



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: York
Program Title: Be the Change You Wish to See in the World: Leaders in Training
Program Category: Parks & Recreation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Neil A. Morgan
Title: County Administrator
Signature: 

York County
2019 VACo Achievement Award Application
Category - Parks & Recreation
Program - Be the Change You Wish to See in the World: Leaders in Training

York County Parks and Recreation offers a Leaders in Training (L.I.T.) Program for Ages 14-16. This program serves as an excellent transition for teens from a camper to potential Recreation Leader, develops skills for future employment opportunities or civic duties, develops leadership skills, and is a meaningful way for youth to spend their summer breaks. In addition, this program helps provide volunteer hours for school or scholarships all while having fun. Participants assist with our Summer Fun Camp and Field Trip Fever Program. A few of their responsibilities are assisting our staff with camp activities such as group games or crafts, operating games at our summer carnival, helping with field trips, and interacting with children who are shy or need additional assistance to help them become part of the group setting. The program provides training for L.I.T.s to be educated on characteristics of youth at different ages, daily procedures, playground supervision, CPR/First Aid, and more. They also receive training that provides team building activities as well as exercises to help develop their judgment skills, setting up for crafts, leading group games, etc. The program provides a training manual, t-shirts, incentives for volunteer hours, and an end of the summer social.

The Problem:

York County Parks and Recreation needed to add more recreational opportunities for teenagers beyond athletics. Parks and Recreation currently offers athletic leagues and sports camps for youth up to age 18. However, our Summer Fun and Field Trip Fever, day-long camps, and specialty camps only allow participants up to 8th grade, which is why there is a need for the Leaders in Training program in our area. Our organization decided to create a leadership development program for teenagers to offer youth an opportunity to give back to their community through volunteering and mentorship. Since the Leaders in Training program is new to the County, the decision was made to target the age group 14-16 because it started where other summer programs ended, but was under the age that would be eligible for employment. This program is a bridge between school age children and adult teenagers, which teaches them life and social skills that will better prepare them for their future.

The Solution:

York County Parks and Recreation's Leaders in Training (L.I.T.) program serves as an excellent transition from a camper to potential recreation leader, develops skills for future employment opportunities or civic duties, develop their leadership skills, and is a very meaningful way for youth to spend their summer. The L.I.T. program allows teenagers the opportunity to gain skills and experience in being a role model, teaching younger youth, resolving conflicts, managing time and resources, and having a positive impact on their community.

The Leaders in Training Program begins recruitment of teenagers ages 14 to 16 in February to apply to be a part of the program. We market the program through flyers to the schools, press releases, social media, Government Access Channel, our agency summer brochure, and the Parks and Recreation website. Applicants must register online and then submit responses to a questionnaire by mid-April. In addition, the applicant must submit a letter of reference that speaks to why this youth is a good fit for this program. The Parks and Recreation Staff review the applications and references prior to interviews, which are held on two Saturdays in April. This interview is more of a development process for the youth to learn interview skills for future employment opportunities. In the interview process, we gain valuable information about the youth in reference to their level of experience relevant to our summer fun camp and field trip fever program, judgement skills in specific scenarios, and maturity level. This information is then used for us to determine our starting point for training to develop the L.I.T.s over the course of the summer. We select one L.I.T. for every 15 camp participants in our summer fun camp program. In addition, depending on the L.I.T. availability, the number of applicants selected might be slightly higher. Each L.I.T. selected is assigned to a specific elementary camp location.

Once the L.I.T.s are selected, the next phase of the program is initial training opportunities. The program, initial training is held at an elementary school - one of our Summer Fun camp sites - on the second Saturday of June. All L.I.T.s are required to attend to be able to participate in our program. The training begins with introductions and team building activities. At this training, the youth are issued t-shirts, whistles, and

L.I.T. manuals for guidance and regulations. This training goes over the sections in the L.I.T. manual.

The first section of the manual covers County aspects, such as an overview of our Board of Supervisors, Parks and Recreation organizational charts, inclement weather policy, regulations concerning any discipline matters, and County forms they might utilize.

