

TEXAS ASSOCIATION *of* COUNTIES  
**COUNTY BEST PRACTICES AWARDS**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**I. Program Information**

County Bexar County

Program title Leadership Development Program

Official/individual playing significant role Linda M. Amaro, MBA

**Award Class** (check one)

☒ Innovation

☐ Achievement

☐ Delivery of Services

**Category** (check one)

☐ Public Safety & Corrections

☐ Financial/General Management

☐ Community Improvement

☐ Health & Human Services

☐ Technology

☒ Other

**II. Contact Information** *(person to whom correspondence should be sent)*

Name Linda M. Amaro, MBA

Title Human Resources Training & Development Specialist

Department Planning & Resource Management, Human Resources

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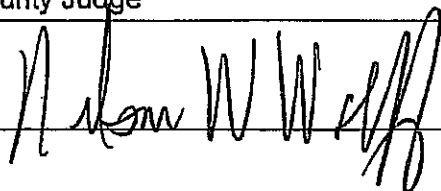
Email lamaro@bexar.org

**III. Signature of the County Judge**

Name Nelson W. Wolff

Title Bexar County Judge

Signature





## **SECTION I – The Challenge**

The Bexar County Leadership Development Program (LDP) is a comprehensive program developed in 2005 to build strong leaders who are committed to continuing their education and fostering leadership in others.

### **The Need**

The LDP was created in consideration of the need to develop a new cohort of future County leaders as more County managers and supervisors become eligible for retirement. This program is intended to increase the leadership skills of County employees and to encourage promotion opportunities from within our workforce. Skilled employees with strong leadership skills have become difficult to find outside the County.

### **History**

The creation of the County LDP began by learning how other successful programs were designed. Bexar County training staff met with the City of San Antonio several times to learn about their leadership development program, which was in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. The purpose of these meetings was to learn how their mature program worked and to avoid any potential pitfalls. Bexar County training staff was invited by the City to attend and observe several of their leadership development events. This was very helpful in building the LDP for the County.

The next phase in the creation of the program continued with a focus group of managers from various County offices and departments facilitated by County training staff. This group met several times to identify essential competencies that were vital to leadership at Bexar County. They identified essential training events, activities and tours that would be necessary to educate the participants in the recognized competencies. This focus group defined what knowledge, skills, and abilities were desired in leaders at Bexar County.

### **What Makes LDP Unique?**

The LDP is unique in developing leaders for Bexar County because it is a comprehensive, six month program that builds on the competencies learned in each course. It is innovative in the use of various methods to achieve the stated objectives. Participants are asked to complete a variety of tasks to successfully complete the program, in addition to attending classroom training and maintaining their regular job duties.

Also, based on recent research of other Texas counties the Bexar County LDP is unique because it involves a written Action Plan of Improvement, a summary of

an assigned business book, oral summaries after each training event, and physical tours of County facilities.

#### Reading Assignment

It is unique because participants must read an assigned business book and provide a one page written summary of the book. Participants present a brief oral summary of the book to the group. Participants also volunteer to give brief oral summaries of the previous class at each training event throughout the program. This reinforces what was learned at the last class in an effort to further emphasize the main ideas of each training event.

#### What are other Texas Counties doing?

This program is unique to other counties' leadership training as it is the only known program of its kind among Texas counties. This is based on research conducted through contact with 45 other Texas counties including Tarrant, Harris, Travis, El Paso, Guadalupe, and Dallas counties. Other Texas counties are utilizing individual training classes within their county or programs offered through their local Chamber of Commerce to educate their leaders. One county conducts a three day annual training event for their supervisors.

It was discovered that only one other Texas County currently has a leadership program, but there are several distinct differences to note. This other county program does contain a final oral presentation, but it is a summary of the function of another department within that particular county. Their intent is to educate their participants in the operations of other county offices. The Bexar County LDP uses physical tours of County facilities to ensure participants learn about other offices and departments. The tours have proven to be very beneficial in broadening participant's perspectives of County government operations.

