

Youth Leadership Elberton FACT SHEET

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Program Sponsors: City of Elberton, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, and Elbert County Extension Service

Program Description: Youth Leadership Elberton is a community youth program, which was established in 2001 and rotates every other year with the Adult Leadership Program. Planning and fundraising efforts for the next youth program begin in August. The twelve (12) week program begins the 1st week in January, with an all day Retreat. The remaining classes are held on Thursday evenings from 6 pm - 8:30 pm in the Staff Development Room of the City Municipal Building. Graduation is held the last week of March which signifies the end of the program for the year.

Purpose: The community determined that leadership is the critical element that determines the future growth and development of Elberton. The community is responsible for teaching strong leadership skills to the youth. To teach these skills, the sponsoring organizations employed the University of Georgia, J. W. Fanning Institute instructional material. The program continues to expand by offering additional opportunities for youth to increase awareness of self and others in areas such as communication, values, group dynamics, problem solving and decision making, understanding leadership, diversity, collaboration, goal setting, community assessment, local economic development and government, managing conflict as well as proper etiquette, finance, preparing for an interview, and finally touring the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta. Students are also required to complete a Community Service Project (CSP) by using the Servant Leadership model, which is based on the concept that through serving others, one reaches the truest, most effective form of leadership.

The program consists of 15-20 participants from the tenth, eleventh, and twelve graders which are selected from the local high school. A selection committee, which is comprised of guidance counselors, board of education administration and the high school principal, help to publicize the program and solicit nominations from teachers for potential participants. Nominees are required to go through an application process. The goal of the selection committee is to select participants that represent the diversity of the community in terms of age, race, gender, culture, education and geographics of the community. Participants must have the direct consent of their legal guardian prior to beginning the class.

Facilitators are obtained through the Fanning Institute for Leadership, Athens Technical College Elberton Campus, Elbert County Extension Agency, local school system, local business leaders and local government personnel.

Leadership Elberton remains a success due to the continued support of the community and their desire to develop strong leadership skills in its youth.