potential income from the networking that occurs. Individuals and small business owners most often cannot afford to pay the program fee” (Taylor, p. 6).

While Chambers of Commerce programs were many times in urban settings, other community leadership programs targeted rural areas. This factor also influenced the demographic composition of the leadership classes. An example of such a program was designed and operated by the Cooperative Extension and Continuing Education Program

at Tuskegee University. Rural Alabamians were the targeted participants. Studying these programs, Tackie, Findlay, Baharanyi and Pierce (2004) discovered that 50% of the alumni interviewed were 54 years of age while 40% were 65 years old or older (¶ 12). In addition, 40% had a high school or technical/vocational education; 50% of the alumni were college educated. The alumni were predominately female (i.e., 12 male versus 28 female) and African American (i.e., 36 black, 4 Native Americans and no Caucasians).

In other research, the demographic focus was on the occupational backgrounds of the participants. The Azzam and Riggio (2003) study, for instance, found that the private sector made up 48% of the participants in a sample of California leadership programs (p. 60). The private sector was defined as large and small business owners and corporate representatives. Government/public workers constituted 28% of the classes. These individuals came from public schools, fire and police departments, city halls and public hospitals. Twenty-three percent of the California sample worked for the non-profit sector, such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, local charities and service organizations. Finally, 2% of the participants were local community activists or retired persons. The researchers noted that the occupational backgrounds varied according to the demographics of the area in which the program was operating (Azzam & Riggio, p. 61).

Selection of participants.

Criteria for selection of leadership class participants were designed by each program. Often, community leadership programs strived for diversity among participants. In California, for instance, “many program directors interviewed said that they try to strike a balance during the application process. They wish to attain an even mix of backgrounds and experiences to increase the chance of learning from each other’s knowledge” (Azzam

& Riggio, 2003, p. 61). In some communities, the pool of potential applicants was insufficient to construct a balanced mix.

To fill classes, community leadership programs relied on different selection processes. One method of recruitment was done through alumni nominating other people to participate in the future. “Alumni most always will nominate co-workers whose fees will be paid by the employer, and they may not always have diversity in mind as they make their nominations” (Taylor, 1997, p. 6). This alumni nomination system was used most often by programs sponsored by Chambers of Commerce.

Another common way to recruit participants was through advertisements via local media outlets. This approach allowed individuals to nominate themselves as well as others. The leadership programs that accepted self-nominations were likely to have lower tuitions (Taylor, 1997, p. 7). This method probably resulted in more class diversity as well. In her study, Taylor recommended more research be devoted to ensure diversity:

Is the fee to participate in the community leadership program a barrier? Is the time commitment required to participate in one and often two weekend retreats along with eight or more monthly half-day or one-day sessions a barrier?...What specific actions could leadership program directors who want to have a more diverse mix of occupations in their programs take to make this occur? (p. 8)

In addition to lack of diversity, the number of class participants may suffer in the recruitment process. For instance, many directors of the California leadership programs told researchers that enrollment numbers varied depending on the economy, community awareness of the programs and the success of advertising (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 59). Their study showed class sizes were as small as 9 participants and as large as 54

individuals. The average class size was 24 participants. In one Louisiana rural community leadership program, there were 28 class participants who represented three small towns (Hughes, 1998, ¶ 6).

Finally, the criteria on which participants were selected for their community leadership programs influenced the makeup of classes as well. One study reported that applicants were chosen based “on their potential for developing, continuing, or broadening leadership skills in the county” (Langone, 1992, ¶ 10). On the other side of the spectrum was the Louisiana program called Building Opportunities Leadership Development (BOLD). That program targeted “forgotten community personnel who might not be attracted to other leadership training programs for various reasons, such as cost, logistics and time constraints” (Hughes, 1998, ¶ 2). Wyoming’s EVOLVE (Extension Volunteer Organization for Leadership, Vitality and Enterprise) programs picked participants who collectively made up diverse groups (Ehmke & Shipp, 2007, ¶ 11). Participants ranged from individuals with no leadership experience to already established leaders. In fact, some researchers contended, “community leadership educators likely err when they target ‘aspiring leaders’ for their development programs” (Pigg, 1999, p. 200). This argument was based on Pigg’s definition of leadership, which was relational in nature (p. 200). He argued that leadership was an influence relationship among leaders and collaborators. It was not a person who held a certain position or a person who demonstrated certain behaviors often attributed to leaders.

Motivation of participants.

Participants cited various reasons for enrolling in their community program.

One study showed the following break-down of motives:

- Thirty percent sought knowledge about their communities.
- Twenty-nine percent hoped to learn specific leadership skills.
- Twenty-three percent wanted to meet new people.
- Ten percent heard positive things about the leadership program from past participants.

(Wituk, et al., 2005, ¶ 20)

In another study, researchers examined the motivations of participants who designed their own community leadership program in Alabama. Seventy percent of the participants said they enrolled in the program because they desired to become an effective leader. Participants reported three other motivations: (1) they sought change in their community; (2) they wanted to learn about grants opportunities; and (3) they hoped to learn more about business skills (Tackie, et al., 2004, ¶ 16).

Alumni

Many community leadership programs have sought to keep their graduates in touch with the program. Surveying 72 programs in California, Azzam and Riggio (2003), for example, found that 73% of the programs had some form of alumni activity (p. 63). Almost 38% of the programs had an alumni association that sponsored meetings, community projects and fund raisers such as collecting dues and holding traditional fund raisers. Members of the alumni associations often helped decide on the events and curricula of future leadership programming. Additional alumni activities included publishing newsletters (i.e., 28%) and hosting social events such as luncheons, dinners and holiday parties (i.e., 45%). In addition, 17% of the leadership programs invited graduates to serve on steering committees, which directed the course of the program.

Other means to keep alumni involved were: inviting alumni to refresher courses (i.e., 11%); providing volunteer opportunities in the program and community (i.e., 9%); sponsoring yearly class reunions (i.e., 6%); and scheduling annual alumni retreats (i.e., 4%). Some community leadership programs also tried to enlist alumni as trainers and consultants in their new classes. It was common for programs to have at least one alumnus on the board of directors or on an advisory committee (Azzam & Riggio, p. 64).

The level of alumni participation depended on several factors. For instance, one study found that alumni with higher incomes were more likely to participate in alumni activities than other graduates (Dhanakumar, et al., 1996, ¶ 10). Other factors that promoted greater alumni participation included “attention to public issues beyond the community level, communication skill, ability to network with community leaders, and experiences in community life” (Dhanakumar, et al., ¶ 10).

Sponsors of community leadership programs

In this project, sponsorship was defined as “planning, designing and conducting a program of community leadership development” (Williams & Wade, 2002, p. 63). This definition did not include providing speakers, facilities or resources.

A variety of organizations have sponsored community leadership programs: Chambers of Commerce, non-profit agencies, local governments, Extension Offices and institutions of higher learning. In addition, some local United Ways and service clubs, such as the Rotary and Kiwanis, have sponsored leadership development programs (Earnest, 1995, p. 7). In one survey of 106 randomly selected members of the Community Leadership Association, of which 67 graduates responded, Williams and Wade (2002) found the following breakdown of program sponsors:

Chamber of Commerce	34 respondents
Private Non-Profit Agency	24 respondents
Community College	4 respondents
Public University or College	2 respondents
Other	2 respondents
Private University of College	1 respondent
Major Employer	0 respondents
Local Government	0 respondents

(p. 65).

Sometimes, these sponsors collaborated with other organizations. Gray (as cited in Williams & Wade, 2002, p. 63) defined collaboration as “a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their limited vision of what is possible” (p. 5). The right combination of sponsors was key to a successful community leadership program. In their study, Williams and Wade discovered that 58.2% of program respondents collaborated with other organizations in sponsoring community leadership programs (p. 63). Respondents who collaborated were asked how many collaborative partners they had and which partners were considered “ideal.” The options presented to these respondents were:

Chamber of Commerce;

Public university or college;

Private university or college;

Community college;

Major employer in the community;

Private non-profit agency;

Local government; and

Other.

(Williams & Wade, p. 64) The results showed that programs sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and private non-profit agents had the most partners, 50 and 39 respectively. Other organizations partnered to a lesser degree: community colleges, 21 partners; major employers, 20 partners; local government, 18 partners; public universities or colleges, 16 partners; other, 13 partners; and private universities or colleges, 9 partners.

These results showed gaps between what the respondents reported as their current partners and what they thought would be ideal partners. The greatest differences were found in three types of higher education: public universities or colleges; private universities or colleges; and community colleges. For instance, 44 respondents stated that public universities would be ideal partners. Only 16 respondents reported that public universities were sponsors of their program. “Colleges and universities can significantly enhance the value and usefulness of programs to develop community leadership” (Williams & Wade, 2002, p. 67). The authors noted that higher education institutions had much to offer community leadership programs. For example, 4-year institutions could provide sources of knowledge, data on trends and issues, and research. In addition, land grant colleges and universities were often involved in community development and initiatives. At the same time, community colleges sometimes worked toward resolving community issues and could help leadership programs by emphasizing excellent teaching and designing customized programs (Williams & Wade, p. 68). However, except for

community colleges, 4-year universities and colleges had often missed opportunities to collaborate with local leadership programs. “To make comprehensive community leadership programs as effective as possible, institutions of higher education should work with other community-based organizations to design and implement leadership programs,” concluded Williams and Wade (p. 70).

Funding

Like so many other aspects of community leadership programs, funding varied widely among programs. Azzam and Riggio (2003) identified six major sources of funding for the community leadership programs they studied (pp. 58-59). Sponsorships constituted the top source of funding. Fifty-three percent of the program directors reported their organization received in-kind donations from local businesses and volunteers. Fund raising was the second-largest source of revenues for the 72 California programs reviewed. Thirty-one percent engaged in fund raising events such as auctions and dinner parties (Azzam & Riggio, p. 58). Sixteen percent of the programs received grants from organizations such as the W. K. Kellogg and Harden Foundations. Chambers of Commerce also donated to 15% of the California leadership programs (Azzam & Riggio, p. 58). Only 8% of the programs relied on dues as a funding source. Tuition was sufficient to finance the activities of 16% of the community leadership programs.

Furthermore, the Azzam and Riggio study (2003) revealed the use of multiple funding sources by community leadership programs: 55% utilized one funding source besides tuition; 23% had two additional funding sources; and 6% looked to three or more funding sources (p. 59).

Finally, the location of the leadership programs made a significant difference in the sources of funding. For instance, a program called Leadership Sunnyvale (California) had access to major corporations such as Yahoo and AMD (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 59).

Tuition

Tuitions to attend community leadership programs varied widely. For instance, one study found that tuition ranged from free to \$4,500 (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 58). Programs offering free tuition depended heavily on community financial sponsors, such as local businesses, foundation grants, fund raising and volunteer services. On the other side of the tuition spectrum were the most expensive programs, which charged between \$2,000-\$4,500 (Azzam & Riggio, p. 58). These programs usually offered scholarships to defray the cost.

Program formats

Among the hundreds of community leadership programs, a common thread that ran through them was their formats. The programs usually extended over several months or weeks. For instance, the programs studied in California ran from 9 to 12 months, one meeting per month, 7 hours per meeting (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 62). The Extension Office programs in Georgia had classes over a 12-week period for a total of 30 instructional hours (Langone, 1992, ¶ 7). Often, the programming included a 1 or 2-day retreat to build bonds among participants and to develop enthusiasm for the program. A few programs lasted over 1 year. Leadership Clovis (California) had a 2-year program (Azzam & Riggio, p. 63). The first year of classes introduced participants to the

community. During the following year, the participants picked a community issue and then planned and implemented an attack on the problem.

