FOCUS St. Louis

LEADERSHIP ST. LOUIS

Founded in 1976, Leadership St. Louis® is one of the most highly-respected leadership development programs in the nation. The program was built on the belief that community, just as any business or organization, requires strong leadership to grow and improve. Graduates of the programs include CEOs and senior level executives, entrepreneurs, elected officials, educators, attorneys, nonprofit directors and public servants. The common ground under this wide array of participants is a deep and active commitment to community improvement and making our region stronger.

Who Should Apply

If you are an experienced leader who wants to gain a deeper understanding of the St. Louis region, explore collaborative civic leadership and build connections across sectors, you may be a great fit for Leadership St. Louis.

Like all of our FOCUS programs, Leadership St. Louis welcomes applicants from all backgrounds, industries and sectors.

Many graduates describe the experience as "transformational," arming you with the tools, resources and connections to lead more effectively in your personal, professional and civic life. Upon graduation, you'll become part of the network of more than 11,000 FOCUS program alumni.

> "Leadership St. Louis was more than a leadership experience, it was a transformational journey grounded in connection, collaboration, courage, and community impact."
>
> — Trisha Gordon

WHAT TO EXPECT

Curriculum

Leadership St. Louis is immersive, bringing you out in community to learn firsthand about the issues and opportunities facing our region. On any given program day, you may be:

- Discussing leadership challenges with the CEOs of the region's largest employers
- Connecting with nonprofit agencies to better understand the social services safety net
- Weighing state and local priorities with elected officials
- Talking with administrators and healthcare professionals about public health in our region
- Exploring a range of topics from immigration to arts and culture to education

Leadership St. Louis is designed to challenge your thinking, expose you to new ideas and perspectives, and promote discussion, reflection and action. You'll also benefit from unparalleled access to community leaders and forge lasting connections with your cohort.

Commitment

Leadership St. Louis is a nine-month program, with one or two full-day sessions (8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.) each month from September to May. Applicants must have the ability to attend all sessions (barring emergencies) to be eligible for participation.

Impact

In an evaluation of recent Leadership St. Louis graduates:

- 100% significantly increased their knowledge of St. Louis civic assets, issues, and leaders.
- 100% said they broadened their leadership 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.



"Leadership St. Louis was one of the most memorable experiences of my adult life. The program made me a better leader, and more importantly, a better St. Louisan." — Larry Morris

Application Process

Applications for the Leadership St. Louis program can be found online at www.focus-stl.org. Two recommendations are required; a link to this form is available online and will be sent upon submission of your application. For those interested in learning more, we'll be hosting a virtual Info Session on Jan. 20, 2027, from 12-1 p.m.

The application deadline for our 2027-28 cohort is Friday, March 19.

Once all materials are reviewed, applicants will be asked to participate in two personal interviews with Leadership program graduates on Saturday, April 24.

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 Leadership St. Louis program is $6,500, which includes FOCUS 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.



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.

Change starts with leadership.

Leadership starts with FOCUS.

2027-28 PROGRAM DATES

FRIDAY, MARCH 19	Application Deadline	
SATURDAY, APRIL 24	Selection Day	8:30-12:00 p.m.
THURSDAY, JUNE 3	Orientation	4:00-6:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, SEPT. 10	Opening Seminar	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
SATURDAY, SEPT. 11	Opening Seminar	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, OCT. 1	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, DEC. 3	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, JAN. 7	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
SATURDAY, JAN. 8	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, FEB. 4	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MARCH 3	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MARCH 31	Seminar Day	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 5	Closing Seminar	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
SATURDAY, MAY 6	Closing Seminar	8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
MAY 2028 (TBA)	FOCUS Now	5:30-7:00 p.m.

Thank You to Our Leadership St. Louis Supporters!

KWAME CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Leadership St. Louis Class 45

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For More Information

Visit www.focus-stl.org or contact Erin Wright at erinw@focus-stl.org or (314) 657-4020.