



LADDER TO
LEADERSHIP



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What is Ladder to Leadership (L2L)?

Ladder to Leadership* is an in-depth capacity building program aimed at strengthening the leadership skills of mid-career professionals. Through an innovative, 16-month curriculum, the program aims to enhance the leadership capacity of the community-based nonprofit organizations supported by Community Memorial Foundation (CMF).

The L2L curriculum is divided into 3 phases, each of which includes face-to-face training sessions, individualized executive coaching and team projects. The program is anchored within the context of the communities in which its participants live and work, in order to maximize the application and impact of its concepts.

**Ladder to Leadership was initially developed through funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is sponsored in partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL).*

How can L2L impact my professional development?

In an increasingly complex health and human services system, community-based nonprofit organizations need innovative leaders to create client-focused practices, manage day-to-day operations and serve as visionary catalysts for systemic change; however, development programs that prepare nonprofit professionals for these senior level positions are seldom available.

In a recent survey conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Center for Creative Leadership, over 1,000 nonprofit leaders identified specific leadership competencies for health-related nonprofit organizations. Among the most necessary were: collaborative leadership skills, political savvy, influencing skills, networking skills, translational leadership skills to work across boundaries, systems thinking, visionary thinking and time management skills. Ladder to Leadership targets the development of these varying skillsets in order to create more effective leaders and, in turn, stronger organizations.



The people in this program are dedicated to being that leader that's going to move the community forward.

Lauren DeSimone
Director of Advancement,
Family Shelter Service





How will L2L benefit my organization and my community?

Nonprofit organizations benefit from the Ladder to Leadership program through increased leadership capacity and access to the community networks forged by its participants. In particular, the program encourages increased cooperation among community health agencies, more frequent dialogue, more strategic partnerships and greater collaboration. Ultimately, communities will be better served by a higher functioning, more collaborative group of leaders.

What will I learn?

Ladder to Leadership is divided into 3 phases, each of which includes group training sessions, individualized coaching and team projects.

Program participants will complete the following objectives:

◆ **PHASE I**

- Identify specific leadership challenges
- Form action learning teams
- Learn the fundamentals of the action learning leadership process

◆ **PHASE II**

- Develop relationship building, self-awareness, systems thinking, problem-solving, innovation and communication skills
- Explore appropriate decision-making strategies, strategic thinking and influencing skills
- Discover effective workplace conflict resolution
- Create productive innovation strategies

◆ **PHASE III**

- Complete an action learning project that involves working across community agencies on a specific issue
- Develop a mentoring relationship with an experienced community leader to enhance the understanding of leadership complexities and apply new skills



Our executive directors, presidents, CEOs...they all know each other. With these middle managers coming together, we've got a second level of communication and collaboration to help close gaps in the social services in this area.

Kristen Hermes

Special Events + Donor Relations Coordinator,
Aspire





Am I eligible to participate?

Qualified applicants must:

- Have one to five years of supervisory experience
- Be an employee of a nonprofit organization that has received a grant from Community Memorial Foundation
- Commit to the 16-month leadership development initiative and curriculum
- Have the support of his or her organization's executive director or senior leader, as well as its board of directors

Please Note: Only one applicant from each CMF grantee organization will be considered.

How do I apply?

Candidates must submit a completed application and supporting documentation including:

- resume
- personal statement
- commitment statement from your employing organization
- 2 letters of recommendation: one from a board member; one from someone other than your executive director

The attached application and supporting documentation must be received at Community Memorial Foundation by 5:00 PM on March 1, 2018.

In addition to the application materials listed above, candidates must conduct an in-person interview with CMF staff. Interviews will be scheduled once all applications have been received.

How are candidates selected?

Participants are chosen based on the following criteria:

- demonstrated experience and record of accomplishment within the nonprofit sector
- potential for assuming increased leadership roles in their current organization and in the nonprofit health and human services fields
- proven commitment to serving vulnerable populations and improving their health and well-being
- commitment to the Foundation's regional vision of transforming the Western Suburbs into the healthiest region in the country

Up to **16** individuals will be selected to participate in the 2018–2019 Ladder to Leadership program. Those selected must be willing and able to commit the time necessary to fully participate in the program. Attendance at all events, as well as participation in the program's evaluation (occasional surveys, phone interviews or focus groups), is a requirement for all participants in the program.

Ladder to Leadership is guided by an advisory committee that reviews applications and makes funding recommendations to CMF's Board of Directors.