Various, yet similar, methods were used to deliver content to the participants. Most programs used a combination of lectures; large and small group dialogue; panel discussions; reading assignments; audiovisual media; and participant feedback to each other. Also common were field trips to locations such as government offices, hospitals and various parts of the community. In addition, participants were sometimes given individual and/or group assignments, including special projects in the community.

Faculty

To deliver these classes, faculties were made up of part-time and full-time paid staff and/or volunteers. “The typical number of either full time or part time staff members is about one” (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 56). The Leadership Santa Barbara County (California) was one example of a program run completely by volunteers. In contrast were the Extension Office programs in Georgia. There, the instructors were paid “state Extension specialists with expertise in leadership development, group dynamics, conflict management, problem solving, communication, managing change, and community and economic development” (Langone, 1992, ¶ 7). Local Extension agents served as coordinators for these programs. They built support for the programs and identified co-sponsors. In turn, the co-sponsors assembled an advisory committee of local leaders who helped the programs obtain funding, select participants and perform managerial tasks. Wyoming’s EVOLVE faculty make-up was similar yet slightly different. The paid local Extension educators coordinated the activities of the programs in conjunction with working with a steering committee (Ehmke & Shipp, 2007, ¶ 9). The Extension educator

sometime taught parts of the curriculum developed by the steering committee. Since a goal of EVOLVE was to help participants develop leadership skills, program graduates were expected to teach most of the classes. Prior to serving as instructors, these alumni received instruction on how to create and deliver good presentations from the Extension educator.

In addition, many community leadership programs relied heavily on outside speakers. These presenters included representatives from business, health care, education and government. Their presentations often were scheduled to coincide with themed sessions. For example, a session might look like Leadership Modesto's (California) health care day when "... participants would meet in the mornings with the chief executive officer (CEO) from the Memorial Hospital Association, learn the history of health care, and discuss ethical issues in the health care field" (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 62). The rest of the day might consist of continuing tours and meeting with topic leaders or receiving instruction on the topic.

Curricula

Introduction.

Community leadership program curricula have several underlying principles. These underpinnings related to the features of contemporary community leadership, which were already discussed. The first of these was that leadership can be taught. Another underlying premise embodied the idea that leadership was not about a person holding a position of power or demonstrating leadership behaviors. In addition, leadership was not exercised in an hierarchy where problems were solved from the top to the bottom.

Rather, organizations and communities were seen as many networks in which members worked collaboratively to obtain a shared vision.

Beyond this starting point, the curricula were unique to each community leadership program. They were described in five ways. One description focused on topics often presented at the sessions. In addition, curricula have been described as two types: those which focused on leadership skill building and those which emphasized networking and community issues. A third category divided curricula into two approaches: an “Instructional Approach” and an “Orientation Approach” (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). A fourth description was identified as participatory, whereby participants helped design the curricula. The fifth and final description was the train the trainer curricula.

Curricula topics.

Many times, community leadership programs focused on such local topics as health care; the criminal justice system; economic development; education; the environment; business; and local and state government. In other leadership programs, the specific subjects looked a little different. A case in point was Louisiana’s program called Building Opportunities Leadership Development (BOLD). This evaluative and technical assistance program was “designed to develop teams of emerging leaders in the community working together in innovative ways across racial, class, and community boundaries to promote community and economic development” (Hughes, 1998, ¶ 3). This 4-month program presented eight topics: teamwork, strategic planning, community vision, community assessment, problem-solving techniques, motivation, conflict management, and how non-profit agencies can address community problems.

Participatory approach.

A distinguishing feature of some community leadership programs was the role of the participants in identifying topics. Tackie, et al. (2004) referred to this program characteristic as the “participatory approach” (¶ 10). An example was the Barbour County Improvement Association in Alabama. Its participant designed curriculum was taught in 12 workshops (Tackie, et al., ¶ 9). Topics were: leadership styles; leadership and ethics; leadership for organizational effectiveness; building trust and teamwork; strategic planning; grantsmanship; zoning and land use; and developing a non-profit organization. Tackie, et al. concluded by stating:

This training method, using a participatory approach, becomes even more critical as institutions of higher education became more entrenched in the concept of “engaged university,” which is based on partnerships and commitment and sharing of knowledge, expertise, and critical resources to facilitate the solution to community problems. This concept goes beyond the conventional outreach protocols, where a university generally emphasized a one-way communication through its university expertise. (¶ 1)

The Barbour County Improvement Association program was not the only one in which local people determined the curriculum. For example, the statewide Wyoming program, EVOLVE, emphasized local direction and control (Ehmke & Shipp, 2007). There, local leadership programs were guided by general parameters identified by the state and were directed by a steering committee of local residents. The core components around which the steering committees designed the curriculum and selected the participants were:

- Increasing human capacity by developing individual leadership skills;
- Increasing social capacity using community-based experiences that strengthened the understanding of resources and issues; and

- Incorporating a group project to practice what was learned.

(Ehmke & Shipp, 2007, ¶ 4) This participatory approach meant that each Wyoming community program used a different curriculum.

Leadership skills versus issue and networking.

The third description divided curricula into two sub-groups: those that included leadership skills and those that focused on issues and networking (Taylor, 1997). Skill-based curricula, often developed by leadership organizations like the well-known Fanning Leadership Center in Athens, Georgia, focused on hands-on practice with collaboration, conflict resolution, appreciating diversity and making decisions. Though not planned into the skill-based curriculum, networking occurred as a by-product of the program. Taylor further commented:

Issue-based and networking curriculum ... most often rely on numerous consultants/trainers/speakers from the corporate/business environment and often the issue discussions are driven by guest speakers who are experts on the subject with little opportunity for participants to wrestle with the conflicting values often present in issue-based discussion. (p. 4)

The other type of program focused on issue discussion and networking. Wituk, et al. (2005) referred to these leadership programs as “meet and greet” (¶ 10). They noted that such programs represented the majority of community leadership programs in the United States.

Taylor (1997) observed that community leadership programs sponsored by Chambers of Commerce were more likely to use the issue-based and networking curriculum (p. 4). Often, these programs highlighted issues for which the Chamber of Commerce hoped to

gain support. Chamber-sponsored programs tended to dismiss skills-based instruction as a duplication of the formal training already received by program participants, many of whom were well-educated professionals and business people. However, Taylor commented: “Knowing the skills and using them in a business/work environment can be different from knowing and using these same skills in a community environment where issues and problems are addressed and solved” (p. 6).

Instructional Approach versus Orientation Approach.

The fourth way to describe curricula was found in work done by Azzam and Riggio (2003, p 57). They distinguished an “Instructional Approach” from an “Orientation Approach” (Azzam & Riggio, p. 57). The Instructional Approach taught leadership skills through structured classes. This approach was similar to managerial leadership programs conducted by organizations and businesses. Instructors were often contractors or academics. The topics focused on leadership styles; developing personal and team communication; and effective leadership strategies. These leadership programs frequently included team-building exercises such as retreats and “ropes courses” (Azzam & Riggio, p. 57). The philosophy of the programs, which used the Instructional Approach, was that leadership skills can be learned in a structured setting and then applied in the community.

The “Orientation Approach” oriented participants to the functions of the community and introduced them to local leaders. This curriculum was divided into different topics, such as economic development, law, health care or education. Thus, for instance, on government day, the participants may meet with the mayor and tour city hall. The underlying philosophy of the Orientation Approach was that interaction with community

leaders could teach participants leadership skills and give participants a better understanding of their community.

Researchers, Azzam and Riggio (2003), found that 76% of the California leadership programs studied used a combination of the Orientation and Instructional Approaches (p. 57). Each program emphasized the two approaches to a varying degree. In addition, they discovered that 21% of the programs used only the Orientation Approach while 3% used only the Instructional Approach.

Train the trainer curricula.

The final type of curricula was used by the “train the trainer” programs. A notable example of this type of program was the Kansas Community Leadership Initiative (KCLI). This 2-year project was designed to create “leader-full” communities by training directors and volunteer board members from 17 local leadership programs in Kansas (Wituk, et al., 2003, p. 77). Rather than focusing on community issues and networking, the curriculum concentrated on theory and philosophy. Servant leadership, the importance of relationships, and the skills to build relationships were the topics emphasized. The specific skills taught in the KCLI included: vision process; learning styles; steps to a performing community; experiential learning cycle; personal mission; consensus and collaboration; and servant leadership (Wituk, et al., p. 79). The main goal of this curriculum was to promote collaboration, understanding and common vision within the communities of the participating Kansans.

Another example of a train the trainer course was the Family Community Leadership (FCL) Program offered by the Oregon State University Extension. In this program, local FCL volunteers received 24 hours of initial training, committed to on-going leadership

training and then gave a minimum of 200 volunteer hours of community involvement (Schauber & Kirk, 2001, ¶ 2). Their contribution included training, facilitating and presenting to other local groups. The FCL curriculum topics included:

- Group process skills;
- Facilitation and meeting management skills;
- Communication, diversity and conflict management skills; and
- Teaching and presentation skills.

Impact

What impact, if any, did community leadership programs make? Did the programs benefit the participants, their organizations or their communities? Today, these were among the most often asked questions about community leadership programs. They were the hardest questions to answer. Evaluating the impact on organizations, fields, communities and systems has been particularly difficult, a topic that was explored elsewhere in this write-up. However, program evaluation has been fairly successful in documenting two areas: (1) impact on participants and (2) tangible impacts.

Tangible impacts.

It was especially easy to identify impact when they were tangible. For instance, one result of Louisiana's BOLD program was the formation of a non-profit agency connecting three parishes (Hughes, 1998, ¶ 15). Together, community leaders addressed the issues of housing, education, environment and economic development. Other tangible evidence of impact was the substantial number of new community leadership programs started by BOLD graduates.

The same kind of tangible impact was found in Georgia. In a 5-year study of the state's Community Leadership Program, 74 county programs participated (Langone, 1992, ¶ 12). Each program was sponsored by an Extension Office. Data were obtained with a written questionnaire, jointly completed by the director and agent actively involved in their respective local leadership program. The study found these tangible impacts that resulted from the community leadership programs:

- Each county prepared a future action plan. The plans proposed such tasks as forming alumni associations; assembling task forces or committees to address community issues; using skills for existing leadership roles; and sponsoring leadership classes.
- Thirty-six counties organized alumni groups.
- Thirty-seven counties sponsored subsequent leadership classes, targeting special audiences such as youth or agribusiness.
- Several task forces were created. They addressed community issues like drug abuse, illiteracy, water quality and land use planning.
- In several counties, graduates organized a Chamber of Commerce or served as a catalyst for merger of several Chambers.

Intangible impact on individuals.

In contrast to tangible impacts, finding intangible impacts on individuals was more difficult. Nevertheless, most research has focused on the intangible impacts made on program participants.

The Langone (1992) study was an example of such research. It found evidence of positive impact on participants in the areas of networking, creating a unified spirit, and encouraging involvement (Langone, ¶ 14). Specific networking impacts on program participants were two-fold: (1) participants increased their knowledge of resources and communication and (2) participants discovered that different viewpoints could help in finding viable solutions to problems. Second, the study showed a team spirit among program participants. Langone quoted one graduate to make the point:

We're a molding together of individuals from different parts of the county with common goals. We put aside selfish interests. We've become a group that's ready to work to make our county the kind of place we want it to be. (¶ 19)

Third, survey respondents believed their program encouraged leadership activity. There also appeared to be a broader range of people getting involved in leadership activities. Specific examples included:

- Graduates reported more motivation to participate in local and state matters as a result of the leadership program. More than 100 graduates ran for public office. Many other alumni joined local and state boards and task forces.
- Many graduates were already active in their community before taking the leadership classes. Yet, they reported they were able to use their newly obtained leadership skills.

