

# Create Impact

## Week 1: Introduction to Leadership & Community Exploration

Participants explore leadership frameworks and gain insights into social issues across Danbury, Ridgefield and Fairfield County.

## Week 2: Designing Change & Applying Leadership

Students engage in interactive discussions, field trips, and design thinking sessions to conceptualize a Community Summit or Social Action Project.

## Week 3: Implementing & Celebrating Impact

Participants host their summit or project, followed by a reflection session and celebration with family and community leaders.



*By the program's end, students will have:*

- *Strengthened their leadership & collaboration skills*
- *Developed an understanding of social responsibility*
- *Designed & executed a meaningful community initiative*
- *Gained valuable experience working alongside civic and organizational leaders*
- *Celebrated their journey with family & community members*



## CONTACT INFORMATION

203.246.1024

DEBORAH@MEETINGHOUSE.LIFE

602 RIDGEBURY RD.  
RIDGEFIELD, CT 06877

# Youth Leadership Initiative



The Meetinghouse

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HOLISTIC WELLBEING | WISE LEADERSHIP | REGENERATIVE PRACTICES

# A Transformative Experience for Middle Schoolers in Danbury and Ridgefield

*The Meetinghouse Youth Leadership Initiative is a three-week immersive program designed to inspire and equip middle school students with the skills, confidence, and insights to lead meaningful social change. By integrating leadership theory with hands-on experience, the program prepares young minds to be active, engaged civic leaders addressing pressing community and global issues.*

## Ignite Purpose

**Our program nurtures a generation of leaders ready to tackle today's challenges,** providing hands-on experience in:

- **Leadership Skills:** Practical tools to inspire and collaborate with others
- **Civic Engagement:** Real-world exposure to community organizations and social initiatives
- **Critical Thinking:** Tools to design and implement impactful projects
- **Community Connection:** Lasting relationships with peers, mentors, and civic leaders

## Program Outcomes

Over the three-week deep dive, students will:

- **Engage** in leadership development and networking opportunities
- **Develop and implement** a community summit to address a pressing issue identified by the youth
- **Learn** from field trips

# Lead with Vision

**The Youth Leadership Initiative is led by a dynamic team passionate about fostering youth development:**

- Resident for Youth Leadership
- Heather Cochrane, Environmentalist in Residence
- Claire Walker Moffit, Wellness Resident
- Dr. Deborah Rundlett, Director of Formation & Change Leadership

## Leadership Voices from the Field

Students gain inspiration and guidance from experts, including:

- Anita Howard, Executive Coach, Researcher, Adjunct Professor, CWRU
- Gamelihle Sibanda, Chief Technical Advisor, United Nations, South Africa (environment)
- Damian Costello, Innovation & Design, Ireland (design & innovation)



# Program Highlights

- Direct engagement with local government, businesses, and nonprofit organizations
- Development and execution of a Community Summit or Social Action Project
- Guidance from leadership experts and field professionals
- Visits to impactful community sites and purpose-driven organizations
- Networking and mentorship opportunities

## Application Process

**To apply for the Youth Leadership Initiative,** please prepare an application packet that includes the following, and email it to [Connect@meetinghouse.life](mailto:Connect@meetinghouse.life):

- Short statement of interest (500 words max)
  - What are your three favorite things about yourself?
  - When you think about leadership, what comes to mind?
  - What made you apply to this leadership program?
  - What would you like to accomplish during your time in this leadership program?
  - What is an accomplishment you are most proud of?
  - What questions do you have for us?
- Letter of recommendation (from a teacher, family friends, employer, someone who knows you well)

**Applicants will also participate in an in-person (or virtual) interview.**