

Designed for early-career professionals, the FOCUS Emerging Leaders program offers the opportunity to strengthen your personal, professional and civic leadership skills, gain a deeper understanding of the inner workings of the St. Louis region and expand your network.

Since 2012, the program has trained more than 800 young professionals. Emerging Leaders is a great springboard to applying for other FOCUS leadership programs and pursuing leadership positions in your career and the community.

Who Should Apply

If you're an early-career professional who wants to gain a better understanding of yourself as a leader, of the St. Louis region, and how you can get involved to make our community stronger, you may be a great fit for Emerging Leaders.

Like all FOCUS programs, Emerging Leaders welcomes applicants from all backgrounds and sectors.

Graduates leave the program with an increased sense of engagement in the region, as well as the tools to take an active role as the next generation of St. Louis civic and professional leaders. You'll also become part of the network of more than 11,000 FOCUS program alumni.

"Emerging Leaders has given me the confidence to be my true and authentic self in my workplace, community and at home. Leadership involves so much more than being a 'leader' and FOCUS drives that home."

— Hannah Talley Fiebig

WHAT TO EXPECT

Curriculum

While program content is continually evolving to meet the needs of each class, the curriculum covers:

- Understanding Self and Leadership
- Civic-minded Leadership
- Finding Your WHY as a Leader

Along the way, you'll have the opportunity to explore your unique strengths, examine regional issues from different perspectives, and build lasting connections with other leaders. Sessions include a mix of speakers, interviews with regional leaders, small-group discussion, interactive exercises and reflection activities. You'll also have the chance to put your leadership skills into action on a Civic Action Project in collaboration with community partners.

Commitment

The four-month program is offered each spring and fall and includes:

- Opening retreat
- Seminar days, hosted at FOCUS and sites around the region
- Civic Action Project (small-group learning experience)
- FOCUS Now graduation/networking event

Impact

In an evaluation of recent graduates:

- 100% broadened their network and built meaningful relationships
- 100% felt the program helped them use knowledge gained about the region to envision a better future for St. Louis.
- 96% said Emerging Leaders helped them find the best ways to contribute their strengths as a leader.



“The Emerging Leaders experience was truly transformative — not only in how I see leadership but also in how I see myself as a leader. I’m deeply thankful for the incredible relationships I built through this journey.” —Jordey Jones

Application Process

Applications for the Emerging Leaders program can be found online at www.focus-stl.org. For those interested in learning more, we’ll be hosting a virtual Info Session on Oct. 14, 2026, from 12-1 p.m.

The application deadline for our Spring 2027 class is Monday, Dec. 4, 2026.

You may also nominate an employee or colleague for the program online, and we will follow up to provide them with the application materials.

Tuition

The tuition for the Emerging Leaders program is \$1,000 and includes a complimentary FOCUS St. Louis membership during your time in the program.

Tuition is often covered in part or full by the participant’s employer. Partial scholarship assistance is available to those with demonstrated financial need. Scholarship application details will be provided upon acceptance into the program.

Host a Civic Action Project

Civic Action Projects are a key element of our Emerging Leaders curriculum, providing participants with the opportunity to work directly with community partners to address challenges facing our region and apply the leadership skills they’re developing in the program. We are always looking for civic/community organizations to host Civic Action Projects, and past partners include Greater St. Louis, Inc., St. Louis County Library, Madison County Mental Health Board, Prosperity Connection, City of Wentzville, Transform 314, and many more.



About FOCUS St. Louis

Recognized as a national model for civic leadership development, FOCUS St. Louis provides leaders with the civic awareness and powerful connections needed to be collaborative changemakers who advance a thriving region for all.

FOCUS offers a continuum of programs to engage leaders at every stage of their journey, from high school students to senior executives. More than 11,000 individuals have completed our programs, and FOCUS alumni and members are leaders who make a difference – in their workplaces, in their communities and throughout our region.

**Change starts with leadership.
Leadership starts with FOCUS.**

**SPRING 2027
PROGRAM
DATES**

FRIDAY, DEC. 4	Application Deadline	
THURSDAY, FEB. 18	Opening Retreat	1:00-5:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, FEB. 19	Opening Retreat	9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MARCH 2	Seminar Day	1:00-5:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MARCH 16	Seminar Day	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MARCH 30	Seminar Day	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, APRIL 13	Seminar Day	1:00-5:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, APRIL 20	CAP Presentations	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MAY 4	Seminar Day	1:00-5:00 p.m.
MAY 2027	FOCUS Now	TBA

Thank You to Our Emerging Leaders Supporters!



For More Information

Visit www.focus-stl.org or contact Program Director Beth Casagrand at bethc@focus-stl.org or (314) 657-4026.