



Leadership Rutherford

LEADERSHIP RUTHERFORD **SPRINT** APPLICATION PACKET

SUMMER 2026

Online Application Packet: leadershiprutherford.org

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please review this section (pages 1-3) carefully before filling out your application form (pages 4-5).

LEADERSHIP RUTHERFORD BENEFITS AND REQUIREMENTS

Benefits of Class Membership

Leadership Rutherford's annual program identifies and trains future leaders to use their skills and energy in community service to benefit Rutherford County.

The Sprint program is an accelerated, high-impact program that condenses the Leadership Rutherford experience into an intensive seven-day summer experience.

The program includes:

- An introductory team-building retreat.
- Seven full class days addressing themes important to the future of Rutherford County.
- Travel throughout the county to visit a number of businesses and facilities.
- Access to as many as 50 county leaders who participate as speakers and presenters during the program.
- Network development:
 - Community contacts
 - Trusted friends among class members
 - Participation in community leadership

Program Requirements

Minimum Age Requirement

1. The minimum age requirement for the Sprint program is 16 years of age.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance is **mandatory** for all meeting dates. Hourly attendance is tracked at each scheduled session.
- Participants **may be absent no more than 8 hours total** throughout the program in order to graduate.

Any participant who misses more than eight (8) hours total may attend graduation with their class, but will not receive their certificate until their hours have been completed. They may return in the subsequent program year to make up their missed hours at no additional cost. They will officially graduate and receive their certificate at the end of that year.

A typical program day begins at 8am and concludes at 5pm. It is expected that all class participants will attend all class-related activities. **Applicants must make every effort to ensure their availability for all Leadership Rutherford activities prior to committing to join the class.**

Summer 2026 Class Schedule

Sunday, July 26 – Saturday, August 1, 2026

Class Sessions: 8 AM – 5 PM (unless otherwise indicated on the class agenda)



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APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Complete the Leadership Rutherford Application Form included in this packet according to these instructions. The minimum age requirement for the Sprint program is 16 years of age.

1. The application must be complete and accurate: all blanks not noted as optional must be filled in or marked N/A.
2. One essay question must be answered fully and attached.
3. All attachments to the application **must be included** when the application is submitted:
 - Essay Question Response
 - Letter of Recommendation

The complete application packet **must be submitted** to Leadership Rutherford by **June 15, 2026**. The completed form and attachments may be submitted by either of the following:

- Email: leadershiprutherfordnc@gmail.com
- U.S. mail to Leadership Rutherford: PO Box 794, Forest City, NC 28043

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Members of the Leadership Rutherford Board of Directors will review all completed application packets and select participants for the Sprint program. Applicants will be notified of their selection status following the Board's review.

Participants under age 18 must sign and submit a Leon's Law Student Educational Records Acknowledgment Form prior to enrollment in the program. This form will be shared with Isothermal Community College.

TUITION

Tuition: **\$385.00 total per participant**

All tuition payments are non-refundable.

- **If you are selected to participate in the program**, you are responsible for paying the required \$385.00 tuition, unless you are sponsored by a third party.
- Checks should be made payable to "Leadership Rutherford," with your name and "2026 Sprint tuition" in the memo, and mailed to: Leadership Rutherford, P.O. Box 794, Forest City, NC 28043
- Tuition may be paid in installments, but ***must be paid in full on or before the first day of class.***
- Some companies will pay the Leadership Rutherford tuition on behalf of their employee(s). Contact your supervisor to find out about your company's policy.



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LEADERSHIP RUTHERFORD **SPRINT** APPLICATION FORM: CLASS OF 2026

Application Deadline: Monday, June 15, 2026

Please review the preceding **PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**, especially the section entitled **APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**, before completing this form.

Full Name: _____ Date: _____

Preferred to be called (first name or nickname): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Personal email address: _____

Employment Information, if Applicable

Employer: _____

Title: _____

Office Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Office Phone: _____

Education Level Achieved: _____

Community Involvement

In order of importance to you, list two (2) organizations (civic, business, religious, social, community, arts, athletics, employment, etc.) in which you demonstrate an active leadership role beyond your employment affiliations and activities.

A. Organization: _____ Dates of Activity: _____

Contact: _____ Phone # _____ Role / responsibilities: _____

B. Organization: _____ Dates of Activity: _____

Contact: _____ Phone # _____ Role / responsibilities: _____



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Essay Questions: On a separate sheet of paper, please answer one (1) of the following four essay questions:

Typical answers are around 250 words in length. Enclose your essay response with your application packet.

1. What are the three most significant problems facing Rutherford County?
2. What do you hope to gain from your participation in Leadership Rutherford?
3. How would your selection to Leadership Rutherford enrich our organization and the region?
4. What unique qualifications can you offer as a potential leader and candidate for selection as a participant?

Recommendation Letter: One (1) signed letter of recommendation should be provided from someone who can cite specific examples of your previous or potential community leadership and engagement. Family members are not eligible. Include the letter with your application packet. *(An electronic signature or typed name is acceptable instead of a handwritten signature.)*

Commitments: Please be sure that you have reviewed the **LEADERSHIP RUTHERFORD PROGRAM BENEFITS AND REQUIREMENTS** section in the **PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS** section of this packet before signing this commitment.

Tuition will be paid by:

- Applicant (self-pay)
- Employer Sponsor
- Other Sponsor - Contact Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Applicant

I have reviewed, and I understand the Leadership Rutherford program requirements detailed in this application packet. If selected, I agree to the terms and conditions as stated. I understand that, if selected, I am obligated to pay my full tuition by the first day of class. I have reviewed the program schedule and the attendance policy. I commit to attending all program activities and class sessions as scheduled. I understand the penalties for non-attendance.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

An electronic signature or your full name typed above is acceptable instead of a handwritten signature.

Authorizing Official

- If the applicant is employed, this section must be completed and signed by their direct supervisor. Only self-employed or unemployed applicants may leave this section blank.

This applicant has my full support to participate in Leadership Rutherford. I am aware of the time commitment and financial obligation required:

Additional Comments (optional): _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Name of Employer: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____