



CLEVELAND BRIDGE BUILDERS: BOARD EXPERIENCE PILOT PROGRAM

Cleveland Leadership Center and Cleveland Bridge Builders

Cleveland Leadership Center (CLC) was established in 2006 with a vision of creating a comprehensive portfolio of offerings intended to develop and catalyze civic leadership in the Greater Cleveland community. Since its formation, CLC has provided programming to over 7,000 individuals seeking to learn more about our community and heighten their level of engagement. Cleveland Bridge Builders (CBB), established in 2000, is one of CLC's key programs. CBB is a 10-month program that runs from September-June. It's an experiential, team-based, hands-on learning experience that serves as a launch pad for mid-career leaders looking for a greater role in the community.

Background: Board Experience Program

In recent years there has been an increase in interest from Bridge Builders around pathways for civic leadership that include board service. Bridge Builders want to increase their knowledge of nonprofit governance, better understand the diversity and complexity of nonprofit boards, and learn from board leaders to help define their own priorities and pathways for civic leadership. This program is designed as a learning experience that connects civically minded Bridge Builders with active nonprofit boards.

For the pilot year, CLC will pair 10 Bridge Builders with 10 different nonprofit organizations. The program will run from October 2021 through June 2022. During that time, Bridge Builders will serve as shadow board members to gain board experience and further understand nonprofit governance. Bridge Builders are expected to fully participate in the board experience program in addition to all other requirements and expectations of the CBB program. In Spring 2022, CLC will share a post-pilot evaluation with participating Bridge Builders and organizations to better understand the experience.

Goals of Program

- Provide a pathway to board service for those who are interested but have not yet served on a board.
- Increase pool of qualified board members in the community.

Board Commitment

- Provide a board mentor for the duration of the program (October 2021 – June 2022)
 - Board mentor should be active, open to sharing their civic leadership journey, and committed to providing a positive learning experience for their mentee
- Provide board training to the Bridge Builder
- Allow Bridge Builder to observe board meetings, maybe sit on a committee

If you have interest in the program and would like to learn more, please reach out to Jody Bonhard, Director of Cleveland Bridge Builders, at jbonhard@cleveleads.org.