



ROARING FORK LEADERSHIP

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CONTACT

Andrea Palm-Porter, Executive Director
andrea@rflleadership.org; 970-922-6035

Roaring Fork Leadership Celebrates 2025 Academy Graduates and Opens Applications for 2026 Cohort

Aspen, Colo. – Roaring Fork Leadership (RFL) proudly announces the graduation of twenty-eight community changemakers from its 2025 Academy program, joining an alumni network of nearly 1,100 individuals. These incredible graduates who are stepping forward as more effective, connected, and courageous leaders. This milestone marks RFL’s 37th year of shaping leadership in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River valleys, and with it, the opening of applications for the 2026 Academy cohort.

The 10-month RFL Academy is not your average leadership program. It’s a deep dive into self-awareness, skill-building, and real-world civic engagement. Participants come away with more than just knowledge – they gain clarity, courage, and a community of peers committed to making a difference. This year, every participant reported stronger leadership abilities and a wider network of meaningful relationships. Nearly all say they are now more active and effective in their roles as community members and professionals, and **the vast majority called the experience one of the best investments of their time and energy.**

“The personal growth I experienced in both confidence and connection was the most valuable part of the [RFL Academy and Civic Impact Projects],” said graduate Katherine Clapper, Risk and Benefits Specialist for Pitkin County.

What sets RFL apart is the way learning is applied in real time. Through Civic Impact Projects, participants partner with local organizations to tackle pressing community challenges – from mental health and housing to youth engagement and sustainability. These projects are not hypothetical exercises: they’re rooted in the realities of our ever-changing region, and they leave lasting footprints.

“[RFL Academy] truly got me out of my comfort zone at every session and has given me more confidence,” added Amanda Kuffell, Guest Services Manager for East West Hospitality – Aspen Mountain Residences.

RFL's mission is to develop leaders – no matter their experience, background, or resources – who make their communities better. The goal of RFL is to strengthen the fabric of our communities through authentic connection and courageous action. Alumni of the program go on to lead in business, nonprofits, education, public service, and grassroots movements across the region.

Applications are now open for RFL Academy 2026. The program welcomes individuals from all sectors who are ready to grow, challenge themselves and contribute to a stronger, more resilient region. Space is limited, and early applications are encouraged. The deadline to apply is July 15, 2025.

To learn more or apply, visit: <https://rflleadership.org/academy>

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About Roaring Fork Leadership

Founded in 1988, Roaring Fork Leadership (RFL) cultivates effective, community-minded leaders who are equipped to meet today's challenges and shape tomorrow's solutions. Through its flagship Academy and ongoing leadership development programs, RFL empowers individuals from all walks of life to lead with courage, clarity, and connection. Rooted in the values of collaboration, self-awareness, and civic responsibility, RFL provides the tools and experiences that help leaders grow – personally and professionally – while making a tangible impact in their communities. Guided by the vision *Better Leaders, Better Communities*, RFL is a catalyst for positive change across the Roaring Fork and Colorado River valleys, and beyond.

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Roaring Fork Leadership Academy 2025 Graduates