South Wood County Teen Leadership is a hands-on program for high school sophomores who have the potential to become involved in their school and community – it’s a program for new leaders, not those already serving in leadership positions. Since 2006, over 225 students from five local high schools have graduated from Teen Leadership.

Participation includes curriculum, meeting a community leader, grantmaking, and a community project.
How does Teen Leadership work?

Meeting once a month, August through May, participants . . .

- Learn about adaptive leadership through Sean Covey's book, 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens
- Have fun and expand their world by building relationships with peers from five local school districts
- Experience the importance of teamwork and collaboration, and gain confidence in organizing others to reach a common goal
- Learn and use adaptive skills (communication, leadership, conflict management, decision making and time management)
- Select, plan and complete a community service project
- Review applications and award a $2,000 grant to one local nonprofit that is addressing teen issues
- Discover ways to identify and use community resources toward positive change
- Meet a community leader to learn about leadership in action
- Learn how civic engagement and philanthropy support a community that works well for all people
- Develop a better understanding of the south Wood County area and the role that teens can play

Schedule

Aug – Orientation
Introduction to Teen Leadership; interactive sessions, meet community leaders, community project, grantmaking

Sep – Opening Retreat
Operation Teamwork; team building, values, goals, self-awareness

Oct – Local History
History & Entrepreneurism; experience the south Wood County area's historical assets

Nov – Community Stewardship
Lending a Hand; select a community project

Dec – Leadership I
Community Leadership in Action; lunch with community leaders

Jan – Leadership II
Exploring Community Philanthropy; Teen Leaders award a local grant

Feb – Judicial Systems
Law & Order; lunch with Wood County Judges

Mar – Education, Diversity & Conflict
Embracing our Differences; experience University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Apr – Community Project
Contributing Locally; complete community project

May – Graduation
Recognition Event; celebrate with friends, family, community members

“There are different types of leaders and all are highly effective in their own way.”
How do I apply?

Students may apply in the spring of their freshman year for participation during their sophomore year. Application forms are at all high schools in Nekoosa, Pittsville, Port Edwards and Wisconsin Rapids. Complete the form which includes consent signatures of a parent/guardian and the school principal, and provide one letter of recommendation. Mail to Incourage Community Foundation.

The Teen Leadership Advisory Committee selects participants from all schools in the south Wood County area, representing public, private and home schools, diverse backgrounds and various decision-making styles and perspectives. Once selected, a $50 participant fee is payable at Orientation in August; scholarships may be available for applicants seeking financial assistance for the fee.

Advisory Committee

Guadalupe Ancel, Community Representative
Kurt Heuer, Wisconsin Rapids Police Department
Mike Kumm, Nekoosa Public Schools
Coleton LaBarre, Student Representative
Kathi Stebbs-Hintz, Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools
Dawn Vruwink, Incourage Community Foundation
Zach Vruwink, City of Wisconsin Rapids
Jeff Whitrock, Pioneer Bank
Sue Zirnhelt, Lincoln High School Volunteer Center

Contact

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“Being a good leader means knowing how to do things that are beneficial to everyone involved, not just yourself.”
Thank you to last year’s sponsors for supporting 2014-15 South Wood County Teen Leadership

American Family Insurance – Tom Schneider Agency
Bull’s Eye Credit Union
City of Wisconsin Rapids – Helen’s Zoo House
Family Natural Health Foods
Feldner/Ritchay Funeral Home
Great Expectations
Highland Training & Development
Incourage Community Foundation
McMillan Memorial Library
Nekoosa Area Senior/Community Center
O’Leary Orthodontics
Opportunity Development Centers
Paper City Savings Association
Pioneer Bank
Renaissance Learning
Riverview Medical Center
Solarus
University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Walker Cranberry Company
Wood County Courthouse
Wood County Criminal Justice Taskforce
YMCA Camp Alexander