



Session Descriptions

Orientation

This orientation session will introduce participants and staff within the Waséyabek LEAD Program, establishing the foundation for the program experience and building initial connections among cohort members. Attendees will engage in introductory discussions that explore professional backgrounds, goals, motivations for joining LEAD, and personal “fun facts” to foster relationship-building and cohort cohesion. The session will provide a brief overview of Waséyabek and comprehensive overview of the LEAD Program, including its purpose, history, structure, and overall format, as well as what participants can expect from each session. Key administrative topics will also be covered, including program expectations, safety considerations, HR paperwork requirements, and logistics related to mileage and stipends. The orientation will conclude with an interactive Q&A, ensuring participants have clarity on program details and feel prepared to fully engage in the LEAD experience.

Safari Circuits – Site Visit, Otsego, Michigan

This session includes a site visit to Safari Circuits in Otsego, Michigan, where participants will gain firsthand insight into advanced electronics manufacturing and the operations of a leading Printed Circuit Board Assembly (PCBA) company. Founded in 1985, Safari Circuits has built its success through a strong family-like culture, commitment to quality, and continued innovation within the electronics manufacturing industry. During the visit, participants will learn about the company’s history, manufacturing processes, operational growth, and expansion into Grand Rapids through its new facility on Michigan Street NE. The session will also explore how organizational culture, strategic growth, and advanced manufacturing capabilities position Safari Circuits for long-term success while supporting customers across diverse industries. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with company leadership and team members throughout the experience.



Baker Engineering – Site Visit, Nunica, Michigan

During this site visit to Baker Engineering in Nunica, MI, participants will gain firsthand exposure to the company's operations, engineering capabilities, and manufacturing environment. Since 1965, Baker Engineering has specialized in custom engineering solutions, supporting projects from concept development and testing through prototype manufacturing and full-scale production. Participants will tour the facility, learn about the company's work in military and commercial research, combustion engine design and testing, and vehicle subsystem development, and explore how in-house capabilities support quality, cost control, and production efficiency. The visit will also highlight internship opportunities, emerging growth disciplines, and future career pathways within the engineering and manufacturing sectors. The experience will conclude with an interactive Q&A session with company leadership and team members.

BLDI

This session will provide participants with an overview of BLDI Environmental Engineering, a full-service environmental consulting firm currently headquartered in Grand Rapids and preparing to relocate its headquarters to Waséyabek's Mshiké Property campus in Fall 2026 as part of its continued growth within the Waséyabek family of companies. Founded in 1991, BLDI Environmental Engineering delivers progressive, professional, and practical consulting services, offering cost-effective and straightforward solutions to complex environmental challenges while maintaining a strong reputation for meeting or exceeding client expectations and building long-term client relationships. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of environmental consulting, including BLDI's key service areas and how its work supports regulatory compliance, responsible development, environmental stewardship, and sustainable growth. The session will also explore the firm's strategic vision for the future, the significance of its transition to the Mshike campus, and the wide range of careers in the environmental field, including the professional growth opportunities and career pathways available within BLDI.



DWH

This session will provide participants with an overview of DWH, including its firm history and its connection to Waséyabek and the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP). Attendees will gain insight into the organization's core service pillars, including mergers and acquisitions, financial advisory, turnaround and restructuring, and Tribal economic development. The session will also explore DWH's growth and ongoing transition, client profile, and the strategic initiatives guiding its work. Participants will be introduced to the organization's long-term direction through its 2030 Vision, highlighting priorities for continued expansion and impact. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage directly with DWH leadership and gain deeper understanding of its role in supporting clients and advancing Tribal and economic development objectives.

Legal

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Waséyabek legal team, and the critical role shared services play in supporting the organization and its portfolio companies. Attendees will learn how Waséyabek partners with portfolio businesses to help drive revenue growth, strengthen operational effectiveness, and reduce organizational risk through legal guidance and strategic support. The session will also explore Tribal Employment Hiring Preference and its importance in advancing Tribal workforce development and opportunity. Participants will conclude the session with an interactive Q&A, providing an opportunity to engage directly with members of the legal team and gain deeper insight into the legal and strategic functions that support Waséyabek's continued growth.

