



The Cleveland Leadership Center's (CLC) community impact survey was designed to investigate the long-term learning and behaviors resulting from participation in CLC programs. The results were achieved by examining current alumni involvement and behaviors in their professional organizations and in their community involvement to determine if they intersect with CLC organizational outcomes of civic understanding, relationship building, collaborative leadership and civic readiness. The survey also sought to explore what sort of lasting impact CLC programming has on participants, organizations and the community and provide insight into long-term behavioral effects of alumni in the community.

The survey was conducted from May to June, 2016; 562 surveys were opened and 402 fully completed (a 10% response rate from the nearly 4,500 surveys sent out). Outreach was conducted via email, mailing and social media campaigns. All alumni were eligible to take the survey. Alumni from all CLC programs responded to the survey, the majority being alumni of Cleveland Bridge Builders, Leadership Cleveland or Civic Leadership Institute. The age range of respondents was under 20 to over 71 with a majority in the ages of 31-60. The For-Profit sector was represented by nearly half of the respondents, with a third in the Non-Profit sector. The respondents were evenly divided among men and women and a majority self-identified as Caucasian.

Examination and analysis of the patterns of quantitative responses provided revealed that overall CLC programs attract and identify individuals who are predisposed to organizational and community leadership and the experience in the CLC program reconfirms their dedication to leadership and civic engagement. CLC programs build a sense of personal responsibility to serve among participants and they are able to identify engagement opportunities that align with their values and personal visions. Eighty percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that CLC programming has made them feel confident and capable in the community.

Participants reported learning about the community and its assets and issues, much of which they did not know prior to their program experience. Additionally, they reported having the opportunity to build relationships with people from a variety of backgrounds. They actively listen to the opinions of others and work to understand diverse perspectives. Participants strongly believe that individuals can make a difference and they work to inspire others to engage in the community, regardless of position or status. Participants believe strongly that CLC programming was significant in shaping their attitudes, practices and behavior regarding leadership in the community, while appreciating the difference between community collaborative leadership and organizational leadership. This was seen across all CLC program alumni represented in the survey results.

In regards to community engagement, participants reported that nearly 15% of their time is dedicated to volunteer and community efforts. This involvement included volunteering, serving on a committee, serving in a leadership role for a committee, serving on a board, serving in a leadership role for a board,



Cleveland Leadership Center's mission is to build a continuum of civic leaders committed to our community's excellence by serving as a catalyst for civic engagement.  
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launching a new organization/program/initiative, planning an event, or chairing an event. Among those who responded, there was an average reporting frequency of at least one of these activities per person. The sectors represented for this involvement include Arts & Culture, Economic Development, Education, Environment/Animals, Foundations, Government/Politics, Health, Human Services, International Affairs, Public or Society Benefit, and Religion. All sectors had reported engagement among participants, with Education having the most reported engagement. When asked for the specific organizations in which participants have engaged, 620 unique organizations across the region were reported.

In reviewing areas of the survey where there are opportunities for growth, a few key areas were noted. As a general finding, based upon the lower than average ratings to key questions on the survey, program participants appear to be somewhat conservative and risk averse in regards to their involvement in civic leadership activities. They are more likely to confine their roles to sustaining civic programs (leadership stewardship) as opposed to advocating for big change initiatives or engaging in visioning for the future of the community (transforming programs). In addition program participants may be more comfortable inspiring others to become involved in civic leadership activities than taking on more assertive roles as change agents. This may reflect the traditional nature of civic leadership demonstrated in the community. Further exploration and outreach around these patterns of responses will be needed to guide CLC in programming.

