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Guest Column:

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Empowering Future Leaders: The Ohio Institute for Political Leadership

Ohio's future depends on strong, capable leaders who understand the challenges and opportunities facing our communities. But leadership doesn't just happen — it requires preparation, training and a deep understanding of the responsibilities that come with public service. That's why the Ohio Chamber of Commerce is proud to launch the [Ohio Institute for Political Leadership](#), a nonpartisan initiative dedicated to recruiting and training pro-business individuals who are ready to step up and lead.

There are 20,642 elected or appointed positions in the state of Ohio. 91% of these are at the county or local level. We need people who are willing to take a leap of faith, fill these important positions, and fight for their communities.

However, running for office can be complex and, at times, daunting — especially for the first time. From navigating campaign finance laws to crafting an effective message that resonates with voters, candidates must be equipped with the right tools and insights to succeed. Unfortunately, many individuals who have the passion and commitment to serve their communities never take that first step simply because they don't know where to begin.

In fact, as someone who has run for office at the state and federal levels, I understand firsthand how crucial it is to have the necessary tools in your toolbox as you're beginning your public office career. And now, as CEO of the Chamber, I also understand how important it is to have officials in office who understand the importance of growing Ohio's economy. With this effort, we hope to merge these two priorities, both to assist blossoming leaders and to ensure the continued prosperity of Ohio's business climate.

Our program is designed to demystify the political process and provide aspiring candidates who are interested in improving Ohio's economic outlook with the skills and confidence they need to run for office. Through an intensive, all-day training session, participants will hear directly from experienced government leaders and political strategists on key topics such as fundraising, legal requirements, voter engagement, and campaign strategy. Most importantly, they will have access

to a network of like-minded individuals who share a commitment to strengthening Ohio through public service.

Our first training session will take place on May 16, 2025, in Columbus, marking the beginning of what we hope will be a transformative experience for future leaders across the state. This initiative is not about partisan politics; it's about ensuring that those who seek to serve Ohioans are well-prepared to do so. By offering practical knowledge and firsthand insights, we aim to cultivate a new generation of candidates who are ready not just to run, but to lead.

We encourage business-minded individuals who are interested in making a difference to take advantage of this opportunity. Whether you've always considered running for office or are just beginning to explore the idea, the Ohio Institute for Political Leadership is here to help.

Ohio's future is bright, but we need dedicated, prepared leaders to help shape it. If you're ready to take the next step into public service, we invite you to join us.

For more information or to register for the Columbus training, visit ohiochamber.com/ohio-institute-for-political-leadership.

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