Curriculum and Time Commitment

Ladder to Leadership requires the following amount of time outside of the office:

◆ **KICKOFF MEETING**

June 28–29, 2018 | La Grange Country Club

◆ **3 FACE-TO-FACE PROGRAM SESSIONS**

Session I — August 20–23, 2018 | CMF Offices

Session II — November 28–30, 2018 | CMF Offices

Session III — March 5–7, 2019 | CMF Offices

◆ **COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY & FINAL PROGRAM MEETING**

June 18, 2019 | LaGrange Country Club

◆ **ACTION LEARNING LEADERSHIP PROCESS (ALLP)**

Participants will engage in a minimum of 5 community-based team meetings to work on ALLP projects throughout the 16-month program. The dates and locations for these meetings will be determined collaboratively by team members. Teams will be formed and projects selected during the kickoff meeting in June. Approximately five hours each week will be spent engaged in ALLP team work.

Key Dates and Deadlines

Applications and supporting materials are due by 5:00 PM on March 1, 2018.

- Participants will be selected by March 31, 2018.
- Program will kick-off June 28–29, 2018.

Program Direction

Direction and technical assistance for Ladder to Leadership are provided by the Center for Creative Leadership.



The Center for Creative Leadership focuses on leadership education, research and expertise in solving the leadership challenges of individuals and organizations.



LADDER TO LEADERSHIP 2018-2019

NAME

ORGANIZATION

POSITION

PREFERRED PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL ADDRESS

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

LENGTH OF TIME WITH CURRENT EMPLOYER

LENGTH OF TIME IN CURRENT POSITION

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES OR VOLUNTEERS YOU SUPERVISE

TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF MEMBERS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET OF YOUR ORGANIZATION



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LADDER TO LEADERSHIP 2018–2019

Participants work in teams to focus in greater depth on a specific, significant leadership challenge that:

- should be of primary importance to you, your work group and/or your organization;
- should involve others who also have a significant investment in the outcomes;
- has persisted over a period of time, or is likely to do so; and
- possibly requires changes in assumptions, behaviors or standard operating procedures.

To help us understand the significant leadership challenges faced by your organization and community, please list 2–3 specific leadership challenges in each of the following categories, providing a 1–2 sentence description for each.

- ◆ **PRESSING HEALTH OR COMMUNITY PROBLEM** (access to mental health services, aging, etc.):

- ◆ **ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGE** (volunteer recruitment, securing funding, staffing, etc.):

- ◆ **COMMUNITY SYSTEM ISSUE** (lack of appropriate services for vulnerable populations, nursing shortage, physician referrals, etc.)



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APPLICATION

LADDER TO LEADERSHIP 2018–2019

Your completed application should include the following attachments:

◆ **YOUR RESUME**

◆ **NARRATIVE STATEMENT**

This statement should not exceed 1000 words and should:

- Describe your organization, including the health/human service issue(s) it addresses; the population served; its organizational structure, etc. (Max. 500 words)
- Describe your experience in the nonprofit field and your current role within your organization, including the number of years in the role and your key responsibilities and accomplishments. (Max. 500 words)

◆ **PERSONAL STATEMENT** expressing your desire and commitment to participate in the program. This statement should not exceed 500 words and should address:

- How you believe participating in this development process will help you, your organization and your constituents
- Your career goals and aspirations
- Any professional association memberships or boards you serve on and the challenges and/or success associated with these experiences
- Your mentoring experience—either as a mentor or mentee

◆ **LETTER OF COMMITMENT** and support from your organization's executive director or top official. This letter should not exceed 500 words and should address:

- The applicant's potential for assuming future leadership roles
- How the executive director or top official will support the applicant throughout the 16-month *Ladder to Leadership* program
- The perceived organizational impact of the applicant's participation in the *Ladder to Leadership* program
- Any information about your community that will successfully help this applicant apply program knowledge

◆ **TWO LETTERS OF REFERENCE** (one of which must come from a board member)



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APPLICATION

LADDER TO LEADERSHIP 2018–2019

For more information, please contact Tom Fuechtmann at 630.654.4729 or tfuechtmann@cmfdn.org.

TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION:

- ◆ **EMAIL** the materials to tfuechtmann@cmfdn.org
or
- ◆ **SEND** the completed application with attachments to:
Community Memorial Foundation
Attn: Tom Fuechtmann
15 Spinning Wheel Rd., Suite 326
Hinsdale IL, 60521

Applications must be received by 5:00 PM on March 1, 2018.
No application will be considered without all documentation.



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