Leadership Development Program Underway in Hawkinsville-Pulaski County
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An early priority of the Archway Partnership in Hawkinsville and Pulaski County, the need to identify and engage new and emerging leaders has quickly been embraced by community members. To address this local priority, the Hawkinsville-Pulaski County Archway Partnership recently offered a round of training to prepare community members for the development of a local leadership development initiative.

Following the curriculum of the Community Leadership Program, the Hawkinsville-Pulaski Chamber of Commerce hosted faculty from the UGA Fanning Institute to teach Facilitator Training sessions to 24 local community participants in late 2009.

The Community Leadership courses resulted in the formation of a new leadership development initiative—Pulaski Tomorrow. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, Pulaski Tomorrow is currently in the planning stage to develop its inaugural class. Vivian Penn, of VCP Marketing & PR, was one of the participants who completed the Facilitator Training and now serves as a member of the Planning and Steering Committee for Pulaski Tomorrow. After taking part in the brainstorming session for this local effort, Penn said she felt compelled to take more of a leadership role in her community. Contacts and resources she acquired from the sessions would only make that goal easier.

“After participating in the newly formed Leadership Program in Pulaski County, I felt compelled to get more involved in my community. I made new contacts at the Leadership Training, learned about their special skills and backgrounds, and was able to share my expertise as well. I have already cultivated new business opportunities and discovered ways I can help Hawkinsville thrive, thanks to the new connections I developed through the Archway Partnership Leadership Program,” Penn said.

In addition to Pulaski Tomorrow, another community-driven effort to develop similar leadership development for young professionals has resulted in the creation of the OcMulgee Order.

An organization dedicated to fostering professionals aged 45 and younger in Hawkinsville and Pulaski County, the OcMulgee Order aims to identify, recruit and train an incoming wave of informed, committed community members who can take ownership in the future positive growth in Hawkinsville and Pulaski County. The Archway Partnership has provided technical assistance and support to the development of this local program.

"Developing our future leaders by positioning them to be an informed and cohesive group will enhance our community's ability to progress efficiently and productively. It is incumbent upon the current leadership to offer the opportunities for leadership development, said Jerry Murkerson, Hawkinsville City Manager.