

## class X newsletter

### Seminar IV

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# Let's Reflect.

## Director's Dialogue -Dr. Hannah Carter, Program Director

*"The world is run by those that show up."* -Laveda Brown, former Alachua County Commissioner

It was during Class V that I heard Ms. Brown say this quote and it has stayed with me—and it's become ingrained in this program. Our participants and alumni need to show up and participate on the issues that are important to them—and this became a theme of this seminar as well as we spent two days in Tallahassee discussing the issues that people are showing up for. But before I discuss the content of our Tallahassee seminar, I need to take the time and thank a few people who made this seminar such a success! First to Mike Joyner (Class I), not only was he integral in making suggestions (and then introductions) about speakers and topics for this seminar, he also did a magnificent job sharing his leadership philosophy. Then, to top it off, he and his wonderful wife Alicia and lovely daughters Micah and Aubrey hosted the class at their home for dinner. Mike is the epitome of leadership and I'm so very grateful to him for his help! Tallahassee typically is one of my least favorite seminars to put together, largely due to the fact that during session, meeting space for 30+ people is at a premium. This year, we were very fortunate to be able to utilize Florida Farm Bureau's new office space to hold our sessions and I am so very appreciative of John Hoblick (Class II) and Adam Basford (Class VII) for their hospitality! Adam was also very

helpful on speaker suggestions and giving me insights on what's really happening this session.

On Tuesday evening, we broadened our networks as we were the guests of Sean Brantley (Class VII) and the Florida Pest Control Association. It was a

great evening of networking and learning about different industries and issues. This networking continued on Wednesday afternoon at the annual WLI Alumni Legislative Reception. We are thankful for the alumni who made time to come out and meet the new class and for Ray Royce (Class VII) our alumni president to make the trip to Tallahassee to be there as well! Alan Shelby (Class VI) extended his (and the Florida Forestry Association's) hospitality and it was a nice afternoon on the back deck of the Forestry building. Our seminar concluded on Thursday morning with an eye opening tour of Trulieve Medicinal Marijuana Growhouse and Processing Center. This has certainly been an issue that has dominated the news and it was an eye-opening tour and discussion of the industry, the legislation and what the future may hold. I'm grateful to Thad Beshears (Class VII) and Richard May (Class VII) for their willingness to provide Class X this opportunity!

In between all these amazing things, we had speakers that discussed topics and issues that are going to impact us all, such as the Constitutional Revision Commission, how Florida is faring financially, the state of higher education in Florida, SB10 and why we should market Florida. In addition, we were able to spend some time with Commissioner Putnam to hear his take on this session.

This seminar was an incredible learning opportunity and I am pleased with how it all came together. This seminar marked a third of the way through the program for Class X and I'm proud of how they've come together as a class. This was also the first seminar that I ever conducted without Janice Shephard—I'm extraordinarily thankful that she has returned to the WLI as this program is a team effort and she is an integral part of that team and a big reason why we are successful! Welcome back Janice!



# Meet

## Class X Member Reba Hicks



Reba Hicks is the Senior Marketing Specialist for Farm Credit of Florida. Originally from Slocumb, Alabama, she graduated with a B.S. in Animal Sciences from Auburn University. Following this, Reba moved to Florida and completed a M.S. in Agricultural Education and Communications. She currently resides in Ocala, Florida where she enjoys showing horses and anything outdoors.

## Seeing Leadership in Florida Issues

-Reba Hicks

Martin Luther King once spoke, “The time is always right to do the right thing.”

As Class X sat gathered around a table in a conference room inside of Florida’s Capitol, we were reminded of many aspects of leadership, including character. Although a majority of Seminar IV focused on the political atmosphere in Tallahassee, FL, the qualities a leadership needs to allow the intricacies of legislation to succeed were consistently noted.