Similar findings were documented in a 20-year evaluation of the California Agricultural Leadership Program (Whent & Leising, 1992). Program participants reported these impacts:

- Increased personal contacts and interaction with other participants;

- Enhanced leadership skills;
- Travel experience;
- Knowledge about other societies, cultures and groups;
- Interaction with government officials and agricultural leaders;
- Increased local community involvement;
- Attainment of state association positions;
- Assistance in advancing their careers; and
- Improved family and peer relationships.

(Whent & Leising, 1992, pp. 36-37) Interestingly, participants with the least amount of education made the greatest gains in leadership development.

Similar kinds of impacts were also found in a study of the Ohio State University Extension program (Earnest, 1996). Qualitative analysis showed that the Extension directors saw these impacts on participants: community awareness; working better with others; a heightened sense of teamwork; local leadership development; implementation of community projects; availability of future instructors for reasonable fees; and increased networking for Extension directors. Program participants confirmed these positive outcomes. They reported impact in these areas: improved communication skills; more networking opportunities; more community awareness; increased self-confidence; greater motivation; more willingness to take risks; understanding and interacting with others; a broader perspective on issues; and improved teamwork.

Finally, other analytical work found similar results, along with others. Dhanakumar, et al. (1996) found patterns and themes in their study of rural Wisconsin community leadership programs (¶ 10). Their findings included:

- Participants gained in their understanding of issues and being actively involved in local, state, national and international issues. They also valued their leadership program and recognized its value to the future of rural Wisconsin. However, older alumni valued the program less than their younger counterparts.
- The more alumni paid attention to public issues and communication with other community leaders, the more satisfied they were with their leadership program. Participants who were older and/or had higher incomes than other participants were less satisfied with their leadership program.
- Graduates who gained the most in knowledge and skills in communication and networking showed more interest in running for public office than other participants. Alumni with the most children showed the greatest interest in public office. The participants who had the most confidence in their communication skills, ability to network, and awareness of public affairs were more likely to seek public office.
- Participants who had the best communication skills and networking ability significantly enhanced their community accomplishments.
- Graduates with high incomes were more likely to participate in alumni events.

Impact when participants designed the program.

Turning now to community leadership programs that were designed by the participants, the impact on participants was mixed. From the Wyoming EVOLVE program, which encouraged local curricula design, community participation by graduates was found to be “high” (Ehmke & Shipp, 2007, ¶ 12). However, it was unclear whether alumni involvement was high because the graduates took the leadership classes.

In a study of Alabama programs designed by participants, the impact on participants varied (Tackie, et al., 2004, ¶ 16). Sixty percent of the participants reported using the information they received from the program. The rest said they did not use the information. However, the participants reported impact in several areas. Fifty percent said they worked with people more because of the program; 10% said the program prompted them to write to agencies; and the rest (i.e., 40%) said the question about how the program impacted them was not applicable. When asked why the information taught in the program was not always used, the participants cited five reasons: (1) the information given was not applicable to them (i.e., 60%); (2) the monthly meetings of the program stopped (i.e., 10%); (3) they were involved in too many other activities (i.e., 10%); (4) the opportunity to apply their leadership skills and knowledge had not arisen (i.e., 10%); and (5) the participants had been sick (i.e., 10%). Nevertheless, the participants found some benefit to their attendance. They reported they changed their behaviors in four areas: they were better communicators (i.e., 60%); they worked more with other people (i.e., 20%); they applied their newly obtained information about grants (i.e., 10%); and they made more donations (i.e., 10%).

Impact on participants in train the trainer programs.

In contrast was the impact on participants in the Oregon State University Extension Program (Schauber & Kirk, 2001). That program trained volunteers. They used their newly acquired leadership skills to volunteer as facilitators and as trainers/presenters for community groups. The impact study on this program found that:

- Sixty percent of the respondents increased the amount of their volunteer time because they took the leadership classes (see Table 1 in Appendix B).
- Two-thirds of the alumni reported an increased leadership role as a result of their participation in the program (see Table 1 in Appendix B).
- All of the program participants said their facilitation skills had improved because of the program. On average, the graduates moved from an “elementary” level to “intermediate” level (see Figure 2 in Appendix B).
- The level of confidence in using facilitation skills increased as well (see Figure 3 in Appendix B).
- They improved their presentation and training skills and their knowledge about group process and decision making (see Figures 4, 5 and 6 in Appendix B).

Schauber & Kirk, ¶¶ 12-22). In addition, alumni were asked what they did differently as a result of their training. Five main changes were mentioned:

- Increased trust in group processes through understanding stages of group development;
- Improved listening to hear what people were really saying;
- More awareness and consideration of the different styles and skill levels of group participants;

- Realization of the importance and use of the tools and techniques for effective meetings so everyone participated; and
- More preparedness for group meetings and events.

(Schauber & Kirk, ¶ 23). Finally, the participants were asked to identify the greatest impact of the leadership program. Five themes emerged:

- They learned that everyone has talents to be developed.
- They accepted people for who they were.
- They trusted people's abilities to make good decisions and impact their communities.
- They gained confidence in speaking to groups.
- They co-facilitated with some great people.

(Schauber & Kirk, ¶ 24).

Another “trainer the trainer” program, the Kansas Community Leadership Initiation (KCLI), was also found to be beneficial to its graduates. For instance, a study showed that 90% of the participants increased their appreciation of others (Wituck, et al., 2003, p. 81). Forty percent developed more patience and tolerance and 30% of the participants thought they had a responsibility to complement the strengths of other people. According to the participants, the new knowledge helped them work more effectively with others. Additional data showed that 70% of the graduates gained insights into themselves. They were able to clarify or identify their personal approaches to leadership. This insight may have contributed to the 50% of the participants who said they felt more comfortable when working with others.

Two years later, another study was conducted on KCLI. Researchers, Wituk, et al. (2005), uncovered similar, positive responses to survey questions answered by graduates. The participants reported strong beliefs about the value of the leadership skills to them, their work and community (see Table 3 in Appendix C). However, the alumni did not indicate as much confidence in using those skills. In addition, 100% of the graduates said they had used at least one of the leadership skills or concepts taught (see Table 4 in Appendix C). The concept most frequently used was the learning styles inventory. That was followed by other leadership skills or concepts used at least once: consensus building (i.e., 77%); exercising servant leadership (i.e., 73%); creating a learning environment (i.e., 62%); and visioning the future (i.e., 61%) (see Table 4 in Appendix C).

Overall, 85% of the KCLI participants said they changed interactions with others at work and in the community because of what they learned. Other impacts were: (1) they became aware of others' perspectives (i.e., 50%); (2) they listened to others more (i.e., 27%); and (3) they felt more comfortable in leadership situations (i.e., 24%). On the other hand, alumni revealed some challenges they encountered while trying to implement the leadership skills and concepts that were taught. For example, 23% of the participants said they had few opportunities to use the leadership skills and concepts. Twenty-one percent of the graduates said they lacked the time to apply the skills. An equal number of respondents said they had difficulty seeing the usefulness of the skills and concepts.

Impact on organizations.

Measuring the impact that community leadership programs made on organizations has been difficult. Despite the challenge, some researchers have attempted to do just that. For example, the KCLI study examined the structure of the leadership programs before

and after participants took the classes. The participants said their local leadership program had these characteristics prior to their completing the program: (1) they, as the directors, served as coordinators for their community leadership programs; (2) 40% of their programs focused on community awareness; and (3) the greatest strength of 37% of the programs was the networking opportunities (Wituck, et al., 2003, p. 83). In addition, 54% of the participants stated that their local programs did not teach leadership skills; 29% of them reported that their local programs lacked diversity of applications; and 26% said their programs did not provide the kind of leadership skills the graduates could use. After attending the KCLI program, however, all the graduates changed their local leadership programs. The participants became more involved in facilitating the leadership classes and in teaching leadership skills. They said they planned to change their programs even more.

Another example of organizational impact was documented in the 5-year study of Georgia's Community Leadership Program (Langone, 1992, ¶ 17). The surveyed respondents said the visibility for their Extension Offices increased as a result of the leadership program in 74 counties. They reported that the Extension Office personnel were regarded as valuable resources who could provide training, planning and management of community events. "Now, county agents are increasingly being called on to provide leadership training, community demographics, rural development planning, and management of community events" (Langone, ¶ 18).

Impact on communities.

There have been some attempts to identify impact made on communities by local leadership programs. This type of impact has been challenging to document. For

example, in the KCLI program, 80% of the alumni assisted groups and organizations in their local communities. This rarely happened before the class was offered. Moreover, nearly 40% of the participants believed that, because they learned and used new leadership skills, more people in their communities would have a voice. Finally, 50% of the respondents described new working relationships as a result of their class attendance. Researchers concluded: "KCLI participants' changes in their own attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors started to contribute to organizational and community level impacts, whether it was where they worked or community groups for which they volunteered" (Wintuk, et al., 2003, p. 85).

Another community impact was reported in the Langone (1992) study. In one Georgian county, for instance, participants convinced public officials to reactivate a land use planning commission (§ 24).

Evaluation of community leadership programs

Introduction.

How to evaluate community leadership programs remained somewhat unclear even after nearly 50 years of experiences across the United States. "Despite their widespread use, evaluation of community leadership programs and their impact is limited" (Wituk, et al., 2003, p. 78). Perhaps this was "due to the unique nature of individual programs. Each program contends with different issues, different populations, different budgets, different approaches to training leaders, and many other significant differences" (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, p. 56). So the fundamental questions remained:

Is effectiveness based on what happens in the community? Are more of the talents of local people utilized? Is there more communication? Is there more local initiative?

Are there healthier ecosystems? Are people who were previously poor now able to make ends meet? Do they have more assets? Or is effectiveness based on what happens to the individuals who undergo leadership training? Is that training a vehicle to exit their depressed communities? Do those who participate increase their own assets and economic position, often by leaving the community? (Flora, et al., 2003 p.1)

Participant self-reporting.

In their quest for answers, researchers and program evaluators have relied primarily on participants to provide feedback. When asked if and how their particular leadership program affected them, their organizations and communities, alumni generally reported positive impact. This self-reporting method had limitations, however. First, the process of surveying participants often came at the end of the classes. The feedback provided a snapshot of the participants' perceptions of the outcome at that time. It did not measure the long-term impact. This method was also weak on gauging impact on organizational, field, community and systemic levels. Moreover, "few evaluation studies triangulated the data with follow-up procedures involving multiple methods" (Wall & Kelsey, 2004, p. 181).

Acknowledging these limitations of self-reporting, Wall and Kelsey (2004) collected data, using three techniques: (1) a then-post survey with Likert-type scales; (2) open-ended questions on the survey; and (3) face-to-face interviews with some participants (p. 182). The research subjects were graduates of an unidentified community leadership program in rural, southwest United States. Of the 125 participants (representing 43% of the total) who returned the survey, eight graduates were chosen to be interviewed. They were picked by applying a process known as "extreme case sampling" (Wall & Kelsey, p.

182). This kind of sampling involved respondents who displayed unusual characteristics. In the interviews, the selected participants reported an above-average level of understanding of and commitment to rural community development.

