



Program Overview

The African American Leadership Academy (AALA) is a community-based leadership development program that expands both the number and effectiveness of African American leaders in central Ohio. Individuals accepted into the Academy come with a demonstrated excellence in their profession, a commitment to public or community service and the desire to succeed. The Academy exists to assure an increasing diversity of leadership. Its Leadership Development Program is guided by a philosophy inspired by Warren Bennis, well known author and chairman of the Advisory Board of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University's Kennedy School. He stated:

To become a leader, you must first become who you are.

Facts about the Academy

- Founded in 2005 by a group of Columbus African American leaders
 - Each class consists of 12 to 20 Fellows from private, entrepreneurial, non-profit, government and education sectors
 - Duration is eight months
 - Strength based curriculum focused on efficacy, leadership agility and leadership interaction
 - Over 160 alumni Fellows to date
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Why does our mission matter?

We cannot hope that capable African American leaders will continue to emerge in our community. Invested individuals and groups must work to ensure that there is a continuous pipeline of high quality leaders for an increasingly diverse community.

Maximizing the potential and engagement of all social and economic sectors is essential to the greater purpose of building innovative and best at businesses and communities.

AALA's vision is to enlarge the definition of success and redefine leadership to include doing well (career/professionally), so you can also do more good (the needed good in our community and life).

How is the Academy governed?

An Advisory Board governs the Academy. The Board is made up of representatives from the Academy's sponsoring organizations as well as other prominent community leaders. Yvette McGee Brown chairs the AALA Advisory Board and Donna A. James serves as Executive Director.

How is the Leadership Development Program structured?

Each year, the Advisory Board selects 12-20 leaders, ages 25-55, from the private, entrepreneurial, nonprofit, government, and educational sectors who demonstrate potential for top leadership roles in their professional and civic life.

The AALA curriculum focuses on how leaders can become more of who they are, authentically, through two development tracts - %Efficacy+and %Leadership Agility+.

Therefore, meeting for eight (8) sessions- in the evening and on weekends- from January through August, the curriculum is shaped to incorporate the following throughout the program year:

1. Professional resources
2. Strategies for success grounded in a customized Efficacy for Professionals of Color curriculum
3. Strengths based leadership principles
4. Specific tools for making better connections and to deepen the attributes that accelerate leadership
5. Individual presentations
6. Reflective Evaluation: An ongoing process of self-evaluation that occurs throughout the program

What do Fellows Achieve?

The goal is for each Fellow to graduate with a clearer sense of personal and professional strengths, more confidence to effectively pursue their passions, and an increased commitment to shaping our community. By the end of the program, Fellows have skills and confidence to achieve the following:

- Become more self-aware of their personal leadership style and strengths
- Enhance their understanding of areas that are critical to their personal growth, community growth, and leadership capabilities
- Identify their most and least effective leadership attributes and skills
- Develop personal strategies for maximizing talents
- Understand the difference between and the role of talent, knowledge, and skills
- Develop personal strategies for greater success in achieving career, community and life goals
- Develop a sense of community and collaboration among and between all classes of Fellows

Who supports the Academy?

Current and past sponsors include, among others:

American Electric Power	Lardon & Associates, LLC
Battelle	Mount Carmel Health System
Cardinal Health	Nationwide
Crabbe, Brown & James, LLP	NiSource
Fifth Third Bank	Ohio Health
Grange Insurance	United Way of Central Ohio
L Brands, Inc.	

Academy contact?

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