The other leadership program schedules a half day session with various County presenters who speak for 5-10 minutes each about their specific area in a panel format. Their participants have the opportunity to ask questions of these county leaders. The Bexar County LDP accomplishes this function in a full day format with each county leader speaking for about 30 minutes each regarding their area and their own leadership philosophy. Bexar County participants also get an opportunity to ask questions of each presenter and learn from these top executive leaders.

#### Action Plan of Improvement

The Bexar County LDP is further innovative as participants also work on a detailed Action Plan of Improvement throughout the program which is designed to improve customer service, save money, boost employee morale, or improve a process or procedure. Participants work with their supervisor and the LDP program coordinator to choose a specific area that needs improvement or has potential to impact our business. This Action Plan becomes a blueprint for making improvements for the entire County or the participant's particular office or department. Some of the Action Plans are used in whole or in part and some

plans wait for funds or resources to become available. Some examples of Action Plans that have been implemented are:

- Improved process to maintain Capital Lease funds
- Organizational restructure of Juvenile Probation services
- Creation of database to monitor contracts for Information Services
- Employee reward & recognition program
- Training manual for Juvenile Probation Officers
- Communication plan for the Human Resources Department

LDP participants document the details of their Action Plan including the need, the benefits, the steps to implement, and the resources required in a complex written paper. They also include written summaries of each training event and tour and a one page summary of the entire program. Participants must summarize in writing and in their oral presentation what they learned throughout the program and what they will continue to do after graduation.

#### Oral Presentation of Action Plan

Participants present the findings of their Action Plan of Improvement in a 15 minute oral presentation. Participants' immediate supervisor and elected official/department executive is invited to attend the Closing Ceremony at the completion of the program. Previous LDP graduates, co-workers, and family members are also invited to attend in support of the candidates. Participants that complete all requirements of the program receive a framed certificate of completion. Graduates are asked to continue to support the program as a mentor or a speaker at future LDP events.

## **SECTION II – The Solution**

The solution to building strong County leaders is to develop a cumulative training program to prepare future leaders, as our current leadership nears retirement age.

### **Program Objectives**

The LDP was designed to achieve the following objectives:

Objective: Develop and grow commitment to Bexar County's Mission, Vision and Goals

***Mission*** – Build a better community through quality services

***Vision*** – Bexar County will be a results-oriented organization characterized by accountable, professional and innovative leadership focused on excellent service.

### ***Goals***

- 1) Manage for Results
- 2) Strengthen City and County Cooperation
- 3) Promote and maintain a dynamic and productive organization that values its workforce
- 4) Manage finances proactively while safeguarding County assets
- 5) Use technology to improve performance
- 6) Improve customer service

Participants learn from senior County officials and department executives about the mission and goals of the County in a one day training event. This event is intended to focus on County specific topics and strengthen the participant's commitment to local government. Each County presenter is asked to discuss their specific office or department, their leadership goals, and maybe an influential mentor or leader in their life. Participants are given the opportunity to ask these top County leaders questions about themselves or their office/department.

Graduates from the City of San Antonio's leadership program have been invited to speak at LDP training events. LDP participants learn about the city's program and what their graduates have done to continue the development of their own leadership skills after completion of their program. This has been a great way to build a network with the city and to strengthen the cooperation between the two local government entities.

Objective: Develop leadership skills to further participants' growth as confident leaders with problem-solving and decision-making skills

The LDP develops leadership skills, builds confidence, and enhances problem-solving and decision-making skills with interactive classroom training provided by County staff and contracted professional vendors. These courses involve practical applications of the ideas presented such as leadership strategies and communication skills (see attachment A for the informational brochure). Participants also complete several different personality assessments to gain further insight into their own particular leadership traits. Training events are customized to the specific needs of the program and are cumulative in nature. Each course is designed to build on concepts learned in previous courses.

Participants are asked to create an Action Plan of Improvement and present their findings in an oral presentation at the completion of the program. This Action Plan is designed to build problem solving and decision making skills as participants use skills they have acquired in the program to create plans that save money, build morale, or improve a process.