The survey was given to program participants after they completed the program. It asked graduates to rate their leadership knowledge and behavior before entering the program (i.e., “then”) and after completing the program (i.e., “post”). The then-post design was picked to control several threats to validity: (1) “overestimation of changes in knowledge” and (2) “response-shift bias” among respondents (Wall & Kelsey, 2004, p. 183). The phenomenon known as overestimation of changes in knowledge can occur because of two factors. First, participants may overestimate their leadership knowledge and skills on a pre-test, defined as a survey given to participants when they started their leadership classes. Second, overestimation may occur because at the beginning of classes participants lacked a clear understanding of the behaviors, attitudes and skills the leadership program was trying to influence.

Wall and Kelsey (2004) noted other potential threats to validity: “memory-related problems, social desirability responding, and effort justification” (p. 183). To deal with memory-related problems, the researchers designed the questions so they were very clear about the time period for which information was being sought. Another threat to validity was effort justification, which happened when participants believed they received no benefit from an activity, such as attending a community leadership program. As a result, respondents tried to justify their effort by adjusting “their initial pretreatment ratings in a downward direction or their post-treatment in an upward direction” (Wall & Kelsey, p. 183). To address these research pitfalls, Wall and Kelsey applied objective measures (p.

183). They also used interviews, designed to examine participants' exact behavior changes, to triangulate results (Wall & Kelsey, p. 183). Experts in rural community development and in leadership education confirmed the content, construct and face validity of the survey. After 30 randomly selected graduates completed a pilot test, the survey was analyzed and revised. The responses collected from the eight interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

The first finding of the study was the same, no matter which of the three techniques to collect data was used. The results showed that the graduates had a general awareness of rural community development processes. However, they did not possess the leadership knowledge and skills to be change agents (Wall & Kelsey, 2004, pp. 185-187). The second conclusion was that, even though the participants believed they were serving as change agents, the leadership program failed to develop change agents who could truly change their communities (Wall & Kelsey, pp. 188-190). Finally, the researchers compared the survey results to the interviews. They found that the respondents overestimated their leadership knowledge and skills. This overestimation was due to social desirability and effort justification (Wall & Kelsey, p. 190).

Pre-post test surveys versus then-post surveys.

Another researcher documented another problem that can skew the accuracy of participant surveys. Rohs (1999) examined the strength of pre-post tests versus then-posttests. His study looked at the impact on participants who completed a college-wide undergraduate course in agricultural leadership. Overall, whether pre-post tests or then-post tests were used to measure impact, the different groups reported a change in their leadership knowledge and skills as a result of the leadership course. However, students

who took the pre-post test rated themselves higher in knowledge and skills when the class began than the students who completed the then-post tests. Rohs attributed this difference to the phenomena known as “response shift” (p. 35). “Response shifts are the result of changes in a student’s understanding or standard of measurement regarding leadership skills” (Rohs, p. 35). Thus, it could be concluded that the pre-post-test method skewed produced skewed data. By ranking their knowledge and skill level high when the classes began, it appeared the pre-post-test students learned less than the then-post survey students. However, Rohs concluded that all respondents learned, but that the method of measuring their learning yielded different results.

Some recommendations based on program evaluation.

Because of his findings about pre-post versus then-post tests, Rohs (1999) made several recommendations (p. 36). First, he suggested that researchers collect then-post-test data as well as the traditional pre-post-test self-ratings. “If other objective and behavioral measures are available integrating them will help to provide a more complete assessment of change” (Rohs, p. 36). He further noted that the “adequacy of the measure used affects the quality of the finding” (Rohs, p. 36). Many self-reporting measures failed to establish validity and reliability, he stated. Finally, Rohs argued that more clarification was “needed regarding the contexts in which then pre-test measures might be inappropriate as well as the use, analysis, and interpretation of these measures. Research is lacking that identifies and clarifies the various casual determinants of the response shift” (p. 36).

Wall and Kelsey (2004) also offered analysis and recommendations based on their findings (pp. 180-193). They included:

- The leadership program helped people understand rural community development (RCD) but did not equip them to become change agents. Therefore, community leadership programs should move beyond awareness-only programs. They should provide:

Opportunities to increase participants' skills in RCD processes by integrating more seminars and workshops into the program that focus on the mechanics of RCD. These experiences should also focus on new development opportunities where participants can engage in discussions with successful community leaders. (Wall & Kelsey, p. 191)

- Leadership program curricula should include a project or practicum for participants. The benefits would provide opportunities to practice leadership, needs assessment and change agent skills, and make at least a short-term impact on the community. Over the long-run, a positive practical experience may motivate alumni to become truly effective community leaders.
- Evaluators and researchers must be aware of the limitations of self-reporting survey methods. Other evaluation tools should be used in order to insure accuracy.
- Longitudinal studies would help document impact resulting from the leadership training.

Funder sponsored evaluation.

Funders of community leadership programs have also shown an interest in evaluation. For instance, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (referred hereinafter as the Kellogg Foundation) has been a leader in sponsoring and funding efforts to evaluate leadership programs. In August 2001, the Kellogg Foundation published a work entitled,

“Evaluating Outcomes and Impacts: A Scan of 55 Leadership Development Programs”

(Reinelt, Foster, & Sullivan). This extensive study identified ways by which leadership programs evaluated failure and success. Specifically, it described the landscape for change-leadership programs, summarized approaches to evaluate the impact or outcomes of leadership programs and looked at the most common evaluation methods. The study’s focus was on evaluating impact: “how programs were assessing their impact, the outcomes they hoped to achieve, indicators of success they had identified, approaches they used for evaluation and learning, and methods and sources of information they relied on” (Reinelt, et al., p. 5).

This scan distinguished “outcomes” from “impact” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 6). Impact referred to results that were expected in 7-10 years following the leadership program activity. Outcomes were defined as “specific changes in attitudes, behavior, knowledge, skills, status, or level of functioning expected to result from program activities” in the short-term (1-3 years) or long-term (4-6 years) (Reinelt, et al., p. 6).

The study noted that the interviewed directors of the 55 programs wanted to conduct meaningful evaluations of their programs. However, they felt frustrated because they lacked resources to invest in collecting data, in gaining the knowledge about how to complete evaluations and in having the time in which to pursue their interest in evaluation. Furthermore, few programs had developed the logic models that connected short-term and long-term outcomes and impact.

There is increasing interest among programs to conduct retrospective evaluations that look at outcomes that persist or evolve over time. Still, there are no known well-

developed theories of leadership development that are grounded in what is being learned about program evaluation” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 6).

Evaluation of outcomes on participants from a funder’s standpoint.

The Kellogg Foundation study further found that the evaluations of the 55 leadership programs focused primarily on participants. Though the programs had hoped to affect organizations, communities, fields, and systems, that type of impact was much harder to document. The reason for this difficulty was that the relationship between program participant changes and the changes beyond the individuals has not been well established. In addition, program evaluations more often tracked short-term outcomes than long-term impacts. The timing of doing the evaluations explained this finding. Evaluations were usually completed at the end of the classes, when the self-assessments were easy to obtain. Participant evaluations had value, however. They captured how participants grew in development of their leadership skills and knowledge; in changed attitudes, perspectives and behaviors; and in clarification of their values and beliefs (see Appendix D for a list of Individual Outcomes Indicators listed in the study). How these newly learned skills, perspectives and behaviors were deepened and applied was more difficult to measure. To do so would require “longitudinal evaluations and an evaluation framework that articulates stages of competency or mastery” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 7). None of the leadership programs participating in the study completed these kinds of evaluations.

Leadership behavioral changes were rarely evaluated. There were two explanations offered for this finding. First, behavior changes often took time to be recognized and valued. Telling stories about how participants’ behaviors changed because of the

programs would be one way to document outcomes and impact. Another way to demonstrate behavioral changes would be through the observations of other persons, such as bosses, co-workers and others. A tool to gather such information was the 360° assessment.

Another growth area difficult to measure was participants' changed values and beliefs. When reported, though, this change was often documented through stories, journaling or case studies. These methods, along with surveys and interviews, recorded the leadership paths alumni took as a result of being in the leadership program. Finally, the relationships that participants formed while attending the leadership programs was measured through surveys. These surveys not only focused on the frequency and importance of the relationships but also on whether alumni engaged in collaborative projects. One tangible testament to the value of those relationships was the alumni programs that were sprouting up around the United States. Building on that development, Reinelt, et al. (2001) recommended that leadership programs begin to explore the impact of alumni networks (p. 8).

Evaluation of outcomes on organizations from a funder's stand.

The second set of outcomes examined in the Kellogg Foundation scan were those involving organizations (see Appendix E for a list of desired Organizational Outcomes Indicators). According to the scan, leadership programs often asked alumni if and how their learning impacted organizations. Unless the opinions of other people were solicited and corroborated with those of alumni, however, the information probably was inaccurate since alumni may report an outcome perceived but not real. Moreover, future longitudinal studies were necessary to measure organizational impact.

Reinelt, et al. (2001) reported on organizational outcomes from the 55 programs that taught about the role of leadership in building and maintaining organizations (p. 9). The first of these outcomes was enhancing organizational leadership capacity and creating youth leadership programs. The methods used to track the outcomes from such programs included site visits; interviews with participants, mentors and key staff; and the extent to which youth were asked to sit on boards, make presentations or advise the host organization.

Several of the 55 scanned leadership programs also identified the development and implementation of a new program as an outcome. Surveys and focus groups of community leaders, funders and participants were used to identify indicators of social and community impact. Moreover, “in follow-up surveys and interviews, evaluators’ documented organizational capacities to have a social impact by exploring their use of various change strategies and the effectiveness with which they were able to apply those strategies” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 10).

Of the 55 programs, one stood out because it evaluated the impact its graduates made on changing organizational functioning. Some of the dimensions of organizational functioning that were examined included whether the organization (1) changed its priorities; (2) became more efficient; or (3) changed some organizational process. The evaluation also looked at changes in organizational capacity for strategic planning, human resource development and financial management. The evaluators interviewed and surveyed program participants, organizational staff and directors, mentors and program observers from the community. By seeing the opinions of many people, the evaluators built reliability and validity into their work.

Evaluation of impact on communities from a funder's viewpoint.

A third area, community outcomes, was even more difficult to measure than individual and organizational outcomes, according to the Kellogg Foundation scan (see Appendix E for a list of Community Outcome Indicators). Several reasons explained the complexity. First, leadership programs did not benchmark their communities' leadership capacity before starting their leadership classes. Instead, they focused on gathering diverse participants-- not on addressing particular problems. Moreover, leadership programs lacked well-defined theories of change, making it hard to know what outcomes looked like in the short-term. Another problem with evaluating community outcomes was the cost and time required to do so. Nevertheless, the scan of 55 programs identified several common short-term outcomes on communities: (1) collaborative projects and (2) resources leveraged. For example, one measurable outcome common to leadership programs was their broadening the group of people who lead. This later outcome was the result of recruiting and selecting a broad group of persons who had the potential to lead. Often, leadership programs tried to diversify their classes to include individuals who did not hold traditional leadership positions. Reinelt, et al. (2001) recommended that future evaluators explore "how inclusive leadership groups solve problems differently" (p. 11).

Another community outcome, collaboration, was found to be common among the 55 leadership programs. The characteristics of such programs included a diverse group of participants assembled to solve community problems. The community outcomes came from a broad range of persons who shared a vision for their community, developed a plan of action and worked together to solve problems. In one leadership program, for instance, community teams documented their outcomes:

... changes in community life, such as new policies, concrete environmental improvements, attitude changes, behavior changes, and greater awareness of community issues being addressed; and changes in team capacities such as new resources, more diverse membership, greater recognition and more confident/experienced/skilled leadership. (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p.11)

Evaluation of impact on systems.

