Developing Civic Leaders: The Institute for Community Leadership

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Leadership is an ever present reality in people's lives. In a democratic society there is an immense need for leaders. Potential leaders emerge from a variety of situations coming from all cultural and racial backgrounds in all ages, sizes, shapes, and from both genders. Future leaders can benefit from training. It is the purpose of the Institute for Community Leadership (ICL) to train these individuals for civic leadership. Properly trained leaders will have the desire to maximize their training experiences. They will want to participate in leadership situations in their community so they can exercise the knowledge and skills gained through the ICL leadership training program.

INTRODUCTION

> The ICL program opened my eyes to the idea of community leadership. I was unsure at the beginning of the program what it meant to be a 'community leader' and how I was able to take part in my community by serving on a board. One interesting thing that I learned from the program is that it does not matter what your life experiences are or how old you are. You can take an active role in your community and join a board. Due to the things that I have learned in this program I would love to join a community board in order to better my community.
> (Mr. Chris Coats, Class 4, 2007-2008)

Shapiro (2005) asks, "Do we have too many leaders" (p. 1-2)? Woyach (1993) asserts, "Democratic societies cannot have too many leaders" (p. 10). He asserts that in a democratic society there is an immense need for leaders. He further notes in such societies there are more opportunities for the exercise of leadership than there are available leaders. I am convinced the answer to the question is, "No." Hackman and Johnson (2009) seemingly concur with my conclusion saying, "The importance of leadership can be overstated. Yet, we remain convinced that leaders do make a difference" (p. 2).

Perhaps the word *leader* is used too freely in society today. Too many people are confused by all the verbiage about leaders and leadership. For purposes of clarity I make the distinction between leader (title or designation) and leadership (actions, behaviors of the leader) (Engleberg & Wynn, 2010). It is accurate to say the literature on leadership offers numerous definitions of these terms; even so, the existing definitions offer a variety of viewpoints concerning the necessary competencies, skills, values, and behaviors necessary for effective leadership.

Purpose

According to Woyach (1993), we need "authentic leaders [who] are people who constantly try to balance personal, group, and community interests so that all three are better off" (p. 11). This paper offers an empirical example of a community's efforts to connect the theoretic and practical applications of

leadership to prepare citizens for civic leadership through the training program offered by the Institute for Community Leadership (ICL). I will present background information about ICL including the Institute's purposes and goals, an examination of its past achievements, current activities, and future projections, and conclude with a discussion of "conditions for success in collaborative public ventures" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293).

Background and Literature Review

The authors and concepts of leadership examined in this section provide the theoretical rationale for the development of the Institute for Community Leadership. People from all walks of life have sought to clarify what leadership is and identify the skill sets that allow an individual to lead effectively. Woyach (1993) notes there are some "350 different definitions of leadership" (p. 3).

Leadership is a shared experience. Today's leaders need to be preparing the next generation of leaders. According to Maxwell (1993), "The one who influences others to follow only is a leader with certain limitations. The one who influences others to lead others is a leader without limitations" (p. 113). It was out of this awareness of the importance of empowering others to assume leadership roles within the community that the Institute for Community Leadership (ICL) was created and established in Fayetteville, North Carolina. "Informed citizens are a valuable resource for a community. They also make the local government's job easier. To inform citizens and to attract and train future community leaders, communities throughout the country are establishing citizen academies" (IQ Report, 2001).

Leadership is a topic of historical and contemporary interest. "Over the last century, there has been a plethora of research and scholarship devoted to the leader agency in the leadership process" (Bratton, Grint, & Nelson, 2005, p. 87). Even as some people argue the importance of leadership is overstated, I am in agreement with Hackman and Johnson (2009) that leaders make a difference. Northouse (2007) claims leadership has a universal appeal considering the amount that has been said and written about it. Information, ideas, and theories about leadership are prevalent. Such information is "in the popular press and academic research literature" (p. 12). Over the past 20 years "academic institutions throughout the country are creating programs in leadership studies" (p. 1).

In addition to defining leadership, it is important to consider issues concerning the nature and dynamics of leadership. Bennis (1959) noted that "probably more has been written and less known about leadership than any other topic in the behavioral sciences" (pp. 259-260). Yet, most of us can agree on what we want from our leaders. According to Woyach (1993), "Our ideas of leadership usually reflect our experience. Leadership is what the 'good leaders' in our lives have done, or the opposite of what the 'bad leaders' have done" (p. 2,). He indicates the concept of a leader comes from a Middle English word meaning *to guide* (Woyach, 1993). This conceptual position is consistent with the view that "we want them to be credible, and we want them to have a sense of direction...and we must be able to believe that they have the ability to take us there" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 29).