Objective: Build the skills needed to motivate and inspire others

Participants learn how to motivate and inspire their subordinates through various training topics including motivating teams, creative coaching, and emotional intelligence using different team building exercises. Many of these exercises can be conducted later with their own offices/departments.

Objective: Broaden the individuals' perceptions about their role in County government

The interactive tours of County facilities include the Forensic Science Center, the Adult Detention Center, the historic County Courthouse, and the Juvenile Detention Center (see photos in attachment B). The tours of County facilities broaden the participant's perceptions about their specific role in the function of the County as one working body. Participants are able to see how individual offices and departments are dependent on each other as they visit these locations as a group. Each tour is approximately 3 hours in length, which provides many opportunities for participants to ask questions.

Objective: Promote the value of continuing education and training to participants

Participants become accustomed to being in a learning environment on a frequent basis and many continue to attend various training events outside the LDP. Several graduates have enrolled in local colleges to pursue their education as they truly develop an appreciation for learning.

Objective: Build a network of well-trained leaders within the County

Participants attend LDP events together over a six month period and build a network of colleagues to consult. They develop a bond that is sustained by providing updates to their Action Plans after graduation and participation in future LDPs.

## **Implementation of the LDP**

### Who is eligible?

County employees with one year of service and currently occupying a supervisory or lead role are eligible to participate in the LDP. The LDP begins with a Kickoff Event in November and continues through late May with a Closing Ceremony each year. Candidates attend 2 to 3 full day training events each month during the six month program in addition to the half day tours. Candidates are nominated by their Immediate Supervisor and complete a nomination form (see attachment C for Nomination Form) to apply for the LDP. The candidates' elected official/executive director and their immediate supervisor are asked to sign a commitment statement on the nomination form. The elected official/department executive is also asked to review and sign the participant's final written document, called the Action Plan.

### Recognition by Commissioners Court

A summary of each program including the reading of the names of graduates is presented each year to Commissioners Court after the Closing Ceremony. This ceremonial presentation to the court each year provides the Judge and Commissioners with feedback on the program and is a great motivator for the graduates as they are recognized for their accomplishments by the Court.

## **SECTION III – The Results**

The results of the LDP are demonstrated in the achievement of our stated objectives. The results of this program are measured in the reduced turnover and increased promotions of graduates as well as their improved job performance. It is difficult to measure the return on investment for leadership programs, but several areas of improvement are significant and can be attributed to this program.

### **Measurable Results**

#### Action Plans Implemented

Action Plans of Improvement have produced great results for the County. For example, the Communication Plan for the HR Dept. created a new website and more internal training of HR specific topics. The Reorganization Plan for Juvenile Probation services resulted in an effective model for managing caseloads, an increase in field offices to offer more services, and department wide staff training. See page 3 for other Action Plans implemented.

#### Reduced Turnover

There has been a greater commitment to County government and to the County's mission, vision, and goals. This commitment is displayed in the low turnover rate of graduates. Turnover of these employees is currently 9%, as compared to an estimated 15% for the rest of the County workforce. Participants see the County as a long term career choice and they look forward with excitement to continuing their employment in local government.

#### Increased Promotions

The program has developed leadership skills in the participants which have resulted in promotions for many of the graduates. It is estimated that 36% of active LDP graduates have been promoted or reclassified into higher positions. It is believed that participation in this program plays an important role in the success of these employees and definitely gives them great exposure to top management.

#### Professional Development & Networking

By attending specified LDP curriculum, participants learn the value of continuing education and are eager to continue to attend training even after they have completed the program requirements. Participants also build a network of other County leaders as they attend events and training together over a six month period. They often consult with each other during the program and later on other work-related topics as needed.

#### County Investment

Bexar County is an employer that invests long-term in employee training and development and values its workforce, as stated in the County's third goal listed above. The County demonstrates how it values its workforce by investing approximately \$26,000 to this program on an annual basis. This investment



results in a significant boost to the morale of the participants which is transmitted to the staff they lead. It is truly a contagious attitude of success that grows and spreads throughout Bexar County.

