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Academic Administrators Launch Inaugural Leadership Program for Women

Atlanta, GA – The Academy for Academic Leadership (AAL) held the inaugural 2016 Exceptional Executive Leadership (ExcEL) for Women program on October 16-18 at Château Élan Winery & Resort in Braselton, GA. Nearly thirty high-impact women leaders attended this 2.5-day competency-based developmental leadership workshop to enhance their leadership skills.

N. Karl Haden, Ph.D., AAL president opened the event with a presentation based on his book, *The 9 Virtues of Exceptional Leaders*. Rep. Stacey Abrams, J.D., House Minority Leader for the Georgia General Assembly and State Representative for the 89th House District provided the keynote address with inspirational insights for the attendees based on her experiences as an entrepreneur and in the Georgia House of Delegates.

“The ExcEL for Women program is a unique leadership workshop where we gather high-potential women leaders from across the country, and we begin the personal self-reflection process, while envisioning where they want to be professionally in the future,” explains Val Gokenbach, D.M., RN, MBA, chief nursing officer at Baylor All Saints Medical Center in Fort Worth, TX and AAL senior consultant. “This program was truly designed for anybody at the executive level or aspiring to be an executive, because to be a good leader you have to understand yourself first.”

Women leaders face a unique set of challenges, and the ExcEL for Women program served as a secure environment where the participants discussed these challenges and focused on the opportunity of self-development in this highly-interactive program. The participants were given strategies that they could use to improve their executive skills as well as their leadership skills. Individually tailored to build upon one competency at a time, the curriculum for the workshop addressed topics critical to the personal and professional growth of a high-impact leader, such as:

- Leading with greater influence and decisiveness
- Driving innovation
- Conquering emotional intelligence
- Developing strategic initiatives
- Building your professional network

“AAL’s ExcEL for Woman was a great program for new and established leaders, said program attendee Janice Blumer, D.O., F.A.O., vice-chair of the department of osteopathic manipulative medicine at the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. “I especially appreciated the diversity of faculty who through the variety of their experiences were able to meet the needs of the upcoming leaders. I look forward to future courses from AAL!”

The facilitators for the 2016 ExcEL for Women program included Dr. Marcia Ditmyer, assistant dean of assessment & instruction and associate professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine and AAL senior consultant; Dr. Val Gokenbach; and Dr. Felicia Tucker-Lively, director of professional development for AAL. The 2016 ExcEL for Women program would not have been possible without the inaugural advisory board, who included:

- **N. Karl Haden, Ph.D.**
President, Academy for Academic Leadership
- **Roy L. Simpson, D.N.P., R.N., DPNAP, FAAN**
Clinical Professor, Emory University; Vice President of Nursing, Cerner Corporation
- **Pamela Zarkowski, M.P.H., J.D.**
Provost and Vice President, University of Detroit Mercy; AAL Senior Consultant
- **Tawana K. Lee-Ware, D.D.S., M.S.D.**
Assistant Professor Pediatric Dentistry, Indiana University School of Dentistry; Trustee, Agnes Scott College; Past-President, American Association of Women Dentists
- **Mary Coussons-Read, Ph.D.**
Professor of Psychology, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs; Special Assistant to the Chancellor at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs; AAL Senior Consultant
- **Nancy Mansfield, J.D.**
Director of Women Lead and Professor of Legal Studies, Georgia State University, J. Mack Robinson College of Business
- **Judy Greenlea Taylor, D.D.S., FICD**
President, National Dental Association; Secretary, Georgia Department of Public Health Board; CEO, Greenlea Dental Care, P.C.

In collaboration with AAL, Mercer University Tift College of Education co-sponsored the inaugural ExcEL for Women scholarship. The recipients of this scholarship included Drs. Susie Goolsby and Esra Sahingur, each from Virginia Commonwealth University. “We are grateful for Mercer University’s support of the ExcEL for Women program,” said Dr. Haden. “The support of Mercer’s Tift College of Education allowed two women from the academic community to attend this leadership program that might not had the opportunity without their generous support. We look forward to future partnerships with Mercer University as the ExcEL for Women program continues to grow in the future.”

“Remarkable program! Rep. Abrams, Drs. Ditmyer, Gokenbach, and Tucker-Lively all exceeded my expectations and were great presenters,” said program attendee Diana Morcho, MBA, director of UT Dentists and Patient Care at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. “With such a broad range of experiences and expertise, they melded well together in helping us understand the true relevance of leadership, from a deeper, more comprehensive perspective.”

Visit www.AALgroup.org/ExcEL as pending dates and program specifics are announced for the 2017 ExcEL for Women program.

About the Academy for Academic Leadership

For more than a decade, the Academy for Academic Leadership (AAL) has been dedicated to advancing people and institutions through professional development and consulting services. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, AAL provides customized professional development and consulting services for academic healthcare executives, educators, practitioners, institutions, and associations. AAL activities include leadership development, coaching, strategic planning, change management, team building, and curriculum development. For more information about AAL's consulting services or professional development programs, please visit AALgroup.org.