



Babson's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership

Women's Leadership Academy

FOR WOMEN-IDENTIFYING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

March 6 - April 13, 2021

The Boston Globe

The Babson Women's Leadership Academy was featured in the Boston Globe's 2020 Women & Power Issue. [Click here to read about the impact our program created!](#)

Babson's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership

At Babson's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership we are closing the gender gap in business, one female leader at a time. We educate and empower women to create impact while enlightening the global community about the importance of female leadership.

As the first center ever focused on women entrepreneurial leaders at a business school, Babson's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership (CWEL) is one of the most visible and important ways Babson supports women. We work diligently to create opportunities for our students and stakeholders, while creating award-winning programs for the broader ecosystem.

In 2017, the college was named the number 1 school for women entrepreneurs who want to change the world thanks to CWEL's diverse programming, exclusive events, access to cutting-edge experts, and hands-on coaching that impacts a diverse set of stakeholders from around the world.





The Program

Babson College's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership is pleased to offer the Babson Women's Leadership Academy (BWLA), giving women-identifying high school students the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the strengths, power, and abilities that they already have while increasing their confidence around communication and building a plan to reach their goals!

At the BWLA, we take Babson's world-renowned curriculum and apply a gender lens, so that participants leave with new tools to help them navigate different environments and achieve whatever goals they set for themselves! We also surround our students with role models, a community of champions, and the opportunity to test things out in a comfortable way, all of which can be critically important to increasing self-assurance.

At the start of the BWLA program, we ask students to set a goal for themselves, which they focus on and take action towards for the full six weeks. Whether they're interested in running for student council, speaking up more in class, or looking for an internship, the BWLA will give them a framework to map out what they want to achieve and a better sense of the skills and network they already have in order to get there! With their goal in hand and our framework to guide them, each student will take one small step toward their goal each week and report out on it so by the end of the program, they're on their way to achieving what they want!



This program has shown aspects of who I am that I have not seen before. I am more confident in coming out of my comfort zone and communicating with others. Thank you for all the wonderful guest speakers and peer mentors. I had a wonderful experience!

- Women's Leadership Academy Participant, Age 17, Arlington Texas



Our Secret Sauce

Babson's Women's Leadership Academy has been built on a tried and tested curriculum, which gives young women the opportunity to identify, own, and leverage their strengths to help them reach their goals! There are two core components of this program that help us do just that:

First, we see extraordinary young women who may not know the power that they already have or can see it but don't necessarily know how to own it. That's why we dedicate time to helping them understand and uncover their unique leadership strengths, which comes from a method that the Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership has used in its award-winning programs. This exercise - the Reflected Best Self Exercise™ (RBSE) - is a feedback-seeking exercise that helps BWLA participants identify and understand their unique strengths and talents. Before the program begins, they will be asked to gather feedback from significant people in their lives (with some help from us), and then be guided through the process of creating a portrait of their best self and an action plan for leveraging their strengths.

Second, we use real-world goal setting and Babson College's one-of-a-kind Entrepreneurial Thought and Action® (ET&A™) methodology to help BWLA participants set an approachable goal and take actionable steps towards that goal each week. We also ask them to present on that goal and what progress they've made in order to help keep them on track (while giving them opportunities to practice public speaking)! At the end of the six weeks, each person will leave the program having made actual progress around achieving their goal, which will let them look back and say, *I know I can do this because I've already started doing it!*



Thanks to all of you for running BWLA. My daughter loved the program and learned a lot. Most importantly, it gave a real boost to her confidence at a time when she is blossoming and becoming active and involved in so many things.