#### Reduced Grievances

It should be noted that Bexar County has experienced a noticeable decrease in the total number of grievances and appeals filed with the Civil Service Commission. Although there may be many reasons for this reduction and other factors to consider, fewer grievances could be a result of more confident and skilled supervisors. This recent decrease is shown below:

2005	53	
2006	39	
2007	39	
2008 to present	10	(16 projected for 2008)

#### **How to replicate at other counties?**

This program can be duplicated by other counties of various sizes. Some of the courses delivered could be developed in-house by internal staff or modified to meet the specific competencies identified by each county. Tours of County facilities and projects designed to improve processes or save money can be added to any program regardless of the amount of funds available. Assigning written summaries of business books is also a great tool to develop leadership skills in future leaders.

## **SECTION IV - Summary**

The Bexar County Leadership Development Program created in 2005 has proven to be a valuable tool in growing and educating future leaders within the County. It was designed to develop leaders with high potential and prepare them for long term, leadership careers with Bexar County.

Bexar County has experienced a greater commitment to its mission and goals, the creation of viable action plans for improvement, a reduction in turnover, and increased promotions among these candidates. These candidates have enhanced their leadership skills and knowledge, which has resulted in improved problem solving and decision making strategies. Participants build a strong network of resources among themselves and they are more dedicated to continuing their professional education and development.

The LDP is an innovative tool to build stronger county leaders through high quality classroom training, physical tours of County facilities, County specific training, opportunities to practice public speaking, and the development of an action plan of improvement. It is unique as compared to leadership training conducted among other Texas counties.

## Curriculum

Participants will attend several core and elective courses along with various interactive workshops and tours.

- Kickoff Ceremony
- Core courses
  - County Training Day
  - Leadership Development
  - Communication Skills
  - Business Writing
  - Team Building/Motivation
  - Coaching/Emotional Intelligence
  - Presentation Skills
- Elective course (Possible options)
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - How to Motivate Others
  - Leadership Styles/Strategies
  - FAST Reading
- Tours of County facilities  
(Must attend two of four scheduled tours)
- Oral presentation of Action Plan
- Closing Ceremony

An Advisory Committee of various Managers throughout the County reviewed and provided feedback on the content of this program. This Advisory Committee will continue to participate throughout the program by coordinating tours and reviewing Action Plans.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How am I nominated?

Your immediate supervisor can nominate you based on your current position and your length of service with the County.

### Is a college degree required?

No. This program is intended to compliment any existing formal education you may have. College level education is not required to attend.

### How much time will I spend in the program?

Over a six month period, the participants will meet approximately two to three times each month for training activities.

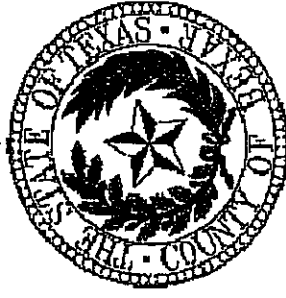
### How do I qualify?

Candidates will complete several questions included on the Nomination form, including a description of their current level of responsibility and judgment required.

### What will this program do for me?

This program will provide a training ground to nurture self-confidence, personal responsibility, leadership skills and the value of service to others and the County.

Can I expect a promotion if I complete this program? Although successful completion of this program will significantly improve participant's skills, there is no guarantee of job advancement.



# Bexar County

"Building strong leaders  
today to prepare for  
tomorrow"