In addition, Reinelt, et al. (2001) examined systemic impact (see Appendix G for a list of Systemic Impact Outcome Indicators). This type of impact included “changed public discourse on a topic, public policies that benefit families and communities, institutional cultures and practices that focus on maximizing people’s assets and capacities” (Reinelt, et al., p. 14). The scan found that leadership programs were just starting to articulate systemic impact. However, several of the 55 leadership programs had already built curricula with a systemic changed component.

Evaluation approaches.

In addition to looking at outcomes and impact, Reinelt, et al. (2001) explored evaluation approaches, methods and sources of data. “Evaluation approaches vary widely and are informed by deeply held assumptions about who should or does produce knowledge, what constitutes valid knowledge, what makes knowledge useful, and so forth” (Reinelt, et al., p. 15). Here was what the scan revealed about different approaches to evaluation:

- Using different approaches produced different data. For instance, a reflective approach emphasized a particular learning process and valued the participants’ abilities to articulate what they learned. On the other hand, a theory of change

approach concentrated on finding outcomes that proved or disproved the theory used by the programs.

- A mixed methods approach study allowed evaluators to take advantage of different learnings that each approach made possible. The purpose of this approach was to guide programs as they began and strove for improvement. With the mixed method approach, validity of the data was improved and different kinds of data were collected.
- Experimental methods were difficult for programs to design and use, thereby making them uncommon. Leadership programs were designed to address the needs of the participants. Thus, participants experienced different leadership programs. Moreover, programs changed over time. The challenges of using the experimental approach included “finding an appropriate control group, delivering programs that provide everyone with the same intervention, and quantifying every desired change” (Reinelt, et al., p. 18).
- Qualitative approaches, such as case studies and stories, were growing in popularity. These approaches captured the nuances and complexities of change.
- Participatory and critical reflection approaches transformed the purpose and power of leadership learning. They had the potential to alter radically what was seen as useful and valid knowledge. Participatory approaches involved program stakeholders in designing, implementing and/or analyzing data. By doing so, the participants evaluated their own learning or created new knowledge. Also, participatory approaches allowed participants to be subjects of learning rather than objects.

- Another approach, critical reflection, included everyone in the program (i.e., participants, staff, etc.) identifying learning and impact. Several of the 55 programs used this approach. For example, one organization continuously examined how the community viewed it, how its staff and program participants worked, and how that work impacted the entire program. The amount of information gathered from this approach was enormous. However, synthesizing the information in a way that benefited others was challenging. Critical reflection was also difficult because people found it hard to recognize immediate impact as opposed to impact after the program was finished.

Evaluation methods.

Evaluation methods were used to collect data. The methods selected “shape what data and information is collected” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 20). For instance, journals collected participants’ reflections. Surveys helped collect quantitative data. Methods often used to evaluate leadership programs were:

- Surveys;
- 360° assessments;
- Interviews;
- Journals;
- Site visits;
- Participant observation;
- Focus groups; and
- Tracking accomplishments.

Reinelt, et al., (2001) enumerated several important findings and challenges in regard to methods:

- The type of method used to evaluate a program must be aligned with the data sought. Failure to do so may disappoint a funder, which had requested the data.
- Using multiple methods yielded the fullest picture of a program's impact.
- Methods varied, depending on their costs. Site visits were not used often because they were expensive.
- Program directors and evaluators preferred the more in-depth methods of evaluation. However, their costs limited their use.

Sources of data for evaluation.

Reinelt, et al. (2001) also made findings about sources of information. These sources included program participants; mentors and advisors; supervisors and colleagues; community leaders; organizations and institutions leaders; leaders in the field; program-generated data from meetings, reports and journals; publications and presentations used as outcome markers; media coverage; and dollars leveraged. In regards to these information sources, the study listed several key findings and challenges. First, leadership programs overly relied on program participants for information. While participant feedback was helpful, other sources of information was needed to corroborate the findings based on data from participants. Second, leadership programs and evaluators were using "proxy" sources of information, such as dollars leveraged, publications and media coverage, to measure long-term impact (Reinelt, et al., p. 23). Third, the Kellogg Foundation scan found that program-generated data were valuable sources of information for evaluators. This information was created in the context of the leadership program and

therefore, it was very revealing. Sometimes program-generated data were underutilized because they were time-consuming and costly to analyze.

Evaluation themes.

During the Kellogg Foundation scan, certain themes emerged from interviews and analysis of evaluation reports. These themes included:

- Funders and program staff must identify what questions they would like answered and make sure enough resources were allocated to find the answers.
- An increasing number of leadership programs were conducting longitudinal evaluations. Through surveys and interviews, much can be learned about the long-term impact of the programs. “They document such elements as activities that program participants have undertaken, career development, the creation and sustainability of professional networks and collaborative relations, and the ability of participants to leverage resources for their work” (Reinelt, et al., 2001, p. 26).
- There have been very few efforts to learn across leadership programs. “Cross-program evaluation might examine common lessons learned, or develop evaluation questions that are explored by multiple programs” (Reinelt, et al., p. 26).
- Leadership programs could learn from the experiences of the for-profit sector and vice-versa. For a long time, non-profits were more interested in program assessments than private organizations because they needed to justify the value of their programs for funders. However, a new trend has emerged. For-profit organizations have started to develop their leadership programs as a way to bring forth change. It might be mutually beneficial for the non-profit and for-profit

sectors to exchange information about their leadership programs and how to measure their success.

- People were evaluating the evaluations. Through systematic reflection and documentation of evaluation processes, valuable information was being gleaned about what worked in the programs. An important outcome of this may be the development of guidelines on how to evaluate programs and how to use evaluation findings effectively.

The future of community leadership programs

All indicators pointed to a long future for community leadership programs. The complexity of society's programs expand every year. To find solutions, effective leaders will be needed. However, can these leadership programs develop enough leaders to meet the needs? To do so will require effective programming in the future. Yet, much remains to be learned about what works and what does not work in community leadership programs. More than ever, finding the answers is crucial. In their scan of 55 leadership programs, Reinelt, et al. (2001) identified several topics for future research and action (p. 2). To meet future needs, the Kellogg Foundation scan recommended the following:

- First, it would be beneficial if leadership programs, evaluators and funders shared and disseminated tools and learnings from their evaluations. They could exchange information about “outcomes and indicators; their approaches; their methods and sources of information; their evaluation tools; their reflections and lessons learned about leadership and leadership development; and their thoughts about the evaluation process and how evaluation was or was not useful to them” (Reinelt, et

al., p. 2). This information could be deposited in a data bank from which everyone could obtain valuable information.

- Second, it would be beneficial if funders, evaluators and program developers and staff developed a shared agenda. “Figuring out what we already know about developing leadership and its impact, and where the gaps in our knowledge are, might enable the field to better allocate its evaluation resources” (Reinelt, et al., p. 2).
- Third, future action might include sharing assessment tools among leadership programs. This information could be made available on-line so to ensure easy access.

These actions can strengthen community leadership programs through improved evaluation tools. Better-equipped programs can train leaders to meet tomorrow’s leadership challenges. Those challenges are several-fold, according to the Center for Creative Leadership. First, “complex challenges are resisting solutions and driving the need for new approaches” (Martin, 2007, p. 3). As a result, future leaders must be equipped to find new approaches to solve problems.

A second challenge will be finding and developing enough leaders to address the complexities of the future. Effective leadership will require individuals to learn new skills such as collaboration, leadership change, team building, and influence without authority. A third challenge for tomorrow’s leaders will be the growing importance on collaboration.

Section Five: Key Learnings

Introduction

My key learnings were divided into two general categories: (1) what I learned about community leadership programs; and (2) what I learned about me, my creativity and the process of a project of this magnitude.

Content key learning # 1: The role of passion

Passion meant everything when taking on a project like this one. This truism showed up every step along the way. For starters, my keen interest and extensive experiences in leadership capacities naturally drew me to the topic of community leadership programs. That same passion kept my energy level up throughout the project, despite the huge time commitment and some minor discouragements. Never was there a time when I doubted the suitability of this project. It always felt “right.” That passion also made the project easy and fun. I predict the knowledge gained will come in handy in my future work as a facilitator, consultant, trainer, and as a leader.

Content key learning # 2: Where to find the information

Another discovery was the extent of the literature focusing on community leadership programs. Originally, I anticipated that my research might be limited to reviewing the web sites of programs. I quickly learned that there were hundreds of community leadership programs across the United States. This large number made research by web sites practically impossible.

Next, I anticipated finding good information from books. The reality was that few books on the commercial market, if any, were entirely devoted to community leadership

programs. The exceptions were books designed by associations that supported their membership's community leadership programs.

The next place I looked for materials were data bases of periodicals and studies. This turned out to be the most fertile ground to locate information. However, the amount of data on community leadership programs, while adequate for this project, was limited.

Content key learning # 3: Room for more research

Information about community leadership programs was limited to volume as well as depth. The current research left open many avenues for further study. For example, much was known about the history of the community leadership programs, why they existed, who sponsored them, their overall goals and what participants said about the programs. But still open for debate was what impact the programs made on their organizations, communities, fields and systems. In addition, there was no clear consensus on what curricula worked best, how and why. Even effective methodologies to evaluate community leadership programs must be refined. Hence, community leadership programming is a field ripe for additional, serious study.

Process key learning # 1: The value of the Concept Paper

The Concept Paper was a key step in this Master's project (Hedge, 2007). In advance, it forced me to organize the project, outline and commit to realistic time frames, and identify my purpose, rationale and goals for the project. While the Concept Paper required a considerable amount of time and effort to complete, in the long run, it saved time over the lifetime of the project. The Concept Paper was my guide and provided direction and guidance repeatedly. The key lesson was the value of starting out a major project with a well-articulated plan.

Process key learning # 2: The value of incubation

Another important factor in making this project so clear was incubation. Unbeknown to me at the time, I started thinking about the subject of my Master's project a year before actually identifying it. That year helped crystallize in my mind what the project should generally be, how it should be put together and what I wanted to accomplish. The year-long incubation was also important to my unwavering interest in the topic along with my high level of energy and intrinsic motivation for the project. In short, incubation made me absolutely positive that the topic, community leadership programs, was right for me.

Process key learning # 3: The value of narrowing a topic

The original scope of the project was huge. Only with input from professionals and outside reviewers, along with the actual experience of completing the project, was I able to appreciate fully the massiveness of my beginning proposal.

Process key learning # 4: The value of other opinions

Another lesson reinforced was the value of seeking out and listening to the advice of others who stood outside the project. As discussed previously, my proposed project was ambitious. The counsel of others saved me time, energy and frustration. For instance, initially I envisioned that my project would include an in-depth evaluation of Leadership LaPorte County. It took little time into the project before I realized that I lacked the time and high-level expertise to complete an extensive evaluation.

Section Six: Conclusion

Introduction

For nearly 25 years, I observed Leadership LaPorte County, my own community leadership program. I watched the programming evolve; sent employees to participate; spoke at classes; facilitated long-range planning; attended program events; and networked with alumni, staff and board members. Over time, I began to wonder: Did this program work? Did our community have more or better leaders as a result of Leadership LaPorte County? Were participants more likely to assume leadership roles in non-profit organizations, government and business after they graduated from the program? Because of Leadership LaPorte County, had public discussion on issues changed? Had there been more collaboration on finding answers to community problems?

