



The Leadership Tybee Program

In early 2009, the City Council set then-Councilman Charlie Brewer the task of implementing his suggestion of a Leadership Tybee program. His original suggestion was inspired by other leadership programs such as Leadership Savannah. A Leadership Tybee Steering Committee was formed to set up a program to work with the Tybee community to enhance our future leadership potential. The committee applied for and received a grant from the Fanning Institute under its Community Leadership Initiative at the University of Georgia.



The primary goal for Leadership Tybee is to create a positive economic force on the island and to encourage and develop an engaged and well-informed community. The goals for class participants are to learn strong leadership skills and to have a better knowledge of the community and its major challenges. The class provides training in applied leadership skills and sets the goal to generate projects that have an immediate measurable community impact and which demonstrate student commitment to making the island a better place to live and work.



Subjects and practices covered include: styles of leadership, successful goal setting, time management, team building, assessments of personality and management styles, collaboration, challenges in economic development, diversity, working with government, ethics, and effective listening for better communication. A police ride-along is also part of each member's experience. Classes meet for three hours once each month for a total of 13 class sessions during

which teams are formed, lectures and exercises delivered, students coordinate their project work, and report on their current progress. Outside the classroom, participants work with others in the community on their selected projects.

Previous projects have included:

- “The Silent Sport Project”, which explored ways to improve outdoor sporting activities on Tybee such as cycling, kayaking, swimming, and hiking. This was a team effort with Dale Williams, Fawn Smiley, and Kim Wilson.



- The high profile “Casting for Stars”, which promoted fund-raising throughout the community on behalf of the restoration efforts for the historic Tybee Post Theater. Amy Gaster, Greg Stoeffler, and Sadie Gaster provided the leadership impetus for this project.

- In a single-member project, David McNaughton explored some of the

avenues available to members of the community to help reduce billboard and signage clutter and improve the visual landscape for residents and visitors.

- Robert Bryson, Tybee Island Police Chief, organized a police ride-along program for the Leadership participants, which has grown to include the Community Police Academy for outreach to the entire community. The ride-along has been included as a permanent part of the program.

Tybee Mayor Jason Buelterman has said, “Leadership Tybee has had a very positive impact on our little community, and I strongly encourage interested citizens to apply to be part of this exciting program.”



Members of the Leadership Tybee Steering Committee include: Perb Fortner, with over 35 years in executive management, as chair; Becky Setliff who is an expert in organizational development and a professor at Savannah State University; City Manager

Diane Schleicher who has been in city management for over 15 years; and Michael Bodine with over 20 years experience in technical management.

Participants have to meet high expectations as they continue with their day-to-day business, work on class material, and cooperate with others to complete their class project and report on their results.

Applicants for Leadership Tybee must complete an application form, including a project proposal, for acceptance. In addition, there will be a \$125 fee for participation, which can be made by the participants, by a sponsor such as their employer, or by a full or partial scholarship. Information about the Leadership Tybee program, including previous presentations by the class members and application forms for the next session, can be found online at www.cityoftybee.org/LeadershipTybee.aspx.



<http://www.cityoftybee.org/LeadershipTybee.aspx>

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