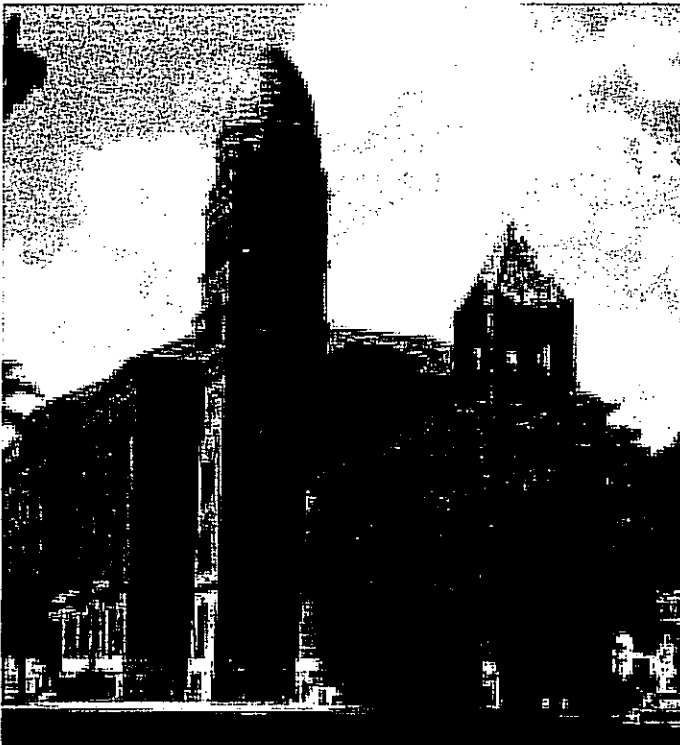
## Leadership Development Program

Program Administrator  
Linda M. Amaro, PHR  
HR Training & Development Specialist  
(210) 335-2643

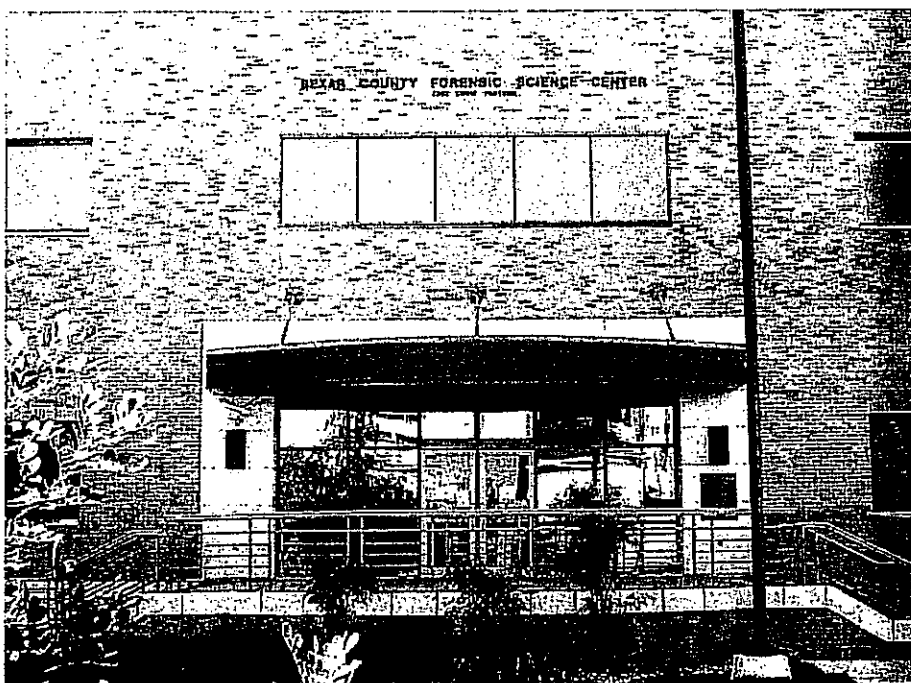
## **ATTACHMENT "B" - Tours of County Facilities**



Bexar County Adult Detention Center



Bexar County Courthouse

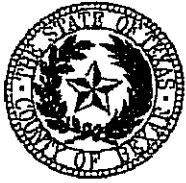


Bexar County Forensic Science Center



Juvenile Justice Center

## Attachment "C" – Nomination Form



### Leadership Development Program - IV **Nomination Packet**



#### Section I: Basic Information *(Please type or print clearly.)*

**Criteria:** You may nominate a candidate for this program if they meet ALL of the following criteria: (a) have one year experience with the County; (b) are currently in a supervisory/lead role; and (c) have the endorsement of the immediate supervisor and Elected Official/Department Head.

