RIPPLE Leadership Program Summary

Do Better. Be Better

The Ripple Leadership Program (RIPPLE) is a city-based leadership enhancement program that connects and supports groups of motivated Duke alumni. The aim is to curate communities of talented alumni who are committed to supporting each other’s priorities creating lives of meaning through their communities, leadership, and personal growth. It’s about individuals and RIPPLE cohorts doing better and being better.

*Doing better* involves collaborative activities that create direct benefits for fellow group members and local communities and ripples of indirect benefits for family, friends, and professional colleagues. RIPPLE cohorts are more than dialogue and reflection groups.

*Being better*, the result of *doing better*, contributes to RIPPLE members’ personal growth, especially as it pertains to their leadership, compassion, and character.

A key program strategy is to engage Duke - other alumni, students, faculty, and administrators – in RIPPLE in ways that calibrate with Ripple members’ values and priorities.

**OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

RIPPLE’s objectives and outcomes focus on the benefits of program participation to the cohort members. In addition, the program benefits local communities, students, and Duke University.

**Communities:** Opportunities and activities that result in deeper and more diverse relationships with RIPPLE members, Duke alumni, students, and other exemplary people.

**Benefits:** Opportunities to discern and act in ways that benefit others individually and collectively. These benefits are often small and personal, with benefits developing over a period of time.

**Personal Growth:** Experiences and relationships that yield meaningful personal and professional growth in strong-hearted leadership qualities – clarity of purpose, moral fiber, personal agency, and empathy – and better specific decisions about jobs, careers, and life.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

**RIPPLE Cohorts**

RIPPLE cohorts are organized and led at the local level. RIPPLE was launched in 2015 in San Francisco and New York City. In 2016, RIPPLE was pilot-tested in Boston, Los Angeles, the Research Triangle, and Washington DC. In 2017, RIPPLE LA and RIPPLE Triangle will be launched and the RIPPLE Boston and RIPPLE DC pilot tests will be continued.

RIPPLE cohort members are primarily Duke alumni, with a specific focus on Sanford School alumni, Tony Brown’s former students, and aspiring and accomplished entrepreneurs. Cohorts may include spouses and others who have a strong connection to program mission and who value increased engagement with Duke alumni, students, and faculty.

Member invitations reflect: (1) the nature and degree of engagement commitment and resulting benefits to others and self, and (2) a diversity of backgrounds and interests.
Specific RIPPLE cohort information:
- One or more city-based cohorts, each with approximately 15 members.
- Cohorts are led by two members who collaborate with Duke-based program leaders.
- Membership is for one-year with options for renewal.

**RIPPLE Activities**

RIPPLE consists of a series of activities and events designed to benefit program members, Duke University, and the community at large in a significant manner. Programs are organized on a calendar year basis, starting in January and ending in December. An event will be held in early January to welcome new members and bid farewell to those leaving their cohort.

Objectives, annual goals, and the specific program activities are decided by each local RIPPLE Community. The city-based monthly gatherings are the core program activity. Types of monthly meetings include a meeting of the whole cohort, a joint meeting with another cohort, and meetings that groups of three cohort members schedule and have on their own.

Primary program activities include:
- City-based monthly gatherings
- Collaborative projects that focus on supporting cohort member community priorities
- Engagement with Duke students, faculty and administrators and an annual visit to the Duke campus
- Personal coaching conversations with Tony for job, career, and life issues
- On-line topic-based conversations and status updates

The Duke-based program leaders will provide program and logistical support for the RIPPLE cohorts, especially in the early years.

**MEMBER COMMITMENTS**

Each RIPPLE cohort member commits to make their RIPPLE engagement an important priority, to learn and grow from the experience, to add value to the cohort, and to help build a sustainable high-impact program that will benefit many people over time.

Specific member commitments include:
- Payment of an annual fee to fund a portion of program expenses. The annual fee is $250 for 2017. Need-based financial support is available on an exception basis.
- In addition to the annual fee, RIPPLE Community members may incur incidental program-related expenses for meetings and activities.
- A four hour monthly commitment to RIPPLE for cohort meetings and activities between meetings.
- Attendance at a minimum of 50% of the cohort meetings. If impossible, acceptance of the burden of responsibility is to find other ways to engage and contribute.
- A commitment by each cohort member to accept the responsibility for and deliver on the planning and leadership of a monthly program meeting or an activity between meetings.

RIPPLE is a program of the Duke Leadership Accelerator, which also includes a number of short-term leadership programs for Duke alumni.

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