



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 NLI was founded in 2007 to support and develop one of Tompkins County's greatest untapped resources -- the large number of "everyday" or "natural" leaders working within their own families, neighborhoods and communities. 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-June or Sept.– January)
- Work with others on a community project you choose
- Meet and learn from experienced community leaders

Lunch or 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 for the participants! The \$850 per person cost is covered by grants, donations and employer sponsorships.



Who participates in NLI?

NLI groups are diverse. 15-20 people are selected for each NLI group. About 60% are African-American, Latino, Asian-American or multi-racial; 40% are white. Their ages range from 20s to 60s. Some live in the City of Ithaca; others live in the rural towns. They are interested in many areas of community life, but they all share an interest in building stronger, more inclusive communities that are 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."

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Nomination Form



Date: _____