

Purpose

In 2007, the Gulf Coast Business Council Research Foundation launched the Masters Leadership Program to identify and develop emerging leaders on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The program brings together a wide array of Coast leaders to become the regional “think tank” for one year. Each year the class learns, challenges assumptions, and develops solutions that lead to making the Gulf Coast region the most livable place in the United States.

The 2018 Program theme is “**Blue Print Gulf Coast.**” It is the second year of a five-year Masters Class effort to develop a long-term, strategic plan for the success of Mississippi’s Coastal region. Creating the Economic Blueprint for the Gulf Coast, the 2018 class will continue to build a roadmap to transform the economic landscape for the Mississippi Gulf Coast’s future. The 2017 Masters Program “Think Tank” identified key economic pillars that will become the foundation for the Coast’s future economic prosperity and viability. The 2018 Masters Program will be tasked with determining the best course of action for enhancing these pillars, and driving increased economic success. In 2018, the class will visit a U.S. city that has demonstrated best practices associated with one of the key pillars. This year the class will visit a city that has identified and put into place key components of their own economic blue print and learn how they have drawn upon their own regional assets to affect change in their communities.

The Master’s program consists of 9 sessions held from March through November. These sessions are designed to develop and enhance critical leadership skills of Gulf Coast leaders. The theme-based program creates a practical application forum where the curriculum is applied to build individual leadership skills and enhance group leadership capacities. The 2018 curriculum includes the following study areas:

- Making the case for Addressing and Resolving Issues
- Identifying Key Trends and Best Practices
- Identifying Key Assets That Drive Outcomes
- Influencing the Political Will & Gaining Public Support
- Identify and Prioritize Key Takeaways

The culmination of these sessions and field study will result in the class developing a position paper on recommended solutions and courses of action that will be presented to the Gulf Coast Business Council.

The class will have the opportunity to meet and dialogue with leaders and strategists with expertise in different areas, and to develop solutions to improve our Coast. In addition, the class will have the opportunity to sustain its work after 2018, with future Masters Program classes building on the work of the 2017-18 class.

The Masters Program does not seek to replace or replicate other leadership programs in each of the three Coast counties but is designed to enhance the skills developed there at a deeper and more engaged level.



Instructions

Type or print in black ink. Please complete each section fully. Limit answers to the space available. Application must be signed by both applicant and employer or sponsoring organization (as applicable) and **received** by the GULF COAST BUSINESS COUNCIL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, 11975 Seaway Road, Suite A-120 Gulfport, MS 39503 by *close of business on **February 28, 2018.***

Selection Criteria

Participation in the MASTERS PROGRAM is open to persons living or working in one of the three Coast counties of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson who possess a demonstrated ability to critically examine issues on a regional basis and actively engage in efforts important to the region. Applicants should have a demonstrated record of leadership in their respective businesses or other organizations. No more than 25 individuals will be appointed to participate in the program. Applicants not selected this year may be nominated in subsequent years.

Participants will be chosen by a confidential selection committee based upon the information completed on this application. The committee will seek a diverse class but will not select participants based upon a predetermined apportionment system.

Applicants must have the full support of the organization or corporation they represent. Full tuition is \$2,000 per selected member and is due within 30 days of selection. Scholarships are available on a limited basis and are capped at 40% (\$800).

Attendance at and engagement in each of the eight sessions is expected. Those who fail to attend or to actively participate may be asked to withdraw, with no refund of tuition.

III. EMPLOYMENT

Present Employer _____ Service Date _____

Type of Organization _____

Title or Responsibility _____ Since _____

A. Briefly describe your responsibilities in your employment:

B. List previous employment in reverse order: (Include active military duty.)

| Employer | Title/Responsibility | From | To |
|----------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

C. What do you consider your highest professional achievement to date?

D. Business/Professional Affiliations (if any):

(Not including civic organizations, public office or political activities)

| Name or Group | Positions Held or Assignments | Period of Affiliation |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. Include community, civic, religious, political, government, social, athletic, or other activities. Do not include business/professional activities. Include current major role in the organization:

Organization _____

Assignment/Position _____

Describe _____

Organization _____

Assignment/Position _____

Describe _____

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (continued)

Organization _____

Assignment/Position _____

Describe _____

- B. If you have additional significant community, religious, political, government, social, athletic or other areas of active involvement, please list below. If you have been graduated from another leadership program, please list.

