

LEADERSHIP *Rockdale*

The Rockdale Municipal Development District and the Rockdale Chamber of Commerce are excited to announce the launch of the Leadership Rockdale program. The goal of the program is to identify potential leaders in the community who may not be involved or for those who want to get involved in Rockdale's future but don't know where to start. "Many cities have a leadership development program to identify potential new community leaders, educate leaders about how a city works, but more importantly, for people to learn about leadership in an informal setting," described Jim Gibson, Rockdale MDD Economic Development Director.

"Graduation from a local leadership development program makes a great addition on the City's application to serve on a volunteer board or on the Chamber board," Gibson continued. "Programs like this also help build social capital and civic infrastructure in the community which contribute to our economic development mission."

The program is one year long and will meet once a month. Topics to be covered include leadership development, community institutions, effective communication, economic development, and civic pride. The class will also read three books on leadership, one of which will be about Walt Disney and Disneyland.

Anyone who either lives or works in Rockdale is eligible to participate. The class will be kept small and capped at 18 participants. The program tuition is \$350 which is to help cover the costs of meals and materials. "Oftentimes employers will pay the program tuition as there should be direct benefits to a business. This could result in a better leader and employee, but the business will also deepen relationships in the community," Gibson described.

Applications can be downloaded from either the Chamber or MDD websites. Applications can be emailed directly by calling the Chamber or MDD offices.

Applications will be accepted from now until May 9. Completed applications can either be delivered to the Rockdale Chamber office at 1203 W. Cameron or emailed to info@rockdalechamber.com. The class will be selected by May 16 and the first session will be on Wednesday, June 8. A program orientation dinner will be scheduled after Memorial Day but prior to the first session.