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Class
IX

Reflect

Director's Dialogue *Dr. Hannah Carter*

Where has the time gone?

Class IX navigated parking, traffic and the last days of the semester here at UF to gather for their last domestic seminar, for their last “traditional” seminar, for the beginning of their last 21 days together...I’ll stop here. The next logical thing would be to say that “all good things must come to an end”—but just because their time together in the program is almost over, that does not mean that Class IX will not remain a close-knit group and make an impact beyond August (stay tuned as they have some big ideas they will be sharing at this year’s alumni meeting!)

While this seminar focused on the international trip to an extent, it’s also the seminar where we try to include all the topics we did not get too throughout the program—so it turns out to be quite the variety of topics—from generational

differences, to conflict management, from hardiness, to utilizing social media—this seminar ran the gamut! One unique feature was that the entire class read for “Ag Literacy Day” on April 23rd. Wedgworth has not participated in this event in the past and it made sense for a group of ag leaders to go share their knowledge to students. We teamed up with Marion County Farm Bureau and had people in classrooms in three schools. It was a very worthwhile experience and one we will try to do again with future classes.

We “book ended” this seminar with a couple of things. Farm Credit of Florida traditionally cooks for participants and their spouses the Thursday “Meet my Family” night during the first seminar and they did so for Class IX. We were invited back to Farm Credit during this seminar for another delicious meal and great hospitality—thank you to Jeffrey

Spencer (Class VII) and the good folks at Farm Credit for making sure we were well fed! Wednesday evening we were the guests for an authentic South American meal hosted by Mrs. Gale Trotter. Mrs. Trotter and her daughter Dottie were with us the very first night Class IX was together for our meal and class introductions. It was very special that Mrs. Trotter was with us for our last evening together for this seminar. The meal was spectacular and I think it allowed the group to be excited about the trip and what they would experience while on the road. Thank you to Mrs. Trotter for making it such a special night and for being a part of the program!

We leave for our international trip a week from today—follow along with us on Facebook and on the WLI blog (www.wlianr.blogspot.com). And make plans to attend graduation and alumni weekend August 6th-8th!!



Erin Archey



Tavis Douglass



Baxter Troutman



Monday

We were all very excited to be back in Gainesville for our FINAL seminar before the international trip to South America! We kicked things off in the Reitz Union with a presentation by Mr. Jon Dain of the Tropical Conservation and Development Program with the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Florida. The topic was ‘Conflict Management’ and the outcomes of proper management strategies.



Although conflict is something that none of us want but all have to deal with at some point, we learned that the outcomes of conflict are usually positive which can create solutions, growth and the opportunity to have the things that we want. Of course this would not be the Wedgworth Leadership Institute if we had stopped there- we delved into the psychology of who and why parties take certain positions and the interests and

needs of each particular individual. I think we all learned a new acronym in ‘BATAN’ Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement and alternately the ‘WATAN’ (Worst Alternative) which force you to evaluate how strong (or weak) your back-up plan is in leveraging an advantage during a conflict. To wrap up the discussion, we discussed that conflict is normal-it is part of being human – and you should learn to seek out the positives of every conflict.

Our next speaker for the day was Dr. Walter Bowen, Director of IFAS International Programs who had extensive knowledge of Peru and the development of new potato varieties through his work with the CGIAR Consortium, International Potato Center (CIP) based in Lima, Peru. We learned that Peru is the native home of the potato and likewise has the most genetic diversity of this particular crop, which is the 3rd most important crop in the world. We discussed many of the new and exciting potatoes that are being developed at the center to help farmers compete on the marketplace. ¡Papas Nativas! Is the marketing slogan to help small farmers of Peru raise new and unique potatoes for local markets. He imparted on us that “Every place has its own unique charm” and to take everything in no matter what we see or where we travel.



To wrap up our first day of programming, Ms. Lisa Gaskalla, Executive Director of Florida Ag in the Classroom, prepped us for Ag Literacy Day with tips and advice on how to approach reading the latest Ag In the Classroom book and the appropriate strategies of keeping elementary students engaged throughout the encounter. This was the first time that a Wedgworth Leadership Institute class has participated in Ag Literacy Day, and we hope that future classes are able to participate in the fun and educational event.

Tuesday

Tuesday began with an equal mix of excitement and trepidation as we set off to our assigned Marion County schools to participate in Ag Literacy Day. We had the books and the planned activities, but we couldn't anticipate the questions or reactions from the students. "Can you eat a horse?" "Did you know my grandmother has chickens, but some died" or a favorite, "Where do baby pigs come from?" Despite these curveballs, we all got a good laugh and somehow found answers to all of the questions that were asked. Once we were all back in Gainesville, we discussed how fulfilling the experience was and the need to stay connected and involved in Ag Literacy Day. It's truly a critical vehicle for teaching students about an industry we hold so dear to our hearts.



It was back to programming following a brief discussion about our class project. Carly Barnes from Ketchum, a public relations and marketing agency, which specializes in corporate and product positioning, spoke to the class about utilizing social media for the benefit of agriculture and natural resources. She expressed the importance of empowering individual voices, especially in our industry that tends to be more reactive than proactive. Furthermore, she shared some critical tips for engaging in social media:

- Avoid skepticism
- Acknowledge concerns
- Share personal stories
- Avoid jargon and technical terms
- Illustrate your ideas using examples
- Show your passion



Our last speaker of the day was Elio Chiarelli, Jr. who spoke to us about fostering innovation in Agriculture and Natural Resources. During the course of Mr. Chiarelli's research, he discovered the important link between hardiness, or

the way people turn adversity into an advantage, and innovation/ entrepreneurship. Therefore, in preparation for this particular discussion, we all took the Hardiness Survey and reviewed our results as a group. According to research, those individuals who thrived under stress/strain, maintained three key beliefs, known as the HardiAttitudes™:

1. Commitment attitude - stay involved, rather than isolating oneself
2. Control attitude – continue to try to influence outcomes rather than lapse into passivity and powerlessness
3. Challenge attitude – view stressful changes, whether positive or negative, as opportunities for new learning



Armed with some new tools and insights on how to better avoid the strain that comes with stress, we finished our day in Alachua, where Farm Credit of Florida generously hosted our class for another amazing steak dinner.