- Women's Leadership Academy Parent, Brookline, MA

What You'll Walk Away With

At the completion of this program, you will walk away with a plan and new set of tools and knowledge that will move you towards accomplishing the goals you have right now. Those include:

- » **A new understanding of the unique strengths that YOU already have and how to develop and own them** to become a more impactful and authentic leader at your school, on your team, or in your community.
- » **A plan to reach your own personal goals.** That plan will be built on a repeatable process to overcome challenges and take small steps forward, which can be used no matter what you try and achieve next!
- » **A map of your network and plan** on how you can leverage it to reach your next goal!
- » **Greater self-assurance** created by working with near-peer role models, receiving support from a community of champions, and taking actionable steps towards forward!
- » **A new framework for public speaking** that you can use in different situations like class presentations and speeches.
- » **Understanding how to lead and collaborate with peers**, while giving them feedback to help them grow and learn.
- » **Greater communication confidence that comes with practice.** You will have a lot of opportunities to speak up in groups (both large and small), present, and get feedback!

Optional College-Prep:

For those students who are looking to apply to college, we are now including an additional, optional session, where you can engage with a Babson admissions counselor and current undergraduate students. In this session you will:

- » **Develop a new understanding of the college experience** by meeting with near-peer undergraduate women who can answer their questions about the search and application process, and what life is like as an undergrad.
- » **Gather information on the college search and application journey** from our college admissions counselor, including when to start looking, when to reach out for recommendations, and when to apply!

The Schedule

This is a virtual offering that runs for six weeks from March 6, 2021, until April 13, 2021. We will meet on one Saturday, March 6, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and six Tuesday evenings from 5:00 - 7:15 p.m. (with a 10-minute break built-in). At the end of each session, you will have one homework assignment to be completed before we reconvene.

The content varies each week and will feature virtual discussions with peer-mentors, workshops with leading experts, talks from guest speakers, and small group presentations.

The Babson Women's Leadership Academy meets on the following days, with an optional college-prep session on Thursday, April 8.

	Saturday	Tuesday
Week 1	March 6	March 9
Week 2	-	March 16
Week 3	-	March 23
Week 4	-	March 30
Week 5	-	April 6
Week 6	-	April 13



The Schedule

Week 1: Saturday, March 6 & Tuesday, March 9

Moving Towards Your Goals

Day 1 is all about meeting the cohort, learning how to work in small groups, and getting acquainted with taking small steps forward to reach your goals! After moving through the basics of peer-coaching, expectation setting, and feedback, you'll learn about Babson's methodology of Entrepreneurial Thought & Action, which is an action-oriented approach to moving forward and learning along the way. On day two, we look at a new presentation framework and workshop it within your groups, giving you a chance to collectively create a new way to communicate your ideas while understanding some of the fundamentals of public speaking.

Week 2: Tuesday, March 16

Leveraging Your Knowledge & Network

Our first round of presentations will kick-start the day! Each of you will share what your goal is and how you plan to take a small action to move you towards it! Next, we'll talk about the community of people you have surrounding you and help you map out who is there and how they might help. Last, we'll take a look at your relationship with risk and failure and how understanding that can help you move forward in a more authentic way.

Week 3: Tuesday, March 23

Igniting Your Strengths

Today is all about leadership. What traits make a good leader? And what does gender have to do with it? We're going to take a closer look at what unique leadership strengths you already have through a tool called the Reflective Best Self Exercise (RBSE). From there, we'll dig into how you can focus and develop those strengths to achieve your goals.

Note: More information about RBSE can be found in our FAQs section.

Week 4: Tuesday, March 30

Overcoming Obstacles

Negative self-talk can quickly sideline your goals. This week, we take a look at how you can reframe the conversation in your head to master that inner-critic and continue moving forward. Week four also marks our second set of presentations! Come prepared to share the goal you set for yourself, what steps you've taken over the last two weeks, and how you plan to continue taking action during week 5!

Week 5: Tuesday, April 6

Communicating Your Vision

Reaching your goals becomes much easier when you understand who you are and what you want to achieve. During week 5, we'll help you connect your strengths to your values, understand your leadership profile, and think about your personal brand.

Optional: Thursday, April 8

Demystifying the College Process

Join us for an optional session where we'll dig into the college application process, giving you time to talk with current undergraduates about their college experience and hear from Babson admissions about the college application journey and how to get started.

