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Class  
IX

# Reflect

## Director's Dialogue *Dr. Hannah Carter*

"A ship in the port is safe, but that is not what ships are built for." Benazir Bhutto

The same could be said for leaders—if you stay where you are, with who you know—you're safe. You need to venture out, see other areas, and meet other people to truly begin to understand connections, the importance of building bridges and to come back home with maybe a different perspective. I think we accomplished that during Seminar VI of Class IX.

Our national seminar took us to DC and the Dakotas and I can honestly say I would not have changed a thing—well maybe "tweaked" a couple of items—but overall the trip could not have gone better! The class itself was the biggest reason for the success of this adventure—they traveled extremely well together, were engaged every step of the way and

were appreciative of all the opportunities that were offered to them. Thank you Class IX for a wonderful experience from my perspective!

There were several differences in this national trip in comparison to previous classes—one of the biggest being that we did several sessions of "joint" programming with the New York Agricultural Leadership Program (LEAD NY)—it was a great opportunity to not only see how another class operates but also get to know individuals going through a similar experience in a different state. I greatly appreciate the willingness of Larry Van De Valk, the director of the NY program, to bring our two programs together for their DC experience.

Our time in South and North Dakota could not have been better spent due to the two directors of the agricultural

leadership programs in both of those states! I cannot speak more highly about my colleagues across the world who also direct these programs—but Lori Cope in South Dakota and Marie Hvidsten in North Dakota (along with some of their alumni), truly rolled out the red carpet for us! I hope that someday Florida can repay their hospitality!

I could go on and on about this trip—but I know the members of Class IX responsible for this newsletter will do a much better job than I will detailing our journey! The class is now over halfway done their leadership program experience and I think reality is beginning to set in that their time together is coming to an end. But, they still have several seminars left—the next being the spouse seminar—and we all know what that means—square dancing!!



## Washington D.C. *Emma Ezell*



### *The Big Picture*

Like most Wedgworth worthy sessions the Washington D.C. portion of this trip started in the early morning of September 30th and ended in what seemed just a few short days later on October 3rd with some people shipping their pants. It was the whirlwind of a week in between that was the real excitement. Being in Washington D.C. alone, can conjure feelings of excitement when one stops and thinks about what really happens in this capital city can and does effect what happens all over the world and right down to Main Street USA. This time was no different. Over the course of the week we went an inch deep and a mile wide on a variety of topics including but not limited to: the great GMO debate, water issues and the WOTUS rule, if immigration reform is ever really going to happen, tours of the White House, Capital and Pentagon, shared programming with our LEADNY friends, and one lost and found person. Please note for future reference, it is not good to deviate from a tour in the Pentagon, that is all.

New this year was the addition of pen pals from the Leadership New York group. On the first night of our visit, we

had dinner and introductions with Class 15 of the program and began learning from each other. It was especially refreshing to find that even though we were separated by many miles, states and a change of weather climates, we shared many of the same concerns for water regulations and immigration reforms. As the week went on there were many opportunities for our two groups to interact and share ideas on our similarities and differences in our respective agricultural practices.



Sometimes it is easy to get lost on our own farms and occupations and just daily life in general. Being in Washington really brings into focus that it is a big world out there and we have to look at the big picture. There are many right answers, many wrong answers, and even some questions that have not been asked yet. We found over the week that we do indeed have friends in Washington and allies for agriculture across this great nation. It was also good to be reminded that if we do not get off the tractor and tell the story of agriculture someone else is going to do it for us and we may not like what they have to say.

### *Issues in Washington, No Pun Intended*

On day two of our journey we got right to the issues. Starting our morning off on the right foot with a little humor and a little realness was Dr. James Thurber. Thurber talked about how there are many sides of government. Under the education heading he talked about how we need to

educate the members of congress and educate the public.



Here is a fun fact: did you know that it is only about nine states that really choose the President? Florida is one of them of course. Here is another fact, there are two Agriculture committees and eighty eight committees on Homeland security. It is no wonder we have to wait forever at the airport. Mr. Thurber also shared thoughts about how the President, any President, needs to get out of the 'House' and walk the halls and work with members of Congress and maybe there will be a little less friction. A little less given we still have left, right and other.

