

ROSS MCKENZIE EMERGING LEADERS



*Developing Leaders in Lee & Sumter Counties, SC
2024-2025 Application*



Mission

To provide a greater understanding of contemporary issues through interaction and problem-solving with peers and community leaders.

Program Description

The Ross McKenzie Emerging Leaders program is designed for high school juniors to introduce economic and community development concepts. Each year approximately 25 high school juniors from Lee and Sumter counties will be selected as Emerging Leaders. The monthly sessions will be divided among the school year starting in October 2024. During this program, students will have the opportunity to:

- Identify opportunities, enhance communication skills, build teamwork, self-awareness, and decision-making capabilities.
- Engage with local government, business, education, health, and wellness professionals.
- Complete a service project for community or media relations.

Requirements

- Applicants must be rising high school juniors (i.e. junior in 2024-2025).
- Applicants must live in Lee or Sumter counties.
- Applicants must have at least a 3.00 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
- Class members must attend the monthly sessions in their entirety.
- Class members must attend the two-day retreat: **Monday, July 15 and Tuesday, July 16, 2024.**
- Class members must agree to abide by all rules, policies, and procedures as outlined.
- Tuition through the University of South Carolina Sumter is \$98 per credit hour or \$295 for 3 credits. Each student qualifies for a partial program scholarship in the amount of \$200. The remaining balance of \$95 is the responsibility of the student or guardian and must be paid prior to the start of the program.
- Class members are responsible for transportation to and from each class session.

Application Process

1. Applicants must submit the application to their school counselor or career specialist **no later than Friday, April 26, 2024.**
2. A recommendation letter must be included with the application package.
3. A reference form must be completed by a school administrator or career specialist.

Benefits

1. Placement on a community board or committee during senior year (This is a requirement of the program. If a student is unable to fulfill this obligation, funds and credit hours will be forfeited.)
2. Serve as Regional Ambassadors for community events.
3. Transferable college credit hours through the University of South Carolina.

Emerging Leaders
Erika Williams
Phone: 803.418.0709
Email: ekwilliams@sumtersc.gov



Application Checklist

Please make sure to have your application complete. Applications that are not complete will not be considered for inclusion in the class. Any applications received after the 5 p.m. April 26, 2024 deadline will not be considered.

- 1. Application completed** _____
- 2. Questions Form completed** _____
- 3. Signed Code of Responsibility Form** _____
- 4. One Recommendation Letter** _____
- 5. One Reference Form** _____

PART I

Please carefully read the application process instructions on page one before completing the application.

Applicant Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Mailing Address: _____
Address City State Zip Code

Cell Phone: (____) _____ Applicant Email Address: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____

High School Name: _____ Phone: _____

School Address: _____
Address City State Zip Code

Please list any known allergies or reactants: _____

Are you in Dual Enrollment/Early College (Early College students are not eligible for program; dual enrollment students are.)

Yes, Dual Enrollment Yes, Early College No Institution: _____

Gender: Female Male Race/Ethnicity: American Indian Asian African American
 Hispanic White Other: _____

How did you find out about the Emerging Leaders Program? Previous Graduate, if so name of graduate: _____
 School Counselor or Career Specialist Social Media Newspaper Other, please specify _____

Applications must be received by your school counselor or career specialist no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 26, 2024.

Commitment Statement

I, _____ understand that in applying for the Ross McKenzie Emerging Leaders program, I am committing myself to a year of *full participation* in different community activities during the 2024-2025 year. I understand that attendance is **mandatory**, and I will be expected to make up any unavoidable **excused** absences with community work. Also, I certify that I have read and understand the policies of the Emerging Leaders Program and will abide by them.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART II

Please answer all the questions below:

Please let us know the leadership roles you have held while involved in organizations or activities both in your school and/or community. List any accomplishments, awards, honors, or recognitions for academic, school, religious, or community activities you have achieved or received in the last five years.

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

What are your educational aspirations? _____

Describe any community service or volunteer work experience and briefly tell what was involved. _____

Describe any work experience you were compensated for and briefly tell what was involved. _____

What are your plans after high school? _____

What do you consider to be one of your strengths? _____

What do you consider to be one of your weaknesses? _____

Who is someone you admire in your community? Why? _____

What are your hobbies? _____

If you could change anything in your community, what would it be and why? _____

Why do you want to participate in the Emerging Leaders Program? What can you add to the program? _____

Why should you be selected for this program? _____

Code of Responsibility

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Emerging Leaders Program is to prepare students to make a positive difference in their communities. Participants are selected because of their proven leadership qualities. Participants are expected to observe the highest standards of behavior and to set an example for others to follow. This Code of Responsibility is intended to describe minimum acceptable standards and the consequences of failure to meet these standards. Those who fail to observe these standards will be held accountable for their actions.

