



National Career  
Development  
Association

### *Mid-Year Report*

Please prepare your report and submit electronically to [dpenn@ncda.org](mailto:dpenn@ncda.org) by **March 15, 2026**, with a copy to your Board Liaison. These reports will be posted on the NCD A Website.

## **LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

**February 18, 2026**

**Chair:** Dr. Sujata Ives, PhD, CCC, [Sujata.ives@gmail.com](mailto:Sujata.ives@gmail.com)

**Co-Chair:** Ms. Rae Stout, [rae@iamclinic.org](mailto:rae@iamclinic.org)

**Board Liaison:** Dr. Carla Cheatham, [cbcheatham@gmail.com](mailto:cbcheatham@gmail.com)

### **Activities to Date**

#### **1. Designing & Managing the Leadership Academy Program**

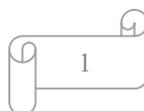
The committee *creates and manages the entire Leadership Academy experience*, including planning how the program runs each year. This includes:

- Developing policies and *procedures* for how the Academy operates.
- Deciding *program structure, timelines, and expectations* for participants.
- Recruiting and organizing committee members (usually LA alumni) to serve on the committee itself.

#### **2. Reviewing Applications & Selecting Participants**

One of the committee's core tasks is **evaluating applications** and selecting new Leadership Academy class members.

- They set application criteria and review materials submitted by applicants (resume, references, essays).
- In some cases, the committee conducts interviews or discussions to decide which candidates show the highest leadership potential.
- They make official *participant selections* that are then approved by the NCD A Board.



### 3. Coordinating Training Sessions & Learning Events

Once participants are selected, the committee schedules and administers Academy learning experiences, including:

- Leadership workshops and sessions at NCDA's *annual Global Career Development Conference*, covering topics like governance, strategy, and leadership skills.
- Conference calls and remote meetings throughout the Academy cycle to keep participants engaged.
- Arranging meetings with current NCDA board members and past leaders to expand mentorship and networking opportunities.

### 4. Facilitating Mentorship & Support

The committee ensures *ongoing support for participants* by:

- Pairing participants with mentors (often current or former NCDA board members).
- Maintaining regular communication throughout the two-year Academy experience (emails, calls, check-ins).
- Helping class members navigate leadership opportunities within NCDA committees, state associations or volunteer roles.

### 5. Assigning & Overseeing Leadership Projects

A defining part of the Academy is the **twelve-month Action Learning Project** each participant does. The committee:

- Provides a *list of Board- or committee-identified needs* that can serve as project topics.
- Helps participants shape and scope their projects so they are relevant and useful.
- Tracks progress and offers guidance as participants complete their projects.
- Reviews and evaluates final written reports and short presentations at the Academy graduation or conference.

### 6. Planning Academy-Related Conference Activities

At annual conferences, the committee is responsible for:

- Scheduling Leadership Academy training workshops & presentations in their second & graduation year.
- Arranging President's breakfast, meet-ups, and invitations to committee *receptions* for current and alumni classes.
- Leading cohort sessions or group discussions tied to leadership development.
- Ensuring logistics (rooms, times, facilitation) are set up via Ms. Mary Ann Powell.

## 7. Communication & Alumni Engagement

After participants complete the Academy:

- The committee continues communication with alumni to encourage continued involvement.
- They sometimes plan alumni events, resource sharing, and opportunities for alumni to serve as mentors or speakers.
- They may solicit feedback from alumni to improve future Academy cycles.

## 8. Reporting & Accountability

The committee is expected to produce regular reports such as:

- Mid-year or annual committee reports summarizing activities.
- Documentation of participant outcomes and project results.
- Recommendations to the NCDA Board on improvements or changes to the Leadership Academy.

## Example Real Leadership Academy Projects

Participants don't just *attend classes* — their projects often deliver real value back to the association. Examples from past cohorts include:

- Researching and proposing improvements to NCDA's credentialing programs.
- Creating sample forms and tools for NCDA members.
- Designing or expanding support for *graduate student involvement* in NCDA.
- Evaluating existing NCDA processes and offering improvement recommendations.

## How is this connected to the NCDA Strategic Plan?

NCDA's strategic plans consistently focus on **leadership development, member engagement, professional excellence, organizational sustainability, diversity/equity/inclusion, and innovation**. The Leadership Academy is a direct mechanism for achieving these goals.

### 1. Leadership Pipeline & Governance Succession

**Strategic Priority: Organizational Sustainability & Leadership Development**

**Committee Activity:**

- Recruiting and selecting high-potential leaders
- Mentoring participants
- Exposing them to NCDA governance and board operations

**Strategic Impact:**

The Leadership Academy builds a **succession pipeline** for:

- Committee chairs
- Board members
- Officers
- Task force leaders

This supports long-term organizational stability and prevents leadership gaps — directly advancing sustainability goals in the Strategic Plan.