Our most anticipated speaker of the day came when Dr. Ellen Gillinsky of the EPA came to speak on protecting the waters of the US. She tried to explain more clearly what the new rule would and would not do as it related to normal farming practices. It was a unique perspective, being that most in the room had already had in their mind how they felt about the implications of this new rule. Hopefully both sides left the conversation a little more enlightened then when we began.

Ray Gilmer was next to speak about managing agriculture issues in Washington D.C. Gilmer's talk was interesting because even though we talked about the top issues that are being discussed as labor, food safety, biotech, and water, he said that immigration is not a crisis because there is still food in the

store. How true a statement that is for us to think about? As long as the public can still buy food, and at a relatively reasonable price, they do not care how it got there. The challenge falls back to the farmer. Gilmer also noted the shift in what California farmers are planting because of the on going drought, and that certain things we are use to growing local to the US may become harder to find. Another topic we spent some time on was getting healthy foods into the hands of our school children with the Lets Move campaign.



Last, but certainly not the least. One of the most overarching themes of the trip: issues surrounding GMO's. The GMO letters are everywhere these days and Cathleen Enright did a good job of trying to simplify this great debate for us. The fact is the topic of genetically modified food is popular right now, and the general public doesn't even know one real fact about it. Fact: there are only eight commodities that are genetically engineered. Fact: we have been eating GE products for 45 years and no one or animal have died from GE. Fact: the time farmers have saved by not having to be in their tractors is equivalent to taking twelve million cars off the road. Neat fact: broccoli, cole rabe, brussel sprouts, and kale all originally came from the same plant.

It was an interesting day to say the least. Whenever you have more than three people in a room, there are always at least four opinions, no matter the

subject. The issues we discussed in Washington are no exception. We can be for or against the President, we can be on either side of the labor debate, and we can read every ingredient on every label everywhere we go, it doesn't make us bad people just a little different from each other. Our ability to go forth and expand from our experience on the issues a little better than when we started, that is what makes us leaders.

### ***Traveling Around Was Uber Fun***

Apparently the latest and greatest way to taxi in DC was the Uber car ride program. It was one of many things us Florida folks learned while in the big city, and of course there is an app for that. Just put in your location it shows you where there nearest car is and when it will arrive, they pick you up and drop you off, and then it just charges your account, easy-peasy, they even have mints and car chargers. It was an experience everyone needs to have at least once.



While the topic of Uber transportation did not come up on our embassy visits, it was exciting to learn a little more about where we will be traveling for our international visit. Argentina and Peru were both welcoming and just as eager to share with us about their countries as we were to learn about them. Being able to experience a small look into South American right there inside Washington D.C. makes you understand how small and connected the world really is.

A thing some Americans do not think about and even take for granted is our national security. We had an interesting national defense intelligence briefing from retired Captain Joe Mazzafro on what it really takes to keep America safe. Again, big picture here, it is a big world and America has a presence almost everywhere. Along those same lines Bruce Hoffman gave us an update and history on ISIS and how they fit into the world picture.



We were taking in a lot and it was very helpful to debrief and reflect after everything we were learning and there was really no better spot in Washington then the roof top of the American Farm Bureau building. Just looking out over the city and back toward the capital building was quite a site to behold. For just a moment all seemed right with the world, even among the hustle and bustle of streets below. It seems all but fitting that we ended our visit to DC with a play called "Shear Madness" because that is what it feels like when you have to tackle the big issues. It would be much easier to avoid it all together, but what is the fun in that? "Shear I'm just going to wait for someone else to do it then complain about it later" just doesn't have the same ring to it.



## LEAD NY Insights *Jessica Gaige* (LEAD NY Class 15 Member)

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.”

I must be lucky! Lucky that I have gained 26 more friends in the past two years in LEAD NY. We have grown and learned so much together. Last month we jumped on a bus and traveled to Washington D.C. together to meet the Florida Wedgworth Leadership Institute. We quickly learned they are just like us. They have a passion for agriculture and admiration for every person involved in it. While we were in D.C. we quickly absorbed a new experience. Right away

we got captured into learning about our country’s leaders. If you are eager to learn, you can reach out and take some leadership characteristics to fit your personality and style.

