

September 1, 2011

Press Release

The Kosciusko Leadership Academy (KLA) kicked off the 2011-2012 year Tuesday, August 30 at the Lake City Bank People Development Center introducing the new class to KLA. Executive Committee members Shelly Fraley (President), Dr. Steve Grill (Advisor), and Allyn Decker (Moderator) ushered in the 30<sup>th</sup> KLA class.

Allyn Decker welcomed the new class members representing various organizations and businesses throughout the county. He introduced Shelly Fraley, KLA President, who thanked them for the time given to the KLA process and shared how she began as a KLA student which led to being an Executive Committee member. She then introduced the rest of the KLA Executive Board: Nate Conley, Vice-President; Becky Anglin, Secretary/Treasurer; Trina Hoy, Curriculum; Cameron Plew, Selection; Allison McSherry, Event Coordinator; and Kathy Stutzman, Public Information.

Dr. Grill shared the history and vision of KLA recounting how Jean Northenor and the late Matt Dalton co-founded KLA in 1982. Jean Northenor took a few minutes to exhort the students. She mentioned that the original nominations were all men. As a result, KLA restarted ending with one female in the first class. This has increased through the years with KLA growing to a proportion of 50/50 male/female involvement. Northenor shared that "there are wonderful opportunities for leadership in KLA" and that it would be a stepping stone for them to serving on boards. She stated that when they graduate, everyone should be prepared to serve on some board. "That's your goal, besides a white paper project...get on a board" and serve the community.

Allyn Decker followed by detailing what to expect in the next few months, as well as explaining White Paper Projects, in which the new members will form teams to research community issues and needs and develop projects to address them. Allyn referred them to the KLA site, [www.klaconnect.com](http://www.klaconnect.com) to get an idea of range and scope of possible projects this year.

The meeting ended with Brenda Rigdon from Kosciusko County Community Development who explained the differences between a nonprofit and a for profit organization. She shared the results of a recent survey that revealed the need for high quality board members. She finished by inviting the students to attend the September 7 Get on Board event at the Center Lake Pavilion which will feature 40 different nonprofit organizations looking for board members.

The kickoff breakfast adjourned with a coach tour immediately following which took the new KLA class to Whetstone Woodenware, Par-Kan Company, lunch on the Dixie stern wheel paddleboat, the National Service Doppler Weather Station, and the Alpaca Company near Etna Green. Grace College provided the bus and driver.

Upon completion of the bus tour, the new KLA class met with former KLA graduates and KLA trustees for an after-work Alumni Meet and Greet at the Lake City People Development Center.

KLA would like to thank everyone who made the Kickoff a success. Thanks to Grace College for providing the bus and driver for the county tour. Thanks to the Kosciusko County Visitors and Convention Bureau for organizing the day trip for the class. Thanks to Whetstone Woodenware, Par-Kan Company, National Service Doppler Weather Station and the Alpaca Company for inviting KLA's class into your workplace. Finally thanks to the Dixie for providing us with an educational tour of Webster Lake.

KLA's next session, "Protecting Our Water Resources", will be hosted by the Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation on Tuesday, September 13 at 7 AM.