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# YOUTH LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

## DEVELOPING A NEW GENERATION OF STRONG EFFECTIVE LEADERS

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### *~ Informational Sheet ~*

Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) is a multicultural leadership program designed to help youth develop strong, effective leadership skills to work in diverse community settings. The program assists youth in learning about themselves, working with others, and engaging in meaningful action. The six building blocks of YLI are learning, community, action, culture, character, and leadership.

#### **Program Goals Include:**

1. Develop youths' understanding of themselves and their cultures.
2. Equip youth with the knowledge, skills and qualities needed for leadership.
3. Encourage youths' appreciation for the culture of others and promote cross cultural leadership.
4. Build youth leadership through meaningful engagement in real community issues.

#### **Training Topics**

A range of topics are covered over the course of the program. We use an experiential training approach where participants engage in interactive learning activities, learn from one another, and reflect on the process. A sample of topics include:

- Communication/cross-cultural communication
- Inclusion/cross-cultural understanding
- Culture, history and traditions
- Problem solving/conflict resolution
- Project planning
- Academic success

#### **Program Activities**

- **Leadership Retreats** – During multicultural retreats, youth explore concepts of leadership, strengthen cross cultural relationships, and participate in experiential learning activities that focus on working effectively with others.
- **Cultural Exploration Sessions** – During these weekly sessions youth meet in cultural groups to explore their culture and heritage and its impact on their leadership style and personal development.
- **Action Teams** – Weekly team meetings centered around learning about topics of interest to the youth. Each team develops service projects around their passions.
- **School Support** – Weekly session for participants who need help with homework, resumes, scholarship searches and other academic support. Youth will receive 1:1 support from staff and volunteers.

*See reverse side for specific dates.*

## **Participant Criteria**

The program requires a school year commitment. Youth participants must agree to attend and participate in all components of the program leadership retreats, cultural exploration sessions and action teams. Graduation from the program is determined by active participation in all program components and demonstrated commitment to YLI, learning, and personal development.

### **Youth participants:**

- 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Live in Saint Paul or east metro area.
- Be reflective of the diversity of the community.
- Complete an application.
- Submit a letter of recommendation

## **Parent and Youth Open House and Orientation**

### *Open House ~ Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30pm*

Come meet the staff, Youth Mentors and hear about the program! Hosted at the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation – 451 Lexington Pkwy. N. St. Paul, MN 55104

### *Orientation ~ Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30pm*

Required for youth and a parent/guardian. Orientation is held at the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation,

### **Program Dates are as follows:**

#### *Multicultural Learning Retreats*

2-3 days occurring in October, February and May

Locations vary – Amherst H. Wilder Foundation or Camp Voyageur, Mound, MN

#### *Cultural Exploration Sessions*

Meets every week from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm on Tuesdays. Sessions begin November 2018  
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

#### *Action Teams*

Meets every week from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm on Thursdays. Sessions begin in November 2018  
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

#### *School Support*

These session will vary in location and time based on interest and need. Sessions begin November 2018

### **Program Support**

The program is run by Wilder staff members. Additional facilitators and cultural coaches are recruited from Wilder Leadership alumni and community partners.

### **Youth Mentors**

Youth Mentors are former program participants who have demonstrated leadership qualities and a clear commitment to self-improvement that exemplifies YLI values. Mentors develop, implement, and deliver program curriculum for the multicultural retreats in partnership with program staff.

**Applications can be e-mailed, faxed or mailed to: Coulette Columbus-Powers, Youth Leadership Initiative,  
451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul, MN 55104 ~ Fax 651-280-3366~ E-mail YLI@wilder.org  
Questions, please contact Nell Goepel at 651-280-2464.**

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*~ Participant Application ~*  
*(Due by 5:00 pm on Friday, August 31, 2018)*

### Participant Information

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Participant E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_

### *Optional Information*

Ethnic Background(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Communities you are a part of (racial, geographical, cultural) \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) Spoken: English \_\_\_\_\_ Hmong \_\_\_\_\_ Somali \_\_\_\_\_ Spanish \_\_\_\_\_ Oromo \_\_\_\_\_ Karen \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (write in the language). Primary Home Language \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent/Legal Guardian Information

Adult 1 First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Youth \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Adult E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Language Spoken \_\_\_\_\_

I need a translator for English: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Adult 2 First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Youth \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Adult E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Language Spoken \_\_\_\_\_

