

The Future of the Community



The best leaders know that training their successors to be competent, knowledgeable and well-connected community leaders is crucial for the North Central Massachusetts community's economic vitality.

The Community Leadership Institute was developed to support the access to the region's many organizations, industries and business leaders as part of the succession plan not only for individual businesses but for the community at large in this 21st century technology and knowledge-driven economy.

CLI Participants will:

- Refresh and renew their leadership skills
- Gain exposure to community resources that effect business and the strength of the economic vitality of the region
- Strengthen leadership skills to support a better community
- Engage in dialogue with peers who see similar goals and challenges for the area
- Enhance professional network of peers through 9-month engagement
- Participate in a local community service project

Expected Outcomes:

- Adaptive, reflective and collaborative community leaders
- Business and community leaders with deeper, informed connections across North Central Massachusetts

Apply for the Class of 2027

Tuition

\$2,050 for the 9-month program including all materials and lunches. CLI participants will also receive season tickets to selected Chamber events for additional education and networking opportunities.

Commitment

Participants who enroll in CLI are expected to fully engage in all sessions. Companies that send a candidate should guarantee their support for the candidates full engagement with their peers.

Community Project

CLI participants select and complete a community service project (or projects) during the course of the program years to positively impact the community using their leadership and management skills.

Need more information?

For more information, please direct questions to Jessica Yakusik at the Chamber via email at jjakusik@northcentralmass.com or by phone at (978) 353-7600 ext. 222

2026–2027 Program Calendar

Successful Candidates

- Demonstrate **motivation and potential to lead** within business or community
- Considered **high performers** in the organization and on a leadership track
- Seek to **understand external issues** facing the North Central region today
- Is **committed to the success of their sector and community**; able to see beyond their own position to **understand the influence they have** on success of company and community
- Shows **curiosity and interested in developing new relationships** and open to challenging own point of view

Selection Process

Nominations

The Executive Sponsor (owner or CEO of a member organization) should internally nominate one or two professionals to apply for the CLI program.

Applications

Applications are available online at www.northcentralmass.com/CLI and includes 4 short essay questions. *Applications are due by August 15, 2026.*

Selection

Applications will be reviewed by the CLI Steering Committee and notified no later than September 25, 2026

Personal Leadership Development & Orientation

October

Participants will be introduced to the CLI program through discussion on personal leadership and corporate citizenship with Dr. Michael Greenwood of Fitchburg State University. Executive sponsors/supervisors will be invited to our Executive Luncheon.

Non-Profit Governance and Volunteerism

November

Participants will review volunteerism, citizen engagement and responsibilities of board of directors before learning from non-profit agencies in North Central.

Education and Workforce Development

December

This session will focus on a broad spectrum of education within North Central MA. The group will hear from a range of educational leaders which may include, K-12, vocational, secondary and alternate education programs.

Media & Crisis Communications

January

We'll delve into how media impacts the view of issues, learn about the importance of local access television, and enhance communication skills with a role play activity.

Healthcare, Law & Justice

February

This session will focus on the health of the North Central community through the lens of the community hospitals and trends in the healthcare industry. The afternoon will focus on mental health through the law and justice system and conclude with a tour of the Worcester County House of Corrections.

Arts & Culture

March

North Central MA is ripe with arts and cultural diversity. Participants will discuss the community from an arts perspective, its importance in the local history, as well as initiatives to move the region forward.

Legislation

April

CLI participants will be transported to Boston where attendees will enjoy a tour of the State House, lunch with local delegation, and speaking program by cabinet members. Past speakers have included State Budget Director, and Secretary of Transportation.

Manufacturing & Economic Development

May

Economic Development is the core of a successful community. Participants will learn more about various economic activities in the community, and partnerships between cities & towns, as well as learning more about manufacturing in our region.

Debrief & Commencement

June

Participants will spend the morning debriefing their program and focusing on the way forward. Commencement will occur during the Chamber's Annual Business Meeting. We encourage participants to invite their Executive Sponsor and supervisor in celebration of their achievements.