Still, connecting theory to practice is complicated. This is so because of the many varied traditions, experiences, and ways of thinking about leadership. Scholars, educators, and practitioners sometimes do not see eye-to-eye on this subject. People's understanding of leadership comes from diverse perspectives, disciplines, and cultures. So, it is a challenge to clearly identify what constitutes leadership and what is a leader.

What makes for an effective leader? What is effective leadership? It has been argued "the appropriate type of leadership depends upon the circumstances" (Goldhaber, 1993, p. 91). Manz and Neck (1999) indicate "leadership (the process of influence) can originate from a number of sources" (p. 2). Conger (1992) has concluded "that the development of leadership ability is a very complex process" (p. 33). He suggests leadership actually starts before birth with certain genes favoring intelligence, physical stamina, and other qualities. Then one's family members, peers, education, sports, and other childhood experiences influence the person's need for achievement, power, risk taking, and so on. Add to the mix various work experiences and mentors who shape the potential leader through early adulthood by providing essential knowledge and behavioral skills and with an opportunity and some luck the result is a leader.

Of course, "without followers there would be no need for leaders" (Pierce & Newstrom, 2008, p. 257). Within the past a15 years or so "an important new thrust in understanding leadership is to regard it as a long-term relationship, or partnership, between leaders and group members" (DuBrin, 1995, p. 2). Kouzes and Posner (1995) note that "strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty unless we understand the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and constituents" (p. 1). They point out that leadership is a relationship between those who choose to lead and those who choose to follow – a reciprocal process. Leaders need to connect with and communicate to followers "with a range of expertise from the layperson or nonexpert to the technical or highly specialized individual" (Barrett, 2008, p. 37). Due to this reciprocal relationship it is essential that leaders "get everyone pointed in the same direction. If we don't know where we are going, then we will all be headed in different directions. We will never be successful" (Warner & Evans, 2006, p. 107). This is one of the biggest challenges of leadership – to identify and stimulate individual's unique "pulse points" (p. 37) which will move the individual to action to achieve personal, group, and community goals.

Successful achievement of goals is not the only matter of importance in determining effective leadership. An ethical dimension to effective, successful leadership exists. Johnson (2005) addresses this common issue facing leaders of all types. He suggests that "when we function as leaders, we take on a unique set of ethical challenges in addition to a set of expectations and tasks" (p. 10). This "involves issues of power, privilege, deceit, consistency, loyalty, and responsibility" (p. 10). How leaders handle the challenges of ethical issues is a major determinant of the quality of their leadership.

By the 1990s many organizational development specialists stressed the need for team-based leadership, leadership responsibilities shared among team members. Given the pervasive use of teams in the work place, it is "essential to understand the role of leadership within teams to ensure team success and to avoid team failure" (Northhouse, 2007, p. 208). He contends that leaders have a "special responsibility" (p. 209) to function in such a manner as to help their groups effectively achieve their goals and reach their vision.

Given the fact there are so many definitions of leadership tied to specific situations or a particular individual along with the existence of so many varying theories of what a leader is, the most basic question is, "Can a person learn to be a leader." I am convinced the answer is, "Yes." Woyach (1993) claims that "exercising leadership effectively means using appropriate skills…to meet the specific needs of your group" (p. 9). His point is that leadership involves skills. And, as he states, "People learn skills. They learn them through study – including the observation of others who have those skills. Ultimately they learn through practice – by trying to apply what they know about the skills in real leadership situations" (pp. 9-10).

In their discussion of the background of the Leadership Studies program at Kansas State University, Shoop and Scott (1999) indicate the program is based on four beliefs: (a) people are not leaders if they can only "do" leadership with people just like themselves, (b) leadership is a collaborative activity, (c) leadership is not a matter of position or title, but it is a process, and (d) *"leadership can be taught and learned* [emphasis added]" (p. xxiii).

