

Program Mission (continued)

What will this diverse mix of leaders do as a result of participating in the RULE program? The personal and professional accomplishments of past participants in the program have taught us that we can expect these leaders to do a great deal! Participants can expect:

- ◆ Positive changes in self-image, increased confidence in responding to changing environments, and greater effectiveness in accomplishing goals and objectives.
- ◆ To become more interpersonally competent by listening, nurturing, and coping with value conflicts.
- ◆ To learn how to be open to new experiences, seek new challenges, and treat mistakes as opportunities for self-improvement.
- ◆ To strengthen problem solving and leadership skills to solve public issues.

Pennsylvania, Penn State and the sponsoring organizations can expect:

1. An ever-widening base of support and leadership for resolving rural public issues and improving Pennsylvania's rural communities.
2. Increased awareness of the University's research efforts and educational programming activities.
3. Improved university and state/federal support for research and educational needs in the area of rural public issues.
4. Enhanced knowledge of local and state government services and the skills needed to impact public policy.
5. Former fellows to continue supporting the RULE program by generating community and/or financial resources for future programming activities, serving as members of the RULE Advisory Board, participating in alumni events, and volunteering for committees.

RULE Mission Statement

The Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program (RULE) encourages and supports leadership development for all segments of Pennsylvania.

RULE Value Statement

RULE Values:

- Leadership through life-long learning,
- Diverse viewpoints and populations,
- Self-assessment and group process,
- Active alumni involvement,
- Commitment to national and international outreach,
- Advocacy,
- Challenge and change.

RULE Vision Statement

RULE fosters engagement in public issues, interorganizational networking, effective public decision making, strategic design, and sustainable relationships.

The Pennsylvania Rural Leadership (RULE) Program is a partnership between the public and private sectors with funds from individual participants, sponsoring organizations, private and public contributors, the Pennsylvania General Assembly, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and The Pennsylvania State University. RULE Fellows are admitted without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. The Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program is Pennsylvania's only inclusive state-wide leadership program. We are based at The Pennsylvania State University at University Park, PA in the Department of Agriculture Economics and Rural Sociology.

How can you benefit from the RULE Program?

RULE Fellows will learn strategies for taking charge and leading their organizations and communities in positive directions. Through practice, each participant will assume new responsibilities and develop new skills and confidence. Every skill they learn will be directly and immediately applicable to the issues and problems facing their organizations and communities. Participants in the program will achieve various results:

- ◆ Increased understanding of the economic, political, cultural and social forces inherent to the public decision making process.
- ◆ Enhanced knowledge of the application of leadership skills, processes and strategies to resolve conflict.
- ◆ The ability to study community problems and issues from a broad economic, political, cultural and social perspective.
- ◆ Increased understanding of contemporary social and economic problems and policy issues, and how to effectively impact public policy.

- ◆ An understanding of the budgetary concerns encountered by rural/urban communities.
- ◆ An enhanced awareness of international relations and the world economy.
- ◆ A broadened understanding of the legislative process and legislative procedure.
- ◆ Increased ability and opportunity to participate in local government and non-profit community organizations.
- ◆ Expanded and strengthened leadership skills, the catalyst for the democratic process.

What is the financial value of the RULE Program to the participant?

Each participant will receive instruction through the RULE Program which is a fellowship valued at approximately \$17,000. This amount includes the cost of lodging and most meals, speakers, educational materials, and supplies. \$1,500 per person, per year, is your minimal financial commitment for a \$17,000 investment.

How is the RULE Program funded?

Funding for the program is derived from private and public support. The majority of program costs are funded by an appropriation from the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Department of Community and Economic Development (Governor's Center for Local Government Services) under Act 65 of 1992 - the Rural Leadership Training Act.

Each RULE fellow is asked to make an annual contribution towards a personal investment in their leadership education. A cash contribution of \$1,500 per year or 9% of the fellowship value, is required; limited scholarships are available. Additionally, RULE fellows are responsible for their own transportation costs to and from meeting sites, meals en route, some meals during study institutes, and a firm two-year time commitment.

The Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences provides a strong base of support for the Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program as its on-site home. It has supplied faculty, staff, and in-kind support since RULE's inception.

Who are the RULE Fellows?

Fellows come from diverse backgrounds. They are sheep farmers, students or homemakers. They are chamber executives, county commissioners, and township supervisors. They are dentists and they are dairy farmers. They have different interests, and goals, with one common thread: a commitment to public involvement in solving community problems.

Participants in the RULE program will be selected from communities in Pennsylvania and must have a demonstrated commitment to public problem solving.

While the program has a strong focus on issues affecting rural Pennsylvania, participants come from across the state, and study institutes are held in both rural and urban locations.