***To be completed by Immediate Supervisor***

<b>EMPLOYEE NAME</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Department/Office</b>	
<b>Immediate Supervisor</b>	
<b>Hire Date</b>	
<b>Phone Number</b>	
<b>E-mail address</b>	

What makes this person a candidate for the LDP? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe this candidate's supervisory responsibilities and level of decision making required in their position.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What areas of interest should this candidate explore and develop? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return nomination packets to Program Administrator no later than Fri., October 19, 2007 to:**

Linda Amaro, HR Training & Development Specialist  
Human Resources, Heritage Plaza, 1st floor

## Section II: Management Acknowledgment

### Immediate Supervisor's Acknowledgment

I endorse and support the nomination of \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate for the County Leadership Development Program or LDP. I understand that the program is a six month commitment and that the participant will accomplish much of the curriculum in addition to his or her regular duties.

My signature below indicates my intention to facilitate his or her participation by providing guidance and counsel on any projects to benefit the employee and the County and by approving administrative leave to attend workshops, seminars, or complete assignments necessary to successfully complete the program. I also intend to support the candidate with my knowledge, skills, abilities, and my time in the development of their final customized Action Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature and Title

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Elected Official/Department Head's Acknowledgment

I endorse and support the nomination of \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate for the County Leadership Development Program. I understand that the program is a six month commitment. My signature below indicates my intention to mentor and facilitate his or her participation by reviewing and approving any individual Action Plan or group projects undertaken to benefit the department/office.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elected Official/Department Head's Signature and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Section III: Statement of Employee Commitment

I recognize that the Bexar County Leadership Development Program is a six month series of learning activities and, if I cannot meet the given time frames, the Program Administrator may ask me to withdraw from the program. Should I be accepted into this program, I will seek the advice and counsel of my immediate supervisor and/or elected official/department head in selecting projects undertaken to benefit the County. In addition, I will submit only those project reports to the Program Administrator which have been reviewed and approved by both of these individuals, as appropriate.

If I have to drop out of the program temporarily, I may reapply for a subsequent class. I also understand that I will undertake some assignments and tasks in addition to my regular duties. If my department/office is unable to provide administrative leave to attend workshops, seminars or finish program assignments, I will arrange to complete all associated work with the Program Administrator.

Upon finishing this program, I may be asked to assist in the selection of candidates for the next LDP. Therefore, I understand that all written reports should reflect my best work. Finally, I recognize that the County is not making any guarantees with regard to job advancement based on completion of the LDP.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**PRINT Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Nominee's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



## Section IV: Candidate Background

### **To be completed by the Employee**

**Directions:** Use specific examples wherever possible. Please respond to **each** of the following questions. Please attach additional sheets if more space is required.

1. Discuss your objectives for personal or professional development and explain how participating in the LDP will contribute to them. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. This program requires participants to exercise significant initiative and self-direction. Describe a situation where you demonstrated one of these traits. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Section V: Action Plan

Once a candidate has been selected, their work on the individual Action Plan should begin immediately. Participants begin writing individual Action Plans to develop their leadership skills within the scope of their current duties. Action Plans will contain: (1) brief summary of each course and tour attended, including what the participants learned from the event. (2) definition of the participant's individual commitment to their office/department and County in a specific area such as employee morale, customer service, cost reduction, process improvement, etc. Specifically, how participants will use what they learned to improve their office/department and the County's mission and goals. (3) detailed description of what was learned throughout the program. These action plans are based on feedback from managers, peers, or direct reports and training received throughout the program.

Participants are required to submit their final Action Plan to their supervisor and department head or elected/appointed official for review and approval. Final written Action Plans are due at the conclusion of the program to the Program Administrator. A 12-15 minute oral presentation of the Action Plan is presented to the participants, supervisors, and/or department head or elected/appointed official during the Closing Ceremonies. Participants are also encouraged to present their Action Plan to their peers and/or subordinates. Participants will receive more information regarding the details of the Action Plan at the beginning of the program.