The Institute for Community Leadership

According to Samples (1999), "Some people catch a vision for leadership just from the enthusiasm of others" (p. 4). The ICL program is designed to help participants catch a vision to lead by educating and training them while providing opportunities to pick the brains of some of the most effective leaders in our community. The Institute seeks to empower people so they may "give more of themselves to the people around them, more to their organization, and more to the project at hand" (Warner & Evans, p. 2006, p. 1). ICL even goes one step further by connecting them with actual opportunities to practice what they have learned. Hackman and Johnson (2000) indicate "the most useful experiences…are those that put you in the leader role….since leadership experience is so vital, seek out chances to act as a leader" (p. 362). Therefore, the ICL staff works diligently to ensure that participants are given the opportunity to serve on private as well as public boards and commissions.

Civic leadership is not, nor should it be the sole prerogative of the rich and famous or the powerful in our communities. As a grassroots effort, ICL provides participants an opportunity to participate in civic leadership. The Institute's goal to reach out to those who have not held leadership positions not only benefits these *new found* leaders, but "when local leaders take initiative, they encourage higher-level leaders to do the same" (Hackman & Johnson, 2000, p. 266). ICL is committed to helping citizens to bring about social change in an effective and efficient manner. For that to happen, we need capable leaders. Social change leadership involves "change, collaboration, and civic responsibility" (Crawford, Brungardt, & Maughan, 2005, p. 111) which are foundational concepts in the thinking of the ICL leadership. Institute staff members are especially convinced of the importance of the concept of civic responsibility. ICL identifies, educates, trains, and then encourages its participants to be good citizen leaders who work to effect needed change in the community. According to Crawford et al. (2005), "social change leadership argues that individuals must ask themselves and others to believe in something larger than personal self-interest as they become active players in the leadership process" (p. 113). The Institute instills such civic-mindedness in its participants to ensure its graduates provide leadership for the betterment of the community.

ICL Historical Background

For many years former city manager, Roger Stancil, and, a local civic activist, Dr. Loleta Foster, had numerous discussions about the need for a mechanism to identify and train community volunteers for civic leadership. These efforts were by and large fruitless at that time.

During the citywide effort in 2000-2001 to achieve recognition as an "All America City" there were troubling rumblings coming from some areas of our community. It was suggested by some citizens the city did not deserve such a designation. One reason cited for opposition to the efforts of city leaders was that many, especially some minority groups, in our city felt disenfranchised. They believed they had little opportunity to assume leadership roles, let alone have any voice in local government. However, despite these rumblings in the fall of 2001 Fayetteville, North Carolina, was designated an "All America City."

As a response to this perceived lack of leadership opportunities, I made an initial effort to create and develop a citizens leadership academy. Discussions were held with a variety of leaders in leadership higher education, the city manager's office, and with the Chamber of Commerce. I received a letter from the assistant to the city manager saying, "Your suggestion of a substantive, joint City-County Leadership Development Academy sounds very encouraging and I would like to be involved in whatever capacity I could best be used" (letter, July 11, 2001). However, these initial efforts failed to gain a consensus among key community leaders and for lack of support the effort died. Stancil and Foster continued to explore the concept over the next couple of years. With the arrival of Dr. T. J. Bryan, Chancellor, Fayetteville State University, in 2003, discussions were rekindled. With this broadened base of interest, other city agencies and institutions of higher education banded together to develop a community leadership program. The county government and the county public school system later joined this initiative. The intent of this core group of leaders was to identify people for the "development of community leaders….leaders may be candidates for appointment to our boards and commissions, community organization leaders or those who fill other vital leadership roles in our churches and civic organizations" (memorandum, May 19, 2004). They intended to develop a core of "authentic leaders…who constantly try to balance personal, group, and community interests so that all three are better off" (Woyach, 1993, p. 11). The Greater Fayetteville Futures and Fayetteville United initially participated in this grassroots program. It was their desire to have a leadership program that reached "out to those who have not previously been involved" (memorandum, May 19, 2004). A coalition was formed through the support of such key leaders who represented a broad range of backgrounds and who possessed many varied interests. The Institute for Community Leadership was developed and established.

ICL Vision and Mission

Dr. Andrew Ziegler, a former ICL executive director, stated, "The intent is to reach people who are not currently involved in the community, but who sincerely desire to serve in some way" (speech to the City

Council, May 24, 2004). The Vision Statement states the purpose of ICL is "to identify, develop, and empower community members, especially those not previously identified, who are able and willing to commit to leadership roles in addressing the issues of the Fayetteville/Cumberland County area" (*ICL*, 2004). The Institute is a joint community effort designed to provide local citizens the opportunity to participate in activities leading to community leadership and membership on boards and commissions as well as work with civic and religious entities. The bottom line is ICL seeks to empower community members for civic leadership. The Institute is a unique partnership between community members, government, and educational institutions in our community. "The program defines itself as a 'recruitment and training program for grassroots leaders'" (*Garden of Leadin'*, June 28, 2004). According to the former Chancellor of Fayetteville State University, Dr. T. J. Bryan, ICL "reflects our community's steadfast commitment to improving the quality of life for residents of Fayetteville and Cumberland County" (April 2006).

