

Comprehensive Curriculum, Coaching and Practice

NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence Program

in collaboration with Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government



Working Together for Strong Communities®



FOCUS ON **RESULTS**

A performance-driven program proven to transform nonprofits for greater impact; designed for organizations in:

- housing
- financing
- community development
- community health
- education
- social services



In your leadership role, you are called upon every day to maintain the delicate balance between the routine and the visionary: day-to-day administrative and personnel management must be handled along with strategic repositioning of your organization to meet changing realities and the development of ever-elusive new sources of funding. As you perform this challenging yet critical balancing act, so many questions arise:

- How to find the time, resources and staff focus to create long-term sustainability without compromising today's needs
- How to re-energize the creative thinking necessary to address bigger-picture issues
- How to respond when organizational challenges appear strategically overwhelming

Leaders like you want and need increasingly sophisticated professional development opportunities, executive coaching and practical guidance that are directly relevant to your work, but most leadership programs are too generic to add much value. With your already heavy workload, any advanced education must address your real work – *not add to it*. The NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence Program (*Achieving Excellence*) is an ideal solution.

NeighborWorks America is committed to educating outstanding leaders and promoting innovation in the not-for-profit arena through this 16-month performance-driven program for experienced not-for-profit or community-serving leaders. Achieving Excellence is a performance program unlike any other – one that takes your skills and knowledge to a level you may not have thought possible. In the process, you will increase your performance – and that of your board and your organization – in a way that is entrepreneurial, sustainable and highly valuable.

THE PROGRAM'S RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Outcomes

You will emerge from this program having significantly advanced your organization's capacity and performance. Some of the specific outcomes you can expect are:

- Definition and comprehensive analysis of a major challenge facing your organization or the communities you serve. If you put the work into it, you can expect to have achieved clear and measurable successes in addressing that challenge throughout the program.
- New and revitalized ways of “seeing” and “leading” – cutting-edge thinking on leadership, management, industry structure and strategy, technology, networking and community building will be used to challenge, inspire and help you succeed.
- Membership in a lasting network of experienced, motivated, performance-minded fellow leaders – people who will help and support you as you find new ways of working and performing.

“Achieving Excellence changed my orientation toward outcomes, deepened my strategic thinking skills, expanded my knowledge of community development, and allowed me the opportunity to collaborate with peers.”

— *Rebecca Morley, Director of the Health Impact Project*

“AE gave us the support, frameworks, and wise counsel as we embarked on this ambitious initiative. The coaching and constant encouragement of my AE colleagues helped us not to let the hard work of multi-sector collaboration keep us from a focus on the policy, systems, and environment outcomes we wanted to achieve. The empowerment of the multicultural health care center residents has given our advocacy efforts increased authenticity and power as we dealt with entrenched systems and bureaucracies.”

— *David Aronstein, Executive Director of the Boston Alliance for Community Health*

Return on Investment

The NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence Program provides demonstrable return on investment. An internal assessment of one class alone showed that just months after the program's conclusion, participants identified nearly a half-billion dollars of new capital leveraged by their organizations, which they attributed in some measure to the program.

HOW THE PROGRAM DELIVERS



The NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence program has proven to be one of the most innovative and high-impact programs available today for organizations that are working to benefit their communities. The program provides the forum, the challenge, the tools, the space and the opportunity for you to lead your organization to a higher level of effectiveness and sustainability.

At the beginning of the program, you will select a specific and significant challenge facing your organization – a challenge with solutions that can dramatically change how your organization operates. Your work throughout the program will focus on this singular critical challenge.

You can expect to work on your performance challenge regularly through conference calls, online chats, and one-on-one conversations with your coach and your peer group of colleagues several times each month. This is a performance-driven program, meaning that your performance in your work challenge is the top priority. The curriculum is aimed at supporting the work you are doing to tackle your challenge.

The interdependent components of this program include:

Curriculum › The multidisciplinary approach of the academic curriculum will help you tackle your performance challenge by concentrating on the issues of leadership faced by organizations in the nonprofit sphere. Augmented by resources from Harvard University and well-known thought leaders, the coursework is case-based and focuses on *your* issues – those on your plate right now, those on the horizon, and the ever-present challenge of how to increase the community impact of the work you do.

Faculty will lead three cutting-edge sessions that feature critical exploration of emerging issues in strategic analysis and planning, leadership and organizational alignment, performance measurement, community building, alliances and partnerships, and other relevant topics.

The curriculum will open your mind to new ideas and approaches, allowing you to learn from the best and most recent work in the nonprofit realm and apply it within your own environment.

Executive Coaching › To assist you in achieving your organizational goals, the program provides personalized guidance on performance-driven change by innovative leaders. A leadership coach will personally guide you through the 16-month program and help you identify the outcome-based goals to achieve success.

Peer Group Work › The program provides structured peer group collaboration among your talented cohort. Working with a small group of other senior leaders, you will address your own performance challenges – being accountable to each other while also being accountable to yourselves, your organizations and your communities. This group will provide support when you face obstacles and honest feedback to keep you on track – and you will do the same for each of them.

The combination of executive education, coaching and peer group collaboration creates a formula that is intense, holistic and unrelenting in helping you achieve what matters most to your organization's success.

A PROGRAM OF UNPARALLELED LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE



This is not just a training or educational program – it’s a performance program with high-level executive coaching and a curriculum that will change your organization.

- You will learn from – and be supported by – the highest quality faculty, leadership experts and executive coaches. No other program compares.
- You’ll receive executive education that is specific to your needs and the challenge you identify. The focus of the program is not the curriculum - it is your work.
- You’ll increase your own creative thinking, learn from multiple vantage points: not just academic experts, but also thought leaders in the nonprofit arena and colleagues who have significant leadership experience.
- Accountability is built in and reinforced throughout the program by fellow participants as well as stakeholders in your own organization. You are accountable not only to your coach and peers but also to your organization and community.
- Your assignments are linked to specific milestones within the program, giving you the structure and discipline necessary to support your success.



