



Rowan Chamber of Commerce

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Leadership Rowan Class 2026-2027

Apply now for the 34th class of Leadership Rowan!

DEADLINE: NOON on Friday, May 22 2026

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP ROWAN?

The Rowan County Chamber of Commerce has been presenting the Leadership Rowan program for 33 years with over 800 graduates. Already existing leaders and budding community volunteers are encouraged to apply for this elite program. For one day a month for nine-months, participants get an in-depth view of community issues, develop skills necessary to assume leadership roles and are exposed to community involvement opportunities. The nine session topics are: History and Power; Public Education; Criminal Justice; Human Needs; Government; Business and the Economy; Communications; and Quality of Life.

Leadership Rowan provides Class Members the opportunity to meet key community leaders. You will also work with your Class Members on important community homework projects and debate the issues of the day. The Opening Retreat SIMSOC exercise is one of the most powerful leadership development tools you will ever experience!

The 2026-2027 program will feature topics such as: Social Media; Public Speaking; Crisis Communication; Conflict Management; Media Relations; Grant Funding; Economic Development (how incentives work); Entrepreneurial Development; and Diversity Training.

Participants will study the qualities that make an effective leader, understand their own leadership styles and develop new skills that will help them in the workplace. They are then challenged to apply their talents by volunteering for local boards and commissions and possibly running for elected office.

STRUCTURE

Participants are required to attend a Kickoff Reception on **Thurs., July 30, 4 p.m.**, an Opening Retreat on **August 6 – 7** and nine (9) Class Days from **Sept. 2026 – May 2027 on the third Thursday of each month from 7:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.** (full day, including breakfast). Attendance at all sessions is required. All participants are required to ride on the bus for all Class Sessions.

Each Class Day will be facilitated by Leadership Rowan graduates and other key leaders. Both the discussion leader and participants will be encouraged to speak freely from their experiences in political, social, cultural, education and economic facets of the community. By free exchange of ideas and experiences, you will develop a deeper understanding of the community.

Those interested in the Leadership Rowan program need to make a serious commitment. Employers must agree in advance to grant participants time off from their duties to attend the full day and prepare for the session. Upon graduation, you will be presented with your personalized Leadership Rowan certificate in an attractive frame suitable for display in your office or home. A vital part of this training will require Leadership Rowan Graduates to plan and lead one assigned Class Day for the following year's class.

TUITION AND APPLICATION

Tuition for the program is **\$1,275** for Chamber members and **\$1,775** for non-members. This fee will cover the Reception, Opening Retreat, FREE tickets to the Chamber's popular Power in Partnership breakfast meeting, Class Day Luncheon, snacks and program materials. The deadline for tuition payment is **Fri., July 17**. Refunds must be requested in writing **by Fri., July 31, 2026** (if the participant cannot attend the Opening Retreat). A limited number of not-for-profit (501 c-3) scholarships may be available. Please indicate on your application if you require a scholarship to participate.

Chamber member firms may send up to two key employee applicants per class. Ideal applicants are those that have demonstrated potential as community leaders and expect to remain in the region for at least the next two years. The Leadership Rowan Steering Committee will select the class members based solely on the application. The deadline for applications is **NOON on May 22, 2026**.

For additional information, please contact the Chamber at (704) 633-4221 or smurphy@rowanchamber.com.

Leadership Rowan 2026-2027 Class Schedule

2026:

May 22	Application Deadline - Noon
July 17	Tuition payment deadline
July 30, 4 pm	Kick-off Reception
Aug. 6 - 7	Opening Retreat
Sept. 17	History & Power Day
Oct. 15	Criminal Justice Day
Nov. 19	Public Education Day
Dec. 17	Human Needs Day

2027:

Jan. 21	Government Day
Feb. 18	Communications Day
March 18	Business & The Economy
April 15	Quality of Life Day
May 20	Graduation & Planning Day



Chamber of Commerce

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Leadership Rowan Application

Name _____ Work Phone _____
First M.I. Last (Name to use)

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Employer _____

Employer Address _____

Occupation _____ Job Title _____

(Optional information – needed to ensure diversity of the class)

Age Range 20-35 _____ 36-50 _____ 51-65 _____ Over 65 _____ Gender _____ Race _____

Education: (list Degrees, Dates, Institutions, etc.):

Community Involvement. Please list (in order of importance) three organizations, i.e. community, civic, professional, religious, social, athletic, etc., in which you are or have been a member during the past five years. List any leadership positions and/or significant contributions.

Organization	Involvement
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

How did you become aware of **Leadership Rowan**? (Circle or Check one)

Rowan Chamber Leadership Rowan Alumni News Media Social Media Other _____

Why do you want to participate in **Leadership Rowan** and what do you hope to gain from the program?

(Limit of 100 words)

References

Please list two people other than your immediate supervisor or family who are knowledgeable about your leadership performance and potential.

Name	Title	Company
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Reference E-mail	Telephone
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Name	Title	Company
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Reference E-mail	Telephone
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Letter of Recommendation

Please include one typed (and signed) letter of recommendation with completed application. This recommendation letter can be written by someone listed above as a reference or by your immediate supervisor.

Leadership Rowan requires a commitment from participants and their employers.

Employer Commitment – if applicable

This application has the approval of this organization and the applicant has our full support which includes the necessary time required to fully participate in all days and aspects of the program.

Immediate Supervisor's Name (please print)	Organization
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Immediate Supervisor's Signature	Date
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Full tuition (\$1275 or Chamber members and \$1775 for non-members) is due by July 17, 2026 for applicants who are selected and will be paid by: (check one)

me personally my employer scholarship consideration

Alex Clark Memorial Scholarship available for those who need and request it **after the selections are made**. Do you require financial assistance in order to participate?

If yes, please explain: _____

I understand the purpose of the program and I agree to fulfill all expectations of me as outlined by **Leadership Rowan** if I am selected to participate.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Application deadline is noon on May 22, 2026. Send completed application to:

smurphy@rowanchamber.com or Rowan County Chamber of Commerce,

204 E. Innes Street, Suite 110, Salisbury, NC 28144.