The ICL board includes the City of Fayetteville, Cumberland County, Cumberland County Public Schools, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Methodist University, and a non-paying at-large community Volunteer Representative. Each of the six sponsoring agencies pays an annual membership fee to fund the Institute's budget. In its first year to generate steam to move the project forward, a grant from the Cumberland Community Foundation was obtained. Additional organizational support for ICL is shown in that, although it is not a sponsor agency, the Arts Council participates in the ICL project by hosting one of the training sessions.

ICL has been recognized for its contributions to the community. It has been noted that the organization has been doing a commendable job developing and empowering community leaders to serve "on government and volunteer boards" (*The Weekly Wrap*, May 29, 2004). The hope is that the program will encourage people living in Cumberland County, North Carolina, who have been shy about getting involved in local leadership to gain confidence to use their skills to the benefit of all in the community.

The six sponsoring entities provide monetary support and other invaluable resources to assist in the achievement of the vision of ICL. In turn they host the Institute's events as well as provide trainers and panelists. In addition, they oversee the participant nomination and selection process. Essentially what they do is provide leadership oversight and ensure the legitimacy of the program.

In its initial year the sponsors of ICL hired an executive director. This was necessary to ensure that the program was well established including development of the curriculum, identification of trainers and panelists, identification and selection of participants, advertising, public relations, creation of a brochure, and a website (i.e., www.leadership4us.org). The ICL sponsors were able to hire an executive director with the assistance of a significant grant from the Cumberland Community Foundation.

In the second and third years the executive director was selected from one of the sponsoring agencies. The sponsor agreed to "house" the executive director. During the third year the sponsors had many discussions about the continued viability of ICL without a permanent solution for housing and the provision of an executive director. These discussions led to a commitment to house and rotate the role of the executive director among each sponsor for a two-year period. Each sponsor was given the freedom to determine how and who would serve as executive director when its shift comes around. This rotational housing and directorship has the added benefit of ensuring ICL does not become overly identified with one sponsor. By sharing in the housing and leadership, the sponsors continue to model their collaborative vision for ICL as a community leadership development program.

Citizen led efforts serve as spark plugs for growth and development. Recognizing the centrality of such efforts to the quality of life in Cumberland County, the sponsors have been willing to step forward and show responsibility for leadership development. As such they have been able to identify and involve numerous individuals who otherwise may not have become active in community leadership.

ICL Alumni Community Leadership Activities

For the past seven years the Institute has provided programming designed to reach the grassroots leaders in our community. Of Class II former Chancellor Bryan (2006) wrote, "A class of leaders armed with the skills and tools to serve this great community that many of us call home." While this is true for

TABLE 1
ICL GRADUATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Class 6 (2009-2010) – Class Leader: Myles Jones.
- Myles Jones heads up a group involving several Class VI alumni in a partnership with a non-profit foundation in order to filter support for various causes.
- Marie Callender is a volunteer for the Arts Council and Child Advocacy Center.
- Tonia Adams serves on the Board of the Downtown Alliance.
- Oscar Arredondo is a volunteer with Sustainable Sandhills Organization.
- Don Williams serves as the Chief Professional Officer for the Boys and Girls Club of Cumberland County.

Class 5 (2008-2009) – Class Leaders: Rick Hamlet, Ricardo Morgan, and Charmaine Murrell.
- Elaine Cole-Abinleko is a member of the Spring Lake Storm Water Advisory Board.
- Gail McAfee volunteers with the Fayetteville Cumberland County Arts Council.
- Lisa Chinland serves on the Fayetteville Personnel Review Board.
- Cheryl Gainey serves as a volunteer for the Cape Fear Regional Theater.
- Ricardo Morgan serves on the Board for the Southeastern North Carolina Radio Reading Service, Inc.; the United Way's Diversity Committee to organize the Minority Leadership Development Program; and, the Cumberland County Relay for Life.
- Sylvia Williams serves on the Joint City-County Senior Citizen Advisory

Class 4 (2007-2008) – Class Leaders: Bobby Hill, Chris Coats, Annette Evans, and LaTicia Wilson.
- Chris Coats serves as a leadership trainer for the Institute for Community Leadership.
- Mary Ellen Lavoie serves on the Fayetteville Planning Commission as well as volunteers with the Arts Council, Airborne and Special Operations Museum, homeless ministry of Highland Presbyterian Church, and Salvation Army.