We began Session IV in the Florida Farm Bureau Building located in close proximity to the capitol building. The location served as our meeting space throughout the week and the class as a whole is grateful to have been able to utilize this building. After a reflection from Session III and a quick box lunch, Sydney Stone, Governmental Affairs at University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, shared with us the the basic information about navigating Tallahassee, both on a map and politically. Capitol protocol and pertinent information was mentioned and she then transitioned into the political climate currently. Sydney was then joined by Adam Basford, Florida Farm Bureau, to discuss the political climate and specific bills being supported. Budget requests for UF/IFAS and the Florida Department of Agriculture are both priorities on the 2017 legislative agenda for Florida Farm Bureau.

Accompanying these items, Senate Bill 10/ House Bill 761, which is the Everglades



Area Reservoir Proposal, is a top priority. This proposes to purchase 60,000 acres of farmland in the Everglades Agriculture Area south of Lake Okeechobee for water storage. This \$2.4 billion proposal would remove 60,000 acres of the most productive farmland in the world from production, does not address the serious need to clean the water coming into Lake Okeechobee from the north and will do little to help with discharges during significant rain events. Following Adam’s in depth explanation of the legislative agenda, we learned a great deal about the science behind the opposition of SB 10/HB 761.

Ernie Barnett, who is Executive Director of Florida Land Council, explained alternate solutions that would be more effective aside from purchasing precious farmland in the EAA. We learned there are approximately 40,000 septic tanks near the Indian River Lagoon,







which contributes to algae and other issues arising. This is an important note to spread to the public, as the common misconception is farming contributes to the algae. The options from the University of Florida Water Institute vary but preserve acreage in the EAA. Mr. Barnett suggested accelerating completion of existing approved projects as the first option in resolving the issue of Everglades restoration. Providing storage north of Lake Okeechobee or providing more water storage, treatments and convenience south of Lake Okeechobee are viable options mentioned.

*“By speaking up and making our opinion known, we can make changes in our industry.”*

Lastly, Mr. Barnett presented deep well disposal of excess flows or operational changes to Lake Okeechobee. After listening to Mr. Barnett, I know I have a much better understanding of the issues with this bill. He provided the science to support the argument. With the science he provided and the passion of those in the agriculture industry, we can stand against this particular bill in a big way. Aside from the agriculture that would be in danger if this bill were to pass, an enormous economic burden would occur.

After Mr. Barnett, we learned how Florida is faring financially according to Ben Watkins, Director, Division of Bond Finance for the state of Florida. Governor Rick Scott has proposed many budget cuts. The budget priorities

for 2017-2018 include tax cuts for Florida families and businesses, job growth, funding for education, environmental concerns, and resident and tourist safety. Following Mr. Barnett, Mohammad Jazil, Hopping Green and Sams, P.A. He spoke about the Florida Constitutional Revision Commission, which convenes to review the Florida Constitution and ultimately craft amendments to it that the CRC will then recommend for inclusion on the next election's ballot.

The CRC convenes every twenty years and is composed of thirty-seven members. As luck would have it, the CRC meets from 2017-2018. The voice of agriculture has to be interjected to ensure agriculture is prioritized. As an industry, we are fortunate the Commissioner of Agriculture is included in the Cabinet. In the 1998, the Commissioner of Agriculture was almost taken out of the Cabinet during the restructuring of the Cabinet. A common theme from all of our speakers was making sure our voice is heard. By speaking up and making our opinion known, we can make changes as an industry. We ended the day with a delicious dinner with the Florida Pest Control Association and invited legislators and staff, courtesy of Mr. Sean Brantley, Class VII. The food was amazing and so were the people who surrounded the tables. We are so grateful for alumni of WLIANR!



# Meet

## Class X Member Daniel Albritton



Daniel lives in Madison, FL with his wife, Elise, and their two daughters, Charlotte (5) and Ruby (3). He works for BASF as a Business Representative in their Ag Chemical Division. Daniel Attended Florida Southern College and studied Horticulture Science. In 2007 he was drafted by the Chicago White Sox, where he played 3 years in their minor league system. He enjoys camping and spending time with his family, hunting, fishing, and playing golf.