## Section VI: Curriculum

Participants are required to attend mandatory and elective leadership courses that are offered throughout the six months. These courses are subject to change at the discretion of the Program Administrator, but each will focus on overall leadership development.

### Core Courses (Participants must attend **all** Core classes)

- Supervisory Skills
- In-House Training and Activity Day
- Communication Enhancement/Good to Great
- Leadership Development
- Teambuilding and Motivation
- Coaching and Emotional Intelligence
- Business Writing
- Presentation Skills

### Elective Courses

Participants must attend at least **two** elective courses. Electives offered may include the following:

- Dealing with Difficult People
- Interpersonal Skills
- How to Motivate Others
- Interviewing Skills
- FAST Reading
- Documented attendance at regular weekly City Council Meeting (Thursdays) for 2 hours.
- Documented attendance at regular County Commissioner's Court meeting (alternating Tuesdays) for 2 hours. (Must attend both meetings to count as one elective and document topics discussed and decisions made.)

### Tour of Facilities (Participants visit two sites of their choice pending authorization and availability)

Juvenile Detention and Probation

Courthouse/Justice Center

Adult Detention Facility

Forensic Science Center

## **ATTACHMENT "D" – Comments**

*Perspective was the part of the Leadership Development Program (LDP) that I was most surprised by. I had expected refresher courses in leadership skills, but not the deep and varied perspectives on the leadership challenges of working in Texas county government. Other participants brought their experiences and skills to each meeting and were generous about sharing them with the group. It was almost always new information and even more directly applicable to my own situation than the class information (some of which I had heard before).*

*Along with the surprise of perspective was the incredible gift of a network of colleagues around the County on whom I can call at any time for information and help. I have already exploited this network a number of times and also have been able to provide assistance to other class members. It's a very real resource that would have taken many years to develop without the LDP.*

*I think, for me, the LDP gave me a broader perspective, more insight, and a more substantial "Leadership Toolkit" to use in my daily work for Bexar County. Thanks again for the opportunity.*

**Linda C. Draper, Technology Business Analyst**  
Bexar County Information Services  
LDP Graduate, 2005

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*As a proud graduate of the Bexar County Leadership Development Program I am pleased to say this program helped me tremendously in all aspects of leadership. It was very insightful in giving me a better understanding of how the county operates as a whole and since the students were from various county departments I was able to experience the different leadership styles throughout the county. It was a great opportunity for networking and creating a smoother operation of the county since you are communicating with the leadership throughout the county.*

*The leadership classes were outstanding because they ranged from the simplicity of giving a proper hand shake and greeting to the diversity of handling complex employee relations issues. We were provided with excellent instructors that welcomed input from the students working individually or as teams. Prior to the implementation of this program there was really no way to teach so many leaders the principles of leadership. I would recommend this program to all Bexar County supervisors and managers.*

**Robert Zavala, Supervisor**  
Criminal Filing, Bexar County District Clerk's Office  
LDP Graduate, 2006

*The Leadership Development Program (LDP) improved my leadership skills on several levels and allowed me to view the County as a whole and see the big picture of how intricate and complicated the workings of the County truly are.*

*I enjoyed visiting the different departments and having discussions on how each department fit into the puzzle, which is Bexar County. The program also allowed me to view how my department, Information Systems, affects County operations.*

*I really enjoyed the training which allowed me to look at different leadership styles to first determine what type of leader I am; secondly to make decisions on ways to improve my leadership skills; and thirdly how my role as a leader has the potential to affect the lives of the people I lead.*

*I met several people during this program, many of whom I have no doubt, will be leading this County one day. I was able to observe and interact with this group of people thus creating relationships that I am still enjoying today.*

*The LDP is a comprehensive course of study which allowed me to observe Bexar County departments and how they function together to perform the duties required to operate day to day. The opportunities afforded me by this program have allowed me to grow as a leader and in dealing with people on a daily basis, and will serve me throughout my career with Bexar County.*

