

THE TIMES

The Blackstone Valley's Neighborhood Newspaper

Published on *The Pawtucket Times* (<http://www.pawtuckettimes.com>)

[Home](#) > Grebien takes part in leadership program

Grebien takes part in leadership program

By *editor*

Created 04/01/2013 - 07:00



[Grebien.jpg](#) [1]

PAWTUCKET – In an era when leaders are constantly challenged to “think outside the box,” insights from experts on how to better understand important decisions and the best ways to make them can help show the way.

That’s what brought Mayor Donald R. Grebien, accompanied by Finance Director Joanna L’Heureux, to a recent two-day leadership session conducted at the Pell Center at Salve Regina University in Newport.

The weekend session, called “Leadership Matters” and part of the Systems Thinking for Public Leaders Program, was co-sponsored by the Pell Center and the nonprofit Public Sector Consortium, whose stated purpose is “to support leaders in their efforts to create and sustain high performing public organizations that serve the public good.”

According to Public Sector Consortium President Georgianna Bishop, the program welcomed 16 participants drawn from town managers, mayors, legislators and community and academic leaders.

The program focuses on skills needed for sustainable leadership practices, including strategic thinking and planning that takes into account “the intended and unintended consequences” of decisions and how to plan for both, and how to determine places in an organization’s system “where a small change can have a huge impact.”

The learn-by-doing exercises in the program also focused on how leaders can examine their own patterns of thinking including by seeking differing viewpoints, encouraging “a work environment of trust” that values feedback, using “mapping” techniques to reveal system structures that may underlie any given problem and need to be addressed, and learning how assumptions and beliefs that are too often taken for granted can stand in the way of improving any system of operation, among other techniques.

“It’s hard to describe how much our eyes were opened to the possibilities of doing things and encouraging others in better and more effective ways but it was both humbling and energizing at the same time,” Grebien said. “This is an excellent program with top-notch instructors and I look forward to applying what we learned to improve how we do things in the city and how we can better serve the public, and continuing with the program on the ongoing basis they offer.”

Participation by Grebien and the city finance director was underwritten by private donations and other contributions to the Pell Center and at no cost to the city.

For more about the Public Sector Consortium, go to www.public-sector.org [2]. Copyright 2010 Pawtucket Times