## 30 in 30s: Ideas to Strengthen Community Leadership Programs

At the 2024 Leadership Summit, we challenged participants to share their most impactful and innovative ideas with the group. This activity was designed to inspire attendees, encourage collaboration, and provide actionable strategies to strengthen community leadership programs.

1. **Empower Alumni Leadership**: Invite past participants to lead a program day, involving current class members in their sessions. Emphasize their graduate status to highlight alumni success. – *Tomi Clifford, Cynthiana Chamber*

2. **Immerse in Stories**: Focus on experiencing where positive change happens by connecting with people's impactful stories. Strive to "be the 'V'" (value in action). – *Christopher Carney, Kentucky 4-H Alum*

3. **Sponsor Recognition**: Feature President's Club Sponsors as breakfast hosts, allowing them to welcome participants. Sponsors love the visibility and engagement. – *Tish Shade, Leadership Frankfort*

4. **Youth-Centered Panels**: Partner with rural impact organizations to incorporate themed youth panels into conferences, adding diverse perspectives. – *Sandi Curd*

5. **Kickstart with Introspection**: Begin the first session with facilitation from experts (e.g., Asbury University) to help participants explore themselves and each other, fostering relationships and setting the program's tone. – *Rob Flaherty, Bullitt County Chamber*

6. **Leadership Academy**: Host a leadership training academy every three years to develop potential leaders for your organization. – *Ann Porter, Kentucky Extension Homemaker*

7. **Continuous Improvement**: Add former graduates to the planning committee. Hold feedback sessions before graduation and use "4 Helpful Lists" to refine and recreate the program annually. – *Lauren Biddle*

8. **Overnight Retreats**: Plan retreats focused on leadership styles, team building, personal and professional growth, and icebreakers to connect participants and set the tone for the program. – *Travis Roberts*

9. **Social Services Simulation**: Incorporate a re-entry simulation for Social Services Day, providing insights into recovery, HR policies, agency reforms, and mindset shifts. – *Scott Murphy*

10. **Group Transportation**: Rent or secure sponsorship for a large vehicle to transport the class together, fostering connections and bonding during commutes. – *Jennifer Bridge*

11. **Respectful Disagreement**: Encourage the principle: "You can always disagree when appropriate, but never be disagreeable." – *Bob Coleman*

12. **Board Basics for Youth**: Introduce a "Board of Directors 101" session to youth programs, teaching the functions and operations of boards. – *Dana Anderson*

13. **Interactive Presentations**: Assign participants fun, five-minute PowerPoint presentations on lighthearted topics (e.g., conspiracy theories or pop culture). These sessions teach presentation skills and boost confidence. – *Tomi Clifford, Cynthiana Chamber*

14. **Alumni Networks**: Establish a leadership alumni group to maintain connections and foster continued engagement. – *Ashtin Warren*

15. **Personalized Gratitude**: Ask two participants per session to write thank-you notes to their favorite guest speakers or leaders. – *Cindy Banks*

16. **Alumni Engagement Events**: Host annual alumni receptions and graduation parties, offering prizes for the class with the highest attendance. – *Kara Sanders*

17. **End-of-Day Wrap-Up**: Send updates and reflections to alumni as part of the program's wrap-up, keeping them informed and engaged. – *Tish Shade, Leadership Frankfort*

18. **Assessment Tools**: Utilize resources like the UK Leadership Priorities Assessment to guide program development.

19. **Community Partnerships**: Leverage alumni, community organizations, and businesses for support and collaboration. – *Brady Shultz, Leadership Montgomery County*

20. **Intergenerational Dialogues**: Dedicate time for adult and youth leaders to engage in guided conversations, fostering mutual learning. – *Ryan Farley*

21. **Alumni Day Chairs**: Assign alumni as day chairs to assist with planning and execution for program days. – *Tish Shade*

22. **Google Nonprofit Grants**: Register for Google's nonprofit program to receive $10,000/month in Google Search Ads, helping boost visibility. – *Jeremy Holbrook*

23. **First Impressions**: Ask the newest program members to share their first impressions to reflect and engage.

24. **Giving Back**: Encourage participants to "pay it forward" by presenting leadership insights from their experience at local, state, or national platforms. – *Cherie Mingins*

25. **Play to Build Relationships**: Incorporate teambuilding and relationship-building activities, reinforcing the idea that "you can learn more about a person in an hour of play than a day of work." – *Melodie Fuller*

26. **Powerful Wrap-Up**: Invite alumni to lead a reflective wrap-up at the end of leadership days, ensuring their continued involvement. – *Tish Shade, Leadership Frankfort*

27. **Dynamic Session Design**: Add creativity to your sessions by blending expert facilitators, engaging activities, and discussions.

28. **Maximize Transport Time**: Use group travel time to encourage networking, storytelling, and camaraderie.

29. **Data-Driven Approaches**: Incorporate assessments and feedback tools to continuously improve the program.

30. **Celebrate Alumni Impact**: Regularly highlight alumni achievements through newsletters, social media, or events to inspire current participants.