**Linda E. Perez, Supervisor Courts Group**  
Bexar County Information Services  
LDP Graduate, 2007

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*The Leadership Development Program has enhanced my knowledge in matters relating to managerial responsibilities and interacting with the deputies and public sector. The knowledge which I have acquired has been tremendously beneficial in the manner that I conduct myself. I enjoyed the LDP because of the associations I formed with other county employees such as the auditors, juvenile, district clerks and sheriff's office. The guest speakers and motivational training also made it a great program. I have applied the information from this program not only at a professional level, but at a personal level as well. I would highly recommend this program to anyone qualified to participate.*

**David Deleon, Substation Manager**  
Motor Vehicle Registration, Office of the Tax Assessor-Collector  
LDP Graduate, 2005

*The LDP has given me the opportunity to apply many skills that I learned during the program. Two developments in my business life and one in my personal life stand out. Here are some new developments that have occurred in my business life of which I am very proud to say I have accomplished. The first being my acquiring the certification to teach Franklin Covey's Focus: Achieving Your Highest Priorities during the fall of 2007. This course permits me to show county employees how to set priorities in their business and personal lives in order to enjoy life as a whole. I am currently waiting to complete my Franklin Covey certification of Outlook with Plan Plus in order to offer the Focus: Achieving Your Highest Priorities using Outlook with Plan Plus course (long title) to our county employees.*

*Another business accomplishment has been the delivering of a new computer course curriculum on Microsoft Project 2003 this year. Since attending the LDP, I have attended other "Project Management" training courses which have contributed to my presenting county employees with a very dynamic and powerful managing tool. I am currently working on more additions to our technology training curriculum and I encourage employees to take advantage of our extensive Bexar County computer training.*

*On a more personal note, as a lector assisting worship services at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, LDP has given me the presentation skills to deliver many scripture readings in a warm and spiritual matter that many members of the congregation have come up to me after services and expressed how they enjoy my readings. I have also approached my parish priest with intentions of maybe one day becoming a Catholic Deacon for my parish.*

**Richard M. Rodriguez**

Senior Technology Training Specialist, Bexar County Information Services  
LDP Graduate, 2005

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*The Bexar County Leadership Development Program was an awesome experience for me. When I was first nominated and accepted into the program, I was very excited about this opportunity. Through the LDP's great curriculum, excellent speakers and the completion of an individual project geared at improving our County or Department, I developed existing and acquired new leadership skills.*

*One of the most important things I took away from the program was a higher level of confidence in being an effective leader. After I graduated from the program, I was offered a great opportunity with the Juvenile Probation Department to be a part of inter-county team tasked with developing a state-wide Juvenile Case Management System. The skills I learned in LDP helped prepare me for this challenge. Thank you LDP.*

**Kimberly Valco**

Information Resources Supervisor, Bexar County Juvenile Probation  
LDP Graduate, 2006

*I thought the leadership program was challenging and informative. The curriculum was well planned. Classes provided new and useful information to both aspiring and experienced leaders. The knowledge combined with the assessments and role playing provided a very unique learning environment.*

*The program was also formatted to elicit class participation by having students participate in physical tours of County departments. Students were further challenged by making brief oral presentations to the class assessing each previous course and instructor. The leadership program provided me with a great deal of confidence in new leadership skills and knowledge and allowed me to refine the skills I have already acquired.*

*The program afforded me with invaluable insight and knowledge of how other departments worked and the many challenges they face. The program has also allowed me to establish a broader network of professional leaders within the County.*

**Lieutenant Kenneth N. Meshew**  
Work Release Supervisor, Bexar County Sheriff's Office  
LDP Graduate, 2008

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*The Bexar County Leadership Development program is a marvelous example of Best Practice in talent management and high potential 'community.' From a world-class curriculum to projects that challenge participants to add real value to the county, this program is marked by excellence. I work extensively with high potential programs across the country, specializing in talent management, and I look to this program and this coordinator for fresh approaches, clear accountabilities, and well designed structure. With each new group, Linda Amaro has implemented key learning for the next. It just keeps getting better and better. I am proud to be associated with this program, and count it as one of the best in class for high potentials.*

**Dondi Scumaci**  
International Speaker and Author