## Capitol-izing on Day 2 -Daniel Albritton

We started Day 2 in Tallahassee meeting with Mr. Mike Joyner, assistant to the Commissioner of Agriculture. Mr. Joyner began by asking us to go around the room and introduce ourselves with our name, place of birth, and who was your mentor growing up ("In the office of..."). Mr. Joyner has the ability to take command of the room and everyone was engaged. He focused on the importance of knowing your strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Your strengths are what you can bring to the team, and when it comes to your weaknesses you should know who to go to for guidance on your team. He also stressed the importance of following the golden rule, treat others the way you want to be treated. Some key points that I took away from Mr. Joyner were that when the time arises you take the responsibility and opportunity to mentor others, when you have a meeting, have a purpose and a vision, and when



it comes to hiring people consider their character; you can teach people what they need to know but you can't teach character.

After Mr. Joyner we had the opportunity to listen to Commissioner of Agriculture, Adam Putnam. He laid out an overall picture of how the ag community is doing throughout the state. He also explained how important agriculture is to this state, pointing out that we are the second largest industry, behind tourism. He proceeded to explain what he and his teams' roles are. He believes that our participation in the WLI is commendable and he appreciates our efforts and recognizes the importance of this program. When he was done speaking he went around the room and did a Q and A. Afterwards, Mr. Putnam invited us to join him in his office, and was kind enough to take a group photo.

When finished with Mr. Putnam we went back to the Farm Bureau building and met with Mr. Marshall Criser III, chancellor for the State







University System of Florida. We learned that there are 12 state universities and 28 state colleges; with the newest state college being Poly Tech, which is a branch off of USF. The majority of his talk was spent explaining how they have spent their efforts trying to figure out how to get students to finish college and to finish on time. Through several studies they have discovered the majority of students that actually started college and finished was taking an average of 6 years. After interviewing these students and asking why it took so long they discovered that the majority of the obstacles involved a second job to help pay for school and the courses they needed were only offered certain times of the year. The chancellor and his team decided to pay the kids not to work and allow them to focus on school, and to fix the issue on when classes were offered. This solution has been a major success for the state of FL. They work on an operating budget of \$11.5 billion. He touched briefly on how the Bright futures program needs to be re evaluated.

Following Mr. Criser was Ms. Carol Dover, President and CEO of the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association. The Association was founded in 1946 and has over 10,000 members. There is over 1.4 million employees in the restaurant business, and generates \$11.3 billion in state and local tax revenue. I found it interesting that they have put up cameras all around the coast of FL so that anyone can go online and see live footage of the beaches and show that “we are open for business.”

This initiative came about after the BP oil spill, and tourists immediately cancelled their vacations to our state. Now, in times of crisis, a tourist can go online and see the condition of the Florida coastline. They also run commercials in the winter time up north to promote our beautiful weather during their northern snowstorms.

Lastly, was Ms. Deborah Kearney, General Counsel from 1997-1998 Constitution Review Commission (CRC). Every 20 years a committee made up of 37 members reviews our constitution. The members are made up of the attorney general of the state, 15 members selected by the governor, 9 members selected by the Speaker of the House, 9 members selected by the Senate, and 3 members selected by the chief justice of the supreme court of Florida. Some potential issues that are discussed by the CRC are the Everglades Restoration, death penalty and criminal justice issues, and health care issues to name a few. We are the only state in the country

*“...when the time arises you take the responsibility and opportunity to mentor others, when you have a meeting, have a purpose and vision, and when it comes to hiring people consider their character; you can teach people what they need to know but you can't teach character.”*

that does this.

We ended the day having dinner at Mike and Alicia Joyner's home with his family and invited guests. They were kind enough to cook for us and welcome us in to their home.





