



Wilson County Leaders Plan Day of Collaboration

Wilson County leaders will take advantage of a new Middle Tennessee resource when they convene January 20th at the Nelson and Sue Andrews Institute for Civic Leadership at Lipscomb University. Through a day of sessions around the theme "Power of One", county leaders will engage each other in discussions and group projects designed to benefit the future of Wilson County. The workshops and projects will be facilitated by Andrews Institute faculty and staff along with Leadership Wilson Director Dorie Mitchell and Alumni. The day will begin and end with a trip to and from Nashville aboard the Music City Star that will highlight Wilson County's valuable commuter rail asset.

The Wilson County project, spearheaded by Leadership Wilson Alumni, is a continuation of this year's Power of One luncheon held at Manheim Nashville Auto Auction in March. At that meeting, county Mayor Randall Hutto outlined the future direction and vision of Wilson County and Mount Juliet Mayor Ed Hagerty, Lebanon Mayor Philip Craighead, and Watertown Mayor Mike Jennings participated in a question and answer session with the attendees. Jeff Gannon, a local State Farm Agent and part of the original project as well says "The upcoming Power of One Conference is about promoting Wilson County, honoring and supporting our leaders, as well as building strong relationships amongst the people who will make important decisions about our future. This day is about showing businesses and investors looking to move to Wilson County that we are positioned well for the future."

That initial meeting was a project organized by a group of the 2011 class of Leadership Wilson. "The meeting was highly successful in bringing our communities together and created a sense of positive momentum for our county that we wanted to see continue." said Leadership Wilson Director Dorie Mitchell

With that in mind a group of leaders from across the county have been working on continuing the momentum of the Power of One for over six months and sent out the initial save the date invitations this past week. "We have invited Wilson County Commissioners, Lebanon, Mount Juliet, and Watertown City Councils along with each city Mayor and a group of local business executives to join us for a leadership conference to be held in January at Lipscomb University, says Caleb Thorne-Thorne's Excavating Co. also involved in the planning of the event.

Former Leadership Wilson Director Lucy Lee will be involved in the training and is excited to be a part of the day. "We are at a critical time in our county's future and I couldn't turn down the opportunity to help make a difference" says Lee.

John McDearman with Wilson Bank & Trust indicated "We have leaned on the alumni of our Leadership Wilson program who are serving on the commission and councils for guidance in making this day most beneficial for them."

County Mayor Randall Hutto also an alumnus of Leadership Wilson was encouraged when approached about the event and said "We believe this is a good opportunity for elected officials to meet on a personal level to discuss common interests and goals for themselves as well as for Wilson County. It will be a sacrifice of a day, but we believe it will be time well spent with great dividends gained.

We are thankful for Leadership Wilson and the Power of One group who care enough about the future of our county to organize and sponsor this event. We are also thankful for other pioneer leaders such as Nelson and Sue Andrews, who established the Institute for Civic Leadership at Lipscomb University, for allowing us to participate.

My hope is the day will bring leaders together with a better understanding of each other not only on the professional level, but on a personal level also, as we explore the possibilities for the great county we call Wilson."

Founded in October 2010 to build on the legacy of Nashville leader Nelson Andrews, the Nelson and Sue Andrews Institute for Civic Leadership engage emerging and current leaders in programs to create thriving communities. The institute promotes and showcases government, business and not-for-profit leaders working together for the common good. Its programs provide for the study and practice of this collaborative civic leadership model.

Two recent projects of the Andrews Institute are the Transit Citizen Leadership Academy, undertaken at the request of the regional caucus of mayors and the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, and the Governor's Summit on Aging, convening private, public, and nonprofit leaders to collaborate to improve the lives of Tennesseans as they age and care for the aging

"We believe great communities are intentional, not accidental and welcome the opportunity to work more with Wilson County leaders." said Linda Peek Schacht, executive director of the Andrews Institute for Civic Leadership.

Funding for the conference will be provided by the Cracker Barrel Foundation and Leadership Wilson.