

Leadership Academy Testimonials

"I've been working in the GIS field for 15 years and this was, by far, the most valuable and comprehensive training I have received. No matter how much you think you know about GIS management, you will learn more than you ever thought possible." – *Scott A Weisman, GISP, GIS Technical Services Manager, Tallahassee Leon County GIS*



"Thank you so much for hosting an incredible ULA in Savannah! I was unsure what to expect and found the entire event well-planned and thoughtful in presentation. The class size allowed for intimate interaction among all participants and room for plentiful exchange between the presenters and the class. Adding breakfast and lunch into the mix encouraged development of professional networking and I know I met a few people I hope to enjoy lifelong communications with. The diversity of instructor backgrounds was great. I know for several at my table, myself included, it was the first time to consider ourselves and our services as a change maker. I gained some useful ideas regarding upstream communication and awareness that my 'team' isn't only inside GIS or even my employer. No matter the GIS position, I think everyone would benefit from this GIS-centric leadership at least once. Personally I hope to repeat this program every 4–5 years." – *Dawn Killian, City of College Station, Texas*

"The URISA Leadership Academy provides GIS professionals seeking leadership direction and opportunities with the frameworks and foundations necessary to deliver and sustain a successful GIS program. The ULA brings together established professionals with budding GIS leaders for a week long educational experience like no other." – *Corey Halford, City of Airdrie, Alberta (ULA 2011 – St Louis, Missouri)*

"For me, the URISA Leadership Academy (ULA) really brought to the forefront the need for, and importance of, a champion for geospatial technologies in almost any organization. The experienced instructors really demonstrated how to be that champion, with the steps for success, and the pitfalls along the way. From the excellent team-building exercises, to the "elevator" speeches, the ULA showed that the only place in line for geospatial professionals is the front." *–Jamie Leitch, GISP, City of Welland, Ontario (ULA 2012 – Savannah, Georgia)*

"This is an excellent leadership course, which I would highly recommend to anyone involved in managing GIS projects. The session on Evaluating Where You Are provides insightful practical techniques and tools for assessing any GIS project. The session on risk management and ROI were equally insightful and beneficial. Once I returned to home to my GIS world, I immediately implemented the concepts and strategies I learned from this training." *–Annette Gardner, Lead GIS Public Health Advisor, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA*

"I felt that the ULA truly authenticated the change in mentality from being a general worker to a true geospatial professional, or leader. It really boosted a change in attitude for me."
– Craig Barraclough, GISP, Park County (CO) GIS



"The ULA provided a rare moment to bring some of the top leaders in the GIS field together to extend their experience with folks that truly believe in GIS and want to make a difference locally, regionally and maybe nationally in the future. The broad knowledge base allowed the ULA to touch on every skill that is needed to make us leaders in our respective communities." *– Chris Cantrell, GIS Coordinator, Midland County, Michigan*

Other reviews from ULA Graduates:

- "I learned more than expected. This is the first time I've been able to interact with, almost exclusively, GIS managers, coordinators and GIOs."

- “The greatest takeaways for me: management and leadership techniques, how to make excellent reports, creating effective budget proposals, strategic planning and marketing planning, collaboration and focusing on small wins.”
- “It inspired new ideas on integration and getting the word out about GIS. The review of strategic planning and ROI was excellent.”
- “The URISA Leadership Academy was well worth it. I enjoyed having the opportunity to network with GIS professionals who are facing the same challenges as me.”
- “Excellent. Very worthwhile in many aspects.”
- “The ULA was a comprehensive and organized interchange of experiences being facilitated by professionals who work in the same field I do. It was so valuable to realize that the issues I have in my workplace are NOT unique, that others have experienced and successfully negotiated the minefield.”



June 2008 Graduates – Chicago



December 2008 Graduates – Seattle



December 2009 Graduates – Seattle



June 2010 Graduates – Baltimore



June 2011 Graduates – St. Louis



June 2012 Graduates – Savannah



San Antonio Graduates – May 2013

What they had to say:

- "I learned so much in one week, it's a miracle. I have immediately started work on a GIS Strategic Plan."
- "This was the best week of training I have ever had, and you can quote me on that."
- "Leadership has no title."
- "Even though I am not the manager, I can be a leader for my organization in GIS and be an agent of change."