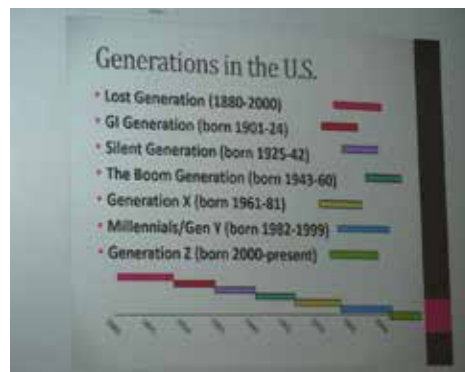
Wednesday

Our Wednesday programming began with a very informative overview about Generational differences by Dr. Jeanna Mastrodicasa. “Baby Boomer”, “Generation X”, the “Millennial generation”, “Generation Y” - these and other similar terms to describe groups of people of different ages have become fairly well known and well used in recent

years. These terms arise from a theory that attempts to explain how different generations develop different value systems, and the impact that this has on how younger and older people interact with the world around them and with each other.



We have all heard and have likely felt the impacts of the differences between generations. Understanding of the different generations and the “gap” between them has many applications in all areas of life, from parents interacting with children, to sales people selling to younger or older clients, to managers who work with teams of people of different ages.



A large portion of our programming this week centered on our upcoming international trip--so our next two speakers touched on communication and staying healthy.

Dr. Sheryl Heinicka started by addressing the different vaccinations we should consider while traveling abroad. While none of the countries we plan to visit have mandatory vaccination requirements the discussion was insightful and prompted many questions. Additional advice was offered by Dr.

Heinicka as it relates to food and beverage consumption. She highly recommended staying away from street vendors and to simply “be smart” while traveling throughout this region of South America.



After lunch Dr. Marta Hartmann gave us an overview on the cultural communication norms in the various countries we’ll be visiting. Having lived in all three countries-her insight was very helpful. The formality of communication in South America is quite different than what we are accustomed. Greetings include hugging and cheek kisses and non-verbal communication makes up a large portion of their communication style.



We ended our day by traveling to Starke for a very special themed dinner event hosted by Mrs. Gale Trotter. This event was special on two different fronts. Not only did we discuss and dine on traditional South American foods we also had the unique opportunity to visit with the Mother of the Wedgworth Leadership program. Mrs. Trotter is a gracious and lovely host-- no wonder this program is such a success.

Thursday



On Thursday morning we opened with a panel discussion with expert University of Florida grad students representing the countries that Class IX will be visiting. Ms. Farah Carrasco-Rueda a citizen of Peru, discussed the geography of her country as well as the cultural highlights of Lima, which is the first stop on our journey. Mr. Mauricio Nunez-Regueiro, was our representative from Argentina, who gave us tips on navigating the streets and foods of his home country and of Buenos Aires- our base city in Argentina. (Apparently Gainesville traffic is worse than Buenos Aires, that's believable!). Ms. Marcela Marquez-Garcia, Chilean citizen, discussed the culture of Santiago, what to eat, see and experience and of course the wines. All three of our speakers stressed the importance of appreciating all that South America has to offer from the food, people, culture,

Pisco Sours, Ceviche, Bife de Chorizo and the Copa America- the South American Soccer tournament which will be hosted by Chile during our trip.

We rounded out the week perfectly with a very inspiring and emotional Reflection session, led by talented Class IX members Jennifer Parish and Brian Patterson. As you all know, this was our last reflection session in a familiar setting before we trek to the bottom of the globe for experiences untold. I would love to share the laughing, crying and fellowship- but of course each class has its moments they keep to themselves as their own. I will say that Class IX if not before, is definitely now a family in its own right and we are primed to take this journey together and subsequently graduate to become the newest alumni members of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute. ¡Nos vemos en agosto!





Wedgworth Leadership Institute
Class IX
Seminar 10 - International

Coordinator's Corner *Kevan Lamm*



Next stop South America, but first...

Although the international trip is rapidly approaching, Seminar 9 served as a great looking glass into the sort of expeditions that you can take without ever leaving home. It has been an honor to serve as the Program Coordinator for the past 1.5+ years, we have been from Miami to the panhandle and heard from dozens of speakers. However, during Seminar IX it was amazing to watch Class IX continue to evolve from a group of individuals into a highly coordinated, high functioning community of agricultural and natural resource leaders. For me, the evidence of this evolution came from the way that the group handled a very intense couple of days. Our speakers and topics ranged from conflict, to generational differences, to social media, to South American culture, to reading in elementary school classrooms for Ag Literacy day, and several others in between. Even though each of these topics on its own might warrant at least half a day to process, the group was able to easily transition from one to the other every hour or two. Additionally, there was no need to provide context for why we were hearing from such a diversity of speakers, the group was able to make their own connections to what we have been discussing from the previous eight seminars. When there were questions or comments, answers or suggestions were just as readily provided by peer classmates as by the experts at the front of the room. Support, coordination, and agility to me these are some of the hallmarks of a high functioning community and all were readily apparent. I'm very excited to continue to be part of this journey as we travel south for our international seminar and grateful for the opportunity to be associated with this amazing community of leaders!