URISA GIS Leadership Academy

The Academy was conceived by URISA leaders who recognized that the community had ample access to technology training. But as they advanced in their careers and their management responsibilities increased, there were no programs dedicated to management and leadership training that would resonate with GIS professionals. So, typical of the URISA ‘can-do’ attitude, these leaders discussed and designed a training program that did just that.

The URISA GIS Leadership Academy has enjoyed steady and enthusiastic participation since it was first presented in 2007. Since then, more than 1,000 GIS professionals have attended the specialized five-day GIS leadership and management training program that focuses on:

- GIS leadership and management techniques
- GIS strategic planning
- Successful team development
- Organizational capacity building and sustainability strategies (ROI, innovative funding ideas)
- Program investment and justification
- Resource allocation
- Change management
- Situation assessment and organizational performance evaluation
- Ethics and professional challenges
- Problem solving

The Academy is taught by GIS leaders (all are GISPs and accomplished in the field). Each GLA includes numerous interactive exercises, team-building tools, and opportunities to delve into topics in a way you cannot do at a large conference. Attendance is limited in size to encourage such interaction with each event capped at about 50 participants. Attendees have noted that the discussions and networking are as valuable as the content presented.

During the COVID pandemic, GLA faculty pivoted and were able to regularly and effectively deliver the content virtually. This will continue to occur, in addition to in-person offerings.

Further, with so many graduates asking for more advanced content as their careers progress, an Advanced GIS Leadership Academy is in development and will be offered in 2023 in order to meet that demand.

Site History:
- November 2023 – Denver, Colorado
- June 2023 – Charlotte, North Carolina
- November 2022 – Santa Rosa, California
- August 2022 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Virtual - June 2022
- December 2021 - Minneapolis, Minnesota
- November 2021 - St. Petersburg, Florida
- August 2021 - Portland, Oregon
- Virtual - April 2021
- Virtual - November 2020
• Virtual - August 2020
• October 2019 - Phoenix, Arizona
• August 2019 - Toronto, Ontario Canada
• May 2019 - Raleigh, North Carolina
• December 2018 - Austin, Texas
• July 2018 - Salt Lake City, Utah
• April 2018 - Columbus, Ohio
• July 2017 - Providence, Rhode Island
• April 2017 - San Diego, California
• August 2016 - Chicago, Illinois
• June 2015 - Denver, Colorado
• October 2014 - Louisville, Kentucky
• May 2014 - Calgary, Alberta Canada
• May 2013 - San Antonio, Texas
• June 2012 - Savannah, Georgia
• June 2011 - St Louis, Missouri
• June 2010 - Baltimore, Maryland
• December 2009 - Seattle, Washington
• December 2008 - Seattle, Washington
• June 2008 - Chicago, Illinois
• December 2007 - New Orleans, Louisiana