



## Fact Sheet:

---

***The Institute is a non-partisan, educational entity. Programs of the Institute are open to participants regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, and status as a military veteran.***

### History:

In 1996, the Institute for Women in Public Life was founded at UMSL. Its focus was to serve the needs of the students, a majority of whom were female. The first major program was NEW Leadership Midwest, a college women's week-long residential program co-sponsored by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers. NEW Leadership Midwest later became the "21st Century Leadership Academy." The Institute newsletter, Woman Watch, was begun; it is the only publication that lists women appointed to positions in state and local government. It is mailed to over 4000 people around the country and is available on the Institute's website.

In 1998, State Rep. Sue Shear, the 9th woman to serve in the House when she was elected in 1972, retired from the legislature due to failing health. The 1994 adoption of legislative term limits meant that no woman would ever exceed her 26 years in the legislature. To honor her unique status, the University of Missouri Board of Curators voted unanimously to rename the Institute in her honor. The legislature unanimously ratified this decision. The Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life became the second university-based public policy center named for a woman office holder. The Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine was created in 1989. Like the Sue Shear Institute, the Center hosts a CAWP-inspired NEW Leadership Program, NEW Leadership Maine.

### Funding:

The Institute's primary funding comes through the University of Missouri's higher education allocation, which is recommended by the state's Coordinating Board for Higher education and must be approved by the Legislature and the Governor annually. In 1998, the Institute was allocated about \$250,000. Since then it has seldom been higher and often as much as 10% has been held back due to budget constraints.

Additional funding comes from fees charged for programs, donations from over 500 individual supporters, foundations, and corporations, including: Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, the Institute of International Education, and the UMSL Women's Leadership Council.

## College Student Leadership Educational Programs:

The Institute's course offerings include two college student leadership development programs.



### The 21<sup>st</sup> Leadership Academy

This national model for a university hosted program began in 1998 as a campus residential program for 36 students, 4 from each of 9 MO public universities. Each participating campus (including UMSL) selects its own students based upon the campus' view of who would benefit most from this experience. Considerations include prior activities in the public policy arena, leadership on campus, interest in women's public sector leadership, and ability to share the experience with others at the home campus. The campuses also help underwrite the cost of their students' participation. This week-long program includes opportunities to meet with community, public and private sector leaders who serve as role models and mentors. Participants enhance their public speaking, networking and negotiating skills. In addition, gender related issues such as handshaking, professional attire and appearance and nametag placement are also addressed. Civic engagement opportunities and a snapshot of the public policy process are also included in the curriculum.

### LEAD program

This program was established in 2010 to support and encourage the civic engagement of students at UMSL, and instill in them a passion for women's public sector leadership. The curriculum is delivered through 8-10 activities that are held over the course of the fall semester. In addition to facilitating a sense of community among female student leaders on campus, the LEAD program provides students with an opportunity to develop and practice leadership skills that can be applied to the campus community and beyond. Specifically, LEAD participants gain self-confidence through training in negotiation and networking skills, increased understanding of their leadership strengths, and interactions with women leaders. In addition to the women leaders they meet through the LEAD program, students are strongly encouraged to participate in the Women's University Mentoring Project during the spring semester following their LEAD experience. Funding for LEAD is provided through a grant from the Women's Leadership Council at UMSL.



### **Community-Based Educational Programs:**

The Institute also offers several programs for the broader community. This group of programs is offered on a varied schedule through the UMSL office of Continuing Education:

#### **Inside Scoop on Boards and Commissions**

A panel of government executive office staff members (state, county and municipal), and at least one person who is serving on a public board, discuss the challenges and importance of public service, and the rigors of the selection process, including background checks. The board member(s) share the motivation for serving on a public board, including learning more about government operations and a field that may be within their own expertise.

Because this program requires coordinating the schedules of many busy people, it is not offered on a set schedule.

#### **Pipeline to Local Office**

Offered annually in the later part of January, this two evening program focuses on campaigns for local government and school boards offices. Faculty includes current office holders, generally graduates of the program, and Institute staff. Topics include figuring out the number of votes needed to win, who the voters are, developing a realistic budget, fund raising, creating a constructive calendar and cost effective ways to reach targeted voters.

#### **Pipeline to Public Office**

Offered in November of odd numbered years, this 1.5 day program covers the general formula for a successful campaign. Staff, subject matter experts and current or former office holders comprise the faculty. This program covers many of the same topics as the Pipeline to Local Office and also includes a public speaking skills and practice module. In addition, the challenge of identifying likely voters in both primary and general elections is covered.

#### **Judiciary**

For over a decade, the Institute has joined with the Women Lawyers' Association of Greater St. Louis to host a workshop on the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan's application and selection process. The faculty for this program includes recently appointed judges, members of the selection commissions as well as a representative from the Governor's office, when possible. The WLA generally arranges for CLE credits.

The Sue Shear Institute keeps the only publicly available database on the diversity of the membership of the courts that are part of the Missouri Plan as well as the diversity of the Commissions that are responsible for selecting the three member judicial panel from which the Governor appoints the new judge. The current information is maintained on the Institute's website.

Since 2010, the Judicial Selection Commissions have held public interviews for all judicial vacancies. Institute Director Eveloff has attended most of these interviews and offers feedback to applicants, and to members of the Commission, when requested, regarding the questions asked.

### Community Outreach

The staff of the Institute gives talks about the state of women in public life to community groups as well as more academic talks at other universities, including Washington University, St. Louis University, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, Missouri State University, and others.

### Partnerships

Many organizations request a presentation from Institute staff and partner with the Institute. Among these are: U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs –Office of International Visitors, Fulbright International Fellowship Program, Business and Professional Women, League of Women Voters, Women Lawyers' Association, The Junior League, America Association of University Women, and others.

The Sue Shear Institute also has affiliations with regional and national groups that track and promote women's civic engagement, including: the Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University; The Infinity Project, University of Minnesota; Vision 2020, Drexel University; and the 2012 project.

On campus, the Institute partners with the Executive Leadership Consortium, the Gender Studies program, the Political Science Department, the College of Nursing, and various other units to provide civic education to students, faculty and staff.

