

# Whole Person Leadership



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for asian pacific american women



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Whole Person  
Leadership



NATIONAL APAWLI  
SIGNATURE PROGRAM



Leadership  
Summit

## Our Vision

The Center's vision is to be *the* place where every Asian Pacific American woman can come together to hear each other's voices, celebrate accomplishments and find the support to embark on personal and professional growth, at whatever stage in life. We strive to develop ethical, compassionate and caring Asian Pacific American women to take leadership roles in the private and public sectors.

## Why The Center?

As individuals, we always seek new levels of personal growth. As women, we have many dimensions to confront. As Asian and Asian Pacific Islander American women, we face other sets of challenges. The Center brings diverse communities of women together to support and nurture each other, like a path of stepping stones, worn smooth by the wisdom of those who have gone before, leading to infinite possibilities for those who travel upon it.

Our great poet Puanani Burgess has taught us that *we make the road by walking it*. Leadership is relational; it's a process, just making the road.

It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you are not.

– Author Unknown



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## Introduction

The Whole Person Leadership Model presented by The Center for Asian Pacific American (APA) Women (The Center) guides participants through three levels of leadership that impact their daily experiences at work and in their communities: individual, interpersonal and institutional. Whole Person Leadership offers a new, more integrated way to contribute more of yourself in boardrooms, courtrooms or community halls, resulting in greater satisfaction in one's work and greater results in today's increasingly complex and diverse workplace.

In 2009, Catalyst Inc., a leading nonprofit organization working globally to build inclusive workplaces and expand opportunities for women in business, issued a report entitled "Women of Color in U.S. Law Firms," which documents how women of color face particular obstacles that may significantly decrease their job satisfaction and increase the likelihood of their departure from their current firms. The study examines how the "intersectionality," or the combined impact of marginalization based on the dual status of being both female and of color, puts women of color at a unique disadvantage in the workplace. Despite the widespread existence of systems created to develop and advance women of color, research has shown that more than 75 percent of these women will leave their current employer within five years, costing these firms the tremendous loss that employee turnover inevitably entails and leaving these women to seek new employment situations where they may, in fact, face these same obstacles once again..

And, while female attorneys of color are continuing to make inroads and career advances, an examination of the upper echelon of women in the legal profession quickly reveals that racial inequities still exist. The 2009 roster of top women legal officers of Fortune 500 companies consists of 75 white/Caucasians (non-Hispanic), 6 African Americans, 2 Hispanics, and 1 Asian Pacific American.

The 2009 Catalyst report identifies a number of these challenges unique to women of color working in the legal profession as:

- A greater sense of "outsider status" and limited growth opportunities
- Racial and gender stereotyping and more reported feelings of sexism in the workplace compared to white women
- Lack of access to high-profile client assignments and important client engagements

- Missed opportunities for candid feedback
- Women of color were more also likely than their white colleagues to have a more expansive definition of family (i.e. more people to whom they had personal commitments to fulfill) and a stronger commitment to religious and cultural activities.

These challenges emphasize the importance for the type of personal and institutional exploration and development that Whole Person Leadership offers and the necessity of recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach to tackling workplace inclusion cannot meet the needs of an increasingly diverse talent pool. The report recommends the following strategies for attracting and retaining women of color employees:

- Include senior leaders as active players in building and establishing inclusive workplaces.
- Raise awareness of intersectionality and the varying needs of differing minority groups.
- Create opportunities for dialogue between firm leadership and women of color attorneys.
- Educate all attorneys, especially partners and other supervising attorneys, on how to recognize bias and stereotyping of women of color in the workplace.
- Monitor and track the career development of women of color and hold leaders accountable for their advancement.

While these recommendations for employers are commendable, the focus of the Whole Person Leadership seminar will be on how APA female attorneys and those in business and academia can take charge of their own careers by learning an approach to leadership that will make them both more successful in an increasingly diverse workplace and more fulfilled in their daily lives at work. We believe that APA women may be particularly capable of drawing from their own personal skills and life experiences and emerge as leaders in their firms as our world moves from “The Information Age” to what we call “The Age of Relationship.” This new paradigm, which emphasizes our interconnectedness, calls for a change in how we lead. Whole Person Leadership focuses on our ability to blend our teammates’ ways of knowing with our own and depends upon developing accountability for our own skill development and maintaining our own well-being in mind, body, heart and spirit.