**2. Member Engagement & Volunteer Development****Strategic Priority: Member Value & Engagement****Committee Activity:**

- Encouraging Academy participants to serve on committees
- Connecting participants to conference programming
- Facilitating alumni involvement

**Strategic Impact:**

Leadership Academy graduates typically:

- Increase volunteer participation
- Lead initiatives
- Present at conferences
- Mentor newer members

This strengthens member engagement and increases the depth of active leadership within NCDA.

**3. Professional Excellence & Innovation****Strategic Priority: Advance the Profession / Promote Best Practices****Committee Activity:**

- Overseeing 12-month Action Learning Projects
- Aligning projects with board-identified needs

**Strategic Impact:**

Action Learning Projects often result in:

- Process improvements
- Policy recommendations
- Research initiatives

- New member tools or resources

These projects directly contribute to **continuous improvement and innovation**, supporting NCDA's role as a leader in career development practice.

#### **4. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)**

##### **Strategic Priority: Inclusive Leadership & Representation**

###### **Committee Activity:**

- Recruiting diverse applicants
- Expanding leadership opportunities across regions and career sectors
- Providing mentorship access to emerging leaders

###### **Strategic Impact:**

The Academy broadens representation in leadership pipelines by:

- Engaging professionals from varied backgrounds
- Elevating new voices into governance roles

This supports strategic goals related to equity, representation, and inclusive leadership development.

#### **5. Conference & Professional Development Alignment**

##### **Strategic Priority: High-Quality Professional Development**

###### **Committee Activity:**

- Coordinating workshops at the Global Career Development Conference
- Facilitating leadership training sessions
- Creating cohort learning experiences

###### **Strategic Impact:**

These activities:

- Strengthen conference programming
- Integrate leadership development into professional development offerings
- Increase the value of NCDA events

This aligns with the Strategic Plan's emphasis on high-impact learning opportunities.

#### **6. Organizational Accountability & Continuous Improvement**

##### **Strategic Priority: Effective Governance & Strategic Execution**

**Committee Activity:**

- Providing annual reports to the Board
- Evaluating program effectiveness
- Refining selection and mentoring processes

**Strategic Impact:**

This ensures the Leadership Academy itself remains:

- Outcome-focused
- Data-informed
- Strategically aligned

The committee doesn't operate independently — it functions as a strategic implementation arm of the Board.

**Mr. Marty Apodaca gave us the task for updating the Leadership Academy Manual and Program. We have done so and will submit the expanded Manual to Ms. Melissa Venable in July of this year.**

The Leadership Academy Committee is not just a programming group — it is a **strategic execution mechanism** of NCDA's long-term plan.

<b>Committee Activity</b>	<b>Strategic Plan Connection</b>
Selecting participants	Leadership pipeline & sustainability
Mentorship	Succession planning
Action Learning Projects	Innovation & professional advancement
Conference programming	Member value & professional development
Alumni engagement	Retention & volunteer leadership
Reporting to Board	Governance & accountability

**Projected Plan through fiscal year end (September 30<sup>th</sup>)**

We will gain a new cohort in the Fall of 2026 where we will begin to choose applicants from an application pool. That class will graduate in 2028. We will follow the tenets listed above and as connected to the NCDA Strategic Plan.

**If you received funding for your work, what specific outcome(s) benefited NCDA?**

Answer: The funding that we receive is free registration and a \$500. Stipend for all Mentees. I would encourage the Board to also provide free registration for the Chair & Co-chair.

## In Summary

Leadership Academy directly advanced the strategic priorities of the National Career Development Association by strengthening our leadership pipeline and supported long-term organizational sustainability.

Through a structured selection and mentorship process, the committee identified and developed 5 emerging leaders who are now prepared to serve in governance and volunteer leadership roles across the association. This work supports succession planning and ensures continuity in Board and committee leadership.

A key component of the Academy is the 2-year Action Learning Project, aligned with Board-identified priorities. These projects generate tangible outcomes—such as process improvements, resource development, and strategic recommendations—that contribute measurable value to NCDA.

In addition, the committee promoted inclusive leadership thru relevant trainings, workshops, virtual meetings, and the Socratic questioning methods.

The Leadership Academy served as a strategic implementation arm of the Board—cultivating leaders, strengthening governance capacity, and contributing directly to the execution of NCDA's Strategic Plan.

Thank you.

*Dr. Sujata Ives, PhD, CCC*