



THE VERMONT LEADERSHIP SERIES

Summary about Participation

Find your voice! Learn how to advocate for change.
<https://ddc.vermont.gov/plan-and-projects/leadership-series>

What is the Vermont Leadership Series?

The Vermont Leadership Series is a training for self-advocates and family members. It takes place over 3 weekends. There will be workshops about leadership skills and lots of fun hands-on activities. Participants stay overnight at the workshop location, usually at a hotel. (The program budget covers these costs; you do not have to pay).

The Leadership Series focuses on the values of the Disability Rights Movement -- Equal Rights, Speaking Up for Yourself, and Full Community Inclusion.

The Series has been created by 3 partner organizations: The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council, Green Mountain Self-Advocates (GMSA), and Vermont Family Network (VFN). These groups want to educate new leaders.

Many Leadership graduates go on to serve in a leadership role – for example, they chair a local self-advocacy group, serve on a State Committee, or talk with legislators. There are many ways to practice leadership.

Leadership teaches participants how to:

- Be an effective advocate and leader for systems change.
- Include people of all abilities and support others to find their voice.
- Build relationships with policymakers.



How can I join the Leadership Series?

To be considered, you must apply to one of two organizations. They will talk with you about the Series and why you're interested. They can help you fill out an application. Pick the organization you know best.

- **Green Mountain Self-Advocates (GMSA)** is Vermont’s statewide self-advocacy organization. Contact them by phone: [1 \(802\) 229-2600](tel:18022292600) or email: Max@gmsavt.org
- **Vermont Family Network (VFN)** is Vermont’s statewide family support organization. Contact them by phone: [1 \(802\) 876-5315](tel:18028765315) or email: Joanne.Wechsler@vfn.org

Reach out and talk to GMSA or VFN, even if these organizations are new to you. They are looking for interested people. They want to help get you involved!

Selected participants:

- Feel comfortable speaking up and listen well to others.
- Are eager to make a difference in their community.
- Are open to new ideas and “thinking outside of the box.”
- You do *not* need to know how to read or write to participate. You do *not* need previous experience working with legislators or other policy makers to apply.

Unfortunately, there is limited space in each class. GMSA and VFN try to select a class that will work well together. If you are not accepted, it does not mean you are not a good candidate. Please plan to apply next year!

Sounds great! Where do I get an application?

You can call GMSA or VFN. Or you can visit the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council website (<http://ddc.vermont.gov/plan-and-projects/leadership-series>) to download an application.



Help is available to fill out the application.

If you would like help or need an accommodation, you should contact GMSA at [1 \(802\) 229-2600](tel:18022292600) or VFN at [1 \(800\) 800-4005, x217](tel:18008004005).

We are open to applications in a wide range of formats, including audio or video answers to the questions.