



Youth Leadership class to begin

By **Jim Kilpatrick, Staff Writer**

(Created: Thursday, August 31, 2006 11:03 PM CDT)

The Plano Youth Leadership program has selected its 10th class to begin Sept. 17.

"Plano Youth Leadership program is designed to identify and develop future leaders in our community at the tenth grade level," said Plano ISD communication specialist and member of the board of directors of the program Joan Smith. "The original board of directors purposely picked the 10th grade in Plano because they felt that the 10th grade was a good transitional year," Smith said.

Students must apply for the program by filling out an application form.

Students have to be accepted into the program and there is tough competition for the 30 slots.

They must apply at the end of their freshman year for the sophomore year class.

The class for the 2006-2007 has already been selected.

To be in the program the student must live in Plano.

"We have a John Paul student and one from Ursuline in this year's group," Smith said. "The majority of the group comes from the Plano school district and the five high schools."

There are eight sessions spread out over the school year. The first two sessions are mandatory for all participants.

Each of the sessions is taught by members of the Plano Youth Leadership board of directors.

"The board members act as facilitators at every session," said Plano Youth Leadership board of director president Dr. Susan Fletcher. "We rely on community resources at all the sessions. We bring in the heavy hitters to talk with the students about Plano."

Fletcher called the program very important in helping develop leaders not only for Plano but everywhere.

The first session will be an orientation session along with the process of identifying leadership styles. The second is on Oct. 21.

"This session develops team building knowledge and skills," said Smith.

Other sessions will cover learning about similarities and differences in people, the volunteer opportunities and human services, the exploration of educational and business opportunities, developing an awareness of the political and judicial process and what happens in the community after the sun goes down.

"Probably the most popular one is in the spring is when they get to go and observe a mock accident and follow all the events from the accident to Medical Center of Plano," Smith said. "One group follows to the emergency room, one group to the morgue and one group to surgery."

Only 30 students a year are selected to be in the Plano Youth Leadership program.

The program was introduced to Plano from Volusia County, Florida by former Plano ISD Superintendent Jim Surratt with the first class graduating in the 1995-1996 school year.

Copyright © 2006 Star Community Newspapers

624 Krona Drive Suite 170, Plano, Texas 75074 - Contact Star Community Newspapers at 972-398-4200