# 2017 WLIANR Legislative Reception

Members of the Alumni Association of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute gathered during Seminar IV for the Annual Legislative Reception.

On March 22, 2017, the Florida Forestry Association hosted the reception at their Tallahassee headquarters. Class X of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources attended the reception as well; the newest class was in Tallahassee for Seminar IV of the program.

Other friends of WLIANR and AAWLI came to the event, including representatives of Florida Farm Bureau Federation and UF/IFAS.

AAWLI Executive Board members served at the reception. AAWLI President Ray Royce, Treasurer Matt Webb, and Secretary Lisa Lochridge (all Class VII) greeted Class X members and welcomed them on behalf of the Association.

Many, many thanks are due to the Florida Forestry Association for providing the venue for the afternoon. We are also thankful for the alumni and friends who came to this event and made it successful.

*-Valerie McKee, Program Coordinator*









# Tag Team Summary of Day 3

*-Daniel Albritton & Reba Hicks*

We had the opportunity to tour the Trulieve Medical Marijuana Facility in Quincy, FL. Trulieve is made up of:

- Mr. Thad Beshears, WLIANR Class VII, owner
- Mr. Richard May, WLIANR Class VII, owner
- Mr. George Hackney, owner (and father to Class X member Martin Hackney)
- Ms. Kim Rivers, CEO
- Mr. Jason Pernell, COO

I wish I would have been educated on the medical marijuana process before I voted last November. I feel like this tour really opened my eyes on the benefits of this industry. The Trulieve team is the definition of entrepreneurship, and I truly believe they are in this to help patients in need. I wish them all the best, and it is an amazing operation that they have created.

*-Daniel Albritton*

On day three of Seminar IV, we traveled to the Quincy, FL to visit Trulieve Medical Marijuana Facility. Trulieve has the extraordinary position of being the industry leader with the first products to market. ETC. Governor Rick Scott signed off on the Compassionate Medical Cannabis Act in the spring of 2014. The legislation divided the state into five regions with one license each to cultivate low-THC marijuana and process its oil into medicine to treat children afflicted with a severe form of epilepsy and cancer patients. Hackney Nursery was selected for the northwest region, which stretches from Pensacola to Tallahassee, but also services the entire state. Nurseries had to have been in business for over 30 years and grow more than 400,000 plants in order to get the license. With the license, Hackney had 10 business days to present a bond to show its financial solvency and ability to see the program through. Not submitting this bond on time will cause the nursery to lose its status as official grower. Hackney uses a 70,000-square-foot facility in Quincy to grow the cannabis. There are dispensary locations throughout Florida. The individuals involved showed immense leadership and vision to begin this endeavor.

*-Reba Hicks*

## Class X Meets Commissioner Adam Putnam





# “A Cup of Joe” with Dr. Joe



## Inspirational Reading Reviews from Dr. Joe Joyce, Program Faculty Advisor



During Seminar III of Class X, we met with Dr. Susan Amat, CEO and Founder of Venture Hive. Venture Hive is a business start-up accelerator that “offers efficient and effective turnkey models to create an entrepreneur ecosystem based on sound educational principles.” One of her key points was that no entrepreneur enterprise can prosper or survive without empowering its employees and infusing them with the passion for the vision of the enterprise. This reminded me of a book I read a couple of years ago entitled “*I Quit, But Forgot to Tell You*” by Terri Kabachnick. While not perhaps a classic in the leadership literature, it does address the issue of empowering employees and attacking the spreading virus of employee disengagement. The book is based on the Kabachnick Group’s years of research into business success as it relates to employee performance and job engagement.

She begins the book by highlighting the costs of employee turnover noting that “the number one issue facing businesses is finding and retaining good employees and nationwide employee turnover averages 12% per year”. She also sights research that indicates the average cost of losing and replacing an employee ranges from 30 to 150% of the annual salary for both hourly and salaried employees. Because salaries are the number one business expense, we owe it to our organizations to avoid unnecessary employee turnover and maintain good performance that comes from engaged individuals.

