



## **2026-27 Program Information and Guidelines**

### ***Application Deadline is Friday, May 29, 2026, 5 p.m.***

***Note: Applications must be submitted online.***

### **About the Program**

Leadership Paducah is a leadership development program coordinated by the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce. Established in 1984, the participants selected for 2026-27 will become Class #40. The program is directed to individuals who demonstrate leadership qualities and exposes them to a variety of professional development topics and community issues. It is an educational opportunity that broadens perspectives and enables participants to gain a deeper understanding of community dynamics and public issues. Classes typically meet in different locations around the community each month, exploring a major topic covered by knowledgeable speakers and panels, tours, group activities, demonstrations, and class discussion.

### **Objectives and Benefits**

- Learn how the community runs for a broader and deeper perspective of the community and your role
- Visit local sites and facilities
- Meet local and state leaders
- Develop and expand network of contacts
- Build friendships and working relationships with class members
- Give back to the community as an individual volunteering and through involvement with a group project
- Improve your skills through professional development opportunities

### **Who Should Apply**

The Leadership Paducah program is open to residents and individuals who live and/or work in the Paducah area. Non-employed community volunteers may also apply. Applicants from a non-Chamber member business may apply, however preference will be given to Chamber members and non-members will pay a higher tuition rate.

## How to Apply

Applications are available online at [www.paducahchamber.org](http://www.paducahchamber.org). The deadline for submission is Friday, May 29, 2026, at 5 p.m. Individuals selected for the program will be notified of their acceptance by no later than June 21. The application is to be completed online.

The application must be accompanied by two letters of recommendation and a confirmation of the employer verifying their understanding of the attendance and tuition requirements. If the applicant is self-employed, the applicant should also sign as the employer. If applying for a scholarship, please include additional information if requested.

- ✓ Applicant Check List: Completed application and two letters of reference. If applying for a scholarship requiring additional information, include the additional information stating why you are applying.

## Attendance

Leadership Paducah requires a strict time commitment. With the honor and privilege of being a Leadership Paducah class member comes the responsibility of wholehearted participation. Class members must attend a minimum of 80% of the sessions and participate in the community project with classmates. The community project will take additional time outside of day sessions. Full participation is best in order to get the most out of the activities of the program. It is understood that life presents last-minute circumstances or unpredictable situations over which one has no control. The required 80% attendance allows for such events as illness and business conflicts. Arriving late or leaving early is highly discouraged. If you are unable to make the time commitment, it is not in your best interest to apply. Participation in the August retreat is mandatory.

## Class Schedule and Payment Information

This year's schedule is included. The program begins with an opening reception on August 6, 2026, and concludes with graduation on June 3, 2027. The overnight mandatory retreat is scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 2 p.m. and concluding at 4 p.m. on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The class will be introduced at a Power in Partnership Breakfast on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and will meet monthly beginning in September. Class members attend the monthly Power in Partnership Breakfast followed by a day of programming until approximately 5 p.m. each session. An additional optional one-day trip to Frankfort during the State Legislative Session will be offered in February for an additional fee. All required programming with materials, meals, and lodging are included in the tuition fee of \$1,800 for Chamber members and \$2,100 for non-Chamber members. For the 2026-27 class, there is an optional three-payment plan available for Chamber member applicants, which must be requested at the time of acceptance. Payment will be due by August 9 (\$900); November 1 (\$450), and January 3 (\$450).

## 2026-27 Class Schedule

Date and Time	Session	Topic
August 6; 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Opening Reception	Get to know each other
August 14-15; Depart Paducah at 2 p.m. on 8/14 and return by 4 p.m. on 8/15	Overnight retreat - Mandatory	Overnight retreat at 4-H Camp
September 3; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class Commerce Center	Professional Development
October 1; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	History & Tourism
November 5; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Education
December 3; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Government
January 7; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Communications
February 4; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Human Needs
February TBD; 6:30 a.m. – 10 p.m.*	Frankfort Trip	State Legislative Session
March 4; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Business & Economy
April 1; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Transportation
May 13 ; 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	PIP Breakfast; Class	Health Care
June 5; 7:30 a.m. – Noon	Graduation at PIP Breakfast	Optional activities following

\*Frankfort trip: optional but strongly encouraged.

If you have conflicts with these dates, it is advised you apply for a future class.

## Individual/Group Project

**Individual:** Participants are expected to earn a minimum of 30 “volunteer points” by participation in the community for their individual project.

**Group:** Most classes have organized a community service project and all class members are expected to participate. Classes in the past have chosen a Chamber member non-profit organization to receive funds from a project/event organized by the class. For example: Class #33 raised funds for Starfish Orphan Ministry to build 1,000 beds for children; Class #34 raised funds for Lifeline Recovery Center; Class #35 raised funds for Child Watch; Class #36 raised funds for Paducah Day Nursery, Class #37 raised funds for New Pathways for Children, Class #38 raised funds for Family Service Society, and Class #39 is current raising funds for Paducah Cooperative Ministries.

## Selection Process

The class will be selected by a committee made up of members appointed by the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Leadership Paducah Alumni Association Board of Directors. Leadership Paducah is a competitive opportunity. It is anticipated that not everyone who applies will be invited to be in the class. Leadership Paducah strives to maintain an occupational, ethnicity, age and gender balance among the participants.

## Tuition and Scholarships

Tuition is \$1,800 for Chamber members and \$2,100 for non-Chamber members. The following scholarships are available:

\_\_\_\_\_ Small Business provided by the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce. A scholarship of one-half of the tuition is available for a small business owner or designated employee of a small business with 15 or fewer employees. The business must have been a Chamber member for the previous two years. To apply for the scholarship, please include additional detailed information explaining why you are applying for this scholarship.

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Profit Organization Representative provided by the Rotary Club of Paducah. A scholarship of one-half of the tuition is available for a representative of a non-profit organization that is a member of the Chamber.

\_\_\_\_\_ Self-employed General Scholarship provided by The Leadership Paducah Alumni Association. A scholarship of one-half of the tuition is available for an individual who is self-employed. To apply for the scholarship, please include additional detailed information explaining why you are applying for this scholarship.

\_\_\_\_\_ African American Scholarship provided by the McCracken County Community Career Endowment. A scholarship of up to 100% of tuition is available for an African American applying for the program. To apply for the scholarship, please include additional detailed information explaining why you are applying for this scholarship.

Tuition covers all required programming with meals, retreat, monthly Chamber breakfasts, and materials. The Frankfort trip is optional and is an additional fee. Any Leadership Paducah participant who accepts a scholarship and does not complete the program may be asked to reimburse the funds. No reimbursement will be made to an employer who pays the tuition for an employee if the employee leaves their employment during the program.