

## *U Lead: Growing Minnesota Leaders*

**Program outcomes of the U-Lead program in the State of Minnesota, coordinated by the University of Minnesota Extension Service, 2002 – 2004.**

To analyze outcomes associated with the U-Lead program, The University of Minnesota administered a pre- and post-assessment using The Community Leadership Program Survey developed by Dr. Kenneth Pigg of the University of Minnesota. Donna Rae Scheffert, Leadership Development Specialist at the University of Minnesota, conducted the study. A research team led by Ben Winchester of the Center for Small towns became involved to objectively analyze the results in the spring of 2004.

### **Who were the Emerging Leadership Program Survey Participants?**

A total of 103 participants responded to the survey.

#### **Demographics**

Average Age of participants	40
<b>Gender:</b> Male	45.2%
Female	54.8
<b>Marital Status:</b> Married	95.7%
<b>Number of years participants lived in their community</b>	
Less than 5 years	15%
5 to 15 years	18%
15 to 25 years	17%
25 years or more	46%
<b>Percentage with family members living in the community</b>	81.3%
<b>Employment</b>	
Full time	44.7%
Employed part-time	14.9%
Self-employed	34%
Homemaker	5.3%
Other	1%
<b>Education</b>	
High School Graduate or GED	13.8%
Vocational, tech or business	22.3%
Some college	13.8%
College graduate	39.4%
Post college / Graduate work	10.6%

<b>Total Household Income.</b>	
Less than 10,000	0%
At least 10,000 less than 20,000	3.3%
At least 20,000 less than 30,000	10.8%
At least 30,000 less than 50,000	23.9%
At least 50,000 less than 100,000	46.7%
More than 100,000	9.6%
Missing / Refused	5.4%

Note: When totals do not reach 100%, data is missing.

## Program Outcomes

- **Participants were more active in local community organizations.**
- Before the program, 68% of participants held a leadership position in at least one organization. **Following the program, 78% held leadership positions** in at least one organization.
- A total of 275 active and leadership status positions were held in community organizations after the leadership program by participants, **an average of 3.4 organizations per participant.**

*“There is a tendency to stay in the shadows, be a manager, and not be in front. But leaders must take a stand on an issue and help drive the public forward. The program sets you up to lead rather than to manage issues.”*

*A Minnesota Mayor  
and Program Participant*

### **Top outcomes – according to participants**

- I have knowledge of local, county and state resources.
- I improved my public speaking skills.
- I think that I am better informed about public issues and government than most people.
- I articulate a convincing vision for the future of my community.
- I know how to change things in my community.
- I understand how new ideas are adopted in my community.
- I try to increase analysis and reasoning skills.
- I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.
- I know the difference between management and leadership.
- I work at developing new leaders within my community.
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- I actively express my ideas and opinions about my community.

## Testimonials

### A Positive Change...

*"I am always hesitant to get in a leadership role. Someone else would be better at it, more organized, more knowledgeable... But it has hit home that I don't have to be the 'best' one out there, I just have to be willing to try and willing to take the steps to get involved. I really can make a difference if I want to.*

*"Going through the program, the path of making a difference by leadership is clear. It gives you the map and the compass!"*

### A Good Investment...

100% of participants believed the program was worth their time and effort, and worth the public investment.

*"Our communities need a core group of couples and individuals who know the importance of maintaining service groups, providing direction through board of directors and official positions and getting more members of the community involved."*

*"I've learned so much about the area that I have decided to plant my roots in for my life remaining. I met people and learned how small communities have just as much to offer as large communities."*

## Summary of Earlier Studies

The goal of the U-Lead program is to build the skills and confidence of emerging, existing and elected leaders. Cohort groups of U-Lead participants who experience leadership education over a longer period of time have the best chance of building experiencing positive outcomes. In 2002, a study of 183 persons from eight U-Lead cohort groups that met from 1996 – 2002 was done.

Participants in the U-Lead program experienced:

- Five major broad impacts: A sense of shared future and purpose, civic engagement, personal growth and self-efficacy, community commitment and community knowledge.
- Enhancements in 43 specific areas of leadership development including skills, aspirations and knowledge.
- Renewal of leadership commitment by taking on leadership roles and/or becoming active in a new group.
- *Value for their time and money, with 95% saying the program was "well worth it!"*