

# CORE PROGRAM: OVERVIEW

Our Core Program is Berks County's only issues-based community orientation program focused on best practices in nonprofit board governance.

Offered annually from September through June, our program is designed with the adult learner in mind. By keeping classes under forty, we allow participants to maximize learning and provide them with the framework to build deep relationships with one another and connect them to key decision makers in the community.

## THE PROGRAM'S PURPOSE IS TO:

- Provide opportunities to hone leadership and project management skills
- Expand leadership networks that complement the workplace
- Learn best practices in board governance
- Provide orientation to community assets and challenges
- Assume community leadership positions on boards or committees
- Showcase the community as a great place to live, work, and play

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS EXCEED 600 HOURS INCLUDING:

- A half-day orientation and two day overnight retreat
- 7 full days of class instruction
- Service learning field projects benefiting community organizations
- Alumni council committee service
- A half-day for graduation & award ceremony

The curriculum is designed and delivered by top leaders and field experts. Throughout the program, participants will work in tandem with their peers to address a nonprofit field project and provide service on an alumni council committee. A commitment to serve on a volunteer board or committee for a minimum of one year, after graduation from the program, is required.

## CLASS INSTRUCTION

**(September-June) 150+ hours**

Each session follows a two-track format: board governance in the morning followed by orientation to a community issue in the afternoon.

## FIELD PROJECT

**(September-May) 100+ hours**

To meet the service learning requirement, working alongside a team of their peers, participants apply their skills in real-world experiences by focusing on a field project that benefits a local organization. Project examples include: feasibility or brand awareness studies, event plans, and marketing or communication plans.

## ALUMNI COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT

**(February-June) 50+ hours**

Focusing on interests and skills, each participant is assigned to work with the Leadership Berks Alumni Council to assist with planning events, recruiting prospective participants for future programs, alumni relations, and fund development.

## PLACEMENT ON A BOARD OR COMMITTEE

**(at least 1 year after graduation) 300+ hours**

For at least one year after graduation from the program, each participant is required to serve on a nonprofit board or committee. Through partnerships with our Alumni Council and the United Way of Berks County, participants are provided guidance to assist them in identifying a board or committee service that meets their needs.



## CHRISTI TEREFENKO

Core Program, Class of 2008  
Orthopedic Research Consultant

“Leadership Berks was a great experience and I absolutely loved it. The program gave me the opportunity to sharpen my leadership skills, learn about the nonprofit sector, get more involved in the community, and really make a difference.”

## IDEAL PARTICIPANT

- Demonstrates a passion to respond to community needs
- Is interested in learning best practices in nonprofit governance
- Is an inclusive, compassionate citizen committed to community service
- Is interested in broadening their network of personal and professional contacts
- Has a desire for life-long learning
- Exhibits effective interpersonal skills
- Is interested in honing their leadership and project management skills
- Is resourceful and innovative
- Is willing to assume a nonprofit committee or board role after graduation

# DEVELOPING SUPPORT AND CONNECTING COMMUNITY LEADERS FOR BERKS COUNTY

## SAMPLE PROGRAM ROSTER:

<b>MID-SEPTEMBER</b> (half-day)	<b>ORIENTATION SESSION:</b> Meet fellow participants, clarify program expectations, and meet the staff and volunteer program team	
<b>OCTOBER</b> (two days)	<b>OVERNIGHT RETREAT:</b> Build team skills and self development; review fieldwork project choices; expand understanding of local demographics, history, government and politics in Berks County; and participate in “Board Boot Camp”	
<b>NOVEMBER</b> (full day)	<b>BOARD GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>COMMUNITY ISSUES</b>
	<b>BOARD 101:</b> Introduction to the roles and responsibilities of board members	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN BERKS COUNTY:</b> Gain perspectives on conservation, preservation, and green initiatives related to air, land, water, energy, and waste
<b>DECEMBER</b> (full day)	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT:</b> Understand how to identify concentrations of risk that will inform strategic direction	<b>ARTS, CULTURE, AND ENTERTAINMENT IN BERKS COUNTY:</b> Expand your awareness about the musical, performing, and visual arts and culture venues in Berks County
<b>JANUARY</b> (full day)	<b>UNDERSTANDING FINANCIALS:</b> Understand how to interpret nonprofit financial reports	<b>THE PLACEMENT FAIR:</b> Identify board, committee or volunteer openings
<b>FEBRUARY</b> (full day)	<b>FUND DEVELOPMENT:</b> Understand the key aspects of fund development and how to ask people to give of their time, talent, and treasure — “make the ask”	<b>COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:</b> Learn the latest about community and economic development efforts in Berks County
<b>MARCH</b> (full day)	<b>THE BOARD’S ROLE IN NONPROFIT COMPENSATION:</b> Learn the board’s role in human resources and nonprofit compensation	<b>K-12 EDUCATION:</b> Broaden your knowledge about the K-12 educational system
<b>APRIL</b> (full day)	<b>BOARD’S ROLE IN GOVERNANCE:</b> Understand the role of board members as it relates to good governance policies and practices	<b>HEALTHCARE IN BERKS:</b> Deepen your understanding of healthcare in Berks County
<b>APRIL</b> (evening)	<b>THE ANNUAL ALUMNI AND RECRUITMENT SOCIAL:</b> Enjoy an evening to network with alumni, fellow class members, potential candidates, and friends	
<b>MAY</b> (full day)	<b>FIELD PROJECT PRESENTATIONS &amp; MOCK BOARD:</b> Team members present nonprofit field project deliverables to peers, sponsors, and agencies; and apply board skills via a “Mock Board” exercise	
<b>JUNE</b> (half day)	<b>GRADUATION &amp; AWARDS LUNCHEON CEREMONY:</b> Graduates, alumni, sponsors, community leaders, and friends celebrate program completion; honor an alumna/alumnus for distinguished volunteerism; honor a business or nonprofit organization for community work and support of Leadership Berks programs	