## The Individual Level

Whole Person Leadership focuses on self-awareness and self-reflection in several key areas:

- “Who am I at my core or center?” is the central question asked of each leader. What is the cultural context in which I have grown up and continue to develop? Through self-awareness, self-reflection and cultural competency, we start to gain greater clarity in who we are at our most fundamental human level as well as who we are as leaders in our families, communities, government or company.
- How is my personality a reflection (or not) of my True Self?
- What gifts do I wish to bring forward in addition to my gifts of intelligence, ability to analyze, and my quick mind? What is ego-based and what is whole person-based?
- What parts of my Self may be buried, unrecognized or obscured from view but essential for my Whole Person Leadership power to blossom and flow?

At the individual level, Whole Person Leadership fosters effective performance and management, successful coaching and mentoring, and the fulfillment of your dreams while being accountable for your own balance mentally, physically and emotionally.

## The Interpersonal Level

Whole Person Leadership at the interpersonal level explores how who we are influences how we relate to others. Interpersonal development and community building includes learning competencies in these areas, among others:

- Gaining interpersonal cultural understanding, cross-cultural awareness, and the ability to better manage diverse teams;
- Articulating and experiencing the fundamental ways in which we relate to others in the work that we do;
- Understanding our strengths, blind spots and leadership styles to better understand our impact on and relationship with others;
- Identifying the behaviors that align best with fostering team/community goals, identifying rewards and recognition, and motivating others, and managing oneself to produce quality results

Whole Person Leadership, which is both a way of leading and a way of being, offers a new approach essential for dealing with the increasing complexity of our global marketplace, workplaces and communities. Whole Person Leadership draws upon our values, intention, wisdom and intuition to produce extraordinary results amidst chaos and change. It embraces the value of leading from one's center with genuineness, generosity and trust in one's self, and draws upon one's entire repertoire of talents, whether managing a diverse team, pursuing strategic thinking, or motivating one's family.

Whole Person Leadership also recognizes the importance of self-monitoring, self-correcting, and self-tuning, rather than reliance on others to do this for you or to you. With an increased ability to coach and teach oneself, both personal and professional growth is an ongoing, multidimensional process. Whole Person Leadership training is about enhancing leadership at the ***individual, interpersonal and institutional levels.***

### The Process

How do we teach Whole Person Leadership? Through self-awareness and self-reflective exercises, group dialogue, and a myriad of other tools—from martial arts to leadership assessment instruments such as the Strengths Finder—we gain greater clarity and focus on our Whole Person Leadership skills. We also help participants to discover their true gifts and assets, their connection to self and how to communicate authentically and clearly.

This life-changing process reaches beyond the mind to the true essence of the person. Whole Person Leadership is grounded in one's character, commitment and collaboration with others and allows us to leverage our individual gifts and talents to bolster personal and professional development.

Terry Seamon, an organizational development professional provided these sentiments on Whole Person Leadership. We agree with him.

## Leadership Requires the Whole Person

*The heart for loving yourself and others.*

*The stomach for courage to face yourself and outside adversity.*

*The head for critical thinking.*

*The eye for looking within and ahead.*

*The tongue for telling truth to yourself and others.*

*The ears for listening to yourself and others.*

*The hands for applauding your work and the work of others.*

*The arms for embracing yourself and others.*

*The back for lifting yourself and others up.*

*The knees for bending in service to others.*

*The feet for the journey.*

*The soul for going down deep within in search of meaning.*

*The spirit for soaring to the heights of higher purpose.*

Adapted from Terrence Seamon,

[http://learningvoyager.blogspot.com/2006\\_04\\_01\\_archive.html](http://learningvoyager.blogspot.com/2006_04_01_archive.html)

## The Institutional Level

Whole Person Leadership integrates personal development, interpersonal skills, and organizational competencies, whether within a family, community, corporation, law firm, NGO, or government agency. Such leadership goes beyond a title, position, circumstance and structure. Whole Person Leadership entails:

- Leading an organization with vision and values that reflect one's ethics, creativity, and spirit;
- Assessing the organizational structure and its impact on productivity, morale and inclusiveness, so that everyone's talents are leveraged, and issues are addressed with greater ease;
- Recognizing that knowing oneself and building culturally competent relationships with others and their environments is essential to "building a beloved community," a valued place in which we can live, work and thrive.

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