



Plano Youth Leadership

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

ALUMNI PROFILE
Allison Sheppard
Class II

Plano Youth Leadership (PYL) encourages our alumni to give back to the Plano community. Many alumni, like Allison Sheppard of Class II, have plans to return to Plano after completing their educational goals. Allison recently reflected upon her PYL experience and plans for the future.

What motivated you to apply for the PYL program?

"During my freshman year of high school, my older brother, James, participated in the first class of PYL and had a very positive experience. I always looked forward to hearing about the fascinating topics that were covered at his PYL sessions. **I thought the PYL program would be a good opportunity for me to build and expand leadership skills.**"

Did the program meet or exceed your expectations? In what ways?

"I expected that I was going to expand my leadership skills but I did not realize how closely I would be interacting with the leaders and benefiting from their experience. **I am constantly amazed that in some of my current leadership experiences how often I have referred back to lessons learned in Plano Youth Leadership.**"

Describe how you've benefited from your PYL experience and how you've applied the skills you learned in PYL.

"The most important experience of PYL was just discovering how many different definitions of a leader exist. I had to learn how to adjust to a group that was selected for their leadership potential and had different approaches to problem solving. **PYL taught us how to work in a group and let other members of the group shine and work on their strengths and weaknesses.** The lessons of leadership and problem solving I learned with PYL was helpful in college as I served in various leadership aspects and was recognized my senior year by Office of Student Life for "Outstanding Leadership and Contributions to Student Life", an honor that I am very proud of."

Where are you now?

"After I graduated from Villanova University in Villanova, PA in 2003 with a degree in Business Administration, I had a successful career in pharmaceutical sales. In 2005, I returned to Villanova to pursue my Masters in Business Administration. I am also working as an Assistant Admissions advisor. **After I spend the summer studying in China, I will graduate in May 2008 with a specialization in International Marketing and hope to return to pharmaceutical sales.**"

What are your plans for the future?

"In the future, I hope to work internationally for a pharmaceutical firm and work to **further my understanding of international leadership and management styles.**"

Describe the ways in which you have given back to the Plano community and the PYL program.

"Following graduation, I moved back to Plano to work. In that time, I was very involved with the Plano Symphony Orchestra and worked to develop their Debutante Program and served as their advisor for two years. I will graduate in May 2008 with my Masters of Business Administration, and I hope to move back to Plano. I enjoyed working with and advising students while I was at Villanova and plan on becoming involved with a group like Youth Mentor Network and help high school students. **I would also like to apply for Leadership Plano and take my leadership skills and community involvement to another level.**"

Would you recommend PYL to friends/relatives who are still in high school? If so, why?

"The PYL program comes at a very important time in a high school student's life. Sophomore year is such a pivotal time. It is before a student discovers the independence of a driver's license, and it is before they start to worry about college, so there is still an ability to shape and develop leadership skills. **I would recommend this program to any student that would like to have leadership transform their mind and heart.** PYL is about preparing for the future, become better problem solvers, learning to give back to Plano, and learning what makes a good leader."

ABOUT PLANO YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Founded in 1995, Plano Youth Leadership (PYL) is dedicated to training students in leadership techniques and community awareness to prepare them to make a positive impact on the quality of life in the Plano community. Each year, approximately 30 students are selected to participate in the program. These students spend the school year taking part in a curriculum designed to broaden their leadership horizons. An application form is available on the PYL website at www.planoyouthleadership.org

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