

1. What was the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project was, if chosen, to immerse myself in the history, culture and economic development of Prince William County. I had recently been appointed as the first full time director of the Mason Enterprise Center Prince William. I had worked at the GMU Manassas Campus for eighteen months on a Veterans training program, but was not equipped to successfully take up a leadership role in this county. The program that I applied to and was accepted for, "Leadership Prince William" unites a group of dedicated and diverse leaders committed to growing and strengthening this community. Leadership Prince William educates a select number of individuals about the societal and economic opportunities within the Prince William area. The influential people then pass on the lessons learned and skills they have honed to others in the community. Leadership Prince William builds a network of colleagues with similar interests from diverse business and personal backgrounds. This serves participants in both professional and personal networking opportunities long after graduation. It is a nine month commitment. Alumni use their diverse talents, skills and unique perspectives to address community-wide challenges, identify viable alternatives and help forge the future of Prince William.

The Leadership Prince William experience offers immediate and long- range benefits to your professional advancement and to the community and beyond.

- Meeting and interacting with current community leaders
- Enhancing teambuilding skills and individual achievement
- Exploring long-term opportunities for community involvement
- Developing lifelong contacts
- Learning innovative approaches to dealing with community and business challenges
- Becoming part of an active network of citizens working together for the common good
- Learning to collaborate and enhance creative problem-solving skills
- Expanding your opportunities within the civic and business community
- Opportunities to share innovative and successful ideas, viewpoints and approaches

2. What steps did you take to ensure the project was successful?

The program allows for one absence. More than one and you cannot graduate. I made it a personal commitment to schedule these day long classes and to complete the homework and related assignments so that I would be able to graduate with my classmates. I have three remaining classes to complete before graduation in June.

3. What was the outcome?

To date I have participated in Emergenetics Training so that I know my strengths as a leader and have learned much about interacting with others whose strengths are not like mine, but equally important to leadership. I have become active in both Chambers of Commerce participating in their respective "economic development" committees. I have taken a more active role at the Manassas Campus most recently volunteering for the "Health & Fitness Expo" Planning Committee and recruiting the vendors for the fair.

4. What did you learn from this process?

By choosing and participating in the year long program "Leadership Prince William", I have broadened my understanding and appreciation of Prince William County from their Parks and Recreation system to their Criminal Justice System. I had the opportunity to shadow the County's Attorney to witness firsthand how court proceedings are reviewed and how the justice system through the trial process attempts to see that all are treated fairly. I have learned to develop relationships among my peers. I have opened up to participating on committees both within the Chambers, the County Economic Development as well as George Mason University. While I have not yet volunteer to serve on a social service board, I am sensitive to their needs and understand the morale requirement to give back to one's community. We keep a journal of our experience and we report back monthly on our experiences and on our relationships. Amazing things are happening as a result of this experience.