It’s striking to be able to find another group of “leaders” that want to learn and grow just like you (OR with you). If you take the route of a richer experience while visiting Washington D.C. you can absorb more than just the history, scenery and architecture of our Nation’s capital. You realize that it took a whole variety of people, with the courage and vision to become leaders. They all have different characteristics, personalities, and goals but still have the desire to contribute.

As LEAD NY and Wedgworth Leadership Institute we already have the ambition to use our time to work towards a new and richer experience. The agricultural industry needs an assortment of leaders to make progress and secure a more prosperous future. I believe that if you take your time, listen, work hard and have a vision you can acquire the necessary skills to contribute to this worthy endeavor. Spending time in Washington D.C. with my LEAD NY classmates and Wedgworth peers made me realize how exciting it is to be part of a group of individuals committed to this future!



WLI Class IX and LEAD NY Class XV

## South Dakota *David Lively*



### *Amber Waves of Grain*

The second leg of WLI Class IX's national trip deviated from the norm as our exhausting pace slowed to a leisurely stroll. Leaving our nation's capital and programming about as and as our Capital Building tour guide, we arrived in Rapid City, South Dakota. Rapid City welcomed us with gale force winds and temperatures that left our class scrambling for our jackets.

The Rapid City Regional Airport seemed to be in the middle of nowhere and was surrounded by cattle, corn and soybeans that faded endlessly into the distance. Our class now has a new understanding of the words of America the Beautiful "O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain." With an unusual 24 hour break from programming, most of the class took advantage of this opportunity to see the sights.



As soon as we dropped our bags at the hotel, we packed ourselves into two vans

and were off to Badlands National Park. The next morning most of the group decided to recharge the batteries while a smaller group of dedicated sight seers traveled to the City of Deadwood as well as the half-finished sculpture of Crazy Horse.



After lunch, programming resumed with a tour of C-Lock, Inc., where the GreenFeed system is manufactured. Our class heard from inventor Dr. Patrick Zimmerman and his son, Scott, about how the GreenFeed system quantitatively measures methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) mass fluxes from cattle. Dr. Zimmerman did an excellent job explaining this technology in layman's terms and how the captured data helps producers and researchers evaluate feed efficiency and genetic markers as well as compare the effects of dietary treatments on emission rates



You just can't go to South Dakota without visiting Mount Rushmore which was our only official tourist excursion and was followed by dinner and wine tasting at Prairie Berry Winery. While sampling wines created from berries native to South Dakota such as Pheasant Reserve and the famous Red Ass Rhubarb, our class had the pleasure of hearing from a native Floridian. Stacy Revels, a former Florida FFA President,

is now a Policy Advisor in the South Dakota Department of Agriculture. Stacy gave us a Floridian's perspective of South Dakota which focused on the way issues affect different parts of the country.



South Dakota Ag & Rural Leadership (SDARL) alumni welcomed us for our last morning in the state. We had the honor of hearing from 3 distinguished speakers. Dr. Barry Dunn, Dean of Agriculture and Biological Science at South Dakota State University, welcomed our group and spoke to us on the State of SDSU, South Dakota's land grant university. Dr. Dunn's historical context of how the land grant university system came to be in the United States helped us further understand the importance and value of the research these institutions contribute.

Dr. Dan Gee, SDARL Alumni Director, described Impacts and Contributions of SDARL Graduates on South Dakota and was followed by The Honorable Lucas Lentsch, South Dakota's Secretary of Agriculture, who gave our class an overview of the agricultural industry in the state. Our final stop was a tour of the Valley Queen Cheese Factory in Milbank. If you've eaten cheese from a national brand you have most likely had cheese produced at this family owned facility. Every day Valley Queen brings in 4 million pounds of milk and produces 400,000 pounds of cheese. The exposure to industries far from home broadens our leadership scope and makes us more effective in our own state and businesses. Our class was privileged to experience this part of the country that most Floridians may never see.