Program Candidates

The typical participant is an executive director (or in some cases other senior managers) with significant scope of authority for a number of years in a well-established nonprofit organization (e.g., one that has been successfully functioning for at least five years, working in areas such as nonprofit housing, financing, community development, community health and wellness, education or social services). To be selected, you must be thoughtful about the work your organization does, excited about your current responsibilities, and eager to take that work to the next level by articulating, committing to, and achieving success on a specific, critical challenge facing your organization. Approximately 50 candidates will be selected to participate in this highly innovative program.

Time Investment

As a participant, you must invest significant time and effort to achieve your organizational challenge over the 16 months of the program. Expect to put your challenge in your operating and strategic plans, and to commit to your staff, your board and other stakeholders that you and your organization will take on the challenge to make a significant impact. As far as ‘time away,’ the program will consist of approximately 15 days of university coursework, at least 3 one-day meetings, and regular conference calls with your coach and peer group.

You will also submit several written updates on your challenge over the course of the program. At the conclusion, you will participate in a one- or two-day concluding event with your peers. However, the real investment of time takes place every day as you focus on tackling an issue critical to your organization’s success and truly prioritizing your time like never before.

PROGRAM SEQUENCE

Program Calendar

Tuesday, September 11 - 15, 2018

1st academic module at Harvard

(please note we will be starting on Tuesday to help people honor Rosh Hashanah)

November 2018

1- or 2-day meeting in Chicago with peer group

February 18-22, 2019

2nd academic module at Harvard

(please note as you look at your calendar that many schools have spring break this week, in case this could affect your family/vacation plans)

Summer 2019

1- or 2-day meeting with peer group

September 9-13, 2019

3rd academic module at Harvard

Concluding Meeting

2-day meeting with peer group

You will arrive for the first module in September 2018 to meet your coach and peer groups and to participate in innovative, thought-provoking sessions that will open your mind to new ways of looking at yourself, your leadership and the work of your organization.

You will be led through a session on performance and organizational challenges, guiding you from the big picture of the themes introduced in the first session to apply the learning to your own organization. At the end of the first academic session, you will work with executive coaches to hone your performance challenge and to develop benchmarks to meet and report on. The coaches will facilitate the next six months of the program. You and your peer group will work together to reach your respective benchmarks with each other's feedback, as well as with coaching assistance and resources. You will gather once with your small peer group 6-7 weeks into the program to discuss your progress and how to overcome barriers.

You will report on your progress when the entire group reconvenes for the beginning of the second module in February 2019. These sessions will focus on the internal management issues you face as you tackle your organizational challenge. It will also explore connections with your board and community. Between the second and third sessions, you will continue to work with coaches and peers through the difficulties and successes of tackling your organizational challenge, and you will attend a one-or two-day meeting with your coach and peer group during the summer.

The third session will focus on how to engrain these new tools in your work moving forward.

At the conclusion of the program, you will meet with your peers to share your progress, celebrate your success and discuss how to continue moving forward.



PROGRAM FEES



“I have been in this job for 15 years...but my participation in Achieving Excellence spurred me to be more assertive at the staff and board level to implement changes.”

– Paul Mazzarella, Ithaca NHS

The best organizations are ones that invest in their own performance. In a very real and explicit sense, the “price” of your participation is the time, effort, work, and commitment you bring to the challenge you define. You will be required to devote a substantial amount of energy and thought to truly solving your challenge and capitalizing upon this opportunity. In exchange for the substantial real costs we are subsidizing, we require that you perform against this challenge and that you also provide us and future participants with feedback on your experience.

Included Costs

The program fee goes toward overall program costs, executive education, executive coaching,

accommodations, meals during the academic sessions and two meals with your peer group. The fee can be paid in two installments with the first payment due by July 31, 2018 after you have been accepted into the program and have signed the program contract. The second payment is due January 31, 2019. Participants are also responsible for all airfare/travel costs, meals on travel days and some during the academic sessions, accommodations at the non-academic events and possibly other incidentals.

The real cost of Achieving Excellence equates to almost \$40,000 per person, but funding from NeighborWorks America and our sponsors underwrites 80% of the program's cost.

Fee Structure

What you pay represents approximately 20% of the actual program cost – the rest is subsidized by NeighborWorks and our partners. The real cost of the program is greater than \$40,000 per participant.

Contact Information

For an application or more information about the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence program, please visit neighborworks.org/ae or email APrograms@nw.org or call (800) 438-5547

Small Organizations



Core operating budget of less than \$750,000

Tuition: \$6,000

Intermediate-Sized Organizations



Core operating budget of \$750,000 to \$2 million

Tuition: \$9,000

Large Organizations



Core operating budget of more than \$2 million

Tuition: \$13,000



NeighborWorks America is grateful to the sponsors that have made the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence Program possible.



ABOUT NEIGHBORWORKS TRAINING AND SERVICES

NeighborWorks is proud to offer a full complement of high-quality support for community-focused organizations and the professionals who work in them. Our offerings include Organizational Assessment Services, a broad range of training and professional development, programs that enhance leadership and organizational performance, technical and published nonprofit tools and resources, and Success Measures outcome evaluation services.

ABOUT NEIGHBORWORKS AMERICA

NeighborWorks America is one of the country's preeminent leaders in affordable housing and community development. We work to create opportunities for lower-income people to live in affordable homes in safe, sustainable communities that are healthy places for families to grow.

Headquartered in Washington, DC, NeighborWorks America operates through five regional offices and one national office.

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