Learning About Region Inspires Rising Leaders

When a local business or organization pop up in conversation and someone chimes in with detailed information about their mission, goals, and maybe even what the looks like behind the scenes, you might be talking to a graduate of the Leadership Eastern Connecticut program. Leadership Eastern Connecticut—a program for rising professionals in the region—connects participants, as well as with alumni of the program, as well as with other members of the community.

The knowledge I gained will have a lifelong impact on me personally and professionally, and it is a great added value to my resume.”

Through this Chamber program, as a class, participants learn to meet the people behind programs, businesses, and organizations who drive economic development, confront local issues, and enhance the quality of life in the region. The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut and leadership potential programs processes along with participants. “This is one of the Chamber’s longest-running, highly-regarded programs, and it only gets stronger each year. I think one of our past participants put it best: you can’t teach leadership skills, you can’t teach leadership skills, you can’t teach leadership skills.” Participants directly interact with top-tier executives in the region, gaining valuable insights and introd to help them professionally. The wide-ranging curriculum highlights the Chamber’s comprehensive view of many forces that affect the region and educates participants on the factors that may be impacting the success of their own organizations, helping them identify synergies to partner effectively. The emphasis on networking during the program with community leaders and fellow participants, as well as with alumni of the Leadership program, contributes to the formation of a regional network that strongly benefits all involved. Each organization sees the benefits and support the program through generous sponsorships. The 2018-19 year is sponsored by Atlantic Broadband, CorePlus Credit Union, Connecticut Hospital Association, Three Rivers Community College and Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. "I love my community and... the Leadership Program gave me a look at what looks like behind the scenes, and how I as an individual can make a difference and become more community-minded. I am excited to partner with other leaders and become part of the leadership team for the Class of 2019. The two-year program begins with a year of ten full-day sessions thematically organized to explore industry, government, services, and regional organizations. As a class, participants complete a capstone community service project with a local nonprofit organization that builds within the class while they employ leadership skills to leave a lasting impact on the beneficiary organization and the community it serves.

“Creating opportunities to Connect, our mission where its heart is, growing, meeting the needs of the area that is continually impressive, responsive and growing.”

Preston Whitteper, Executive Director of the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center discusses the importance of arts and culture with Leadership Eastern CT participants.

The Class of 2019 celebrates their graduation from the program on June 19 at the Hilton Mystic. Information about the program for next year’s class is available at the Chamber’s website at ChamberECT.com. Application for next year’s class is due by May 15.