



## CLC programs shape leadership attitudes and practices, alumni survey finds

(October 21, 2020) -- Alumni of Cleveland Leadership Center programs feel their program experience was significant in shaping their attitudes about leadership in the community as well as their leadership practices and behaviors in the community, CLC's fall 2019 alumni survey has found.

The survey also revealed that CLC alumni are nearly seven times more likely to devote time to volunteering than are their peers in other cities across the country.

The survey was designed to investigate long-term learning retention and behavior changes resulting from participation in CLC programs. It measured the lasting impact CLC programming has on participants, organizations, and the community. The positive impact of the CLC program experience was seen across alumni of all programs and all years.

### Key findings

- 83% of respondents felt the CLC program experience impacted their abilities to think critically about the relationships between civic assets, issues, and stakeholders and the health of the community.
- 82% felt the program experience helped them to envision Cleveland's future. They are able to find the most appropriate ways to contribute their strengths as a leader and they can inspire others to make a difference in the community through their attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs.
- 76% agreed or strongly agreed that they feel confident and capable in the community as a result of their CLC experience.
- The majority of respondents report inspiring others to get involved in the community, fostering collaboration, and stimulating others to rethink the way they do things.
- When asked for specific organizations in which participants have engaged, nearly 900 unique organizations across Northeast Ohio were reported.
- CLC survey respondents seem much more likely than their peers among U.S. adults to devote time to volunteering:
  - About 70% reported details about their volunteer commitments. The most recent survey by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics about volunteering behaviors among U.S. adults estimates that between 6.2% (who have "some college") and 9.8% (college degree) engage in some volunteering behaviors.<sup>1</sup> The CLC survey data reveal that alumni engage in volunteering at a rate seven times greater than other U.S. adults
  - When they do volunteer, the time they devote is comparable to other U.S. adults. Alumni reported that nearly 16% of their time is dedicated to community efforts: volunteering; serving on a committee or board; serving in a leadership role for a committee or board; launching a new organization, program, or initiative; or planning or chairing an event. The same Bureau of Labor Statistics survey estimates that among all U.S. adults who volunteer, approximately 13% devote time to volunteer activities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/tus/charts/volunteer.htm>





The survey sought to see how current engagement of alumni in their professional organizations and in their community intersect with outcomes CLC seeks to achieve for participants in each program: civic understanding, relationship building, collaborative leadership, and civic readiness.

“The survey underscores that programs we deliver are changing how people interact with the community,” said Marianne Crosley, CLC President and CEO. She said CLC’s offerings for individuals from high school to retirement fulfill CLC’s mission to build a continuum of civic leaders committed to our community’s excellence by serving as a catalyst for civic engagement.

“Our programs, along with CLC’s initiatives such as the annual Accelerate civic pitch competition, Spark: Grit to Great innovation symposium, and customized programs, inspire and connect people to transform Cleveland,” Crosley said.

### **Next steps**

The survey is conducted with all alumni every three years, and efforts are made to ensure measures remain relevant and align with CLC’s outcomes. CLC works with the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University on data analysis and reporting to inform the work and ensure it is accountable to best practices in evaluation.

CLC is following up the alumni impact survey with the next phase of its evaluation project: piloting a Ripple Effect Mapping technique to explore CLC alumni impact across the community. Several alumni focus groups have been conducted in 2019 and 2020 as part of this effort.

### **Methodology**

The online survey was conducted in October 2019 using Survey Monkey. All alumni were eligible to participate. The link was emailed to alumni and shared in a mailing and on social media. Some 686 individuals responded, nearly a 10% response rate from the nearly 7,000 emails sent.

Alumni representing all CLC programs responded, with the majority from Cleveland Bridge Builders, Leadership Cleveland, or Civic Leadership Institute. A majority had participated in more than one program. Most had participated between 2000 and 2019, though participants from 1978 through 1999 were also represented. The age of respondents ranged from under 20 to over 71 with an even spread across that range. Of respondents, 59% identified as female and a majority self-identified as Caucasian.

### **For more information**

To read more about CLC’s impact on participants and the community, visit <https://www.cleveleads.org/about-us/our-impact/>, which includes a brief video (1:20) highlighting the study’s findings.

The web page also contains details about the retrospective pre-test CLC designed and administers to each class to determine how participants’ knowledge, attitude, and skills change by the end of their program compared to before the program.



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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