Chapter 9 is a discussion of Isolating the Virus of Disengagement and the five phases of an employee’s travel from engagement to disengagement. Each of the phases has specific symptoms and timelines, thus understanding the five phases can provide an employer the opportunity to reverse the disengagement evolution. If we as leaders are not conscious of the five phases, we will lose the ability to “save” an employee and prevent the spread of the “virus” throughout the organization. Once phase five “active disengagement” is reached it is almost impossible to save the employee and they

must be removed or the business and thus profits will suffer. Thus, Chapter 10, Firing is a Favor, focuses on principle discussed in the last “Cup of Joe”, Good to Great. If an employee is disengaged, the good employees often recognized it before the leader does. Once the disengaged employee is “kicked off the bus”, morale and overall productivity typically improve. While the book discusses many of the causes for employee disengagement, the most valuable part of the book to me was the author’s “Five Commandments for Achieving Employee Engagement”:

- Treat employees as individuals. You have to understand their needs and desires and build a relationship with them
- Treat employees as adults. Adults want control over their lives and work. Use this desire as a way to motivate them to be a significant factor in making the business better.
- Spur employee engagement. Encourage them to ask “why”. Employees that know the “why” of a business or task increases their involvement and commitment to overall company success.
- Make employees partners. It was noted that, “when employees are treated as “partners”, a sense of “ownership”, involvement and responsibility sets in.”
- Respect employees. When you give respect, you get respect.

The author discussed one other aspect of employee engagement which I was surprised was not one of her “commandments”, i.e. invest in their self-development. Often times we cannot increase salaries but you can keep an employee motivated and maintain moral by providing training and growth opportunities. The added benefit is new or improved skill sets that help both the employee and the organization. And remember, a lot of research shows it is not so much were a person works or how much they make but what they do and how they are allowed to do it. This 311 page book is a quick read with large font and contains some self-evaluation exercises. I recommend putting it on your “to read” list.





# Coordinator's Corner

## Golden Nuggets to Live By

-Valerie McKee, Program Coordinator

**"I'm Mike Joyner from Wildwood, FL, and I was raised in the office of Jeb Bush."**

These words were shared by Mike Joyner (Class I), Assistant Commissioner for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to Class X on our second day of Seminar IV.

Mr. Joyner encouraged each of us to repeat these same words for ourselves, and I watched in amazement as Class X members one by one spoke up to share in whose office were they raised to be the hard working adult leaders they are today. Kyle Straughn made me smile as he shared he was "raised in the pickup of Alton Straughn," acknowledging the impact his grandfather had on the man he is today.

This exercise was just one of many powerful moments had with Mr. Joyner. We had the distinct pleasure of hearing Mr. Joyner's list of leadership principles to live by, a list that kept us all writing notes and listening intently because we all knew we were in the presence of a humble leadership giant. Instead of summarizing all of the all of the impactful experiences during Seminar IV for this article, I want to focus in on the "golden nuggets" of wisdom we mined from Mr. Joyner's presentation.

**"Culture beats strategy every day."**

Mr. Joyner credited the Honorable Adam Putnam with saying these words and integrating this belief throughout FDACS. There is something so refreshing about this thought. Somehow, despite our best efforts to have the best plans and think the best thoughts and include the best people, our strategies for success are no match for the impact that having great culture can have. How do we get great culture in our organizations? I think it starts with great people embracing each other, with great traditions and celebrations, with great working relationships being forged. Mr. Joyner explained how keeping such a culture has become a goal within FDACS so that no matter who steps into the position of leadership in the years to come the culture will still carry the department forward.

**"In times of crisis, people follow the person with the highest character."**

Wow. These words were truly convicting. Sometimes I think we subconsciously care about having strong character and integrity for our own

purposes; we care about being virtuous because it is the right thing to be, because it ultimately protects us from fault, or because we care about how others respect us. We care about character because in an evolutionary way it can serve us well to have it.