Waséyabek Federal Group (WFG)

This session will provide participants with an overview of Waséyabek Federal Group (WFG), including its mission, values, organizational structure, and strategic role within the broader Waséyabek portfolio. Attendees will gain insight into how WFG operates within the federal contracting space and the unique Tribal advantages that support growth and opportunity in the industry. The session will also highlight current and past performance, demonstrating the organization's capabilities, partnerships, and expanding impact across federal markets. Participants will learn about WFG's continued growth trajectory and future



opportunities within the organization and federal contracting sector. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage directly with WFG leadership and team members.

VES

This session will provide participants with an overview of VES LLC, a small engineering firm headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, and established in 2014. As part of the Waséyabek family of companies, VES operates within a 100% Tribally-owned holding company structure that supports the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi's non-gaming economic development initiatives. The session will highlight the company's engineering-driven culture and its focus on solving complex software systems integration challenges for the Department of Defense. Participants will gain insight into VES's core competencies, including custom infrastructure software development, embedded platform and command post system integration, and prototyping emerging technologies for tactical edge applications. The discussion will also cover the development of GOTS-based embedded Linux solutions, Mission Command Infrastructure architecture expertise, and the firm's commitment to delivering innovative, mission-critical solutions.

Finance

This session will provide participants with an overview of key finance functions within Waséyabek's Finance team and how financial analysis supports effective portfolio-level decision-making across the organization. Attendees will explore how to evaluate portfolio financial performance, with emphasis on interpreting results across multiple operating companies and aligning insights to strategic objectives. The session will also cover cash flow forecasting and its role in supporting liquidity management, planning, and long-term financial sustainability within a diversified holding company structure. In addition, participants will review different financial reporting requirements and how standardized reporting enables transparency, accountability, and informed leadership decisions across the portfolio. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage directly with the Finance team and deepen their understanding of Waséyabek's financial operations and reporting framework.



Real Estate Group

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Waséyabek Real Estate Group and its role in advancing long-term portfolio diversification and financial stability. Attendees will learn about Terrapin Properties of Michigan, LLC, Waséyabek's wholly owned real estate holding company, and how its commercial property investments support a low-risk, value-building strategy within the broader enterprise. The session will introduce foundational concepts in commercial real estate, including key terms, investment benefits, and portfolio management principles. Participants will also review the current Terrapin property portfolio, which includes retail, office, residential, industrial, and commercial assets strategically located across Michigan.

As part of the experience, participants will tour McKay Tower, the iconic 18-story mixed-use landmark located at the heart of downtown Grand Rapids. Originally constructed in 1915 and expanded throughout the 1920s, McKay Tower has served as a center of commerce for more than a century and today features office, retail, residential, and event space. Since its joint acquisition by Waséyabek Development Company and Gun Lake Investments in January 2020, McKay Tower has represented a meaningful investment in both economic diversification and the continued presence of Tribal ownership in the region's urban core. During the tour, participants will explore the building's rich history, unique features, and strategic significance within Waséyabek's real estate portfolio.

The session will also highlight the group's stewardship model and strategic vision for sustainable growth and asset management, along with guidance on how to learn more about real estate opportunities within Waséyabek. The experience will conclude with an interactive Q&A and a Jeopardy-style activity designed to reinforce key concepts in an engaging and memorable way.

Zip Xpress/Green Transportation/Great Lakes Warehousing

This session will include an on-site visit to Zip Xpress, Green Transportation, and Great Lakes Warehousing, providing participants with a firsthand look at operations within the transportation, logistics, and warehousing industry. Attendees will receive company overviews and gain insight into the evolving transportation and logistics market, including



the role each business plays in supporting supply chain operations and economic growth. Through the site visit experience, participants will explore career pathways across transportation, fleet operations, logistics, and warehousing, while also learning about future industry trends and growth projections. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, offering participants the opportunity to engage directly with industry professionals and leadership teams.

Executive Management

This session will provide participants with an overview of Waséyabek Executive Management and the evolving role of executive leadership within a dynamic, diversified holding company. Attendees will explore the leadership journey and perspective of CEO Deidra Mitchell, including the concept of “The Art of the Pivot” as it relates to adaptability, strategic decision-making, and organizational growth. The session will also introduce foundational leadership development concepts, including Enneagram testing as a tool for self-awareness, communication effectiveness, and team dynamics. Participants will gain insight into how leadership philosophy is applied at the executive level to guide culture, strategy, and performance across the enterprise. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage directly with executive leadership and deepen their understanding of leadership in practice.