## *East River West River*

As we traveled across South Dakota, our group learned about the dynamic of the Missouri River on the culture of the state. Residents split the state into East River and West River areas depending on where your land is located related to the Missouri. Cattle and ranching dominate the west river culture while the east river area is more farming intensive.

We began programming in the West River area with a normal 7:30am start. The group headed to Bill Slovek's ranch in Philip, South Dakota. The Slovek's, along with alumni of the South Dakota Ag & Rural Leadership (SDARL) program, welcomed our class into their home for breakfast. Giant honey buns along with fresh apples, picked from the Slovek's trees, drizzled in chocolate and caramel certainly started the morning off right. After introductions, Bill along with a neighboring rancher, Todd Mortenson, emotionally recalled the catastrophic snow storm of October 2013 that devastated the state's cattle population. As they recalled their



experiences during and after the blizzard the underlying theme of helping your neighbor brought their story to life. They helped each other find surviving cattle, they cared for their neighbors animals, all the while dealing with the devastation after a storm that killed close to 100,000 cattle in the state.

Leaving the Slovek's home was like leaving a cousin's house after Thanksgiving. Along with the SDARL alumni they walked us out and waved as our bus pulled away. Our class was joined by Jerry Cope, VP of Marketing for Dakota Mill and Grain as well as an SDARL Class III Alumni, to escort us on a 4 hour bus ride from Philip to Lake Preston, South Dakota. Mr. Cope narrated our trip and explained the farm

to market practices for all the grain crops we passed. After a brief stop in Pierre (pronounced Pier), South Dakota's capital, for lunch we crossed the Missouri River into the East River region. As we arrived in Lake Preston, we were warmly greeted by SDARL Alumni including John Nelson at his family farm.



Mr. Nelson took us on a tour of his operation that included corn, soybeans, as well as a cattle feed lot. Mr. Nelson explained the current challenges in the grain industry where the market price of grain makes it more economical to feed his cattle with his harvested grain rather than taking it to market. Our evening ended with dinner at Mr. Nelson's home. Ninety eight percent of farms in South Dakota are family owned and operated and family hospitality was a consistent theme through our time in South Dakota. Whether our class was in the East River or West River regions, the welcoming friendliness shown to us by the Sloveks, Nelsons, & SDARL alumni was second to none.



## North Dakota *John Evans*



These two industries are taking advantage of a simple supply and demand function. The global population is expected to reach 9 billion people by 2050. Both food and energy resources will be in high demand and will come at a premium. North Dakota, as well as its citizens understand this situation and have taken the necessary steps to create a business-friendly and pro-growth state.



### ***Agriculture and Natural Resources Produce Economic Winners (Again)***

Traditionally, North Dakota has ranked at the lower end of the economic prosperity scale in most categories. Unemployment, poverty and economic stagnation have historically ruled the day. However, North Dakota is shedding its old persona and stepping into an unfamiliar role of economic leadership.



Playing to its strengths of agriculture and natural resources, North Dakota has emerged over the past decade as a national leader in economic growth, sustainability and opportunity. While most of the country has struggled economically in recent years, North Dakota is a thriving model of economic success. Agriculture and natural resources are the cornerstones of economic prosperity for this state.

North Dakota's agriculture industry is alive and well. This region of the United States is a major contributor in feeding the world. Traditional, "hard lined" commodity crops like corn, soy beans, wheat, sugar beets and others are used in much of the world's foods and products. As demand for commodities rise and prices increase for their products, North Dakota has a great opportunity in realizing economic gains. North Dakota has done a commendable job of advocating for farmers, ranchers, growers and other agriculturalists.

In addition, the Bakken Oil boom has turned into a modern day gold rush. We visited multiple towns within the Bakken Oil Field Region, and it is no exaggeration in stating that this is the equivalent to a modern day "Wild, Wild West Gold Rush". Workers are coming from around the globe to chase their dream of new found wealth



Wealth on an exponentially dramatic scale has been created and realized in this region. Farmers and ranchers who own their mineral rights are leasing directly to oil companies. Oil and Mineral Right holders receive 1/8th of every barrel of oil produced. One example of great wealth creation was a lifelong farmer leasing out his mineral rights to an oil company. This well produces approximately 5,500 barrels of oil a day. A few of us did the math in the back of the bus, this comes out to \$40,000/day to the mineral rights holder! To put it in other words, that is approximately \$16,000,000 a year!



