

LeadingAge™ New York

**IGNITE
YOUR
FLAME**



Leadership Academy

APPLICATION

2025-2026

“Leading Age New York’s Ignite Leadership Academy was one of the most beneficial development programs I’ve experienced in my professional career. The content and networking opportunities have been invaluable to me.” – Ignite Graduate

WHY APPLY?

LeadingAge New York IGNITE Leadership Academy arose from members' experience with the national program and the realization that discussion and learning is also needed at the state level.

What IGNITE graduates are saying!

The Leadership Academy gives the power to lead in confidence and master your craft. It's been a great time, with great people.

The sessions helped me to see the value in negative perspectives and allowed me to interact with staff who have different viewpoints from my own.

Truly a heart warming experience in better understanding yourself, the dynamics of a team and how to make a difference.

This experience helped me recognize the importance of having diverse points of view and different work styles on a team.

The Academy has been truly transformative not only professionally, but personally. Thank you!

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Whether you are a novice or seasoned professional you will undoubtedly grow or be stretched in new ways.

What an awesome and outstanding program. It has challenged me in several ways. I'm learning to be transparent.

Leadership Academy has given me the opportunity to develop truly rich relationships that I wasn't expecting. The Coaches and Leaders have touched my heart and I'm so grateful!

The Leadership Academy has provided me great skills and knowledge that I will use in my professional and personal life. It gave me a chance to reflect upon my current leadership skills and find where my true self and style lies. It was an experience I will never forget.

The opportunity to visit innovative communities across New York State was made possible to me by this program. I'm so grateful to my company for the investment and the opportunity. I highly recommend it to anyone looking to grow personally and professionally.

The IGNITE Leadership Academy is an amazing experience! Networking, learning, socializing with peers – it has everything I need to become introspective and a better leader. The instructors are fabulous and the content is specific to insuring that each participant gets the most benefit.

I appreciate LeadingAge New York for this program because it is a great way to learn skills and have time to focus on us as leaders.

LeadingAge New York IGNITE Leadership Academy provides approximately 30 credits from the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) and a total of 60 generic continuing education credits each year.

BENEFITS



Vision

To create an engaged group of transformational senior living leaders who are prepared to serve their own organizations and support the goals of LeadingAge New York in an exemplary and innovative fashion.

In this program, you will:

- Learn how leaders become more authentic as they clarify their personal values and create their own unique leadership legacy;
- Understand what it means to be a visionary leader who embraces culture change and innovation;
- Adopt the practices required for networking and partnership building within and outside the organization; and,
- Manage energy levels for high performance and model behaviors that enhance personal credibility.

Mission

To facilitate the development and growth of the next generation of senior living leaders in New York State, with a focus on internal and external relationship building, the sharing of best practices, and a passion for continuous learning.

2025-2026 Learning Schedule and Themes

Participants will engage in four face-to-face learning experiences that include visits to member communities, intimate conversations with aging services leaders and self-exploration of leadership styles through exercises and readings. **Attendance at each session is required.** The dates for the 2025-2026 LeadingAge New York IGNITE Leadership Academy are as follows:

Date	Region	Theme
October 20 – 21, 2025	Capital Region	Discovering Our Authentic Leadership
January 13 – 14, 2026	Rochester	Collaborating and Partnership Building
March 10 – 11, 2026	Yonkers	Leading Change and Innovation
April 21 – 22, 2026	Syracuse	Creating a Mindset of Wellbeing

Values

Collaboration

Generous Listening

Thoughtful Questioning

Responsiveness

Open Communication





ELIGIBILITY

Application Deadline June 20, 2025

Eligibility

Any individual who works for a LeadingAge NY provider member organization is eligible to apply, irrespective of professional experience, educational attainment, or type or level of position. It is far more important for an applicant to demonstrate deep leadership potential within their organization than it is for them to have a specific job title or tenure in the field. We strive for a cohort that represents the full continuum of LeadingAge NY providers, the various roles within those services, and the various geographic regions across the state. We welcome individuals with varied perspectives, life experiences, and personal and professional skills, in order to enrich the learning experience, fueling leadership development and personal growth for all.

