



## Leadership U Program Overview

Leadership U (LU) is a unique leadership development and community service program for Howard County (HoCo) rising high school juniors (students apply during the spring of their sophomore year). Eligible students must live or go to school in HoCo. Starting in the summer following the sophomore year, this 4-month program fosters leadership growth and civic engagement through three pillar areas:

- ❖ Education on Community Issues
- ❖ Student-Led Community Service Projects
- ❖ Development of Student's Unique Leadership Skills

Students appreciate our program's ability to foster confidence, fortify leadership and problem-solving skills, and expand their professional networks through connections with numerous community leaders. Participants initiate impactful projects, contributing to the betterment of our local community while forming lasting friendships with peers from across the county, forging connections they might never have encountered otherwise.

Upon graduating from LU, students frequently continue their commitment to community service through active volunteering, assume pivotal roles in school leadership, and engage in advisory positions such as the HC Commission for Women, Human Rights Commission, #One Howard, Recreation and Parks, HCPSS (Howard County Public School System) Advisory Committees, and more. Many find their amplified leadership capabilities invaluable as they transition to college and pursue future endeavors.

### **Program Eligibility:**

- Students must be current sophomores to apply
- Student must live OR attend school in Howard County, MD
- Students must submit an online application, two references, and attend an interview

### **Applicant Information:**

- Online applications will be available January 2025

- Application format is eight short answer questions
- Two references are also required. Students must independently contact references and ask for the necessary form to be completed. One reference from school and one reference from outside of school.
- Personal interviews will be held in April
  - Selection is based on written application, references, and interview.
- Selected applicants will be notified in May.
  - LU will accept fifty students from all HoCo public high schools and numerous private school and home school programs
  - This is a tuition-based program; tuition assistance and payment plans are available. Tuition covers the cost of the week-long training, meals, materials, Sunday sessions, graduation dinner, and ceremony for the participant and their parent(s). Tuition for the 2025 program is \$1,500.

**Program Schedule: Dates will be determined in January 2025 and posted on the LHC website**

- The “Summer Week” dates are set and will occur Sunday, July 27 – Friday, August 1 and attendance is MANDATORY
- Sunday Sessions are held on nine Sundays, typically from 2 to 4:30 pm, between August and December (Please note, some projects require groups to meet on their own in addition to the nine Sunday sessions)
- 3D-HC—held one day when HCPSS are off from school in the fall
- Graduation - December

**Program Curriculum:**

**Summer Week of HoCo Community Learning** - LU participants visit locations across the county for hands-on learning on subjects such as:

- Team Building
- Healthcare
- Government
- Needs of Special Populations such as 50+ Seniors
- Law Enforcement
- Diversity in the County
- Health & Human Services
- Community Non-Profits and needs of the county

**Community Service Project Sunday Sessions** - After the culmination of the Summer Week, the LU class undergoes division into 7 teams dedicated to executing student-developed community projects to address identified community needs. Assisted by adult volunteer mentors, all students convene for nine Sunday afternoon sessions (twice a month) from August to December, entirely dedicated to advancing their projects. Throughout these gatherings, the cultivation of leadership skills persists, complemented by guest speakers from the community. Abundant opportunities are provided for students to apply and enhance their leadership abilities within their groups and the broader community while actively implementing these impactful community service projects.

**3D-HC – Dig Deep and Discover Howard County** -On a weekday when Howard County Public Schools are closed, students visit a Howard County non-profit to learn about leadership and nonprofit operations and participate in hands-on service.

**Graduation** -Students present their projects to their families, friends, school administrators, Leadership Howard County board, and members.

**Conditions for Retention in Leadership U Program:**

- Attendance at **all** sessions during the first week of the program
- Adherence to the Leadership U Code of Ethics
- Attendance at **all** required Sunday afternoon meetings (typically twice a month from 2-4:30 pm)
- Ability to attend ad-hoc team meetings to be determined by each project team (this is in addition to the regularly scheduled Sunday meetings)
- Full participation in the design and implementation of the team project

**2025 LU Info Sessions for Students and Families**

Information Sessions are scheduled for the following dates:

- Tuesday, January 28, 5:30 p.m. - East Columbia Branch of the Howard County Library
- Thursday, February 27, 6 p.m. - Location TBA
- Wednesday, March 19, 5:30 p.m. - Location TBA

While applicants for LU 2025 will be limited to current high school *sophomores* who live or attend school in Howard County, Maryland, we welcome future students and families who may be curious to also attend!

**Program Contact:**

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**Additional Program Information:** Visit [www.leadershiphc.org](http://www.leadershiphc.org)