



NEWS RELEASE

Washburn University's Leadership Institute Announces High School Leadership Academy February 1, 2017 For Immediate Release

TOPEKA – Washburn University's Leadership Institute has been awarded a grant from the Topeka Community Foundation to launch a Washburn University High School Leadership Academy. The academy is a collaborative initiative between Washburn University and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce to develop leadership skills in high school students and create a greater awareness about ways they can become involved in influencing positive change in their communities. The program will also introduce participants to potential career opportunities in the region post-graduation.

"This grant maximizes our investment in youth leadership by partnering with Washburn University and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce," said Marsha Pope, President, Topeka Community Foundation. "As we look to develop home-grown talent in Topeka, we believe this grant opens doors for collaborative work in finding opportunities to benefit our community."

The seven-day summer academy will pair Shawnee County high school students with members of the Washburn Leadership Institute who will serve as mentors. Throughout the week, students will meet with government, education, health, nonprofit and business entities to better understand how they work together to contribute to community development and change.

"Not only will the students become exposed to community initiatives, but our community's organizations and leaders will have the opportunity to gather the input and ideas of these young minds," said, Matt Pivarnik, President and CEO, Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce. "The more we involve our high school students in the leadership of community change, the stronger our community will be moving forward."

Over the past six years, the Washburn Leadership Institute has hosted the Leadership Challenge Event™ which has reached more than 750 high school and college students from across the country in an effort to promote leadership development in a creative environment.

“We have a strong commitment to developing leadership programs in partnership with our high schools and community partners,” said Michael Gleason, Director, Washburn University Leadership Institute. “The high school academy is the next step in furthering our goal of providing leadership development opportunities to high school students. We are truly grateful for this generous grant from the Topeka Community Foundation and for the Chamber’s commitment to this program.”

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