In rural communities we understand that leadership is not a position, it’s an activity! Anyone at any time has the opportunity to grow the skills to be a leader. The purpose of RDI’s Rural Community Leadership Program (RCLP) is to connect rural residents to each other and to their communities in a way that promotes vitality in rural places. Our leadership training is based on the belief that vital rural communities develop from:

- A broad base of diverse, knowledgeable, skilled, and connected local leaders
- Effective organizations
- Productive collaborations among all voices in a community

Training & Hands-On Learning
The training typically consists of 45 class hours held over approximately six months. Typically, classes are delivered in English, and a bilingual trainer is present for those needing interpretation. Participant materials will be offered in both English and Spanish whenever possible.

The training emphasizes an interactive and facilitative style rather than lectures. It draws on the knowledge and skills of those in the room, augmented by short lessons, activities, and class member experience.

A typical class includes about 25–35 individuals (ranging from youth to retired seniors) with leadership experience from emerging to seasoned. This training is designed for a diverse mix of community members representing business, sovereign nations, government, nonprofit sectors, and others, and connects many different voices on the challenges and opportunities faced by rural places. Values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are woven throughout the experience.
Participation
A nominating committee of known community leaders identifies and invites possible participants (like you) to apply. Participants are expected to attend all sessions and complete the class project. Each class selects a community project that they work on together which provides participants a unique opportunity to apply the skills being taught by the curriculum to a real-life situation.

Cost and Materials
The cost of the program and materials is covered; food and beverages are also provided. Participants are responsible for travel to and from the trainings.

Impacts of the Program
When past graduates were asked about how the leadership program impacted their lives and communities, they reported the following*:

- 82% said the program increased the number of community leaders in their town
- Volunteerism for participants increased nearly four-fold
- 85% reported classes helped them create a better future for their community
- 89% increased their appreciation of their community assets
- 90% expanded their network and resources
- 92% indicated working more effectively in teams
- Most described participation as a “life changing experience”


The ideal candidate is someone who is looking to...

- **Serve**: Those who have an expressed desire to serve their rural community
- **Expand Skills**: Those who are working toward cultivating and expanding their leadership skills to advance within their organization or personal lives
- **Get Connected**: Those who would like to get connected outside of their present sector, industry, or field
- **Make a Difference**: Those who would like to cultivate a multi-faceted approach to solving problems by working across sectors and networks

Contact Us!
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Help Lead the Change
You Want to See

“[In this course I learned so much, I became convinced that a person can grow a concept into a team effort to help their community! This is a fantastic course, well worth the time and effort to attend. Given the chance, take this course, you will build relationships, friendships and your community!]”