

NEWS

VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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Candidates Sought for Leadership Program

North Jersey-- Applications are now being accepted for the 2009-2010 class of Bergen LEADS, an innovative, 10-month learning and leadership program for adults who live or work in Bergen County. An informational open house will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2009 at Rebuilding Together Bergen County, 217 Rock Rd in Glen Rock from 6:30 pm to 8:00pm, where representatives will be available to answer questions about this well regarded county resource.

Under the guidance of former Bergen County Executive William "Pat" Schuber, the LEADS Seminar Director, participants are immersed in a stimulating curriculum that not only introduces them to topical issues of local importance, but also enables them to explore their leadership styles, enhance their leadership capacity and become meaningfully engaged in helping to solve some of the challenges facing Bergen County.

The application form for the class of 2009-2010 can be downloaded at www.bergenleads.org and is due by April 18. Each candidate must fill in a simple individual profile form and provide essay answers to specific questions.

"Many of the problems of the current economy stem from issues with effective leadership," says Janet Sharma, the Center's executive director. "Consequently, a persistent question facing every sector is 'where will the next generation of strong,

ethical, effective leaders come from?' Bergen LEADS will help provide the answer by preparing acknowledged and aspiring leaders to take the helm in the years ahead.”

“Diversity of participants is essential,” continues Mrs. Sharma. Applicants are encouraged from business, nonprofit, civic and faith-based organizations and government agencies as well as from the community at large. Bergen LEADS seeks representation from the broad array of ethnic, racial, religious and socio-economic groups within Bergen County.

The tuition to participate in Bergen LEADS is \$2,000 per person, and scholarships will be available for those with financial need.

Glen Rock resident Gretchen Viggiano is a member of the 2009/2009 inaugural class. She says, "Bergen LEADS is a wonderful opportunity to learn from experts in our community, to hear from people with different backgrounds, professions and interests. As Executive Director of the non-profit "Rebuilding Together" I will use this new found knowledge of Bergen County to help my organization make even more of an impact."

Pre-registration for the open house is required; call (201) 489-9454 Ext. 119.

Additional information about how to apply for the program, and about financial aid, is available on the website www.bergenleads.org. The class of 30 participants will be announced in June, and the monthly seminars will begin in September.

Every month participants of Bergen LEADS will meet to dissect issues, debate viewpoints and develop approaches to community problems. Every seminar day will begin and end at Bergen Community College.

“Bergen LEADS will help participants see the community – and themselves – through new eyes,” says Mrs. Sharma. “The curriculum is interactive, fast-paced and experiential. Field trips and site visits built into each seminar day will bring Bergen County to life.”

LEADS participants will meet with dynamic leaders with varying viewpoints as they debate topical issues of local importance. Woven throughout each seminar day will be exercises and experiences to help LEADS fellows better understand themselves as leaders – their motivations and strengths, as well as their own unique style.

The culmination of the Bergen LEADS experience is that, ultimately, the program will help participants figure out what to do with their newfound knowledge, both of Bergen County and of their own skills as leaders.

Bergen LEADS will also have an active alumni component with events, forums and other networking vehicles that will keep LEADS alumni engaged and active throughout their careers in Bergen County.

For more information about Bergen LEADS, call 201-489-9454. ext. 119, or email amissey@bergenvolunteers.org.

The mission of the Volunteer Center of Bergen County is to strengthen the community by connecting people with opportunities to serve, operating model volunteer programs, building capacity for effective volunteering, and participating in strategic partnerships that meet community needs.

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