

Valley Leadership Class 36 Community Impact

June 10, 2015 (Phoenix, AZ) – Class 36 of Leadership Institute, Valley Leadership’s flagship program, completed its program year on June 5, after presenting the results of collaborative group work benefiting Arizona communities. Through high quality education, unprecedented access, and an innovative network, Valley Leadership goes beyond traditional leadership programs by empowering already proven leaders to advance their passions and accelerate their pursuits.

As the Valley’s premier leadership organization, Valley Leadership boasts a proven and long-standing track record of making deep impacts on the community. VL’s roots date back to the late 1970s when a group of Valley visionaries recognized the need to identify and develop the next generation of leadership. Almost 40 years later, this vision has produced nearly 2,000 alumni—83 percent of which still reside in Arizona.

VL curates each Leadership Institute cohort through a robust selection and matching process that builds a diverse group primed to deepen their passions and advance their pursuits...together. Fifty-three members of Class 36 completed the nine-month leadership development program, which requires attendance at nine issue-focused program days in addition to the significant group work, community tours, and other program obligations.

The group projects required of each Leadership Institute class are just one example of the ways that VL participants and alumni make significant and lasting impact on local communities. Following VL tradition, group projects are judged and scored by a panel of alumni and key community partners, based on criteria such as understanding an issue of regional importance; creating and completing a usable project; practicing and modeling civil discourse skills throughout; connecting with both classmates and community leaders; and making a positive impact on the community.

The winning project for Class 36 organized the efforts of a local editor and artist to create a book for early childhood readers. The book, “Who knew it grew from Poo?” teaches young readers about the science of aquaponics, a system of aquaculture in which the waste produced by farmed fish or other aquatic animals supplies nutrients for plants grown hydroponically, which in turn purify the water. The approach uses 90 percent less water (ideal for desert living) and can produce up to 3 times more produce at a faster rate than traditional urban gardening. The judges selected this project for several reasons, including: it starts with education, it has broad outreach, and it inspired people to action.

The six other group projects from Class 36 were:

Arizona 2030 – Launched Arizona 2030, a collaborative platform that connects businesses, community organizations, and individuals committed to solving Arizona’s biggest challenges, to advance ideas and solutions dedicated to creating a better future for all Arizona citizens by the year 2030.

Daring Adventures – Led a comprehensive “AZ Gives Day” campaign that raised \$70,000, which is being invested into the nonprofit agency’s infrastructure to support its sustainability goals.

Grant Network – Launched the Grant Network, a new and improved on-line grants and knowledge platform that serves as Arizona’s premier resource for the nonprofit sector to locate funding, identify partnerships and connect with sponsors.

hART Gallery– Installed youth art in public spaces around the Valley, providing exposure for important youth art programs, and beautiful locally sourced art that is available for purchase to benefit the partnering nonprofits agencies.

Sojourner Center – Leveraged connections to provide an update to the donor center for the organization including, new children’s play area, administrative office spaces, and donor collection area. In addition approximately \$2,000 was raised to help the nonprofit agency fund other improvements needed.

United Food Bank – Constructed the VL Pavilion at the United Food Bank, a shaded structure that welcomes visitors to the food bank and recognizes the nonprofit agency’s donors.

“The quality of the Class 36 projects is certainly impressive,” Christy Moore, President & CEO, said. “What excites us most is the evidentiary impact the program has had on these leaders to accelerate their pursuits and advance their passions. We continue to be amazed by the passionate work the groups do on their own time.”

Class 36 membership includes Past Honoree for Valley Leadership’s Man of the Year award, Gary Trujillo, policy, communications, and marketing experts, healthcare administrators, attorneys and small business owners, nonprofit executives and philanthropists. The final Class 36 program day was sponsored by APS, and hosted at Gateway Community College. Judges include: Katherine Cecala, VL Class 16, Chief Operating Officer, Valley of the Sun United Way; Greg Ensell, Cox Communications; Ilana Lowery, Editor-in-Chief, Phoenix Business Journal; Michael Ponzio, VL Class 35, Marketing & Events Manager, Arizona Community Foundation; Ashley Shick, Community Relations Manager, KTVK 3TV KPHO CBS 5; Tina Marie Tentori, Director, Community Affairs and Executive Director, Foundation, APS.

Valley Leadership’s Class 37 will commence its programming year in late August; the class membership is expected to be announced in mid-July. Valley Leadership is currently seeking group project proposals for Class 37. Community organizations interested in submitting a proposal should visit their website: www.valleyleadership.org.

ABOUT VALLEY LEADERSHIP

As the Valley’s premier leadership organization, Valley Leadership boasts a proven and long-standing track record of making deep impacts on the community.

Our roots date back to the late 1970s when a group of Valley visionaries recognized the need to identify and develop the next generation of leadership. Our founders imagined an annual succession of educated change agents dedicated to the best possible future for our region.

Almost 40 years later, this vision has produced nearly 2,000 alumni. Through high quality education, unprecedented access and an innovative network, Valley Leadership goes beyond traditional leadership programs by empowering already proven leaders to advance their passions and accelerate their pursuits.