The second section reviews the program goals of summer fun camp and their responsibilities as L.I.T.s for this program. During this section of training, we educate the youth on recreational games appropriate for each age group and the different categories of appropriate games. As an exercise, a couple of the leaders in the training are selected to lead a game. They are issued a piece of paper that explains the game and they are given a pile of equipment they may use. Then the participants have time to discuss how they want to lead the game and to set it up. Afterwards, they explain and lead the others in the game. After a round or two of the game, the youth gather to discuss what they did well on leading the activity and the areas needing improvement. Once the youth comment, the staff gives their input.

Section three of the manual educates the youth on characteristics of kids by grades in the categories of physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. Then, the staff led the teens in exercises or scenarios to help youth understand the implications of that in programmatic purposes and leading activities. During this section of training, staff cover how leaders in training can help to make the camp stimulating and fun as well as preventing negative behaviors and using positive reinforcement with the camp kids.

Section four of the manual training involves summer camp policies the camp kids and L.I.T.s must follow. Daily procedures for the leaders in training are reviewed in the areas of playground rules, gymnasiums, arts/crafts, games, accidents or incidents, and proper phone protocol for the leaders in training. As an exercise, a few of the teens are selected to lead the others in a craft activity. Staff show those selected where the supplies, crafts, and area to lead the others. After those L.I.T.s discuss how they want to lead and set up the activity, they will then lead the others and camp kids in the craft activities. Upon completion, the group reviews what they did well and areas they could have improved upon. During this section, staff cover the volunteer log sheet that must be completed weekly and submitted to their site supervisor.

In Section 5 manual training the group safety guidelines, heat safety, staying hydrated, fire drills, etc. During this section, the staff do a playground supervision exercise. A few of the L.I.T.s are selected to lead the others out to the playground and supervise them for about five to ten minutes on the playground. Upon completion, the group reviews what they did well and the areas that could be improved for safety reasons.

Section 6 of the manual training covers area that are relevant to our field trip fever program. Each L.I.T. is allowed to sign up for two field trips to assist the staff. Other sections of the manual cover forms and curriculum packets for the programs the leaders in training will assist. The L.I.T. are educated on the curriculum and the importance of being prepared. The week before our summer fun camp program the leaders in training participate in training with summer fun camp staff at the specific location they are assigned. This allows them to become familiar with areas important to their site location,

building relationships with the staff they will assist, and become familiar with the logistics at their specific school/camp site. The L.I.T.'s participate in a CPR/First Aid certification on the Wednesday the first week of camp. Additional trainings and meetings are offered during the summer as they are relevant to the group of leaders in training. As you can read, the manual is quite comprehensive and the teens receive training that can benefit them beyond the summer program.

The next phase of the program is for the leaders in training to apply what they have learned in training at the summer fun camp and field trip fever program. The leaders in training report to their site as scheduled. The leaders in training are to record their volunteer hours on a weekly log sheet and submit to their site supervisor. The site supervisor then provides comments and feedback on their log sheet to submit to the Leaders in Training liaison, who reviews the feedback with the teen. The feedback is used for the L.I.T. Liaison to give guidance and provide more individual training as needed. During the summer fun camp program and field trip fever programs, the leaders in training assist in many different ways: setting up and breaking down activities allowing the staff to keep the camp kids engaged at all time, engaging in an activity with a shy camper assisting him/her to become more involved in activities to develop friendship with other campers, operating carnival games at special events, being a buddy for campers with special needs, judging and/or leading recreational games, and more. Of course, staff is always with the leaders in training at all times.

The final phase of the program is the reward phase for the Leaders in Training. We offer two end of the summer social outings where they have no responsibility. On one

outing, the teens enjoyed a trip to the beach and on the other, L.I.T.s enjoyed lunch at a local restaurant and the movies afterwards. The Leaders in Training earn incentives based upon how many hours they volunteer. The incentives they earn are provided by local partners such as Rebounders, AMF Bowling Lanes-Yorktown, Spare Times Bowling-Hampton, Regal Cinema Theatre, and Ripley’s Believe or Not, which are given to the youth at the lunch outing. In addition, we provide reference letters indicating the amount of hours they volunteer, which are used for classes at the local high schools, scholarship opportunities, and more.

