



**LEADERSHIPAKRON**

**SIGNATURE PROGRAM**

An unparalleled community learning experience for 36 leaders per year

Application period: March to April | Program runs: August to June

**insight:AKRON**

A one-day "crash course" in Akron designed to give new executives a running start to their community involvement

Registration period: June to August | Program runs: Fall

**TORCHBEARERS**

An affiliated community partner of Leadership Akron, Torchbearers connects emerging leaders with one another to develop skills for community engagement

Application period: May to June | Program runs: January to December

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTES**

A customized community immersion experience that develops leadership capabilities prioritized by employers and encourages community awareness and involvement

Spring application period: January to February | Program runs: March to May

Fall application period: July to August | Program runs: September to November

**DIVERSITY ON BOARD**

A program developed with United Way for minority leaders. The purpose is to develop diverse talent for service on nonprofit boards through leadership development, education, coaching and service

Application period: November to January | Program runs: March to November

**NEXT**

"New Endeavors for Experienced Talent" provides senior leaders the opportunity to examine community needs, personal strengths, and individual involvement in the community post-career

Registration period: March to April | Program runs: September to November

**EDGE**

Edge provides interns an opportunity to explore the Akron area as a place to build a life and a career, delivered in partnership with Torchbearers

Registration period: March to May | Program runs: June to July

Look for more on these programs in upcoming editions of **EmployerConnect**. Have a leader in mind for one of the programs above? Nominate them any time at: [WWW.LEADERSHIPAKRON.ORG/NOMINATIONS](http://WWW.LEADERSHIPAKRON.ORG/NOMINATIONS)

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**LEADERSHIPAKRON**



**SIGNATURE PROGRAM**

**CIVIC SOLUTIONS LAB**

**insight:AKRON**

**EDGE**

**TORCHBEARERS**

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**

**DIVERSITY ON BOARD**

**NEXT**

**MARCH 2017**

**EmployerConnect**  
**SIGNATURE**

**HELPING CONNECT YOUR LEADERS  
TO THE COMMUNITY**

**EMPOWERING. FOR YOU. FOR AKRON. FOR GOOD.**

## WHY THE LEADERSHIP AKRON SIGNATURE PROGRAM?

Often when people think of "Leadership Akron," they think of the Signature Program. Since our founding class in 1984, Leadership Akron's Signature Program has remained the premier community leadership experience in Akron with over 1,000 graduates. An exclusive opportunity for a few dozen leaders per year, each Leadership Akron class explores the inner workings of our community and what makes it great. With behind the scenes, VIP access to top decision makers and venues, our leaders graduate from the program not only with an increased understanding of the area, but also of their own passions for community service.

**"Leadership Akron brings together area leaders from many different sectors and exposes them to critical elements of a successful, thriving community. The program allows for a very unique opportunity to build relationships. Participants are much more aware of how their community works, how agencies interact and have a better understanding of how they can use their talents to enhance the lives of others."**

**- Signature Program Class 32 graduate**

## YOUR NEXT STEPS

Do you have a leader in mind who would be a great addition to the Signature Program? Please submit their name at [www.leadershipakron.org/signatureprogram](http://www.leadershipakron.org/signatureprogram).

*Applications are currently available online. The deadline to complete them is April 21st.*



## AN IMMERSION EXPERIENCE FOR AKRON LEADERS

*"You shouldn't lead in a community you don't love. And you can't love a community you don't know."*



This proverb concisely captures why the work of Leadership Akron matters. I was reminded of it when our Signature Class 33 explored the Summit Lake neighborhood on their recent Civic Leadership Day. On this day we use the lens of a neighborhood to explore the dimensions of civic leadership – from national politics, to local government, to neighborhood partnerships. As the class connected with the leaders in the Summit Lake neighborhood, their assumptions and perceptions about the neighborhood and its assets changed. Seeing this neighborhood through the lenses of those who live and lead there had a transformational effect.

In this respect they were retracing the steps of the neighborhood and community partners that are active in Summit Lake today. These partners are modeling the way, showing that community revitalization should be done with, not to or for, those already in the neighborhood. The partners involved in the Reimagine the Civic Commons project are finding that this approach to community development may take longer. It may take them out of their comfort zone. And it may involve people from completely different backgrounds working side by side. And it turns out to be more sustainable for the long haul: when all the voices come into the conversation about shaping the future, they become more engaged in creating and owning it.

If this kind of work sounds compelling, you or someone in your organization may want to explore Leadership Akron's Signature Program (Application Deadline: April 21). In its own way, the Signature Program brings some of the same elements to the leaders we serve that the Reimagining Civic Commons project is bringing to the partners involved. For our participants, Leadership Akron is an effort to take their leadership impact to the next level. First, though, they take the time to listen hard, connect with the people who are already active in shaping Greater Akron. While this takes longer than just getting more involved, it's also transformational: it changes their perceptions of Greater Akron and unlocks new possibilities. It also brings the leaders in the class together with counterparts from different backgrounds, and puts them in situations out of their comfort zone. In the end, they have a stronger connection to one another and to Akron, and they're ready to create and own their impact for Akron over the long haul.

In the same way that partners involved at Summit Lake are Re-Imagining the Civic Commons, the leaders in our Signature Program come to reimagine their leadership in a community they have come to know and love more than ever. Just as the Civic Commons partners will see the neighborhoods they're working in differently because of the people and discoveries they've encountered, graduates of Leadership Akron's Signature Program will see our community differently because of their experiences.

*-Mark Scheffler, President*