Class 3 (2006-2007) – Class Leaders: David Allen, Jessie Bellflowers, and Gloria Tuprah.
- Mary Ann Brown-Jackson serves on the Cumberland County Adult Care Board.
- Edna Cogdell serves on the Joint Appearance Commission.
- Charles Luther serves on the Cumberland County Transportation Board.
- Carolyn Owens serves on the Mid-Carolina Council of Governments.
- Rose McMillian serves on the Cumberland County WorkForce Development Board.
- Debra Patillo serves on the Fayetteville Planning Commission.
- Amy Samperton serves with the Unit Scholarship Fund of Fort Bragg.
- Nancy Shakir serves with the Lafayette Market Co-Op, the Cumberland County Progressives, the Great Oak Leadership Development Center, and the North Carolina Reading Service for the Blind.

Class 2 (2005-2006) – Class Leaders: Anne Adams, Stephon Ferguson, and Carolyn McLaurin.
- Lyn Green serves on the board of the Fayetteville Urban Ministry and Cumberland County Department of Social Services Board.
- Jaunita Heyward serves on the Board of Directors for the Fascinate U Children's Museum.
- James Ingram serves on the Council of Aging, the County Board of Adjustment, and the County Court System as a Guardian ad Litem.
- George Matthews serves on the Board of Advisors of the Fayetteville Area Habit for Humanity.
- Carrianne McClellan is a volunteer with Zeta Pi Omega Cultural and Educational Foundation.
- Wynella Myers serves on the Cumberland County Adult Care Board.
- Kim Sublett serves on the Hope Mills Youth Association Board and Fayetteville Observer Credit Union Board.
- Angela Vann established Fayetteville's Oprah Book Club and the Cape Fear High School Alumni Association.
- Bobby Washington is Director of the Great Oaks Leadership Development Center and serves on the NC Veterans Park Design/Content Committee.

Class 1 (2004-2005) – Class Leaders: Floyd Johnson and Wendy Vonnegut.
- Leonard Covington is Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Highlands Chapter of the American Red Cross.
- Polly Davis serves on the Cumberland County Juvenile Crime Board and the Library Board.
- Latonya Hankins serves on the board of the Cumberland County CommuniCare.
- Floyd Johnson serves the NC Council of Community Programs & Cumberland County Area Mental Health Board.
- Victor T. Landry serves on the Board of Directors for the Fayetteville Urban Ministries.
- Loletha Porter serves on the Administrative Council of Harry Hosier United Methodist Church.
- Wendy Vonnegut serves on the boards for the Child Advocacy Center of Cumberland County, Cumberland County Legal Aid, and the Small Business Center of Fayetteville Technical Community College.
- Dan Geiger serves on the Fayetteville Recycling Task Force.

Class II, it is also true of the other cohorts as evidenced by the various leadership activities the graduates have been involved with in the community.

Current Activities

ICL hosts training sessions focusing on leadership enhancement activities and discussions with some of Fayetteville's and Cumberland County's most effective and dynamic leaders. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, skills training, community issues, and service ICL opportunities on a variety of

