Program Information

2027 – Class 5

The West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance is coordinating Leadership West Kentucky as a regional program seeking to build a network of informed citizens connected across community lines. Curriculum includes leadership development, education on issues facing the region, relationship-building, and awareness of the uniqueness of each county. It is to instill pride in the region and focus on encouraging participants to be active in their region/community in Western Kentucky and help make positive change and "be a changemaker in their community."

Counties represented by the West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance include:

Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, and Trigg.

ELIGIBILITY:
Applicants must either work or live in one of the counties identified above. If the county they reside in has a local Leadership program, it is highly recommended they participate in their local program before applying for LWK. We are looking for participants who are active in their local community and willing to commit the time to actively participate in LWK. Attention will be given to reflect the diversity of the region's local communities.

Participants will be chosen by a Selection Committee appointed by the WKRCA Board and based upon the information completed on the application. The Committee will be seeking a diverse class, professionally, geographically, ethnically, and gender-wise. The goal is to have representation from all 15 counties.

STRUCTURE:
The program will begin with a mandatory overnight orientation to kick off the program on January 20 and 21 in Paducah and meet for a full day's session in February - June. Class members will travel each month to the featured area with a focus on that community as well as regional topics such as transportation, education, economic development, quality of life, advocacy, agriculture, and tourism. These topics will be covered by knowledgeable speakers and panels, tours, interactive exercises, and class discussions.

REQUIREMENTS:
Attendance at the January overnight orientation is mandatory. Orientation is unique and requires a higher standard of attendance than regular program sessions. Any absence of any portion (greater than one hour) may result in such a class member not being able to participate in the LWK program, subject to extenuating circumstances.

Leadership West Kentucky requires a strict time commitment. Class members must attend a minimum of 80% of all sessions. Any participant missing more than two regular full-day sessions, in half-day increments, will not be eligible to graduate from the program. No refunds will be given.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

Applicants should review the dates of the class to ensure there are no major conflicts and tentatively hold these dates:

- January 19 – Department of Energy site (Paducah) visit (optional)
- January 20 and 21, 2027 – Mandatory Orientation Overnight Retreat in Paducah
- February 25, 2027 – TBD
- March 25, 2027 – TBD
- April 22, 2027 – TBD
- May 27, 2027 – TBD
- June 23, 2027 – Fort Campbell site visit (optional)
- June 24, 2027 - Mandatory – Hopkinsville and Graduation Day

PLACE AND TIME:
Sessions will last an average of eight hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Sessions will be located throughout the region. Times and locations will be sent prior to each session. Participants are responsible for their own transportation to the sessions.

COST:
Tuition for LWK is $850. Participants are responsible for any overnight lodging required, including the orientation, and their own transportation to the county for each month's session.

SCHOLARSHIPS:
A limited number of partial scholarships may be available. If financial assistance is requested, applicants will need to attach a letter officially requesting a scholarship and stating the reasons. The scholarship request must accompany the completed application to be considered. Requests for scholarship assistance are completely confidential. (Note: no full scholarships will be awarded.)

The deadline to apply for Class 5 is Friday, December 4, 2026. Notifications will be made no later than December 15. For more information, email fbennett@paducahchamber.org.

Special thank you to Leadership West Kentucky Presenting Sponsor TVA.