



*Courtesy of The Ann and John Doerr Institute for New Leaders (DINL) at Rice University*

# Developing Tomorrow's Leaders through Coaching



The Ann and John Doerr Institute for New Leaders (DINL) at Rice University, in Houston, Texas, USA, was founded with the aim of transforming how students are developed as leaders in top-tier colleges and universities. All Rice students (6,200 graduate and undergraduate) have access to a highly personalized and professionally executed leader development experience on a scope and scale unprecedented among major universities. Coaching has played a key role in this experience since DINL's founding in 2015, and no organization, department or initiative at Rice has greater sustainability than coaching, which is funded in perpetuity.

In recognition of DINL's commitment to its coaching initiative, the International Coach Federation (ICF) named the organization one of five finalists in the 2017 ICF International Prism Award program. The Prism Award program recognizes organizations with outstanding coaching programs that yield discernible and measurable positive impacts, fulfill rigorous professional standards, address key strategic goals

and shape organizational culture. (Learn more at [Coachfederation.org/prism](https://Coachfederation.org/prism).)

### **Making Sense of It All**

When determining what to include in the leader development experience, DINL conducted 185 interviews with Rice students, faculty and stakeholders and found that honoring the diversity and academic demands of students was critical.

"It became apparent to us that if we could deliver some of our leader development using coaching as a method, then it would maximize the amount of control that students have over their own destiny when it comes to development, both in terms of the focus of development and the flexibility of the scheduling," says Tom Kolditz, founding director of DINL.

Coaching also allows for students to contextualize extracurricular activities in an educational environment. According to Rice University's president, David Leebron, coaching is recognized as the integrative piece. It allows students to assess all the different leadership opportunities they have, intentionally connect them together and consider how to develop themselves into the leaders they want to be.

"I think [the coaching experience] develops the reflective capability the student will need to benefit the most from opportunities that they will confront," says

Leebron, adding that this allows for students to really begin learning from experiences now as part of the educational experience, rather than waiting until after graduation.

## Setting the Bar

DINL rigorously upholds ICF standards. Its largest non-salary budget item offers every student an ICF-credentialed coach. As ICF Credential-holders, all DINL coaches are obliged to uphold the ICF Code of Ethics; they are also asked to sign off on policies that govern client-coach interaction and the ongoing collaboration for measurement. In just 18 months, 23 percent of the undergraduate population has been coached. Coaching is also available to faculty and staff, including all senior leaders of the University.

DINL not only wanted students to be protected by high standards but also wanted them to contribute to the growth of a coaching culture at Rice University. To this end, DINL developed a 60-hour ICF-accredited coach-specific training program that's available to students, faculty, leaders, employees and business community members. Program participation is encouraged and subsidized by many different stakeholders, including departments and schools within Rice. To date, 25 undergraduate students have completed the training program and are employed by the university as Peer Leader Developers as they pursue 100 hours of coaching experience toward the ICF Associate Certified Coach (ACC) Credential.

## Evaluating Impact

Rice is a research university, so data collection has been part of the coaching initiative from the start. Student-clients complete pre-and post-engagement questionnaires as well as a survey after every coaching

session. Coaches complete surveys after training sessions and at the end of each coaching engagement.

Since it is the Institute's mission to develop a student's capacity to lead, DINL is constantly considering additional ways to measure the growth of students. DINL has begun evaluating students' leadership goals, examining students' coaching readiness and assessing the longer-term impacts of coaching on students, which will be measured through their willingness to serve and ability to succeed in leadership roles at Rice and beyond.

DINL recognizes that the power of coaching can extend far beyond the individual and that the coaching of university students is a highly impactful application of coaching. It is likely to impact the way the client will lead and influence the world for the next 40–50 years, according to nominating coach Amber Barger, PCC. With this in mind, DINL is also planning to survey alumni to evaluate the leadership opportunities they have pursued, professionally and personally.

DINL's comprehensive approach to data collection will provide insights on how coaching is affecting students now and in the future, as well as capture the impact—both of the individual and the DINL program—over time.

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The International Coach Federation (ICF) is dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high ethical standards, providing independent certification and building a worldwide network of credentialed coaches across a variety of coaching disciplines. ICF is active in representing all facets of the coaching industry, including Executive, Life Vision and Enhancement, Leadership, Relationship, and Career Coaching. Its 26,000-plus members located in more than 130 countries\* work toward the common goal of enhancing awareness of coaching, upholding the integrity of the profession, and continually educating themselves with the newest research and practices.

*\*Numbers as of August 2017. Numbers are subject to change month to month.*

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[Coachfederation.org](http://Coachfederation.org)

2365 Harrodsburg Road., Suite A325 Lexington, Kentucky USA 40504 Phone: 1.888.423.3131 or 1.859.219.3580 Fax: 1.859.226.4411