

LEAD ¹⁰³ program kicks off with banquet

By Travis Knight
Copy Editor

A group of 19 new members are beginning the 2009 Leadership Enrichment And Development (LEAD) program.

"We teach activity based learning, leadership skills, communication skills, learning styles, team building and collaboration consensus," said Lisa Hatcher, a co-facilitator of the class.

Hatcher said LEAD classes will be held at SCCC and the alumni and board members will be involved in the program.

The students will have to do a class project as part of the program curriculum. The project is based off of Oprah's "The Big Give." Students will have 24 hours to make a difference to change the lives of kids in our community. The assignment has to be based around helping the lives of children," said Hatcher. The Kansas Health Foundation donated \$1,000 to help the students with the project. Projects must be completed by April 23 and a report will be delivered by the students at the LEAD graduation, the same night.

A two-day trip to Topeka is also part of the class.

Elizabeth Irby, Clinical Director with the Seward County Health Department, is a 2007 graduate of the then-Leadership

Liberal, and has been a board member since.

"The LEAD Program, formally known as Leadership Liberal, is a leadership enrichment program available to anyone in our area," said Irby.

She said the program consists of a series of seven class times where students learn leadership skills to use in all areas of their lives.

"As a class you get to work with other people that are interested in improving their lives and the community they live in.

These classes are facilitated by local people that have gone through previous Leadership training,"

said Irby. "The class takes a trip to Topeka for a wonderful tour of the Capital Building and other areas of government. They

experience small gatherings with Government Leaders where stu-

dents have an opportunity to ask questions and get answers directly from that Government leader. At the completion of the class, the students are expected to complete a project."

Irby said she didn't know what to expect when she went through the class two years ago.

"I had just started my position as a supervisor and could use some training to improve my skills. Our class consisted of a variety of personalities and learning styles. It was beneficial to me for my job and my home. It opened my eyes to the possibilities in Liberal and how all of us could make this community a better place to live, work and raise a family. We have a wonderful blend of cultures here in Liberal and LEAD helps bring those differences together and learn to work together in a fun non-threatening situation," said Irby.

Irby said she encourages everyone to become involved in their community whether it be at church, their neighborhood, at their child's school, a civic organization, or something they are interested in. "I recommend the class to everyone, even if they are a stay at home Mom or the president of a bank, because it takes everyone to make Liberal a better place," said Irby.

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