

The Emerging Leaders Institute

The mission of Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI) of Bluefield State College (BSC) is to provide students with opportunities for leadership development by offering a comprehensive, curricular and co-curricular program grounded in leadership theory and practice that promotes civic engagement, enhances academic productivity, and emphasizes the ethical responsibilities of individuals and organizations. Additionally, ELI strives to increase African-American participation in disciplines such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, business, and allied health. The staff consists of an executive director, a director with a faculty appointment, part-time technical support, and an Advisory Committee.

The Emerging Leaders Institute is a college-wide program that seeks to stimulate intellectualism. The maximum number of students in the program each semester is ten. Each Emerging Leader mentors 10 pre-collegiate students to promote interests in the aforementioned academic disciplines. The Emerging Leaders Institute of Bluefield State College works with all institutional departments and units as well as the community to provide a variety of curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students both to learn about leadership and to develop leadership skills. Activities include leadership workshops and lectures for students, a research project, and community service projects. As a function of the program, a student practicum or lab activity provides educational opportunities to learn about a rapidly developing area in higher education: leadership development and leadership studies. The Emerging Leaders also participate in other activities that engender cultural, social, and professional development. The Emerging Leaders represent BSC and conduct presentations at national, state, and local conferences.

The Emerging Leaders Institute has gained state-wide recognition among member institutions of the NASA-West Virginia Space Grant Consortium and is now the model being studied and replicated at other colleges within the state.

Dr. Guy Sims, Executive Director, and Mrs. Linda P Trigg, Director are continuing an initiative that began in 2001, by Dr. Felicia Wooten Williams, with start-up funds from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. ELI is currently sponsored in part by the NASA West Virginia Space Grant Consortium and other contributors.