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Leadership North Carolina Receives Grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina to Expand Opportunities for Rural North Carolina Leaders

Raleigh, NC – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) has awarded a grant in the amount of \$250,000 to Leadership North Carolina (LNC) to increase participation from rural communities and underrepresented groups in future LNC cohorts.

This grant will allow LNC to expand opportunities through scholarships to rural and underrepresented leaders to participate in the LNC program as part of its [100 County Initiative](#). Each year, through a rigorous selection process, LNC chooses a class of established and emerging leaders from across the state to participate in its acclaimed program. Each cohort is made up of top leaders from the government, business, nonprofit, and education sectors.

“Thanks to the support of Blue Cross NC, we will be able to expand the opportunity of the LNC program to current and emerging leaders across North Carolina and from rural North Carolina in particular,” said Leadership North Carolina President Brian Etheridge. “North Carolina is at its best when informed and engaged leaders from every corner of our state are learning about the opportunities and challenges facing our state and building relationships to leverage their impact to make our communities stronger and more dynamic. This contribution will allow us to partner with other organizations to strengthen networks of leaders across rural and urban communities statewide.”

“Blue Cross NC, like LNC, has a commitment to serve all 100 counties in North Carolina. We know that our state is at its best when leaders from all corners of the state collaborate to make communities stronger, healthier, and more vibrant,” said Reagan Greene Pruitt, Vice President of Integrated Marketing and Community Engagement at Blue Cross NC and an alumna of LNC Class 17.

“North Carolina’s rural communities are great places to grow up, raise a family and start a business, and they deserve strong leadership. I commend Leadership North Carolina for developing a next generation of leaders from our small towns and rural areas to help all of our state prosper,” stated North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper.

About Leadership North Carolina

Leadership North Carolina’s mission is to inform, develop, and engage committed leaders by broadening their understanding of and involvement in issues and opportunities facing North Carolina. The Leadership North Carolina Program cultivates a network of individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences who share a deep commitment to their state. There are more than 1,100 graduates of the program whose continued ties to LNC and to one another provide them with rich opportunities for serving North Carolina.

Over the course of six two-and-a-half day sessions participants learn about issues critical to the state through discussions with top officials and professionals, field trips, and experiential learning activities. LNC’s sessions focus

on five key areas: economic development, education, environment, government, and health and human services. Through LNC's program, participants gain new insight into North Carolina's strengths and challenges and explore opportunities for how they will improve and empower their communities and the state as a whole.

LNC sessions are held around the state, highlighting the social, geographic, and economic diversity of North Carolina. Information on the LNC Class XXVI program schedule and how to apply can be found by visiting <http://leadershipnc.org/class/apply/>.

To find out more about Leadership North Carolina, please visit: www.leadershipnc.org.