



For Immediate Release

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Applications Available for Leadership Oak Ridge Program to Feature New Format

December 5, 2008 – Applications are now available and being accepted for the 2009 class of Leadership Oak Ridge. The program is undergoing many exciting changes. Among the changes is the transition of the management of the program to the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce. However, the most exciting change for participants and the community is the program format modifications.

Effective with the 2009 program year, Leadership Oak Ridge will transition to an issue based program from a community orientation program. In addition, the new format will feature applied leadership lessons in each session focused on the topic of the session. And, Leadership Oak Ridge participants will actively participate in the planning of the sessions with input, advice and guidance from Leadership Oak Ridge board members, Chamber staff and other community leaders.

According to Ray Smith, President of the Leadership Oak Ridge Board of Directors, “This new format is intriguing in that it offers the participants a solid foundation of community issues and leadership development, while remaining true to the networking aspects of the former program.”

Among the session topics are: Oak Ridge Economics 101; Education; Residential Development; Quality of Life; Oak Ridge’s Regional Partners and Neighbors; Make a Difference; and An Oak Ridge Orientation. In addition, there will be two overnight trips. The first trip is a two day/one night retreat. The second trip will be to Nashville while the General Assembly is in session. A graduation will be held for the participants in October.

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Mark Harvey, Chairman of the Board of the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce noted “A transition team including Leadership Oak Ridge and Oak Ridge Chamber board members has been meeting since early 2008. The group reviewed and dissected leadership program formats from across the country to develop this new focus. As a graduate of Leadership Oak Ridge, I am excited to see the program move in this new direction.”

With the new format, Leadership Oak Ridge will become a ten month program rather than a ten week program. Parker Hardy, President of the Oak Ridge Chamber commented, “Our customers told us it would be a more attractive schedule if the sessions were spread out over ten months rather than ten weeks.”

Applications for the program, set to kickoff in February 2009, are available on the Chamber’s website at www.oakridgechamber.org and at the Chamber office, 1400 Oak Ridge Turnpike. The program fee is \$1,200 per person which includes the two overnight trips, meals and session costs. A limited number of scholarships are available. For more information, please contact the Chamber office or email leadershipoakridge@orcc.org.

The Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce is Four-Star Accredited Chamber of Commerce and a 2008 ACCE Chamber of the Year finalist.

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