Leadership Development Program Enhances Washington County Healthcare
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Leadership and professional development among the Washington County healthcare workforce is an important priority within the community. The Washington County Chamber of Commerce and the Washington County Archway Partnership: Health are working together to enhance these skills to enrich the overall quality of care to the public.

The Chamber applied for the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) in 2009 with the assistance of research by the Archway Partnership. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides grants for rural projects that include funding for employment related adult education programs that help to serve the rural community.

The Chamber was awarded a $67,000 RBEG from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to enhance leadership development in the county with a portion of the funds designated to focus on healthcare professionals. This sparked the beginning of the Leadership Washington County Program in June 2010 where half of the participants in the cohort represented the healthcare industry.

These healthcare professionals, along with representatives from other industries, are able to enhance their own leadership and professional skills by discussing challenging issues in the community and the opportunities to overcome them. In addition to community issues, certain Leadership Washington County seminars were tailored to educate and discuss the changing healthcare environment, the value of healthcare to the local economy, and public health.

Graduates of the program participate in proposing ideas and strategies for ways to progress Washington County to the Chamber’s Board of Directors. They use the skills from the leadership program to assist them in enhancing Washington County and their own professional development.

Advancing Community Priorities: Leadership in the healthcare arena is a top priority for the Washington County Archway Partnership. The USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant will greatly impact the community by funding the Leadership Washington County Program. This program has proven to develop leadership skills, encourage participants to engage in the community, and enhance the overall quality of care to the public.