TABLE 2
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Date & Time	Location/POCs	Training Topics & Goals	Community Focus Panel or Activity
Sep. 15 6:00-9:00 pm	**FTCC** Berry and Michaels	**Getting to Know You** **Goal:** To assist participants in overcoming the barriers of race, social status, background, and occupation, and to bond together as a class.	**Human Services Organizations** **Goal:** To introduce participants to the types and purposes of non-profit human service orgs., e.g., United Way, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Child Advocacy Center.
Oct. 20 6:00-9:00 pm	**Cumberland County Dept of Social Services** Pilgrim and Shutt	**Leadership Style** **Goal:** To introduce participants to different leadership styles and to complete a self-assessment to identify their own leadership style.	**County Boards & Issues** **Goal:** To acquaint participants with some of the county boards and the issues they deal with, and to explain the process for applying to serve.
Nov. 17 6:00-9:00 pm	**Fayetteville City Hall** Hutaff and Johnson	**Communication** **Goal:** To improve communication skills. To learn about different listening styles and to conduct a self-assessment to identify their own listening style.	**City Boards & Issues** **Goal:** To acquaint participants with some of the city boards and the issues they deal with, and to explain the process for applying to serve.
Jan. 19 6:00-9:00 pm	**Methodist University** Watt and Ziegler	**Team Building** **Goal:** To learn how a group works effectively together. To learn about group process and group dynamics.	**Higher Education** **Goal:** To learn about the volunteer and service opportunities at the institutions of higher education in Fayetteville.
Feb. 16 6:00-9:00 pm	**Cumberland County Schools** McPhaul and Philips	**Board Member Toolbox** **Goal:** To learn some of the basics of board functions: mission statements, job descriptions, finances, parliamentary procedure, legal issues, etc.	**Public Education** **Goal:** For participants to learn about the volunteer and service opportunities for them with the public schools in Cumberland County.
Mar. 16 6:00-9:00 pm	**Arts Council** Mintz and Bryant	**Making the Connection** **Goal:** To inspire participants to take the next step and get involved. **Alumni Training** **Goal:** To provide advanced training on a topic of interest to former participants.	**Opportunity Fair** **Goal:** To provide information displays manned by community organizations, for participants and alumni to learn first-hand about the many volunteer service opportunities, so they can make a commitment and sign up on-the-spot.
Apr. 20 6:00-9:00 pm	**Fayetteville State University** Dickens and Bentley	**Graduation Dinner** **Goal**: To recognize and honor ICL participants who completed the requirements for graduation.	**Guest Speaker** **Goal:** To meet and hear a local volunteer leader who has a distinguished record of community service.

public and private commissions and boards. Each session focuses on one area of community involvement including such aspects as arts and culture, city and county government, higher education, and not-for-profit human services. The ICL schedule includes seven monthly training sessions. As previously noted, each session features leadership enhancement activities and panel discussions with local leaders. The monthly sessions include September through April (excluding December). Each monthly training session is conducted at the location of a sponsor agency. These locations include City Hall, county Courthouse, campuses of the three institutions of higher education, and the Arts Council. This feature of ICL brings citizens to places and facilities where they may have no experience, thus broadening their exposure to the community. Sessions include an introductory meeting, discussion about community issues, and service opportunities. Because the participants learn about opportunities for volunteer service they are better able to decide where their abilities and interests are needed in the community. Session six includes an "Opportunity Fair" at which over 30 local organizations and agencies participate. Each of the 30 agencies

has a table with materials and displays to inform and encourage ICL participants to sign up on the spot for volunteer service.

The current programming consists of the aforementioned seven sessions (see Table 2). In April a graduation dinner honoring participants completes the program. Following graduation participants receive mentoring by the staff members of the partner agencies. Mentors assist graduates in the application process for membership on various public and private boards and commissions.

Persons who are interested in completing the program must complete an application form. Applicants are then evaluated and selected by a committee of ICL staffers. Participants must be registered to vote in Cumberland County. Each candidate must demonstrate in a written essay a sincere commitment to serve the community and agree to attend each session of the Institute. Additionally, they must indicate a willingness to pursue an appointment to a governmental or community board or commission, or to some other community leadership role. There is no charge to the participants for the ICL program.

Participants receive many benefits. First, they develop opportunities to participate in key community decisions. Second, they participate in discussions concerning local issues and solutions with community leaders. Third, they find volunteer leadership positions that best fit their skills, talents, and interests. Fourth, they build relationships with others who are committed to self- and community betterment. And, finally, they are able to polish their leadership skills and abilities.

At this time six cohorts have graduated from the program (N = 170). Class 7 (2010-2011) began with 31 participants in September 2010 (see Table 3). With curriculum, funding, and leadership issues set, it appears ICL is ready to continue providing development for civic leadership in our community.

Future Projections

It is the vision of ICL to continue to offer grassroots leadership development to educate and train civic leaders for membership on private and public boards and commissions. In order to accomplish that vision, the sponsors have committed to continued funding and the provision of an executive director to coordinate the work of the Institute.

Maxwell (2002) suggests that "at some point we need to end the lecture and send them out to try what they have learned" (p. 1163). As ICL matures over the next several years, it is possible the program will

TABLE 3
PARTICIPANT NUMBERS

Class #	Year	Number of Participants
1	2004-2005	41
2	2005-2006	28
3	2006-2007	26
4	2007-2008	24
5	2008-2009	30
6	2009-2010	21

develop more expansive peer mentoring by its participants. Further, it is even possible that this collaboration among private and public entities may evolve to include a "community think tank" to create opportunities for those involved in community leadership to come together to learn about and discuss common interests. At this time ICL has a bright future.