Board of Directors

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Waséyabek Board of Directors and the role of governing boards within a Tribally owned holding company structure. Attendees will explore what a governing board is, why organizations utilize boards for oversight and accountability, and how board governance supports long-term strategic direction and organizational integrity. The session will also examine the specific role of the Waséyabek Board, including its membership composition, individual responsibilities, and key fiduciary and governance duties. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of how board-level leadership influences decision-making, performance oversight, and alignment with organizational mission and Tribal priorities. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, providing participants an opportunity to engage directly and deepen their understanding of governance within Waséyabek.



Investment & Operations

This session with the Waséyabek (former) Chief Operating Officer will provide participants with an overview of the organization's operational strategy, investment philosophy, and business development approach. Participants will explore how Waséyabek serves as an economic engine for long-term Tribal prosperity through strategic diversification, sustainable growth, and value creation across its portfolio of businesses and investments. The session will also introduce the investment screening matrix used to evaluate opportunities, assess risk, and align potential ventures with organizational priorities and long-term objectives. Attendees will gain insight into the decision-making processes that support operational success and future expansion, followed by an interactive Q&A discussion.

Information Technology

This session will provide participants with an introduction to the role of Information Technology within Waséyabek and the importance of IT in supporting business operations, innovation, and long-term organizational success. Attendees will learn about the structure and culture of an IT department, including the value of collaboration, continuous learning, and problem-solving within the field. The session will explore how IT strategy aligns with broader business objectives, while also introducing foundational concepts related to cybersecurity, technology infrastructure, compliance, and risk management. Participants will gain insight into how IT systems support daily operations, protect organizational information, and drive operational excellence. The discussion will also highlight emerging technology trends and innovations shaping the future of business and IT. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage directly with the Waséyabek Information Technology team.



Human Resources

This Human Resources session will provide participants with a deeper understanding of the organizational structure of Waséyabek and its portfolio companies, while highlighting the diverse career opportunities available across Tribal enterprise operations. Participants will learn practical interviewing strategies and professional development tips designed to support long-term career growth within the Waséyabek organization and the broader Tribal economic development landscape. The session will also explore Waséyabek's Tribal outreach and recruitment strategies, including its commitment to Tribal employment preference and the advancement of Tribal citizens through mentorship, leadership development, and career pathway initiatives. An interactive Q&A discussion will allow participants to engage directly with the Human Resources team and gain additional insight into professional growth within the Waséyabek family of companies.

Strategic (Tribal) Engagement

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Waséyabek Strategic (Tribal) Engagement Department and its mission to develop a first-of-its-kind stakeholder engagement program within Indian Country. Attendees will explore how the department advances Waséyabek's commitment to building a profitable family of companies while simultaneously increasing Tribal awareness, engagement, quality employment opportunities, and Tribal employment across the organization and its portfolio companies. The session will highlight key focus areas, including the strategic promotion of internal and external initiatives that deepen understanding of Tribal ownership and Native American culture, as well as the delivery of ongoing cultural awareness and education for employees, leadership, and community partners. Participants will also learn about the department's role as a Tribal and cultural liaison, providing guidance and resources related to the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi and Tribal events. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A to further explore strategic engagement efforts and cultural integration across Waséyabek.

Marketing & Communications

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Waséyabek Marketing & Communications function, including its purpose, evolution, and role in shaping organizational identity and external engagement. Attendees will hear the professional



journey from journalism into marketing and communications, offering insight into how storytelling, messaging, and strategic communication are applied in a corporate and Tribal enterprise environment. The session will explore what it is like working in marketing and communications at Waséyabek, including current and ongoing initiatives that support brand development, stakeholder engagement, and internal alignment. Participants will also learn about the importance of professional networking through platforms like LinkedIn, including the value of a polished profile, maintaining connections, and leveraging headshots to support personal and organizational branding. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, providing participants with an opportunity to engage directly with the Marketing & Communications team.

LEAD Wrap-Up

This final session will focus on reflection, integration, and closing the LEAD Program experience through the lens of the Grandfather Teachings and their application to leadership practice. Participants will engage in a reflective activity designed to connect program learning to core values such as respect, honesty, humility, wisdom, bravery, truth, and love, and how these teachings inform personal and professional leadership. The session will guide participants in identifying key program takeaways, including their most meaningful experiences and lasting impressions from the LEAD program. Participants will also be invited to share feedback, recommendations for future cohorts, and reflections on overall program impact. The session will conclude with discussion on follow-up opportunities and continued engagement, formally wrapping up the LEAD experience and reinforcing a commitment to ongoing leadership development.

