

Get ahead – Get involved: The Hancock Leadership program is presented to our community by the Findlay-Hancock County Chamber of Commerce each year. Since 1985, over 1,200 area leaders have graduated from this annual program, representing over 500 area businesses and/or service organizations.

About Hancock Leadership:

The Hancock Leadership program is designed to develop and cultivate people with a passion to serve our community through a dynamic learning experience that encourages self-discovery, fosters relationships and inspires stewardship. The HL program is a nationally recognized nine month seminar program created to nurture and promote volunteer leadership resources within the community on a planned, continuing basis.

Each class size is approximately 30 participants. The class meets one day a month for nine months to explore and learn more about the core of our community with updated information and perspectives on economic development, educational systems, health & human services, public safety and agriculture throughout Findlay-Hancock County. Participants make connections with the community in which we live and work, as well as build their interest in leadership opportunities.

The class generally begins in August and holds graduation ceremonies in May each year. The competitive application process is now underway. The applications are **due on May 29, 2026** for the upcoming class year. A selection committee comprised of community leaders will make the final selection of class participants, and notify the applicants. Limited scholarships are available for those who qualify. For more information, or to download the application, please visit FindlayHancockChamber.com/HancockLeadership.

Expanding the Curriculum:

Designed specifically for community leadership programs, the Hancock Leadership program utilizes **Positive Leadership** curriculum. Positive Leadership is about harnessing the potential energy when people come together – social force. Positive leaders take actions that evoke positive reactions. To enhance one's social force, we will focus on seven timeless capacities: authenticity, purpose, advocacy, resilience, community-building, reason and gratitude. These capacities are well-documented under a field of research known as Positive Psychology. The curriculum provides a rich experience for participants to grow together through lively group discussion and personal development activities.

The greatest aspects of the Hancock Leadership program are the connections participants make with each other and increased knowledge about our community. Positive Leadership enhances both of these aspects by sparking rich dialogue among class members and methods to make an even greater impact in the Findlay-Hancock County community.

Testimonials from HL Alumni:

"My experience with Hancock Leadership is one of the most memorable of my lifetime! It was exciting to meet people that feel the same way about the community I care so much about!"
~*Sherri Garner Brumbaugh, President,*
Garner Transportation Group

"Having lived and worked in Findlay for over ten years, I thought I knew a lot of people in the community. When I walked into our first Leadership meeting, I only knew two people in the room. I am very glad to have cultivated the relationships with my classmates over the last year; I feel as though they are quality connections that will last a lifetime."
~*Teresa White, Hancock Leadership Class of 2016*

"Hancock Leadership was instrumental in learning to network, meeting new people, making life-long friends and becoming active in our community. It was a time of personal and professional growth!"
~*Kim Stumpp, Consortia Consulting, Inc.*

"Hancock Leadership was a wonderful experience that allowed me to grow as a leader, network with other leaders in the community, and get a new perspective on the businesses, governments, and non-profits in the city and county. I would gladly participate every year if I could!"
~*Ben Stevens, Hancock Leadership Class of 2024*

"I have found Hancock Leadership to be more than a learning experience, but rather a life experience. My life has now crossed paths with people I may not have otherwise known. My life has been enriched with a greater appreciation for the components that make up Findlay and Hancock County. I feel I am now better prepared to serve the community professionally, and through leadership roles that may present themselves."
~*Brian Whitta, Coldwell Banker Flag City*

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What are the benefits to a Hancock Leadership participant?

A: The participant will follow a professionally-organized curriculum that expands the focus on leadership education and skill development. Participants will connect with like-minded community members/leaders and receive information and perspectives on economic development, educational systems, health & human services, public safety and agriculture throughout the Findlay-Hancock County community. Additionally, it provides a great opportunity for self-development and offers ideas on how to use personal talents to “give back” to our community. *Positive Leadership* will spark a rich dialogue among class members and methods to make an even greater impact in the community.

Q: What are the benefits to the employer?

A: The program offers exposure to other leaders within the community; serves as a great employee retention tool by helping to involve him/her with our community; provides networking opportunities for your business with other area businesses and organizations; acts as a recognition/reward for key employees and shows your organization's support of leadership development in our community by educating future leaders about the needs/issues of the Findlay-Hancock County area. Employees will enhance their social force and utilize within their personal and professional roles. Also, the classes are held locally – no travel expenses required, and are low-cost compared to other leadership training programs.

Q: How does the Program benefit the community?

A: In addition to cultivating leaders to serve on community boards, each Hancock Leadership class chooses and completes a class service project. There is great variety in the scope and type of project selected by each class. Recent classes have completed the following: You Belong Campaign, History Walk at Brucklacher Memorial Park, Y on the Fly, Camp 911, Buddy Benches, and Family Literacy Nights. The class project is an opportunity to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team focused on solving a complex community problem while using one's personal leadership skills. Many Hancock Leadership alums share that the camaraderie surrounding the class project was a highlight of the Hancock Leadership experience.

Q: What is the time commitment involved?

A: The Hancock Leadership class schedule is designed to help the class explore and learn more about the core of our community in a wide variety of areas, and meets one day a month for nine months. The class generally begins in August and holds graduation ceremonies in May each year. It is important that class members are committed to attending each of the monthly sessions. Of course, unexpected events can get in the way, but solid attendance is required. Beyond the normal monthly meeting schedule, each class will decide on a class project. The time commitment associated with the class project depends on the scope of the project itself, the portion of the project a class member assists with, and the amount of time they are able to dedicate to it.

Q: What type of topics are covered?

A: Typical class topics include Local History, Public Safety, Business & Economic Development, Health & Human Services, Education, Arts and Media, Agriculture, and City/County Infrastructure. Also embedded into each class curriculum are professional skills that graduates bring back into their work environments such as effective meeting management, teambuilding, and networking.

Q: When is the deadline to apply? When do I find out if I am in the next class?

A: Application are due to the Chamber of Commerce Office by **May 29, 2026**. The selection committee will select the class members in July. Application information is available at FindlayHancockChamber.com. Class size is approximately 30 members.

Q: On what criteria is the selection process based?

A: A selection committee comprised of community leaders will make the final selection of class participants. They will look for community involvement experience as well as leadership potential and interest to help grow our local community.

Q: What is the cost to participate in the Hancock Leadership program?

A: The tuition fee is \$995.00 for the 2026-2027 class. In many cases, the participant's employer pays for the tuition costs, so applicants may want to inquire if this may be an option for them. Many employers are looking for a way to provide leadership training for their employees, and this is a great, low-cost, local option. Financial assistance is also available through scholarships.