But character is also the currency of leadership. If we are trying to "buy" leadership in a group, to earn respect and loyalty, then having high-quality character is our purchasing power. Mr. Joyner explained how working in Tallahassee can sometimes feel like "your worst day in high school" because of the 'nasty' politics played there. He said, "People are rewarded for not doing the right thing in this town." And yet, in times of chaos and confusion, high character rises to the top. It reminds me of a debate I have heard multiple times in ethical leadership classes: Batman vs. Superman. Which superhero do people want as their leader? While often

times this debate brings up the 'human' side of Batman as an argument in favour of him as their choice, it is Superman who often ultimately wins the crowd's approval. Why? Because when people seek a superhero, they want the spotless purity of Superman over the darkness of Batman. (Personally, I've always liked Batman over Superman, but that's beside the point.) At the face of danger or distress, people will turn to the person in the room with the strongest known character to rise to the challenge.

**"Don't associate long hours with hard work."**

I had to chuckle at these words shared by Mr. Joyner. My mother used to ask me after every test in grade school, "Did you try your best?" With my affirmative reply she would then respond with, "Good, that's all I can ask for." But, in my adult life, I have found that "trying my best" is not always the best I can actually offer. Far too often, despite pushing my best efforts in time and energy, my hours spent have left me frustrated with the fruits of my labour. Why does this happen? It is usually a matter of working harder, not smarter. Admitting this has occurred can be rather uncomfortable and humbling, especially when you're surrounded by 'smarter' folks. Mr. Joyner offered words of encouragement to our group by reminding us that our schedules should reflect our priorities, and thus it is important for us all to find ways to respect our priorities in how we engage in our jobs. I am far too blessed to work for this program and programs like it here at the University of Florida for many reasons, one of them being I work with talented individuals who have helped me learn what it means to

**"I'm Val McKee of Okeechobee, FL, and I'm being raised in the office of Wedgworth."**



do my job 'smarter.'

*"Teach and mentor those around you."*

When Mr. Joyner asked us to state who we are and in whose office we were raised, everyone was able to speak in past tense. "My name is Hannah Carter, and I was raised in the office of Gene Trotter." "My name is Reba Hicks, and I was raised in the office of Dr. Ricky Telg." But me? I couldn't quite say it the way everyone else could. All that came to mind was this: "I'm Val McKee of Okeechobee, FL, and I'm being raised in the office of Wedgworth." Working for The Dr. Hannah Carter teaches me lessons on a daily basis, lessons that come both in her words and in her actions. Janice Shephard (who is back in our office, thank the Good Lord!) teaches me how to do my job well. These ladies are graciously raising me and will have a profound impact on who I will become one day as a fellow employee, and I couldn't be more grateful to each of them. Mr. Joyner asked us a follow-up question to this exercise: "Now, who are you mentoring? This question was intriguing to ponder as well. I think about the students at UF who frequent my office, curious about the Wedgworth Leadership Institute and seeking advice as they move forward from college to graduate school or a career. I don't consider myself as being too wise in most subjects, but this transition is certainly an area I am freshly experienced in. Mentoring is probably one of the most important jobs any leader has; it is how leaders secure their own legacy and the sustainability of their organization.

Mr. Joyner might be my favorite speaker we have heard thus far during the seminars of Class X. His humility is obvious, and with every "golden nugget" he had to share, he was quick to express when he had fallen short of living up to his own advice as proof that even he was not infallible as a leader. I am curious about the man he was nearly thirty years ago when the first class of this leadership program was formed. Could he believe then that his life experiences would take him to where he is now, being asked to address the tenth class of the very program that he was first to be a part of? Would the Mike Joyner of thirty years ago be moved and inspired by his own words just as Class X was, just as I was? I imagine so.



## WEDGWORTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

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