

It's exciting to support the launch of Leadership Oconto County.

Community-based, experiential leadership programs help emerging and established leaders grow to become more engaged in their community. The more connected a person feels to their community, the more likely they are to stay and become a productive participant.

Representatives from all sectors of businesses form a class and meet once a month from September to May to learn about businesses in their county, challenges, social issues and opportunities facing their communities; while getting exposure to relevant leadership education and skills and becoming community stewards. Each monthly session has a specific focus; from local government to economic development to education and healthcare. Participants are immersed in a full-day interactive session that includes guest speakers, tours of businesses, hands-on exercises, and networking. The goal of each session day is to challenge thinking and inspire participants to get involved in their community. Program participants organize into teams and identifying social or public opportunities. Teams work on community projects that are designed to raise awareness of an issue, identify solutions to a problem while improving team skills and effecting change.

Graduates of leadership programs have a new sense of connection to the community, knowledge, confidence and friendship.

Leadership Shawano County started in 2000. To date, we have graduated 270 participants who make up area boards of directors, committees and volunteers. Leadership Shawano County was instrumental in starting SAYPRO- Shawano Area Young Professionals Organization, The Boys & Girls Club of Shawano and SunDrop Dayz to name a few. Without the unique calibration of participants who bring various business skills and connections; these projects would have never been realized.

Community based leadership development programs are good for communities! Congratulations Oconto County on the birth of you community leadership program. I'm excited to see the impact for Oconto County that we've expereinced in Shawano County.

Wendy Crawford  
Program Coordinator  
Leadership Shawano County