



ABOUT THE ILLINOIS WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP

HISTORY

The Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership (IWIL) is an educational not-for-profit (501[C][4]) organization created to encourage and train Democratic women to become effective leaders in Illinois government and politics. The organization grew out of discussions about the need for more women in politics which took place at the 1999 Democratic National Convention. Many of the founding members of the Board of Directors, listed to the left, participated in those discussions and have worked diligently since that time to build the organization and raise the funds needed to conduct the training programs. The first class was selected in 2002.

CURRICULUM

The IWIL curriculum is designed to meet several goals. The most obvious goal is to teach Delegates the fundamental techniques of conducting effective campaigns. We incorporate programs offered by leading experts in the field dealing with fundraising, direct mail, polling, targeting, media, message and presentation.

A second goal is to further the Delegates' understanding of institutions of government and of public policy. Delegates interact with participants in the political system—elected officials, appointed officials, lobbyists, etc.—to learn about their career path and the responsibilities and challenges they must meet in fulfilling their roles. Understanding public policy debates and possessing knowledge of critical issues facing society is important to those interested in public service. Therefore, IWIL introduces Delegates to individuals and organizations with expertise and experience in a variety of public policy arenas, i.e. fiscal policy, labor policy, etc.

Thirdly, IWIL offers programs which allow Delegates personal growth opportunities, intended to make them more effective in their preparation for a career in the political realm. From tips on building effective support networks to strategies for reducing stress, experts offer Delegates insights and guidance to set them on the path to success.

Finally, Delegates have the opportunity to learn from those who have extensive experience in the political and governmental arenas. Some of the best lessons to be learned are offered by those willing to share their personal experiences. Past Delegates have had the good fortune to meet with such leaders as U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, first woman president of the IL State AFL-CIO Margaret Blackshere, Attorney General Lisa Madigan, former Illinois State Senator and State Comptroller Dawn Clark Netsch, among others. The generosity with which these individuals share their insights and the “lessons learned” from their experiences make these sessions some of the most valuable programs IWIL offers.

PROGRAM

The program is open to all Illinois women who have a commitment to serve in public office and a willingness to commit the time necessary to participate fully. The application process begins in July with a mid-September deadline. Candidate applications are reviewed by IWIL's *Delegate Selection Committee* and finalists are interviewed personally by the committee. Class Delegates are announced in November and the first session is held in February. Attempts are made to schedule programs on weekend days; however, since some sessions are held during the week, Delegates are required to obtain permission from their employers in order to ensure full participation. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. The program includes an extensive session on fundraising and part of the curriculum includes putting that training to work for the annual fundraising event.

COSTS

To ensure that qualified candidates are not excluded due to financial constraints, IWIL pays for major expenses (e.g., hotel accommodations and out-of-state travel). Delegates are required to pay for in-state transportation, instructional materials/books, some meals and a few other incidentals.

Founding Board

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Contact Information

IWIL
P.O. Box 1149
Springfield, IL 62705
www.iwilinfo.org

Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership (IWIL)

Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Business Address: _____

Business Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

- Attach a professional quality resume of no more than two pages.
- Attach a recent photograph suitable for publicity purposes (preferably in .jpg format on disk).
- On separate pages, please answer each of the following questions. Repeat the question at the beginning of your answer. Answers should be no longer than 500 words.
 1. Describe three (3) examples of work you have done to advance the goals of the Democratic Party. This can be work on behalf of a Democratic organization or a candidate, policy advocacy, etc. Be specific in your description, i.e. tell us what you did, how you made a difference, how the Party was strengthened as a result, etc.
 2. Why do you want to (or why have you) run for public office? What office do you aspire to (or do you hold/have held)? What qualities do you possess that make you an effective candidate for public office? What have you done to prepare for running?
 3. Why should you be selected for the IWIL Training Program? What do you have to offer to the Program and to the Democratic Party? How will you use the training you receive from the program?

Did you vote in the last two Democratic Primary Elections in Illinois? ___ Yes ___ No

If "No," please explain: _____

Provide the following information for the area in which you reside:

County: _____ Congressional District: # _____

State Representative District: # _____ State Senate District: # _____

Aldermanic Ward (for Chicago residents): # _____

PLEDGE:

If chosen for the IWIL Training Program I will maintain long-term involvement in IWIL. I will use the skills and knowledge gained to advance opportunities for Democratic women in the political process and the interests of the Democratic Party and its candidates. Furthermore, I understand that participation in all training sessions is mandatory.

Signed _____

Dated _____

ENDORSEMENTS:

Secure two (2) signed letters of recommendation one of which must be from a Democratic elected official, a Democratic Party official or a Labor leader. Letters must be mailed directly to IWIL at the address provided below by the person making the recommendation.

Deadline: Application and letters of recommendation must be postmarked by October 15.

Mail seven (7) copies of the completed application and attachments (**no staples, folders or tabs**) to the following address:

Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership
P.O. Box 1149
Springfield, IL 62705

Questions may be directed to office@iwilinfo.org or by calling 217.525.8434, Ext. 100 or Ext. 101.