Through work on this project, I realized my questions were not unique. All across the United States, people have been wondering the same things. No answers have been found yet. However, funders, program developers and directors, evaluators, and researchers are actively pursuing data that will provide the answers. Their efforts come at a critical point in the history of community leadership programs. The increasingly complexities of our world demand more leaders who can execute more effective approaches to solving problems. Those programs that incorporate the new and growing body of knowledge about leadership into their curricula will be supported. Resources will be available to those community leadership programs that document their impact on participants, organizations, fields of interest, communities and systems.

The next steps

The search for meaningful data on leadership programming will go on. It may never end because the nature of leadership changes with the times. My own search for answers will continue as well. Starting in January 2008, I will teach the first advanced leadership class for Leadership LaPorte County. The class will deviate from its traditional curriculum of community awareness and networking. The advanced class will focus on the many theories of leadership, provide feedback to participants on their own styles of leadership, teach contemporary leadership skills, and give participants an opportunity to practice their skills in the community. When the advanced class ends in April 2008, the graduates, program staff and I will assess the value of the eight sessions. What worked? What could be improved? Who, if anyone, benefited from the class? Will similar advanced classes be offered in the future? Overall, what did we learn from our experiences in this advanced leadership class? How might our learnings help not only Leadership LaPorte County but other leadership programs? The answers to these questions will invariably change the local leadership program. But how? Stay tuned!

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Section Seven: Appendices

Appendix A: Concept Paper

Community Leadership Programs

Name: Cynthia A. Hedge **Date Submitted:** September 19, 2007

Use a Skill/Talent to Improve the Quality of Life for Others

What Is This Project About?

Introduction

For my Master's project, I will research community leadership programs similar to the one in my community, Leadership LaPorte County (Indiana). The research will focus primarily on these areas:

- What are community leadership programs?
- Why were community leadership programs developed in the United States?
- What are the general goals of community leadership programs?
- What are the benefits of community leadership programs?
- Who organizes/sponsors community leadership programs?
- What do community leadership programs do?
- Who are the participants in community leadership programs? How are the participants selected?
- What are the curricula used by community leadership programs?
- What are the targeted outcomes of community leadership programs?
- Are community leadership programs effective? If so, what makes community leadership programs effective?
- What might community leadership programs look like in the future?

This research will assist me as I design and teach an advanced leadership program for Leadership LaPorte County after my Master's project is completed.

Background

Leadership LaPorte County is similar to many community leadership programs across the nation. Its purpose is to educate participants about local issues and to teach participants leadership skills, thereby encouraging them to become better leaders in government, business and non-profit organizations.

Leadership LaPorte County has served its community of approximately 110,000 citizens for the last 23 years. This non-profit agency boasts of graduating over 700 persons from all walks of life. Each year, about 30 students are selected to participate in the non-partisan, 10-month program. The first session is a two-day retreat where participants get to know one another and begin the learning process. Another session is devoted to visiting the Indiana General Assembly in Indianapolis. While there, the students talk with state officials and observe parts of the legislative process. The remaining eight, one-day sessions focus on hearing speakers who represent local government offices, education, law enforcement, non-profits, health care and economic development.

Leadership LaPorte County functions on a shoe-string budget. Each student or his/her sponsor pays tuition, currently \$600. These moneys fund only a fraction of the total cost of operating the program. Additional revenues are generated through fund raising and grants. On the debit side, the major program expenses are salaries for a part-time director and an assistant. Additional services are provided by many volunteers, including the members of the Board of Directors.

At the end of each year, the new graduates informally evaluate the value of the year's program. However, Leadership LaPorte County has never completed a formal evaluation of the overall effectiveness of its programs.

At this point, Leadership LaPorte County is ready to reevaluate its programming. However, without key data, it is difficult, if not impossible, to revamp the program. Without eventual changes, the credibility of the program may be questioned. Third, fund raising is complicated since donors want their dollars to make a difference.

Rationale For Choice:

As a professional for nearly 30 years, I have held many positions of leadership in my community and region. These opportunities have been in the context of non-profit organizations, government, law and business. When serving in public office, I spoke at Leadership LaPorte County sessions. I encouraged my employees to participate in the program and sponsored several of them. Also, I facilitated a strategic planning retreat for the members of the Board of Directors. In short, I believe in Leadership LaPorte County. Furthermore, I believe the program has always been run by good people wanting to do good things for the community.

These leadership experiences brought me to the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership of the State University of New York, Buffalo State College. A primary goal in applying was to become a more effective leader by meshing my practical experiences with leadership theory taught at the Center.

The third reason I chose Leadership LaPorte County is my concern for the direction of my community. I worry that the community is headed in the wrong direction. This opinion is shared by many other citizens, representing many segments of the community.

In addition, this project can help Leadership LaPorte County advance to another level of service. By doing so, program participants may be better equipped to integrate leadership knowledge and skills into their everyday activities. Hopefully, this process will not only enhance the quality of participants' lives but help them become the effective leaders the community needs.

What Will Be The Tangible Product(s) or Outcome(s)?

The tangible product or outcome of this project will be key data about community leadership programs through out the United States. This data will be documented for the Master's project.

After the Master's project is completed in December 2007, the data will be used to help develop a new and advanced curriculum for Leadership LaPorte County. The curriculum will teach leadership skills, leadership theory and Creative Problem Solving during the 2008 Spring Semester. Students may be asked to adopt a community project or program. By doing so, they will be able to apply their new knowledge and practice their new skills.

What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?

The effectiveness of this Master's project may be measured in several ways. They are:

- The review and feedback of the Leadership LaPorte County staff, board of directors and graduates.
- The extent to which I can incorporate the data in crafting an advanced leadership curriculum for Leadership LaPorte County.

Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?

I anticipate that several people will participate in this Master's project. They are:

- Jim Jessup, the Director of Leadership LaPorte County, will supply general guidance for my work with the organization.

- No more than three executive directors of other community leadership programs will provide information about their programs.

My own involvement will include, but may not be limited to, a variety of activities. These include:

- I will interview up to three executive directors of community leadership programs.
- I will conduct additional research on community leadership programs through web sites, brochures, articles, books and studies.

When Will This Project Take Place?

This Master's project will take place during the 2007 Fall Semester. Related activities, outside the scope of the Master's project, started in June 2007 and will extend into the 2008 Spring Semester.

Where Will This Project Occur?

This project's activities will take place primarily in my community, LaPorte County, Indiana. Other geographic areas may be a part of this project as well. I will interview no more than three executive directors in leadership programs outside my community. These interviews may take me to places where the programming is occurring.

Why Is It Important To Do This?

This project is important because my community is in a critical stage. The people in LaPorte County, Indiana, the immediate surrounding region (i.e., northwest Indiana) in which the county sits and, to a lesser degree, the State of Indiana, face a huge challenge in deciding on a direction for the future.

In the 20th Century, the state and particularly the northwest Indiana region relied on heavy industry as its economic backbone. By the 1980's, however, this industry began to vanish, often ending up in other countries. For instance, the steel industry was strong in northwest Indiana for nearly 100 years. Today, it exists, but at a fraction of what it once was. The state has suffered as well. For example, when the State of Indiana is compared to other states, Indiana is often at the bottom of the quality of life lists. Everywhere "brain drain" -- the phenomenon of college graduates leaving the state for better opportunities elsewhere -- is occurring at an alarming rate.

Most citizens agree that change is imperative. The questions are easy but the answers are hard to come up with: What can we do to be competitive in the 21st Century? How do we do this? Who will/should bear the negative consequences that invariably come with change? There appears to be no consensus on what direction to take to ensure a strong economic, educational and social future for the community.

Examples of this struggle for direction can be seen in two particular elections. In 2004, the now governor of the State of Indiana ran on a platform of change. He defeated the incumbent, kept his promise of change and has made major changes in the state, many of which are very controversial. The question now is: Will the governor be re-elected in 2008?

In one of the towns in the community, there is a mayoral election this year. In 2003, the one candidate -- then the mayor -- was defeated by the current mayor, now the other candidate. During her term, the former mayor was often criticized for "doing nothing." The current mayor is now being charged with moving the city too fast. Who will win? What ideas will prevail? What will be the resulting direction?

LaPorte County faces an additional kind of challenge. The political scene has become dominated by one political party -- and a small handful of people in that party. Elections are almost non-competitive. Many citizens from all walks of life are aware of this problem but seem to be unable to respond effectively. Historically, such scenarios lead to poor government and ultimately affect the quality of life in a community.

Skilled leaders are desperately needed in LaPorte County, the northwest Indiana region and the state. Concerned and capable citizens must be encouraged to lead and must be given the tools that will make them successful. The purpose of this project is to help do exactly that: encourage and prepare effective leaders in my community (and not to take sides on issues or candidates).

Personal Learning Goals:

I have several goals I wish to achieve with this project. They are:

- I want to help equip my community with effective leaders.
- I hope to become a better change leader.
- I seek to enhance my knowledge about change leadership.

- I wish to apply my knowledge about change leadership and practice my own leadership skills.
- I want to network with other professionals who are teaching leadership skills.
- I hope others will appreciate my abilities as a facilitator and trainer, thereby giving me more opportunities to practice my skills and share my knowledge about change leadership and Creative Problem Solving.

How Do You Plan To Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?

- I. Phase I: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I will assist writing a survey for graduates of Leadership LaPorte County and help analyze the survey results. The steps to achieve this are:
 - A. After review of several surveys used by other leadership programs, I will help prepare a survey instrument.
 - B. Once Leadership LaPorte County receives survey responses, I will write a summary of the survey findings.
 - C. If requested, I will present the findings to the program's Board of Directors, etc.
- II. Phase II: This is my Master's project. I will research community leadership programs through web sites, brochures, articles, books, studies and conduct no more than three interviews with directors of community leadership programs.
 - A. Upon the local Director providing me with materials he has on other leadership programs, I will review them.
 - B. I will conduct an internet search, looking at community leadership program web sites and pertinent articles, books and research studies.
 - C. I will interview no more than three directors of community leadership programs outside my community.

- D. Upon gathering information about community leadership programs, I will review the materials and report my findings in my final project paper.
- III. Phase III: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I will interview three Leadership LaPorte County graduates and write case studies.
 - A. The Director of Leadership LaPorte County will provide appropriate names of graduates. With his input, I will select three persons to contact.
 - B. I will contact the graduates who I want to interview.
 - C. I will prepare some standard questions so that, when I interview these graduates, I will receive similar information.
 - D. I will author a case study for each person I interview.
 - IV. Phase IV: After the Master's project is completed, I will use the data collected in the Master's project to help me develop and teach an advanced leadership class for Leadership LaPorte County.

Evaluation:

Evaluation for this project and for my work will come from multiple sources. These may include the following:

- Feedback from key people such as the Director of Leadership LaPorte County.
- Formal feedback received from my faculty advisor and members of my cohort.

Prepare Project Timeline:

- I. Phase I: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I will assist writing a survey of graduates of Leadership LaPorte County and help analyze the survey results. This

phase was started in June 2007 and should be completed no later than December 2007.

- II. Phase II: This will be my Master's project. It will consist of several parts:

First, I will research community leadership programs through web sites, brochures, articles, books, studies and no more than three interviews with directors of community leadership programs outside my community. This research will be completed no later than October 22, 2007. This research may take up to 50 hours.

Second, I will write up my findings for submission to my academic adviser at the International Center for Studies in Creativity and Change Leadership. The draft of Sections 1-3 will be completed no later than November 5, 2007. The draft of Sections 4-6 will be submitted no later than November 19, 2007. The final version will be submitted no later than December 5, 2007. This will require approximately 70 hours.

- III. Phase III: As a consultant outside the scope of the Master's project, I will interview three graduates and write case studies. This phase was started in June 2007 and should be completed no later than December 2007.
- IV. Phase IV: After the Master's project is completed, I will use the data collected in the project to develop and teach an advanced leadership class for Leadership LaPorte County. This phase will be completed as an independent study course during the 2008 Spring Semester.

