



GREATER NAPLES LEADERSHIP

GNL MASTERS PROGRAM GUIDE FOR SPONSORS AND POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

- GNL was founded in 1999, with the same mission it has today, “To provide proven leaders with a unique opportunity to learn firsthand about the issues and needs in Collier County and to encourage the use of their skills individually and collectively in bettering the community.” GNL is non-political. It does not take positions on public policy issues and does not support or oppose candidates for elective office.
- Since its founding, over 1000 community members have been through GNL’s Masters Class, and there are currently nearly 500 active members. Most GNL members are retired and maintain residences in Collier County.
- Current GNL members are engaged in over 200 different community not-for-profit and civic organizations. The networking amongst our members is one of the greatest advantages of being part of the GNL program.
- On a monthly basis, most GNL members contribute between 11 and 25 hours a month to volunteer work in the community. A majority of members volunteer with more than one community organization.
- A sample of community organizations where GNL members have been on boards or leadership positions: Champions for Learning, Community Foundation of Collier County, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, David Lawrence Center, Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Naples Art Association, Naples Botanical Garden, Naples Civil Air Patrol, Naples Council on World Affairs, Naples Zoo, Naples City Council, Shelter for Abused Women and The Naples Players.
- GNL, itself, offers opportunities for volunteers on its board and operating committees. GNL members also participate in GNL sponsored “Done-in-a Day” projects for various community organizations.
- In addition to its focus on community volunteerism, GNL offers its members the opportunity to interact socially, network and make new friends. Among each year’s social events are a welcome back party, a holiday party, a beach party and an annual meeting. There are also several “Lunch with Leaders” and Alumni Continuing Education continuing education sessions during the year that are both educational and offer additional time for GNL members to socially interact. Individual Master Classes meet from one to multiple times throughout the year.

ABOUT THE MASTERS CLASS

- GNL's Master Class, usually 40-48 people, requires a two-year commitment. Year 1 includes nine session days which educate the class on issues regarding Collier County. Also, in Year 1 class members are expected to attend two social events, Welcome Lunch in March, 2022, and the Class Graduation in March, 2023. The class is also expected to attend two half-day planning sessions. In Year 2, small teams of class members prepare the session days for the following year's class.
- The session days begin in October, 2022 and end in March, 2023. There are no session days between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Session days are focused on the following areas:
 - ***Naples Past, Present, & Future:*** major historical events, places, and people that influenced development of SW Florida
 - ***Cultural Arts:*** the breadth of Naples' cultural arts offerings
 - ***Healthcare:*** the healthcare environment in SW Florida and the future impact of healthcare on the community
 - ***Education:*** how the community is organized to support and encourage student success
 - ***Environment:*** critical environmental issues in the area regarding water and the balance between preserving the environment and the effect on quality of life
 - ***Government:*** an overview of the structure of local, county, state and federal government
 - ***Growth & Economic Development:*** the status of growth and economic development in SW Florida
 - ***Human Services:*** information about the range of human services offered in Collier County and the collaboration across agencies
 - ***Immokalee:*** create an awareness of socioeconomic trends in Immokalee, including related critical issues
- Session day presentations are typically made by outside experts knowledgeable in the subject matter. There are also panel discussions and on-site field trips and visits. The class travels to some session day venues by bus, while other venues are reached by personal cars or carpooling.
- In addition to session days, there are two half-day planning sessions for the following year-
 - ***Evaluation & Planning*** - classmates pick sessions to lead in the second year
 - ***Session Day Planning*** - teams begin planning for session days in the second year
- There are social events to encourage members to maintain contact with their classmates.
- The main second-year responsibility is for small teams of class members, under the guidance of a class leadership team, to prepare one of nine educational sessions for the following year's Masters Class.
- There are also a variety of social activities that takes place involving class members, both during and after the class year. The Social Committee sponsors social events that encourage members to maintain contact with their classmates. In addition, after-class social hours and class-initiated events are frequently held.
- Cost of membership:
 - \$2,300 tuition for Masters Class
 - \$180 the current annual dues thereafter

ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Most applicants to a Master Class are sponsored by a GNL member. However, it is not necessary to have a sponsor and in the past many successful applicants have been unsponsored.

- Application forms will be available online on the GNL website commencing October 20, 2021. The form must be completed online by the applicant, also by the Sponsor, for sponsored applicants, and submitted online to GNL by the earlier of December 31, 2021 or once 60 applications have been filed. Early applications are encouraged.
- Each applicant will have an interview which will be conducted by two GNL members. Interviews will occur during the first half of December and the first half of January. It is preferable that the interviews occur in person at FineMark Bank on Laurel Oak Drive in Naples. Applicants should specify in the application when during the period they will be unavailable, Jeremy Farmer, head of the Membership Committee, will then get back to them with a proposed interview date and time.
- Historically, GNL has accepted between 40 and 48 applicants.
- A committee of seven GNL members, led by the Chair of the Membership Committee, will review each application form and reports of each interview. Multiple factors will be considered, including making the class as inclusive and balanced as possible.
- Important Application Process Dates.
 - October 20, 2021 Application form available online at GNL website.
 - November 29 - December 17, 2021 and January 3 - January 17, 2022. Interviews will be scheduled in the morning or afternoon on weekdays during these periods.
 - December 31, 2021 - Applications must be submitted by the earlier of receipt of 60 applications or the close of business on this date.
 - Early February, 2022 - Applicants will be advised of the results of the application process.
 - March 1, 2022 - Applicants must respond affirmatively to the offer to join GNL and pay Master Class tuition of \$2300 by this date.
 - June 1, 2022 - One-half of Master Class tuition refundable if Applicant withdraws by this date.

ABOUT GNL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- The GNL governing board and officers are all member volunteers. There are no paid staff at GNL at any level. GNL does contract with an independent external administration agency for membership and communications activities.
- The governing board has 19 members, elected to 3-year terms. There are 5 officers, elected annually by GNL's Board: President, Immediate Past President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary.
- There are 11 committees: Alumni Continuing Education, Alumni Social, Governance, Class Reps, Communications, Community Service, Finance, Membership, Distinguished Leadership, Strategic Planning and Class Leadership Team.
- GNL revenues are a mix of annual membership fees and program fees. Expenses are direct program costs (venue costs, food, etc.), program support and external contracted membership administrative support.