

## **Culinary Leadership Institute - a farm to community adventure**

**The term “farm” is inclusive i.e. farms, ranches, orchards, hunting preserves, fisheries, apiaries.**

**We invite your participation as a Fellow, Educator, Sponsor or Mentor.**

### **Summary of program**

The Culinary Leadership Institute (CLI) is a one-year intensive initiative focused on developing emerging leaders in the field of agriculture who will impact the Waller County community. Participants will experience situations outside of their current environment.

The objectives are to:

Support local farms.

Strengthen the Waller County community by developing its leaders.

Promote healthy eating.

Our goal is to provide opportunities for participants through cultural and educational interactions between agricultural, business and faith-based communities. We will accomplish this through constructive collaboration between farms/ranches/fisheries and community citizens. Our target audience is participants from small towns and surrounding rural areas of Waller County Texas.

Participants will be chosen from recommendations made by ministerial alliances and chambers of commerce in the target geographical areas. Applicants will submit a one-page statement outlining (1) why I want to participate in the program (2) how I will use what I learned during the program to develop my community. Certificates will be awarded. Once accepted into the program participants will be referred to as Fellows. Certificates of achievement will be presented to Fellows who complete more than 90% of the work. Certificates of attendance will be presented to Fellows who complete less than 90% of the work. Rubrics will be provided for each component of the CLI adventure.

Components of the Culinary Leadership Institute (CLI) include: Opening Retreat, Field Experience Days, Sampler Days, Discovery Days, Mentor-Mentee Relationships and Graduation activities.

The project team that we will use to deliver this leadership institute has diverse skill sets.

Agricultural community leaders will provide educational tours of their operations during Field Experiences. Ministry leaders and business people will participate in the Sampler Days. Discovery Day presenters represent various aspects of the agricultural community. Those who have volunteered to be Mentors are at the top of their respective fields. During the Opening Retreat we will be establishing our plan of work. One of the purposes of Field Experience Days and Sampling Days is for Fellows to learn to translate the food products we observe at various operations into healthy meals that the community can consume. During Discovery Days we participate in a working lunch between the end of presentations and the beginning of workshops to conserve continuity. It's not time efficient to leave the premises in the midst of work. Finally, we analyze outcomes of the CLI and conclude our plan of work during Graduation activities.

### **Purpose, Rationale and Justification**

The purpose of CLI is to provide farm to community adventures that provide insights toward understanding the relationship between sustainable agriculture and community development. We will accomplish this by providing exposure to local farmers, developing agricultural community leaders and promoting healthy eating. We will produce and distribute a historical cookbook. This cookbook will (1) be developed using foods representative of animals/products we witnessed during field experiences (2) feature a brief history of each farm operation. (3) include recipes that are developed or modified to encourage healthy eating habits.

### The rationale

The CLI will address Waller County's underserved population. Waller County is a small underserved area (population 32,000 +) with many living below the poverty line i.e. (1) 16% overall population (2) 11.5 % families (3) 20% under 18 y.o. (4) 12.3% 65 y.o. +. The economy revolves around farming, cattle, forest products, construction and manufacturing. While the 2009-2010 Waller County Community Plan addresses several issues and concerns two observations are especially important for this proposed project. The report lists a lack of mentoring programs and career awareness training for its young people, as well as, stating that one of the county goals is to develop a vibrant economy. CLI addresses challenges outlined in Waller County's Community Plan. As our Fellows move through and complete Mentor-Mentee relationships they will be able to mentor others. Fellows will be exposed to varied careers during the CLI adventure and can share insights with others in the community. Our plan to emphasize the linkages between sustainable agriculture and community development will enhance relationships and economics in the geographic area.

Short term impacts include:

- Focus on emerging leaders.
- Allow Fellows to network within nurturing, small, intimate learning environments.
- Empower and involve Fellows in solving agricultural challenges.
- Provide Fellows with opportunities for collectively identifying planning and implementing solutions to agriculture issues.

Longer term impacts include:

- Fellows will develop relationships that will last a lifetime.
- Fellows will grow professionally, personally, socially.
- Fellows will contribute to the growth of their communities.
- Fellows will make contributions throughout the agricultural community.
- Fellows will receive leadership training and explore cutting edge agriculture issues.
- A network of future leaders will emerge and will pass along this knowledge and new skill sets to the next cadre of emerging leaders.

### The justification

The expected results and products include:

- Establish links between sustainable agriculture and sustainable community development by fostering connections between farmers and community leaders (both emerging and established).
- Promote healthy eating habits within targeted communities.
- Historical cookbook distributed to Waller County libraries, universities/colleges, secondary and trade schools with Food & Nutrition curriculum, county historical museum and Liendo Plantation.

- Speaker's bureau specializing in agricultural issues.
- Placement of CLI activities on existing web pages and multimedia outlets.

We anticipate:

- Community will move toward 21st century thinking regarding the linkages between sustainable agriculture and community development.
- Community will be educated by Fellows about the multidisciplinary aspects of agriculture.
- Fellows will enhance decision-making, critical thinking, analytical and problem solving skills.
- Performance of Fellows in general will be enhanced by the CLI experience.

CLI may also strengthen the competence of participants in agriculture and related areas, as well as, enhance community development by addressing these specific initiatives:

- Encourage Fellows to work in the agriculture industry i.e. farms, ranches, orchards, fisheries, agencies, corporations.
- Encourage Fellows to pursue studies in accredited culinary institutes or encourage pursuit of professional/terminal degrees related to the field of agriculture i.e. D.V.M., Ph.D., D.Sc.
- Encourage Fellows to work in and contribute to the field of agriculture.
- Encourage cultural and educational collaborations.
- Encourage Fellows to develop agricultural awareness and perspectives.
- Encourage Fellows to be receptive to courses, workshops or presentations with agricultural contents/contexts.

### **Dissemination plan**

- Historical Cookbook
- Speakers Bureau
- Alumni Association

### **Graduation**

Fellows and guest (one each) Mentors and guest, Farm/ranch owners and guest will have dinner and activities. At this time Fellows will share the following insights:

- How have you become a better leader?
- Specific leadership skills you developed.
- Personal commitment to giving back to the agriculture community based on this experience.
- Identify three leadership lessons learned through your participation in CLI.
- Describe how your leadership skills were enhanced.