Week 6: Tuesday, April 13

Presenting with Presence

The final week - it's time to celebrate! This is where you will give your final presentation and tell the group what you've done, and what you plan to do, to reach your goal! We'll end the session with a special guest speaker and some celebratory words from the team! Come prepared to present, learn, and celebrate all that you have achieved throughout the Academy!



Frequently Asked Questions

What does the program cost?

Due to generous contributions, we are able to offer the spring program for \$595.

Are there any discounts available?

Babson, Olin, and Wellesley College Staff: 10% off

Are there scholarships available?

Yes. A limited number of scholarship seats are available for women of color high school students. If you're interested in applying, please reach out to Ashley Lucas (alucas@babson.edu) for more information

Who can register?

The Babson Women's Leadership Academy is open to women-identifying high school students who are at least 13 years of age at the time of registration. International students are encouraged to apply but should note instructions and group work will be conducted in English and the timing of the program is in Eastern Standard Time.

How do I register?

Head to our website and look for the registration button at the top of the page!

Is there a registration deadline?

Registration closes one week in advance - February 28 - due to the pre-work required for the program. If that date has passed and you're eager to sign up, please reach out to the program director, Ashley Lucas, at alucas@babson.edu.

Why is the program two days each week?

We spent hours talking to high school students and their parents, while running focus groups, to uncover their thoughts on the optimal virtual learning environment. With some Zoom calls already on their schedule for the day, we wanted to ensure participants had the opportunity to learn without feeling completely overloaded! With just one day of programming each week, students can learn, take a break, and have additional time to complete their at-home assignments.

Programming

Who will be teaching?

Babson's faculty and staff, who have decades of combined experience teaching women's leadership, business, and entrepreneurship, will be guiding all participants through workshops, content sessions, and group discussions. These individuals have dedicated countless hours to studying and speaking on the intersection of gender and leadership, have developed and run women's accelerator programs, are former CEOs for publicly traded corporations, and have led diverse teams.

Who else will be speaking?

The importance of near-peer mentor role modeling cannot be overstated. Research tells us time and time again that role models and champions have the ability to build confidence in emerging leaders and increase the likelihood that they will succeed! Because of this, CWEL has invited near-peer mentors to work with participants, teach one or two sessions, and act as guest speakers and discussion leaders in order to demonstrate that if they can do it, you can do it too!

What are some unique elements of the program?

Understanding and uncovering your unique leadership strengths comes from a tested method that we have used in multiple programs. This exercise - **the Reflected Best Self Exercise™ (RBSE)** - is a feedback-seeking exercise that helps you identify and understand your unique strengths and talents. You will be asked to gather feedback from significant people in your life (with some help from us), and then be guided through the process of creating a portrait of your best self and an action plan for leveraging your strengths.

Babson is globally recognized for our **one-of-a-kind Entrepreneurial Thought and Action® (ET&A™) methodology** that teaches you how to balance action, experimentation, creativity, and risk-taking to tackle challenges and reach your goals. We ask you to start with what you have, take the first step, enroll others along the way, look at what you've learned, and then continue moving in the right direction.

Real-world goal setting is the core component of this program. You will be asked to think about one thing that you want to accomplish this year and use the program's teaching and tools to help you reach that goal. Beginning in week three, you will present your goal and action plan to small groups, while taking one tangible step towards that goal each week and telling your group about it! That way, whether you're looking to solve a problem in your community, take on a new leadership role in your school, or get into college, you will leave the program having taken actual steps towards achieving what you want!

Will there be pre-work?

Yes! In order to participate in the Reflective Best Self Exercise above, you will need to coordinate with people in your life who will submit stories. (More information about that will be sent after you sign up.) We will also ask you to familiarize yourself with Zoom (if you haven't already) and start thinking about the specific goal that you're going to focus on throughout the program.

Will there be assignments outside of the virtual classroom?

Yes! You will be asked to complete at least one assignment after each day, to be submitted by the following session. Creating presentations, reading, and writing reflections will all be a part of the assignments you'll be tasked with. The entire program will culminate with a final presentation that outlines your goal, the action you've taken during the program, and what you'll do next to continue moving towards it!



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Have questions?
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