

Sylvia M. Thomasson Educational Leadership Enhancement Program
Responses to survey of past participants
Conducted by 2008 class

The 2008 class sent survey questions to about 40 past participants and received responses from about 10. Below are the results.

General Themes

- The majority of participants have had a promotion since participating in the program.
- Participants felt that the president's forum was very meaningful.
- Several participants commented that the Tallahassee trip provided insight into the operations of the community college system.
- Building relationships with colleagues from their college and others was constantly stated as a wonderful benefit to the program.
- The business etiquette and resume building session was a big hit.
- Suggested improvements to the program include making the final project and other information available to future classes, having graduates serve as mentors for new participants and making the program more sensitive to the inflexible nature of faculty schedules.
- Participants learned many varied things from the program and no common thread was found in the responses. It appears that the program successfully met each individual's needs by providing several different venues for gaining knowledge allowing participants to draw information specific to their personality and leadership style.
- Although the majority of the participants indicated that they are in contact with their fellow class participants, they indicated that they are not in contact with those from other institutions. A reunion of all Sylvia Thomasson program graduates was suggested.

Position while in Program

Foundation finance coordinator
Full time English faculty
Upward Bound program coordinator
Women's program coordinator

Student activities coordinator/academic advisor
Student activities coordinator
Assistant registrar
Purchasing coordinator
Academic advisor/VA certifying Rep / adjunct professor

Current Position

Director, accounting and budget
Director of learning centers
Upward Bound program manager
Manager, workforce education programs

Student services manager
Journalism and speech instructor
Assistant registrar
Purchasing manager
Coordinator of new student programs

What did you get out of the program?

- Improving business etiquette, team building, supervisory and leadership skills, networking skills and self-confidence
- Understanding that Florida community college system is truly united in its efforts to provide top quality education for its students
- Understanding of operational processes of the community college system
- Diversity training
- Attendance at Futures conference
- Off-campus exposure
- New information about state initiatives
- Relationships with professionals at my community college and the other participating community colleges
- Clarification of long-term career goals

What was the most meaningful part of the program for you?

- Presidents' forum
- Tallahassee Trip
- Networking and bonding with emerging leaders
- Being selected to participate
- Business etiquette and resume session

What would you do to improve the program?

- Eliminate the Futures Assembly – too costly for little benefit
- Make the program more faculty friendly. Activities are often planned for the same day.
- Allow more funds to fully cover participant expenses and allow for conference attendance
- Provide job shadowing and mentoring
- Make each group's final project available to future groups
- Increase focus on leadership issues and limit the conferences that don't deal directly with leadership
- Encourage past participants to take on role of mentoring new participants
- Provide continuing education on leadership

What did you learn from the program that you are using today?

- Business etiquette
- Not hesitant to contact other schools for information or advice
- Allowing employees to provide feedback and incorporating their suggestions
- Listening
- Learned ways to deal with challenging issues as a leader
- More diversity aware
- Power of networking and establishing credibility
- Appreciating different personality types
- Moving out of comfort zone
- Learned to value each experience as a benefit to becoming a good leader

What leadership skills are you using in your current position?

- Techniques that generate respect from my employees
- Ability to communicate and work with faculty and administration as my position serves as a bridge between these two groups
- Being more tactful while being assertive in motivating employees to do their best
- Preparing and conducting meetings at a variety of levels
- Modeling, team building, time management, effective communication
- Leading by example and being sensitive and responsive to employee strengths and weaknesses
- Learning to be a leader who is available when needed but not standing over employee shoulders
- Interpersonal skills, conflict management skills and organizational skills

Are you networking with any past participants?

- Yes
- Mainly with participants in my own school from my year and previous years
- Would be nice to have a reunion
- Unfortunately no