



Leadership Golden was created in 1984 by a group of Golden citizens. There was a concern about a lack of leadership in local government and very little community involvement and volunteerism. They felt that engaging citizens in the community and teaching them about their city and the issues it faced, could inspire more people to become active in civic affairs and develop leaders in the Golden area.

Similar to other community leadership and education programs around the country, a class with a series of education sessions was initiated. The focus was on local government; having local officials speak to classes about governance, City of Golden services, City finances and issues that Golden faced. Over time, Leadership Golden class content expanded to educate participants about the county justice system, open space, regional agencies, and Golden area cultural and nonprofit organizations, and the role they play in the community.

The Leadership Golden program reviews applicants and selects up to twenty-five people to participate in each year's class. The program has had approximately 600 participants since inception and graduates of the class have a very high rate of participation in the community and its affairs. Graduates have held positions on City Council, City boards and commissions, including Planning, Historic Preservation, Parks & Recreation, and Urban Renewal. In addition, Leadership Golden has supplied Directors, board members and volunteers for Golden's cultural and non-profit organizations, their projects and initiatives. It continues to provide leadership and volunteers who serve to improve the Golden community.

Virtually all of the "leadership" programs in Colorado and around the country charge participants tuition from several hundred to several thousand dollars. Leadership Golden has always been free to class participants. In the early years endowments were provided by foundations such as the Golden Civic and Adolph Coors Foundations and other community donors. Since its inception the Leadership Golden Alumni Association has sold annual Christmas ornaments to raise money. In 2015, LGAA, Inc. was accepted as a part of the Colorado Gives Day program and is generating donation revenue to offset more of the program costs. Alumni also pay dues of \$10 a year. LGAA, Inc. is an entirely volunteer organization with a board of directors and a steering committee which designs and operates the classes.

Golden continues to thrive with the assistance of concerned, involved citizens who take interest in their community. They have given their time and service to be leaders. Many of these people were informed and inspired by their involvement in Leadership Golden.