



June 4, 2016

Contact: Christy Moore
christy@valleyleadership.org
(602) 952-6760 x 1

For Immediate Release

Valley Leadership Class 37 Community Impact

Class 37 of the Leadership Institute, Valley Leadership's flagship program, completed its program year on June 4, 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 youth, high-potential and 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 3,000 alumni from its multigenerational programming —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 advance their passions and accelerate their pursuits together. Fifty-six members of Class 37 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 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 37 increased awareness and participation in the Arizona Public School Tax Credit, particularly among low income schools. They leveraged existing efforts, built new resources, and forged strategic, game-changing partnerships. The resulting impact has been significant in terms of increased reach as well as anticipated tax credit donations. H&R Block, one of the project's strategic partners, reported a 150% increase in Public School Tax Credit donations from their clients - a direct result of this group project. The judges selected this project for several reasons, including: it starts with education, it has broad outreach, and it inspired people to action.

The judges had a hard time selecting a winner this year due to each group passionately presenting their successful projects, which included pairing adult mentors to high-risk youth, bringing awareness to LGBTQ youth through art, developing a screening tool for Asperger's, ensuring that youth in low-income neighborhoods have free, accessible little libraries, granting wishes to the elderly and teaching computer coding to youth.

Class 38 of the Leadership Institute will commence its programming year in late August; the class membership is expected to be announced in mid-July.

###