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Ten Years of Leadership

11.04.2009 | Business As the region's economic base has changed in the past 10 years, so has the University of Dayton's Center for Leadership and Executive Development in the School of Business Administration, evolving from serving a few large organizations to now serving many small and midsize businesses and nonprofits.

"We started out in 1999 as a consortium of the largest organizations in the area — about eight original partners," said Bob Smith, director. "The idea was to bring in world-class leaders in executive education and offer training in a more cost-effective way."

Now celebrating its 10th anniversary, the center boasts more than 35 partners and has expanded programming to offer leadership effectiveness and capacity building for nonprofit as well as for-profit organizations.

"We see the center as an important asset for the region's economic recovery," said Smith. "If we can help build more effective leaders, we can help the region be more competitive."

The center also sees opportunities beyond the region for nonprofit training. On Nov. 11-13, the Meals On Wheels Association of America, the national organization representing more than 5,000 senior nutrition programs, will bring executive directors to campus for a three-day program leading to a Certificate in Leadership.

Smith said the center has intentionally changed its business model to reach out to smaller organizations and nonprofits. "It seems to be working; our revenue grew 6 percent last year in spite of a tough economy," he said.

Smith is particularly excited about partnerships with the Dayton Foundation, the Minority Economic Development Council and the University's own Fitz Center for Leadership in Community because they are allowing the center to extend programming to underserved markets such as nonprofits and minority business owners.

All in all, more than 8,000 executives and managers have attended executive development, emerging leader and successful supervisor programs through the center, Smith said.

Program topics have included marketing, managing in challenging times, operations management, strategic business development and executive communications.

At 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 19, at the National Composite Center in Kettering, the center will bring Tim Sanders, former senior executive at Yahoo! and author of two best-selling books, for a one-day executive leadership development session on "Creating the Passionate Organization: How Companies and Individuals Can Make a Profit AND Make a Difference." Cost is \$970 for non-partner organizations. For more information visit <http://leadership.udayton.edu>.

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