It appears the Institute will be able to continue to empower community members for civic leadership positions, thus improving the quality of life in our community.

Assessment and Observations

Is ICL able to prepare people for community leadership? Is the Institute accomplishing its goals, vision, and mission? Is it worthwhile in terms of people's commitment, energy, time, and money? In the following section I will make an effort to answer these and other questions about the value and long term viability of the Institute. In order to do that I will use Hackman and Johnson's (2009) 10 conditions necessary for collaborative public ventures. Those conditions include "(1) good timing and a clear need; (2) strong stakeholder groups; (3) broad-based involvement; (4) a credible and open process; (5) committed, high-level, visible community leaders; (6) formal support; (7) an ability to overcome mistrust and skepticism; (8) strong leadership of the process; (9) celebration of ongoing achievement; and (10) shift to broader concerns" (p. 293).

First, let us consider "*good timing and a clear need*" (p. 293). The initial concept of the Institute grew out of talks among various community and university leaders. The community's desire to achieve national recognition as an All America City further heightened interest in the project, but the timing was not right until a local state university hired a new chancellor. Eventually, when the time was right, the Greater Fayetteville Futures and Fayetteville United provided supplied early grassroots support for a leadership program. It was at this pointing time efforts were made to develop a community-wide leadership development program. "S*trong stakeholder groups*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) provide the foundation for ICL.

The City of Fayetteville, Cumberland County, Cumberland County School System, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, and Methodist University are sponsor agencies. And, the local Arts Council is also actively engaged in the training program. Local entities including government, not-for-profit groups, and schools are engaged in the project. "*Broad-based involvement*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) in the project can be clearly seen in that local entities including government, not-for-profit groups, and schools as well as numerous citizen leaders are engaged in the project. "*Involvement*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) is not limited to those who provide the programming. The fact is 170 individuals have completed the program. Thirty are currently involved in this year's cohort, or are on a waiting list for Class 8 (2011-2012).

Based on data from the first six cohorts, Table 4 offers a breakdown of the participants based on gender. Benchmark data comparing the cohorts to recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2000) and the Fayetteville Planning Department (2000) are provided. In the first year of ICL the maximum participation was set at 40. The final count, however, was 41 participants. The participant committee did not deem it necessary to exclude one viable candidate. During that year it seemed difficult to meet the goals of ICL with its 41 participants; therefore, the Board decided to limit enrollment to a maximum of 30 participants. This was the case over the next two years. Subsequently, participation dropped to 25 in the fourth year. Based on the first four years of experience, the Board consequently decided to set the class limit at a maximum of 30 participants. Given the decision of the ICL Board concerning class size, it should be noted there was an approximate one-third drop in the class size for 2009-2010.

TABLE 4
CLASS COMPARISONS BY GENDER

Characteristic	Countywide Data %	Class 1 (04/05)	Class 2 (05/06)	Class 3 (06-07)	Class 4 (07/08)	Class 5 (08/09)	Class 6 (09/10)
SEX							
Males	50.6	42.5	35.7	42.3	21.8	30	37
Females	49.4	57.5	64.3	57.3	78.2	70	63

Table 5 offers a comparative demographic comparison of selected classes beginning with the first class (2004-2005 through the most recently completed cohort (2009-2010). In addition to the comparison of the classes, benchmark data comparing the cohorts to U.S. Census Bureau (2000) and the Fayetteville Planning Department data (2000) is included.

TABLE 5
SELECTED CLASS DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS

Characteristic	Countywide Data %	Class 1 (04/05)	Class 4 (07/08)	Class 5 (08/09)	Class 6 (09/10)
RACE					
Asian	1.9	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Black	34.9	45	56.5	56.5	76
Hispanic	-0-	-0-	-0-	5	
Indian	1.5	2.5	-0-	-0-	-0-
White	55.2	50	43.5	43.5	19
EDUCATION					
Hi. Sch./GED	28.4	-0-	21.7	17.2	10
Some Coll.	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	14
Assoc. Degree	27.7	13.5	26.1	27.6	10
Bach. Degree	13.1	35.1	30.4	27.6	23

Given the age diversity of participants (see Table 6) and the community-wide organizational involvement, it seems evident the Institute is a "*credible and open process*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293). Its early history involved a wide ranging grassroots effort to establish a leadership program to reach those who have not previously been involved in local activities.

