



Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI) Nomination Packet for February 2010 NLI Group

Thank you for nominating an emerging community leader to the Natural Leaders Initiative!

This packet contains:

- A nomination form for you to fill out
- Program information to share with the person you want to nominate
- An “interest in participating” form to be signed by the nominee

Additional packets are available at <www.ccetompkins.org/nli>, by calling 607 272-2292, or by emailing <mjh17@cornell.edu>.

Nomination deadline: Jan. 22, 2010

What is the Natural Leaders Initiative?

NLI supports “everyday” leaders – particularly those from low/moderate-income communities and communities of color – to put their ideas into action, learn new skills, grow as community leaders, and network with others who care about improving the community.

In addition to our program for “natural leaders,” NLI also helps community organizations, boards and committees to develop, support and retain emerging leaders from under-represented groups

NLI is a collaboration of Cornell Cooperative Extension-Tompkins, the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC), the Multicultural Resource Center, and Tompkins Community Action.

How do I nominate someone to participate?

Simply complete the nomination form telling us why you think your nominee should be included in NLI. Ask your nominee to sign the form expressing their interest in participating if selected. Send both forms to **Margo Hittleman, NLI Coordinator, CCE-Tompkins, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850.**

How are NLI participants selected?

The NLI Steering Committee reviews the nominations and selects the members of the Natural Leaders group.

Other questions?

Please contact Margo Hittleman, NLI Coordinator, at 607 272-2292 or <mjh17@cornell.edu>.

What people are saying about the

NATURAL LEADERS INITIATIVE

"Throughout my experience with NLI, I have developed long-lasting friendships and a leadership ability that I never knew I had. My mind has opened up to the differences each person has. I have truly come out of my shell, and with this new attitude, I am making a difference." — NLI participant

NLI can help us make sure that developing new leaders, particularly from under-represented constituencies, is not left to chance."

— Elected official

"Being nominated for NLI was like having someone open a door and invite me into the community. I didn't know I was wanted."

— NLI participant

"Through this program, I have learned so much about myself that I was unaware of before. I always thought of myself as being a supporter for others and did not realize that I could possibly be a leader." — NLI participant

"Since completing NLI, it's as though I was picked up out the muck, set on a track, and the mud cleaned from my wheels. My engine has started the motion and I am continually picking up speed. The wind whistles by chanting, 'I knew I could... I knew I could.' It just took someone else seeing that to set in motion an unstoppable force."

— NLI participant

"I have noticed how B____ has grown as a parent, an advocate for other families and as a leader. As a leader in our school and community, I am so impressed and excited about this training ... of natural leaders so they will be able to make a difference in their communities."

— NLI nominator

"I had always enjoyed networking. This helped me move into action. It increased my confidence in my own ability to organize."

— NLI participant

"Hearing other community leaders share their experiences with similar challenges, helped me realize I'm not alone in making change." — NLI participant

"I saw great strides in my sense of self-worth and was excited to clearly realize the potential that existed within me."

— NLI participant

"I have more confidence in my leadership; my ability to speak my mind and beliefs increased, with or without people backing me. To meet up with other people who were as committed to their goals and vision was encouraging. I feel less isolated." — NLI participant

"If you want to be a basketball player, you have to hang out with basketball players. If you want to be a leader, you have to hang out with leaders. NLI is my leadership support group." — NLI participant

Since I first learned about NLI, I have been impressed with what I have seen and heard. Last year, I nominated one of my neighbors as an NLI participant. I have heard nothing but enthusiastic reports from her about her experiences in NLI. She told me that NLI helped her realize that she really was a "leader" and gave her more confidence and an enhanced skill set, to do the grassroots community building she wants to do. That's success! — NLI nominator

Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI)

Congratulations!

Someone has noticed your leadership abilities and wants to nominate you to be part of the Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI).

Are you a “natural leader”?

If you can answer yes to the following questions, NLI may be right for you:

- Do you have ideas about how to make things better in the community?
- Do you get things done?
- Do people come to you for help?
- Do you get others to share their ideas and get involved?
- Do you like meeting new people and learning new things?
- Do you want to be around others who want to improve community life, and have fun while doing it?