FACILITATORS:

Laurie Mante, MBA, LNHA
Executive Director
Kendal at Ithaca

Diane Darbyshire, LCSW
VP of Advocacy & Public Policy
LeadingAge New York

COACHES:

Jennifer Drogenik, MHA, LNHA
Director of Health Services
Peconic Landing

Ellen Quinn, BS, SPHR, SHRMSCP
Certified DiSC Facilitator
VP of Human Resources
LeadingAge New York

Mary Wassel, LMSW, LNHA
Chief Operating Officer
Good Shepherd Communities

Desmond Jackson, MHA, LNHA
Deputy Executive Health Director
Monroe Community Hospital

Tuition, Costs and Commitment

Upon acceptance a \$2500 tuition payment *(non-refundable and non-transferable) is required from each Fellow's organization. In addition, lodging and travel expenses are also paid by each Fellow's organization (the costs incurred vary depending on the locations of the site visits). Some meals are provided during the sessions at no additional cost. Registration for the 2026 LeadingAge New York Annual Conference and Exposition is included as part of the tuition. Graduation will be held at the conference.

Fellows are required to attend all in-person sessions. Please note, access to cell phones and other communication devices will be limited to break periods. The Fellows should plan on spending up to 10 hours a month working on Academy activities. Fellows will need access to a personal computer for regular email contacts with their coaches and team members.

Fellows must remain actively employed by a LeadingAge New York organization during the Academy program year in order to remain eligible for participation. Each applicant slot is non-transferable and tuition is non-refundable unless an alternate arrangement is agreed to by all parties.

APPLICATION



Components: All three components must be completed by the deadline for your application to be considered.

1) Complete Application, including Leadership Essay* digitally [here](#). More information about the essay is provided below.

2) Applicants are required to submit the [Applicant and Sponsoring Organization Commitment](#) page signed by their sponsoring organization as part of the application package. *Please note: the Application must be signed by the president, CEO, executive director or administrator (where appropriate) of the applicant's sponsoring organization. If the applicant is the highest-ranking executive officer, the organization's board chair should sign the commitment letter. This document, signed by both aforementioned parties, should be sent to leadershipacademy@leadingageny.org by the application deadline.

3) Letter of Reference: Applicants are required to obtain one professional letter of reference. This letter should be sent to leadershipacademy@leadingageny.org by the application deadline.

Leadership Essay Components:

You will submit your essay in the above linked digital application. Please make sure your essay provides enough information to give the selection committee insight into your history and desire to be part of this program. Please compose your personal leadership essay using the following points as headers:

- Describe the capacities that you possess that make you an effective leader and the specific ways you have utilized these attributes in your personal and professional life. In doing so, please refer to a significant professional achievement, your specific role in attaining that achievement and the impact it has had on your organization.
- Describe the perspective and knowledge you hope to acquire from your participation in the LeadingAge New York IGNITE Leadership Academy and how these insights will enable you to become a transformational leader.
- Describe your personal commitment to long term care and aging services and how you envision using your IGNITE experience to enhance aging services within your organization, your community and at the state level.

***Important:**

We recommend that you compose your Leadership Essay first, in Word for example, and then go in and complete the digital application, copying and pasting the text into the digital application. You cannot save the application to return to and complete later. Your complete essay, addressing all three questions, should not exceed two typed, single-spaced pages. The application will not accept a longer submission.



APPLICATION

Evaluation Criteria

A committee of LeadingAge New York member leaders will evaluate applications using the following criteria:

- How strongly defined, insightful and introspective is the leadership essay? How strongly does the applicant demonstrate a personal commitment to the field of long term care and aging services?
- How strongly does the applicant demonstrate dedication to life-long learning?
- To what extent does the applicant possess the leadership capacity needed to become a transformational leader?

Submission Deadline

To ensure consideration, the deadline to complete and submit the application packet is **5 PM on June 20, 2025**. Applications that fail to meet all guidelines or are incomplete cannot be considered for review. Applicants will receive notification of their acceptance status in August.

Application questions should be directed to Nancy Caban at: ncaban@leadingageny.org or 518.867.8383. Questions about the program can be directed to Diane Darbyshire at ddarbyshire@leadingageny.org or 518.867.8828.

Application checklist:

Be sure all components of the application are completed by 5 PM June 20, 2025:

- Complete digital application, including essay, and submit
- Ensure a Letter of Reference and Applicant Sponsoring Organization Commitment is sent to leadershipacademy@leadingageny.org by the application deadline

Incomplete applications will not be considered.