|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A picture containing logo  Description automatically generated **Text  Description automatically generated** | **Media Contact:** Ryan Poe  901-268-5074  rpoe@memphischamber.com |

Aspen Institute selects Memphis for workforce academy  
*Greater Memphis Chamber one of eight chosen for prestigious program*

* The Aspen Institute, a global nonprofit committed to realizing a free, just, and equitable society, has chosen the Greater Memphis Chamber and seven other organizations in the U.S. to create Workforce Leadership Academies in their communities.
* The Memphis Workforce Leadership Academy will equip regional leaders, or fellows, with the skills, knowledge, and resources to improve outcomes for workers and employers.
* An informational webinar will be held Jan. 17 for potential fellows, who will be selected in a competitive process. Applications for the academy may be filed online through Feb. 16.

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (Friday, 1/6/23) –** The Greater Memphis Chamber and the Aspen Institute today announced plans to create the Memphis Workforce Leadership Academy, a year-long program to equip local leaders with the skills, knowledge, and resources to advance workforce development in the region.

In a series of retreats, workshops, and action-learning projects, the Memphis Workforce Leadership Academy will let fellows learn how to improve outcomes for workers and employers from some of the world’s leading workforce development practitioners. The program will help fellows deepen their networks; strengthen their systems leadership skills; apply race, equity, and systems change frameworks to their work; and increase their understanding of effective strategies and programs.

Applications for the program are available [here](https://ai-eop.submittable.com/submit/a78bf1a1-71b9-42e1-819f-fd4777acd483/memphis-workforce-leadership-academy-2023) through Feb. 16. For people interested in applying for this competitive program, the Chamber will host an informational webinar on Jan. 17 ([register here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZFRP9YB)). To learn more, visit [memphischamber.com/aspen](https://memphischamber.com/aspen/).

“The Memphis Workforce Leadership Academy will help Greater Memphis capitalize on the diversity, ingenuity, and resiliency of our workforce to create more pathways to prosperity in our community,” said Ted Townsend, president & CEO of the Greater Memphis Chamber. “As Greater Memphis sets and breaks new records for jobs, our goal with this program is for every person, regardless of their education level, to have access to quick, affordable skills training that helps them pursue life-changing careers.”

The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program has worked with partners to establish 14 Workforce Leadership Academies in 11 cities in the U.S. and Canada with nearly 250 participants since 2014. With a goal of realizing a free, just, and equitable society, the Aspen Institute recently selected Greater Memphis and seven other organizations as partners to create Workforce Leadership Academies in their communities following a highly competitive process that included applications from 24 states.

“A high-capacity, responsive, and agile local workforce ecosystem is critical to increasing the chances of sustainable and equitable economic recovery,” said Sheila Maguire, Senior Fellow with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program. “The Academy provides leaders with the rare opportunity to think and act strategically across siloes to advance outcomes for workers and businesses.”

Senior-level managers from across the workforce ecosystem of nonprofit organizations, business associations, union-based training efforts, public agencies, and community colleges who have the authority to implement changes are encouraged to apply for the Academy. Alumni of the Academy become part of the Aspen Institute’s Economic Opportunity Fellows Network.

The Memphis Academy will be led by Greater Memphis Chamber Chief Innovation Officer and Senior Vice President of Workforce Development Amity Schuyler and Vice President of Talent Innovation and Community Development Sondra Howell. An advisory board has been formed of the following members:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Jamilica Burke, Seeding Success* | *Penelope Huston, Downtown Commission* |
| *Dr. Tracy Hall, Southwest Community College* | *Trevia Chatman, Bank of America* |
| *Dr. Kenneth Robinson, United Way Mid-South* | *Danielle Inez, Shelby County Government* |
| *Tom Marino, Poplar Foundation* | *Holly Coleman, Hyde Family Foundation* |
| *David Jordan, Agape* | *Kyla Guyette, Workforce Mid-South* |
| *Dr. Dick Irwin, University of Memphis* | *Alex Smith, City of Memphis* |
| *Dr. Jan Young, Assisi Foundation* | *Shante Avant, Women’s Foundation of Greater Memphis* |

***About the Greater Memphis Chamber:*** *One of Memphis’ oldest institutions, dating back to 1838, the Greater Memphis Chamber is a privately funded nonprofit that serves as the region’s lead economic development organization and the “Voice of Memphis Business” on local, state, and national issues. The Chamber’s mission is to relentlessly pursue prosperity for all — through economic and workforce development, pro-growth advocacy, and by providing support and resources to its investors, which include many of the region’s largest employers. For more information about the Chamber, visit* [*memphischamber.com*](file:///C:\Users\rpoe\Desktop\www.memphischamber.com) *and* [*memphismoves.com*](https://memphismoves.com/)*. Also, follow the Chamber on* [*Twitter*](https://twitter.com/memphischamber)*,* [*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/memphischamber)*,* [*LinkedIn*](https://www.linkedin.com/company/83560) *and* [*Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/memphischamber/)*, and sign up for its weekly newsletter,* [*Memphis Fourword*](https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/uQL7BSu?source_id=d1b09dc9-c5c6-468a-803d-9f8f7d3b08eb&source_type=em&c=poGe9f2ekl9acrR-Omg8jezlGh8BmWaoebgrgca2jedp5npJcs4FKQ==)*.*