It doesn't matter whether you have a formal leadership “title.” Most NLI participants don't.

What is NLI?

The Natural Leaders Initiative was started to support talented people to grow as community leaders. It was started by GIAC, the Multicultural Resource Center, Tompkins Community Action, and Cornell Cooperative Extension –Tompkins .

What will I do in NLI?

As an NLI participant, you will:

- Participate in 8 group sessions over 5 months (either February-May or Sept.– January)
- Work with others on a community project you choose
- Meet and learn from experienced community leaders

Dinner, child care and help with transportation are provided for each group session.

How can I benefit from NLI?

NLI will help you to:

- Get training and support for things you want to accomplish
- Build on strengths and skills you already have
- Increase your leadership knowledge, skills and confidence
- Get to know other community leaders
- Learn about other leadership opportunities

What will the program cost me?

Absolutely nothing! All costs are covered by grants and donations.

Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI)

Who participates in NLI?

NLI groups are diverse. 15-20 people are selected for each NLI group. Previous groups had close to equal numbers of men and women. 70% were African-American, Latino, Asian-American or multi-racial. Their ages ranged from 20s to 60s. Some lived in the City of Ithaca; others lived in the rural towns. They were interested in many areas of community life, but they all shared an interest in building stronger communities that were good places for everyone.

What happens in group meetings?

Group sessions are based on participants' interests, so each cycle is different. But past groups have talked about:

- Connecting with our own power, strengths and passions
- Moving from "I have a dream" to "I have a project"
- Finding and using community resources
- Communication skills
- Engaging and empowering others
- Who is a leader? What are leadership skills?
- Building relationships with diverse groups of people.
- Building effective allies for ourselves; becoming an effective ally to others
- Managing conflict
- Dealing with frustration, anger, and hopelessness
- Taking pride and celebrating success
- Taking care of ourselves

What some past NLI participants have said:

"This project has helped me move from sidelines to believe that I have something to offer."

"Being nominated for NLI was like having someone open a door and invite me into the community. I didn't know I was wanted."

"If you want to be a basketball player, you have to hang out with basketball players. If you want to be a leader, you have to hang out with leaders. NLI is my leadership support group."

"Through NLI, I have developed long-lasting friends and a leadership ability that I never knew I had. ... I have truly come out of my shell, and with this new attitude, I am making a difference."

For more info, contact: Margo Hittleman, NLI Coordinator,
<mjh17@cornell.edu, 272-22292 x 167



Natural Leaders Initiative Nomination Form Spring 2010

Thank you for nominating an emerging leader to the Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI)!

Natural Leader's (nominee's) name _____

Address: _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Nominator's name: _____

Title/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please answer the following questions on another sheet of paper.

1. How do you know the person you are nominating? How long have you known him or her?
2. Why do you think he or she should be selected for the Natural Leaders Initiative? (Please tell us about personal strengths, interests, accomplishments, challenges overcome, etc.)
3. Feel free to tell us anything else about this person that will help in our selection process.

Submit to: Margo Hittleman, Coordinator, Natural Leaders Initiative, c/o CCE-Tompkins, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850.

- ◆ **Don't forget** to include the "agreement to be nominated" page, signed by your nominee.

Questions: Contact Margo at 607-272-2292 x167 or <mjh17@cornell.edu>

Natural Leaders Initiative

“Agreement to be nominated”

Congratulations!

Someone has noticed your leadership abilities and wants to nominate you to be part of the Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI).

We will be choosing 20 NLI participants. We need to know whether you are willing to participate if you are chosen.

There will be 8 group sessions (Tuesday evenings, 5:30—8:00 pm, from February-May). You will work with others on a community project that you choose. We provide dinner, child care and, if you need, help with transportation for each session.

Are you interested in being part of this program and able to attend the sessions?

yes **no** **maybe** (please explain):

The best ways to contact me are:

Phone: _____ (day) _____ (evening)

Email: _____

** If you can't commit right now, you might be interested in joining a future NLI group. There will be another group beginning in September. It will meet on Wednesday evenings.

Name (printed) _____

Name (signature) _____

Date _____