Policy on Attendance

Attendance and participation at all scheduled events is necessary to obtain the full benefits of the program. Class members must attend the program in its entirety. Because of the limited time available for numerous activities, punctuality is essential. ***Be prepared to stay until the class is over!*** If more than one absence occurs, you will not graduate with your class.

Discipline

Appropriate behavior is expected of all participants within the parameters of law and local school policies. A participant may be suspended from participation if such action is determined by the Emerging Leaders program staff to be necessary to protect the safety and security of persons or property or to avoid disruption of a class event. The disciplinary action selected will depend on the nature of the offense and the facts and circumstances in which the violation occurred.

Classroom Expectations

Participants are expected to be actively engaged and use whole-body listening during each session.

Travel Directions

At least one week before the program starts, you will receive your agenda with directions to each day's destination, as appropriate.

Mobile Devices

Mobile devices **are permitted with limitations**. The program staff will have phone access for emergency use only.

Breaks

Breaks are brief. Please follow the directions of your Day Chair. We ask that you keep your breaks brief out of consideration for your classmates.

Dress

Please note the dress of the day as designated on each day's agenda. Proper attire will be suggested for appropriateness and comfort, based on the activities scheduled. Shirts for class and community functions will be provided.

Time

Unless otherwise notified, each session will begin promptly at **9:00 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m.** There are special sessions that are required that will be announced later. Lunch and snacks will be provided for in-person sessions.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature

Date

ROSS MCKENZIE EMERGING LEADERS

To be completed by the career specialist or a school administrator.

Student Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

High School Name: _____ Phone: _____

School Address: _____
Address City State Zip Code

Counselor/School Administrator Name: _____ Student GPA: _____
Last First

Please complete the following:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “poor” and 5 being “excellent,” how would you rank the student in each area below.

Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude	1	2	3	4	5
Social Responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
Attendance/Punctuality	1	2	3	4	5
Participation	1	2	3	4	5
Performance	1	2	3	4	5

Additional comments: _____

 Counselor/School Administrator’s Signature

 Date



Recommendation Letter

Please include a letter of recommendation from an adult who knows you well but is not a parent or relative (e.g. teacher, youth group leader, club advisor, coach, employer, or neighbor). This letter should tell how long and in what capacity the reference has known you, how you might benefit from the experience, and anything else that would give the committee a more complete picture of you.

Reference Form

In addition to the above letter of recommendation, please have your principal, counselor, or a teacher complete the reference form on your behalf regarding your performance at school.

In-Person Interview Process

In-person interviews will take place during the month of May at the Sumter Economic Development/TheLINK building at 10 E. Liberty St. Sumter, SC 29154. You will receive an email after the application deadline with instructions for how to schedule your interview. Interviews will last approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

Emerging Leaders
Erika Williams
Phone: 803.418.0709
Email: ekwilliams@sumtersc.gov



2024-2025 Program Curriculum

July 15 & 16: Retreat and Class Introduction

Students are required to attend a mandatory retreat and introductory session.

September 19: Parent Orientation

October: Philanthropy & Non-Profits/Service

Students are exposed to the challenges that face our community and become part of the solutions as they work with local non-profits. *Required Community Service Project (date TBA)*

November: Health, Wellness, and Diversity

Students immerse themselves in other cultures and learn confidence, dynamic expression, and encouragement of one another, as well as the importance of good physical and emotional health.

December: Etiquette, Dressing for Success, and Public Speaking

Students learn the basics of business etiquette, dressing for success, and the keys to making a successful presentation before others.

January: Legislation & Government

Students engage in local legislative processes and personally meet their council members and legislators.

February: Investment & Finance

Financial basics are covered through managing a budget, developing a life-long financial plan, and understanding good credit and poor credit.

March: Industry & Economic Development

Students have unique explorations into the economic development process and local industries.

April: Crime, Victims, & Justice

Students learn about the role of law enforcement and criminal justice in the community.

May: Career & Higher Education

Students explore careers and skills needed based on the insights gained, values developed, and skillsets forged over the entire year.