The Financing:

The direct costs associated with the Leaders in Training Program is mostly covered by the program fee charged to the participants as well as in-kind donations by local partners. The program fee for participants is \$150. The direct expenses are t-shirts, manuals for training, whistles, field trip and admission fees, lunch at the main training, lunch at the social, cost of their social, CPR/First Aid Course, and the payroll for the Leaders in Training Liaison. The payroll of the site supervisors is already covered in the summer fun camp program. We already have County vehicles that could transport the leaders in training. One of our full-time staff is currently certified to teach CPR/First Aid.

Description	Cost (per participant)
T-shirts - 2 per participant	\$16
Manuals - includes binder/tabs/copies	\$6

Lunches - training/socials	\$20
Field Trip Admissions	\$30
Whistles	\$1
Payroll for LIT Liaison	\$77
Marketing - used mechanisms in place	\$0
CPR/First Aid - In house instructor	\$0
Prizes - Donations	\$0

The Results:

The initial result in the program is another opportunity for teenagers to participate in a recreational opportunity and have a positive impact in the community. We were successful in having leaders in training at each of our elementary camp locations throughout the County. The program was successful in developing life and leadership skills that the teens could apply in future employment opportunities, impacting the community, and in everyday life.

- The youth learned and applied skills for employment opportunity: interview skills, responsibility by adhering to a schedule, evaluations, etc.
- The youth had a positive impact on the community: being buddies for those with special needs and disabilities to have a more successful experience, allowed us to add programs to our community such as the carnival, being a role model for those

youth in the camps, and demonstrating to adult the positive impact that teens can have in the community.

- They developed skills for everyday life: learning and appreciating diversity of among those in our community, taking initiative to make improvements, etc.

There are multiple success stories with the leaders in training.

- We have leaders in training that have now secured jobs within the community and express that it is due to this opportunity.
- We have a couple of the leaders in training that now will obtain credit with their high school due to the amount of volunteering hours.
- Seventy-five percent of our leaders in training have volunteered beyond the leaders in training program at other parks and recreation programs.
- We have hired a leader in training for our tennis office at our Back Creek Park.
- We have some of the 16-year-old leaders in training from last year that are asking for us to expand the age this year so they can participate again.
- The slogan for the Leaders in Training Program has been “Be the Change You Wish to See in the World” and the teenagers in this program accomplished that by **volunteering 1,894.75 hours** in the summer of 2018.

Teenagers are an underserved portion of our community and not always valued as they should be. It is important to educate and offer recreational opportunities to teenagers to be a valuable part of our Government and Community. “Be the Change” stands out in

bold letters across the t-shirt worn teens in York County's Park and Recreation summer programs. The teens who wear these shirts so proudly are our Leaders In Training, better known as L.I.T.s. We interview teenagers between the ages of 14-16 years old who want a little more than a tan from their summer vacation. Teens who are selected for our L.I.T. program are given the opportunity to develop leadership abilities and learn useful skills that they will be able to use not only in the workforce, but in life. Each teen is trained in CPR and First Aid and receives much of the same staff training as our summer camp counselors. They also take away weeks of hands-on experience working alongside our camp counselors throughout the summer.

This program is a great way to capture the teens who have aged out of our other programs to continue to develop them and help them be a productive member of our community leaving a lasting positive impact. This is one of our most important programs that helps us keep the teens in our community connected within our organization. As our next generation of leaders, these teens need programs that provide them the guidance to make the right choices in life. Long after the program has ended, the Leaders in Training continue to be rewarded by the program, such as running into one of the camp kids in the store who greets them enthusiastically, seeing programs they help volunteer for continue to grow, skills they learned helping them to accomplish other goals they have for themselves, and more. These teens continue to impact our community with volunteering in other areas within and outside of York County Parks and Recreation. **Teenagers volunteering over 1800 volunteer hours in six weeks is a great accomplishment.**