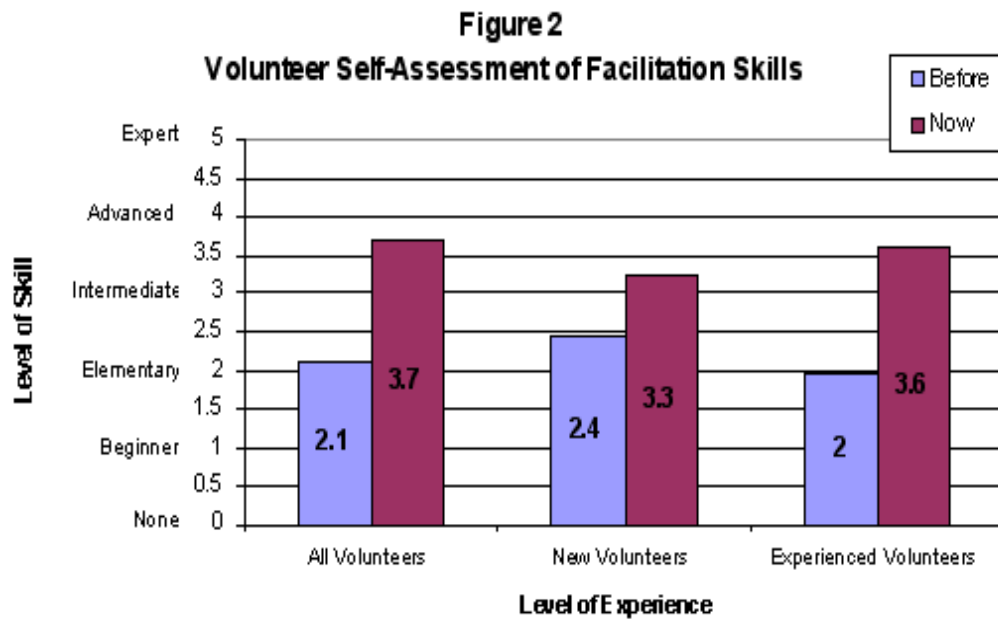
Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

The pertinent literature about community leadership programs may be somewhat limited to brochures and web sites. However, there will be a search of the various databases for books, articles and research studies.

Appendix B: Volunteer self-assessments

Table 1
FCL Volunteer Community Participation Level

	Participant Only	As a Leader	Percent of Time as a Leader
Before FCL	11.2 hours/month	6.4 hours/month	57%
Now	18.4 hours/month	16.5 hours/month	90%



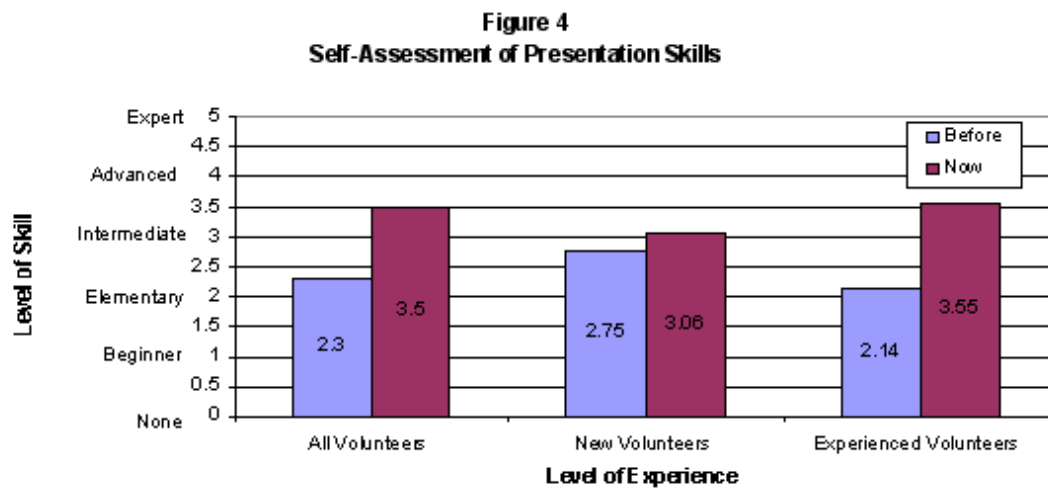
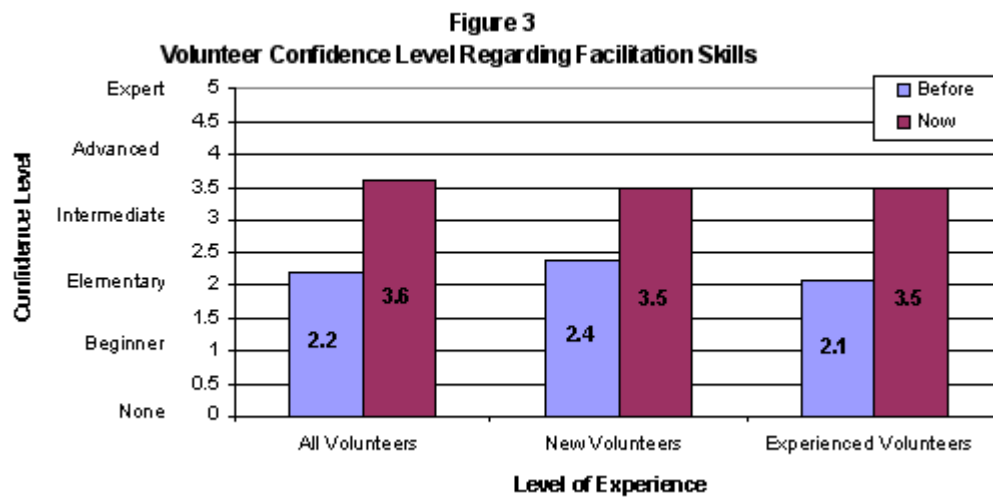


Figure 5
Self-Assessment of Training Skills

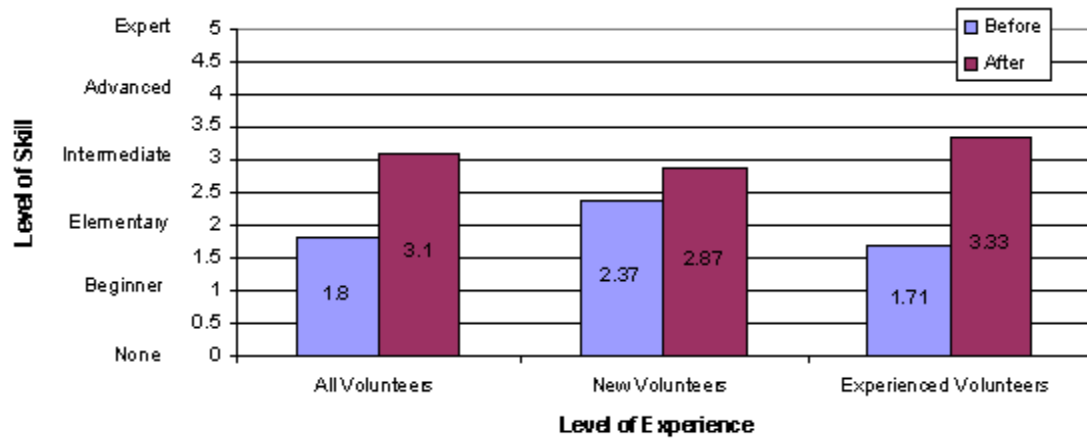
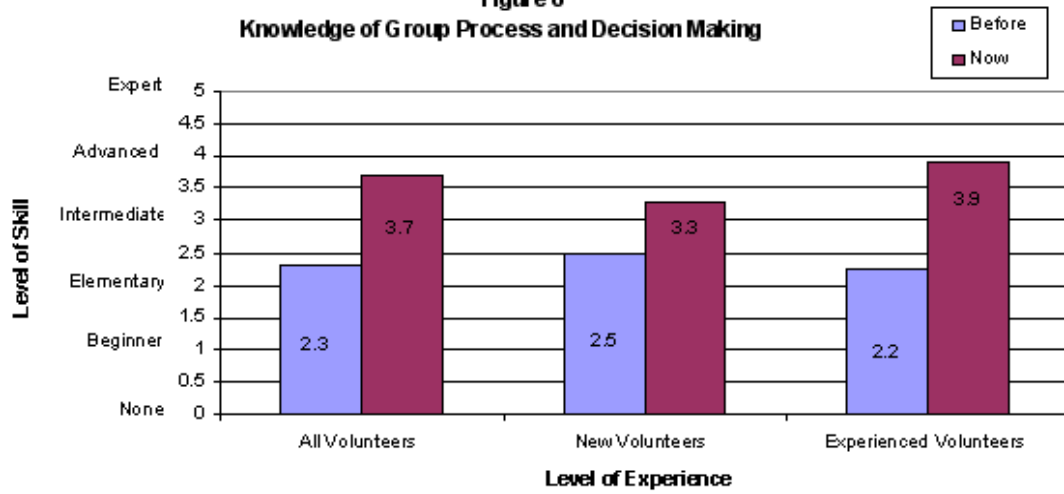


Figure 6
Knowledge of Group Process and Decision Making



Appendix C: Leadership confidence, beliefs, skills and concepts

Table 1. Confidence and Beliefs Regarding the Leadership Skills and Concepts

Items ...	M
The leadership skills and concepts are beneficial	5.7
The leadership skills and concepts benefit my community	5.5
The leadership skills and concepts help make my community a better place for kids.	5.5
The leadership skills and concepts benefit my work.	5.4
I understand how to use the leadership skills and concepts.	5.1
I am prepared to use the leadership skills and concepts.	5.0
I am comfortable using the leadership skills and concepts.	4.9
I am confident using the leadership skills and concepts in any setting.	4.6

Note: Based on six point Likert scale from 1 to 6 with 1 = "strongly disagree"; 2 = "disagree"; 3 = "somewhat disagree"; 4 = "somewhat agree"; 5 = "agree"; and 6 = "strongly agree"

Table 2. Use of Leadership Skills and Concepts

Leadership Skills and Concepts ...	% of Respondents Who Said the Leadership Skill or Concept was...			
	Used at Least Once	Used Most Frequently	Used at Work	Used in Community
Learning Styles	85	40	75	47
Creating a Learning Environment	62	2	51	35
Timeline Exercise	55	12	46	28
Vision Process	61	4	46	37
Servant Leadership	73	8	61	46
Experiential Learning Cycle	20	2	15	11
Steps to a Performing Community	40	26	27	27
Consensus and Collaboration	77	4	64	44
Multiple Lens Exercise	39	1	25	24

Appendix D: Individual outcome indicators: Kellogg Foundation

Individual Outcome Indicators

Collaboration/Partnership

- Are individuals more able to collaborate across societal boundaries such as race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender, etc.?
- Do individuals have improved or new, professional networks?
- Have individuals remained in contact with those they met through the program?
- Are individuals effectively engaging interdisciplinary groups?
- Are individuals engaging in collaborative projects?
- Are individuals building relationships across sectors?

Communication

- Do individuals have the ability to express or hear divergent opinions and really listen?
- Are individuals able to mobilize political will for change?
- Have individuals improved their oral and written communication skills and their ability to explain complicated information to others?
- Are individuals able to gain the support of influential people?
- Are individuals able to effectively utilize the media?

Courage and Confidence

- Have individuals' confidence and self-image improved?
- Are individuals taking greater risks?

Cultural Competence

- Are individuals able to work effectively across cultures?