- C. What do you consider your most important accomplishment in one of the above organizations? Why?

- D. What specific engagement have you had with critical public policy issues?

- E. What plans do you have for your future in terms of your career, civic, and community affairs?

V. OTHER QUESTIONS

(The purpose of the MASTERS PROGRAM is to engage bright, critical thinkers on important public policy issues and emerging topics facing the Gulf Coast.)

A. What are three critical public policy areas that should be addressed to make the Gulf Coast region one of the most livable in the US?

B. What is the most important book you have read within the past five years? Briefly describe its importance.

B. What will you do once you graduate to ensure that the leadership skills and relationships developed during this program are used to further the program's goal of developing solutions that lead to making the Gulf Coast region the most livable place in the United States?

VI. COMMITMENT 2018 dates need to be added

To graduate from the **MASTERS PROGRAM**, a participant is expected to attend and engage in all sessions. Most of the below sessions are expected to last full a day.

| <i>Event</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Purpose</i> |
|--|---|---|
| Welcome Reception and Orientation | March 2018 TBD 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm | Orientation and introduction of Class to the GCBC Board |
| <i>Sessions are generally from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm</i> | | |
| Session I | March 2018 TBD | Making the Case |
| Session II | Thursday, April 5, 2018 – Sunday, April 8, 2018 | Travel to the Model City (3 night stay) |
| Session III | May 2018 TBD | Trip Debrief |
| Session IV | JUNE 2018 TBD | Identify Key Trends and Best Practices |
| Session V | AUGUST 2018 TBD | Identify Key Assets That Drive Outcomes |
| Session VI | SEPTEMBER 2018 TBD | Influencing the Political Will & Gaining Public Support |
| Session VII | OCTOBER 2018 TBD | Identify & Prioritize Key Takeaways |
| Session VIII | NOVEMBER 2018 TBD | Finalize Recommendations & White Paper - |
| Session VIII | DECEMBER 2018 TBD | Graduation and Celebration |

AGREEMENT:

I understand the purpose of the MASTERS PROGRAM and if I am selected, I will devote the time and resources necessary to actively engage in each session. I am not participating and will not participate in other community leadership programs during the tenure of the 2018 Masters Program. I understand the above commitment and agree to be bound by them in signing this application.

Applicant Signature **Date**

VII. SCHOLARSHIP NEED

If you are requesting a tuition scholarship, please briefly describe the reason for your request and the amount requested. The maximum scholarship available is 40% of tuition (\$800) balance of \$1,200 to be paid by participant.

Amount Requested: \$ _____

Reason: _____

Applicant Signature (if requesting scholarship) **Date**

VII. EMPLOYER COMMITMENT (if applicable)

This application has the approval of this organization and the applicant has our full support which includes the time required to participate in the program.

Firm _____

Signature _____

Title _____

VIII. TUITION

If accepted into the MASTERS PROGRAM, you or your employer/sponsor will be responsible for the tuition fee of **\$2,000** which covers all program costs, unless scholarship is awarded. (Costs include meals, outside area travel, required books, other reading material, supplies and graduation recognition) Checks should be made payable to "**Gulf Coast Business Council**" and mailed to the address below.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MAILED OR

DELIVERED TO: GULF COAST BUSINESS COUNCIL
RESEARCH FOUNDATION
11975 SEAWAY ROAD, SUITE A120
GULFPORT, MS 39503

FAXED TO: (228) 896-8384 **ATTENTION:** MASTERS APPLICATION

OR EMAILED TO: JHART@MSGCBC.ORG