

**Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce
Youth Leadership Program Applications Available
Forty Students to be Selected to Participate in Class of 2015**

DAPHNE, AL, March 31, 2014 - - The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership program applications are now available. Forty students who are currently freshmen, sophomores or juniors from Eastern Shore public and private high schools and home-schooled settings will be selected to participate in the seven-month program, which begins this year in August. The deadline to apply is April 21.

The students will work on a wide variety of projects that are developed to help them learn leadership skills and broaden their individual talents. Included are seminars, volunteer activities and small group projects that integrate involvement in civic and business issues with life skills that empower them as leaders.

Christina Hellmich, coordinator of the youth leadership program, describes the program as fun, interactive and a way for students to learn valuable life skills. "It's different from any other experience offered to students," she said. "These young people get an opportunity to interact with leaders from the Eastern Shore area and with students from other schools. They learn to make decisions that affect not only themselves but their communities."

The students have an opportunity to identify needs and concerns in the area. They then create a Plan of Action working within a small group to address the needs and implement it, using the knowledge and skills they gained during the program activities.

The Eastern Shore Chamber Youth Leadership program is currently funded through special donations and grants obtained by the Eastern Shore Chamber Foundation, a 501(C)(3) entity. Individuals, foundations, corporations and small businesses have also made contributions. Chamber President Darrelyn Bender said financial donations and in-kind goods and services are always needed to help the program, now starting its fourteenth year.

"Being involved in this annual youth leadership program is an excellent way the business community can become well-known and make a difference in the community," said Bender. "After all, our youth are our future."

Applications are available online at <http://www.eschamber.com/page/YouthLeadership>. The deadline to apply is Monday, April 21. For more information, to sponsor or help with the program call Christina Hellmich at the Eastern Shore Chamber at 621-8222.

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