I need a translator for English: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like my child to participate in the YLI program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature Required**

**Date**

*Youth, please complete side two.*

**Youth, please answer the following questions. Feel free to attach an additional sheet of paper if you need more space to write.**

1. How did you hear about YLI and why are you interested in participating in the program?
2. How have you been involved in your school or community? If you haven't yet, what are a few things you are curious about getting involved with?
3. What are two strengths that you can contribute to this learning community?
4. What do you hope to get out of this leadership program?
5. How do you want to change the world? (If you would like to draw out and explain your answer, please do!)
6. In YLI, we believe that there are six building blocks to becoming a leader in the community: learning, culture, community, action, character, and leadership. Please select one of these topics and tell us why you think it is important to one's leadership journey.

\*In YLI we encourage everyone to try new things and engage participants in a variety of learning activities: arts and crafts, large and small group discussions, cultural simulations, outdoor initiatives, cabin camping, and project planning.

\*\*Please attach one reference letter to application completed by an adult.

**I would like to participate in the YLI Program:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Youth Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application to be e-mailed, faxed or mailed to: Coulette Columbus-Powers, Youth Leadership Initiative,  
451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul, MN 55104 ~ Fax 651-280-3366 ~ E-mail [YLI@wilder.org](mailto:YLI@wilder.org) .  
Questions, please contact Nell Goepel at 651-280-2464.**

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## Youth Leadership Initiative

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### *~ Parent Commitment and Transportation Form ~*

\_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to participate in the 2018-2019 Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) a program of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

- I understand I am responsible to arrange or provide transportation for my youth to and from the program
- I understand the program has many components including, but not limited to, overnight retreats, weekly cultural sessions, action team meetings, creating success initiative and the occasional special events.
- On those occasions when transportation is provided by Wilder, such as for overnight retreats and some special activities, I agree to get my child to the designated pick-up and drop-off sites. I also give permission to the Youth Leadership Initiative to transport my youth by bus or car pool.
- I agree to support my youth's participation in all aspects of the YLI program.
- I will do my best to support the YLI program staff as they work on educational goals with my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Parent or Legal Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

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## Youth Leadership Initiative

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### *~ Youth Commitment Form ~*

- I understand the program has overnight retreats, Tuesday and Thursday weekly programming focusing on cultural exploration, and taking service and action in the community, and occasional special activities. I agree to participate fully in all aspects of the YLI program. If conflicts arise I will notify program staff immediately.
- I understand the program runs from October through May with a graduation celebration in May. I agree to participate from October through May.
- I agree to attend all activities with an open mind and work hard to make this program the best experience possible.
- I agree to follow the Codes of Behavior and Working Agreements set by our group.
- I agree to respect participants, staff and cultures.
- I agree to commit to set educational goals with YLI program staff.
- I understand I am responsible for keeping my parents informed about my transportation needs to and from the program.

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Print Participant Name

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Participant Signature

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Date Signed

Parent Commitment Form on reverse side.

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**~ Letter of Reference ~**

All youth who apply to be a participant in the Youth Leadership Initiative program are required to have an adult complete this letter of reference. **Reference person should not be related to applicant** but should be an adult, for example a counselor, teacher, pastor, or mentor. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. This information will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you for your help and cooperation!

Youth Requesting Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reference \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How frequently are you in contact with this person?

Almost daily     Several times a month     Less than once a month     Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please describe this applicant's potential to be a leader. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please describe a time in which you have seen this person take on a leadership role. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please describe why this program will be beneficial to this person. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Any additional comments? \_\_\_\_\_

| Please rate this applicant on the following: | Above Average | Average | Below Average | Don't Know |
|--|---------------|---------|---------------|------------|
| Ability to work with diverse groups          |               |         |               |            |
| Respectful of others                         |               |         |               |            |
| Responsible                                  |               |         |               |            |
| Takes initiative                             |               |         |               |            |
| Open to new experiences                      |               |         |               |            |
| Enthusiasm                                   |               |         |               |            |
| Emotional maturity                           |               |         |               |            |
| Patience                                     |               |         |               |            |
| Friendliness                                 |               |         |               |            |
| Cooperative                                  |               |         |               |            |
| Ability to speak in front of groups          |               |         |               |            |
| Ability to manage time                       |               |         |               |            |
| Ability to follow through on commitments     |               |         |               |            |

Reference Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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