- Have individuals had broader exposure to cultural differences and similarities?
- Have individuals gained a greater recognition of their own biases and prejudices?
- Do individuals have a deeper appreciation of their own culture and community and the cultures and communities of others?

Knowledge Development

- Is there a greater understanding of global issues and international affairs?
- Do individuals have greater knowledge of their field or other fields or knowledge bases relevant to their work?
- Do individuals have the capacity to understand “systems thinking”?
- Do individuals have deeper knowledge of broad issue areas such as government and politics, mass media, economics, environmental issues, etc.?

Leadership in Action/Demonstrating Leadership

- Do individuals demonstrate increased involvement in community activities, civic affairs, and volunteer work?
- Are individuals developing new projects, programs, products, or organizations?
- Are individuals engaging others to get work done rather than doing it on their own?
- Are individuals more pro-active than re-active?

Leadership Development

- Are individuals actively promoting the leadership development of others?

Self-Awareness and Reflective Capacity

- Do individuals have a better understanding of themselves and their values?
- Do individuals have a personal theory of change that they can articulate?
- Do individuals know their strengths and limits as a leader?
- Do individuals have the ability to evaluate themselves?

Personal Development

- Are individuals more capable of acting in accordance with their deepest values?
- Is there a working and effective balance between personal life and professional life that values both?
- Are family relationships improved?
- Have individuals made a personal commitment to the creation of healthy communities?

Perspective Development

- Do individuals have an understanding of shared mission and vision for a community?
- Do individuals have a greater understanding of their community and their concerns within local, regional, national, and international contexts?
- Are individuals more thoughtful in their approach to their work?
- Do individuals have a wider perspective of issues facing their country and the world?

Professional Development

- Have individuals career or career goals changed and grown?
- Have individuals advanced in their leadership responsibilities?

- Have individuals developed the confidence to take risks with their careers?
- Have individuals learned about new career possibilities?
- Have individuals accepted leadership positions or affiliated with professional organizations?
- Has the likelihood of individuals remaining in the field, and not “burning out,” increased?

Skill Development

- Have individuals developed new, or improved existing, skills that enhance their ability to lead? (e.g., facilitation, strategic planning, problem-solving, training, team-building, goal-setting, fund development, conflict resolution, etc.)
- Have management skills improved?
- Do individuals have an ability to use data and information to plan for and drive decisions?
- Are individuals able to effectively use technology to enhance and forward their work?
- Are individuals better able to develop and attract resources to their work and the work of others?

Visibility

- Are individuals more recognized as leaders?

Appendix E: Organizational outcomes indicators: Kellogg Foundation

Organizational Outcome Indicators

Collaborations, Networks, and Partnerships

- Have new strategic partnerships been formed?
- Is the organization cooperating with other organizations in the community?
- Are organizational leaders in similar positions at different organizations supporting each other?

Development of Leadership

- Are staff and volunteers more diverse?
- Has the organization initiated leadership training programs or mentoring programs?
- Have new staff been hired?
- Are young leaders being given leadership opportunities within organizations?

Effecting Change

- Is the organization having a social impact?
- Is the organization an effective catalyst for social change?
- Is the organization able to mobilize people in communities to support a change agenda?

Leadership/Governance

- Does the organization have a responsive, functional management team?
- Is succession planning effective and carried out?
- Are clients and constituents participating in decision-making?

Management

- Does organizational leadership have improved management capabilities? (e.g., projecting what programs will cost, measuring program impact, determining organizational needs, financial management, strategic planning, etc.)
- Has the performance of organizational core functions improved?

Programming

- Has existing work been strengthened?
- Have new programs been implemented?
- Have services been provided to new populations?

Sustainability

- Has the organization's ability to attract resources (financial, talented staff, etc.) improved?
- Is the organization better able to leverage existing resources to attract other resources?
- Has the organization secured resources from new sources?
- Has the overall budget increased?
- Is there an increased understanding of and participation in financial systems and markets?

Visibility

- Has the visibility of the organization increased locally? Regionally? Nationally? Internationally?
- Is there increased media coverage of the organization?
- Have new materials been developed or more public appearances made?

Appendix F: Community outcome indicators: the Kellogg Foundation

Community Outcome Indicators

Collaboration, Networks, and Partnerships

- Is there inter- and intra-community cooperation?
- Is there more frequent community dialogue about addressing problems?
- Is there greater collaboration among key individuals, organizations, and institutions?
- Are there new community coalitions or collaborations?
- Are there activities being jointly organized?

Community Change

- Are there tangible improvements in the quality of life or functioning of the community? (e.g., new policies)
- Have new projects or programs been developed in the community?
- Are new forums for citizen engagement being created?

Community Decision-Making

- Are policymakers more aware of and attuned to the public's voice?

Community Leadership

- Is there a heightened sense of community conscience and responsibility?
- Are the community's strengths being maximized and utilized to develop community-relevant solutions?
- Are citizens from all walks of life sharing responsibility to tackle complex problems?
- Is there respect for diverse points of view?

Engagement/Participation

- Have new vehicles been created to engage citizens?
- Have trust and credibility been developed to allow the community to carry on important work?
- Is there increased confidence within the community that problems can be addressed?
- Are community efforts aimed at building a civic society?

Knowledge Development

- Are community members better informed and more knowledgeable?
- Is the whole community constantly learning?

Leadership Development

- Are new leaders emerging from within the community?
- Are citizens taking on leadership roles within the community?

Public Awareness

- Has awareness of community issues increased throughout the community?
- Resource Development
- Are there new resources or greater resources being brought into the community?

Social Capital

- Is there trust among members of the community?

Appendix G: Systemic impact outcome indicators: Kellogg Foundation

Systemic Impact Outcome Indicators

Culture Shifts

- Are organizations and institutions valuing and implementing collaborative models of leadership?
- Is there greater awareness and recognition of change leaders in communities?
- Is the national dialogue about what constitutes quality leadership shifting?

Institutional Transformation

- Is non-traditional leadership being reconciled with traditionally hierarchical forms of leadership within the institution?
- Are change efforts being integrated into the institution's formal structure?
- Do change efforts have the support of top institutional leadership?
- Are individuals from across and outside the institution involved in change efforts?

Policy and Policymaking Change

- Are policymakers more knowledgeable about the needs of communities?
- Is the policymaking process improving and yielding better results for communities?
- Is there new policy, new regulation, or new precedent or case law?

Collaboration

- Is there greater collaboration and cooperation among sectors and institutions to address social problems?

Appendix H: Power Point Presentation

***Community
Leadership
Programs***

Where They've Been ...

Where They're Going

By

Cynthia A. Hedge

***Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies***

Purpose of the Master's Project

An examination of
community leadership programs

- ▶ History
- ▶ Purpose and Goals
- ▶ Participants, Alumni and Sponsors
- ▶ Funding and Tuition
- ▶ Formats, Faculty and Curricula
- ▶ Impact and Evaluation
- ▶ The Future

Background to the Project: A Personal Perspective

Starting Point: Leadership LaPorte County

- Nearly 23 years of community service
- Its purpose: educate citizens about local issues and teach leadership skills
- 700 graduates

Leadership LaPorte County

- 10-months, one day a week and a retreat
- Curriculum:
 - Networking
 - Community awareness
- Similar to other community leadership programs in the United States

Community Leadership Programs in America

- Began in Philadelphia, 1959
- Designed to address different community issues
- Grew quickly to 750 programs today
- National and state associations created
- Programs are different yet similar

Purpose

- ✚ Complex times need effective leaders
- ✚ Everyone can learn to be a leader
- ✚ Leadership position and leadership behaviors not very important
- ✚ Programs designed to cultivate community leaders who can solve complex problems

Goals

- Networking
- Creating closer bonds between people
- Giving information about community strengths, problems and needs
- Adding to pool of local leaders

- Teaching leadership skills
- Inspiring people to become leaders
- Promoting volunteerism
- Impacting participants, organizations, communities, fields and systems

Participants

- Adults of all ages
- Youth programs
- Mixture of genders, races, ethnicity, education levels and backgrounds
- Selection processes vary

Selection of participants

- ◀ Accept self-nominations
- ◀ Encourage alumni nominations
- ◀ Use media outlets
- ◀ Seek people who are leaders already
- ◀ Seek diversity

Alumni

Many programs connect with alumni

- Host social events
- Support alumni associations
- Produce newsletters
- Sponsor steering committees
- Provide continuing education
- Promote volunteerism
- Have reunions and retreats

Sponsors

- ➔ Chambers of Commerce
- ➔ Non-profit organizations
- ➔ Community colleges
- ➔ Public universities and colleges
- ➔ Private universities and colleges
- ➔ Employers
- ➔ Government

Faculty

- Small staffs
- Full and part-time paid staff
- Volunteers
- Guest speakers

Curricula

Premises underlying
community leadership programs

- Leadership can be taught
- Leadership is not about position or behaviors
- Organizations and communities are networks—
leaders must collaborate

Types of Curricula

- Orientation Approach
- Instructional Approach
- Train the Trainer Approach

Orientation Approach

- ▶ Curriculum orients participants to community
- ▶ Topics focus on community issues:
 - * Government
 - * Education
 - * Health care
 - * Economic development

Instructional Approach

- Teaches leadership skills in a classroom
- Topics focus on leadership skills:

* Leadership styles	* Motivation
* Problem solving	* Conflict resolution
* Team building	* Strategic planning
* Community vision	* Needs assessment

Train the Trainer

- ✚ Ripple effect: train people to train others
- ✚ Often statewide initiatives
- ✚ Topics focus on teaching skills:
 - * Teaching and presentation skills
 - * Facilitation and meeting management
 - * Communication, diversity, conflict management

IMPACTS

- ✿ Participants
- ✿ Organizations
- ✿ Communities
- ✿ Fields
- ✿ Systems

Participant Impacts

- ▬ Easier to measure than impacts on groups, communities, fields and systems
- ▬ Usually reported by participants
- ▬ Documented by:
 - Surveys
 - Interviews
 - Stories

Participant Impacts

(What participants report)

- ✓ Affected personal, career and leadership growth
- ✓ Increased networking
- ✓ Enhanced community awareness
- ✓ Improved leadership skills
- ✓ Involved in more community projects and affairs

Organizational Impacts

- ◉ Harder to measure than participant impact
- ◉ Impacts:
 - Increased leadership capacity- youth programs
 - Started new programs
 - Changed organizational functioning- strategic planning, financial management, etc.

Community Impacts

- Very difficult to measure community impact
- No benchmarks before and after program
- Impacts may include:
 - * Broadening leadership participation
 - * Collaboration
 - * Change in public discord

Evaluation

Sources of Information

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| *Participants | *Alumni |
| *Faculty | *Mentors and advisors |
| *Supervisors | *Colleagues |
| *Community leaders | *Field leaders |
| *Organizations | *Program-produced data |
| *Publications | *Media coverage |

Evaluation

Measurement Tools

- * Surveys
- * Interviews
- * Focus groups
- * Journals
- * 360 degree assessments
- * Open-ended questions
- * Site visits
- * Tracking accomplishments

Evaluations

- ✿ Different approaches yield different learnings!
- ✿ Example: Pre-post vs. then-post surveys
- ✿ Weakness of many evaluations:
 - Lack validity
 - Lack reliability
 - No triangulation
- ✿ Mixed approaches and methods work best

The Future

- 🇺🇸 More complex problems demand leaders!
- 🇺🇸 Funders will support programs that work!
- 🇺🇸 Better evaluation tools will be developed!
- 🇺🇸 Effective leadership programs will thrive!

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