As it relates to the current oil boom, there isn't an end in sight. In the past, there have been "baby oil booms" in this region. However, they were not sustainable. Due to the relatively new technology of fracking, the industry is now able to capture oil that was once impossible to realize. There is a tremendous amount of oil under the surface, and oil companies are going to do whatever it takes to pull it up out of the ground.

Once oil wells are installed, there is a need for supplemental industry infrastructure, upkeep and labor required to sustain the industry. Drive up on a ridge overlooking the horizon and wells are sprouting out of the earth in all directions.

What else is contributing to the success of North Dakota's oil industry? It is abundantly clear that such progress has been supported by a government that champions for business and gets out of the way of the private sector. North



Dakota appears to embrace the success. While the agriculture and oil industry certainly face regulatory agencies and hurdles, the path to prosperity is much more achievable when there is a government that supports business and creates a business friendly environment that is encouraged by the state. Florida, as well as other states, could learn a lot from North Dakota.



North Dakota, in particular, has done a magnificent job in bolstering, encouraging and harboring pro-business policies. North Dakota's unemployment rate is approximately 2.8% (Florida's unemployment rate is 6.3%, National unemployment rate is 5.9%). Wages paid to workers are double, if not triple (or higher) the national average.

Opportunities in the Bakken Oil Field region are vast. Opportunity exist not only in the oil industry, but in secondary, supplementary or emerging industries like housing, hospitality, dining, healthcare, etc. The oil industry is the heart of the economy, and these secondary industries are the veins. The opportunity to create large amounts of wealth exists in many forms and will be capitalized.

With rapid growth and seemingly overnight success, major societal challenges have come to the region. Populations have exploded and adequate housing options and housing supply lag behind current demand as there is currently a housing shortage. Prices for very small apartments have surged costing nearly \$3,000/month. These prices rival that of studios and flats in New York City and London. Drugs and alcohol abuse has skyrocketed. And in turn, so have the arrests. Sex trafficking has become a problem. Law enforcement agencies have struggled managing crime as well as the court systems because they lack an adequate force. Once small

farming roads now see high use as heavy duty equipment and tankers need to get to their sites. Internal road systems are failing literally due to the weight and heavy use of these roads.



These issues are prevalent in all societies, but seem to be more prevalent in this society because of the "fever" of new found opportunity and prospects of wealth. When the infrastructure of the region catches up with the economy, these problems can be better mitigated. Growing pains are normal to any growing society and community. As North Dakota grows, I am optimistic that the right leaders will lead their state in the right direction, making the right decisions, and continuing their prosperous economic run in an ethical and principled manner



Wedgworth Leadership Institute

# Class IX

Seminar 7 - Mount Dora

## Coordinator's Corner *Kevan Lamm*

On October 23rd Lex and I were blessed with twin boys, Warren Alexander and Aiden Elso. Big sister Charlotte is doing her best to help out, but at 19 months "help" is a somewhat relative concept. Although I was not able to participate in the national seminar I feel fortunate that everyone in the class did such an amazing job of documenting and reflecting on the experience. Seeing pictures from one of the most metropolitan areas in the U.S. to some of the most rural made for a stark contrast. The decisions that are made on K Street have a direct impact on places like Rapid City SD, or Minot ND, or Gainesville FL. Lifting the veil on the legislative process and gaining a broader perspective on policy and subsequent impacts within the agricultural and natural resource industry is a paradigm shifting experience. It is critical that the ANR industry continue to have a strong presence in the legislative process to help secure a more prosperous future for us all. Being part of an organization such as the Wedgworth Leadership Institute that is helping to make sure this need is met is a very rewarding experience, an experience whose dividends I expect my children will benefit from long into the future. Thank you all for this opportunity and for the great work that you are doing each and every day!



WLI Class IX in Washington D.C.