TABLE 6
2009-2010 CLASS AGE DISTRIBUTION

Under 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+

The Institute has received recognition for its contributions to the community because of the commendable job it does in developing and empowering community leaders to serve on government and volunteer boards. The program is open and offered free of charge to any registered voter living in Cumberland County, North Carolina. This offer has been extended to those shy or reluctant about getting involved in local leadership situations.

"*Committed, high-level, visible community leaders*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) sit on the ICL Board of Directors. They include the presidents and chancellor of our three local institutions of higher education, county school superintendent, city and county managers, and the director of the Arts Council. In addition, the Board staff consists of various local government, school, and have also included benchmark data comparing the cohorts to U.S. Census Bureau (2000) and the Fayetteville Planning Department data (2000).

"*Formal support*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) for ICL is substantiated by the fact that the sponsoring groups have made a long term commitment to support ICL with an executive director, office, funding, staffing, and training spaces for the seminars. ICL has enjoyed from its very beginning a high degree of credibility. ICL has been able to avoid or "*overcome mistrust and skepticism*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) because of the broad-based foundations of ICL. It began and continues to be a

collaborative civic project that is open in its interactions and communications with the community. This is a major reason the Institute has not experienced mistrust or skepticism about the program. Evidence of "*strong leadership of the process*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) can be found through its Board of Directors and its staff; however, perhaps a major example of the strength of ICL's leadership can be seen in the individuals who have served as the Executive Director. In its first year the Institute hired a retired university professor and former member of the City Council to serve as its director. Since then the executive director has been designated from one of the sponsoring units (years two and three from Fayetteville State University; years four and five from Methodist University, years seven and eight from Fayetteville Technical Community College). As previously stated, the current agreement is a rotating basis will be used so each sponsoring agency will designate a person to serve as the executive director for a two-year term. The efforts and successes of ICL are openly shared throughout the community. "*Celebration of ongoing achievement*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293) is marked in a number of ways starting with the graduation and awards banquet held each year. In addition, plans have been made to expand the "celebration" through more alumni events. The Institute and its graduates have been recognized before the City Council. There have been numerous newspaper editorials written about the activities and successes of ICL. Staff members have appeared on local television and spoken on radio about the Institute and what it is doing to better the community. And, ICL has an excellent website (i.e., www.leadership4us.org). Even as ICL celebrates its past, the Institute is looking at various ways to "*shift to broader concerns*" (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 293). ICL has done an outstanding job reaching out to minority populations in the community such as women in general, but African-American women, specifically. It is a goal of the Institute to reach an even more diverse population of potential leaders, including Hispanic and Native American groups in our community. Another possibility for broadening the impact of the ICL project involves the possibility that a collaboration now exists among private and public entities to develop a "community think tank" to bring community leadership together to learn about and discuss common interests.

CONCLUSION

In closing, effective civic leadership is needed in a democratic society. The Institute is identifying and training such potential leaders as they emerge from a variety of situations from various cultural and racial backgrounds including all ages, sizes, shapes, and genders. Participants, as well as the community, are benefiting from ICL training program. ICL program is relatively new program. As more and more emergent, civic-minded leaders graduate from the program, the community will achieve positive tangible results. The public and private institutions and organizations the ICL graduates serve will see an improved pool of candidates from which to select their memberships. With ICL training the participants will be able to change the way traditional leaders and their followers solve public and private problems. Optimism for the future success of the Institute for Community program is embodied in a statement by Mr. Michael Murray (Class 2, 2005-2006):

> Concerning the Institute for Community Leadership, I would have to say that it was very enlightening. Going into it, I had the mindset that I wanted to put every social and scholarly interaction under my belt to prepare me to be the world changer I was meant to be. This course opened my eyes to the inner workings of committee and city board service. There was so much I did not know that went into this much needed community service. The most important lesson I learned from ICL was that a successful community does not just happen; it is birthed from the ideas and dedication of individuals who are willing to give of themselves and their time. Finally, ICL did wonders in educating me as to the financial and legal workings of city board service.

At this time it appears that indeed the ICL program has a bright future in Fayetteville, Cumberland County, North Carolina. It appears the Institute will be able to provide programming that empowers community members for civic leadership positions, thus improving the quality of life in our community.

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