Board and Volunteer Leadership Fair

## FAST FACTS

- Leadership Berks is one of 3,400 community leadership programs nationally.
- Graduates delivered over 150 service projects to area nonprofit and community organizations.
- Over 700 graduates continue to serve in the Greater Reading area and beyond.
- In the first year after completion, graduates provide a return on investment of over 1,800 hours back to their community through service on a board or committee
- Over 25 area employers regularly send employees through the program.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

### EMPLOYER IMPACT

In addition to greater visibility and commitment to community issues, upon completion of the Core Program, employers can expect their employees to have increased organizational, leadership, and problem solving skills. Employees can utilize the expanded network of professional contacts and relationships with key community leaders developed through the program to enhance work projects and initiatives. Graduates return to the workplace with a greater ability to lead more effectively, manage teams more efficiently, and make better informed decisions that impact the bottom line.

### NONPROFIT IMPACT

Each program cycle, class members work side-by-side with a team of their peers to apply their skills in real-world experiences by addressing four to six service projects benefiting area nonprofit and community organizations. Sample projects range from feasibility studies to marketing and business plans. The requirement helps to build capacity for the nonprofit by addressing a need for which the organization may not have the resources to address on its own. Teams must present deliverables to the organization, their peers, and their sponsors at their capstone session in May. Since its inception, Leadership Berks has provided over 150 field projects and over 700 people to fill board and committee positions with area nonprofit and community organizations.

### VOLUNTEERISM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC IMPACT

According to a 2006 Issues Brief delivered by the Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, D.C., the approved hourly rate for volunteer time for the United States is \$18.77. According to the same brief, residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania volunteered over 350 million hours which is equal to over \$6.5 trillion in cost savings for Pennsylvania's philanthropic community. For the past 25 years, the average Leadership Berks Class of graduates contributed 1,800 volunteer hours per year or a total of 45,000 hours of volunteer service — a value of almost \$850,000 for Berks County's philanthropies. This is an extraordinary impact that helps ensure adequate services are provided to meet the needs of our community, and helps to keep talent local, which contributes to an overall good quality of life for Berks County residents.

### PERSONAL IMPACT

The Core Program provides participants the opportunity to build their personal and professional network and make direct contact with over 75 influential leaders who assist with program design and instruction. In addition, participants can expect to hone their leadership, team building, and project management skills; establish relationships within a network of over 700 alumni; learn best practices in board governance; develop greater sensitivity about diverse populations; and become informed about the community's assets, challenges, and issues.



Core Program, Class of 2007

**The Leadership Berks Alumni Council was launched as a direct result of a Core Program Class of 2007 field project. The Council is designed to foster and expand the personal, professional, and community leadership benefits enjoyed by each Alumnus as a result of their Leadership Berks experience.**

**The Council supports the ideals of Alvernia's Leadership Berks program by assisting in the achievements of the institution's goals and objectives.**

**To learn more about the Alumni Council, please contact Leadership Berks at 610-790-1930 or connect with us on Facebook or LinkedIn.**

KEEPING  
ALUMNI  
CONNECTED  
TO ONE  
ANOTHER AND  
THE COMMUNITY