

KLA Mission

The Mission of KLA is to develop informed and innovative leaders who will serve our community by skillfully leading it into the future. KLA promises to ...

Educate you through practical sessions with recognized leaders examining the issues that face our community.

Enrich you by building a network of peer and community leaders.

Inspire you to see possibilities of our thriving community.

Challenge you to take action, get involved and make a difference in our community.

"One of the first functions that I attended when I arrived in Warsaw in the fall of 1996 was Kosciusko Leadership Academy. I listened to local planners, Dan Richard and Pat Hudson, discuss the future of planning in Kosciusko County. The following year, I was selected to attend KLA. This great experience broadened my perspective as a young planner to learn about the many facets of the community. It was a great opportunity to network with other professionals from the many organizations that were represented.

"Attending KLA was a defining moment in my professional career. It was the beginning of the Lake City Greenway project, which was my white paper topic. A master plan was developed to assist in planning trails and greenways in the greater Warsaw community. This document has served as the blueprint for three trail segments that have been completed to date: the award winning Beyer Farm Trail; the scenic Winona Lake Heritage Trail through the Village at Winona; and the historic Chinworth Bridge Trail."

Jeff Noffsinger, Syracuse Town Manager



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"As a new resident of Kosciusko County, it was important for me professionally and personally to learn as much as I could about our new community. KLA provided me with an all-encompassing introduction to our new home and gave me a great appreciation for the diversity and strength of Kosciusko County. Since KLA continuously reinvents itself and keeps the curriculum updated, it's a great experience for long-time residents and newcomers alike!"

David Findlay, Lake City Bank



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KOSCIUSKO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



***THE FUTURE IS BORN
IN THE DREAMS OF
LEADERS.***

KOSCIUSKO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

History of KLA

Kosciusko Leadership Academy (KLA) was formed in 1982 when Jean Northenor, Executive Vice-President at Lake City Bank, and Matt Dalton, owner of Dalton Foundries, envisioned a program that would develop, in Jean's words, "young, innovative, enthusiastic leaders with some new ideas."

Jean was often asked to serve on the board of local organizations. She was pleased to be of service to her community, but something began to bother her. Regardless of the board meeting, the same group of local leaders was in attendance. Alarmed by the apparent lack of fresh leadership, she voiced her concern to fellow board member, Matt Dalton. The rest, as they say, is history.

KLA promptly exerted a positive influence in the community. Since 1982, an average of 25 students has graduated each year from KLA, now totaling more than 600 alumni!



"KLA is one of the many uniquely wonderful aspects of our community! Other counties from all over the United States have asked us how Kosciusko County has managed to maintain such a vibrant leadership academy for over a quarter of a century. The answer is simple: we have excited young people who want to be our community leaders for the future. And we have farsighted organizations that sponsor those young people as KLA participants. That tremendous collaboration has led to over 600 KLA graduates who are now making our community a better place to live."
Steve Grill, KLA Moderator, Grace College

KLA Classes

KLA conducts sessions each year that give students access to the frontline leaders in our community. Critical community issues such as County and State Government, Health Care, Education, Agriculture, Business, and Entrepreneurship are thoroughly discussed and examined.

Classes meet every two weeks at various locations throughout the county for the duration of the school year. Sessions provide time to network with classmates, alumni, and presenters. Some examples of past classes and their presenters are:

City, County, and State Government

Ernie Wiggins, *Mayor of Warsaw*
Brad Tandy, *County Council*
Dave Wolkins, *State Representative*

Agri-Business in Kosciusko County

Ron Truex, *Creighton Brothers*
Kelly Easterday, *County Extension Agent*
Chuck Klippel, *Chore-Time Brock*

The Orthopaedic Industry in Kosciusko County

Don McNulty, *DePuy*
Tom Allen, *Biomet*
Brad Bishop, *Zimmer*

The Role of Entrepreneurship in Kosciusko County

Brent Wilcoxson, *Winona Lake Restoration*
Rev. Denny Wilson, *Warsaw Community Church*

The Selection Process

The KLA Selection Committee seeks a cross-section of the community; men and women from different career, education, political, social, cultural, and community backgrounds.

Applicants may be sponsored by their employer, by another organization, or by themselves. Tuition for the program is determined each year. One scholarship per year is also available. This scholarship may be awarded to one individual, or it may be divided between two individuals.



White Papers

The KLA experience culminates with a White Paper Project. Students form teams and research relevant community issues and needs. Class members propose workable solutions in a forum of peers and community leaders. Past projects such as Kosciusko Youth Leadership Academy, Heart of Gold, and The Greenway Project, continue to have a positive impact on our community. As Jean Northenor has put it: "The dreams of the founding board members have [been] and continue to be fulfilled."

Kosciusko Youth Leadership Academy (KYLA) (1991, 1995):

Started by KLA graduates that believed that a program similar to the one attended by adults should be created for youth. KYLA develops leadership skills in the youth of the community, as well as give them a better understanding of what goes on in community government, area businesses, and other facets of life in Kosciusko County that they might not have previously been exposed to.

Heart of Gold (1997): The Heart of Gold program established a venue to publicly recognize and thank local individuals or groups that give of themselves unselfishly by doing good things in the community.

The Greenway Project (1995, 1997, 1998): The Lake City Greenway is an eight mile multi-use trail system for bicycling, walking, jogging, running, and rollerblading. The Greenway, when completed, will run from Winona Lake to the Chinworth Bridge on Old US 30 west of Warsaw.



VISION: TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE LEADERS EQUIPPED TO TACKLE THE FUTURE CHALLENGES OF OUR COMMUNITY.