

class X newsletter

Seminar IX

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Let's Reflect.

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

"I believe this was the first class that was able to see mining up close, learn more about agriculture on reclaimed lands, and understand the phosphate industry here in the state..."



It was wonderful to pick leadership programming back up in 2018 in a strawberry research trial being conducted by Driscoll's. As we stood around the field and greeted one another, I think the reality that our time together as a class is quickly coming to an end. But, in true Wedgworth fashion, we had another packed agenda for this seminar and had no time to spend



being sad that Class X is on the downhill slide of programming.

Our time with Driscoll's not only gave us insight on the strawberry industry from field to cooler to your grocery store shelves. It gave us a unique perspective on what it means to "delight" a customer and what it means to continue to strive for the "perfect" berry through meticulous research. We greatly appreciate Mark Greeff (Class VI) and Richard Fiorelli (Class VII) for hosting the group in the field, in their cooler and for lunch!

Entities working together for a common goal is a theme that we try to showcase throughout a WLI class and one of my favorite examples of groups coming together and public/private partnerships is the Circle B Bar Preserve in Polk County. Many thanks to Danny Kushmer (Class II) for introducing Circle B to the program several classes ago—"active learning" takes on a whole new meaning when you're on an airboat and learning about the process and years it took to create this amazing venue to learn about the natural resources of the area. Our day was complete with a wonderful meal prepared and served by members of Farm Credit of Central Florida! Thank you to Reggie Holt (Class VI) for sponsoring and being the head chef! Special thanks also go to David McDonald (Class VI), Shane Platt (Class II), Carl Bauman (Class VIII) and Jennifer Parrish (Class IX) for helping with the meal and set up!

The focus of this seminar for now all ten classes of this program is media training and I am thrilled that Ray Gilmer (Class IV) made the trek south to spend the day helping class members understand the importance of crafting messages, delivering them on camera and their role as opinion leaders and subject matter experts. While the "outtakes"

and interviews will never be shown outside of the seminar—I do wish that I could compile a blooper reel of all the classes!

While the camera critiques were occurring, the group was divided into smaller groups to become CPR certified and to do some goal setting with Valerie. I greatly appreciate her thoughtful process of walking the group through "life after Wedgworth" and have them set some goals and write letters to themselves (which we will mail a year after graduation).

Our seminar wrapped up with an opportunity to learn more about the phosphate industry from Mosaic, which has a large presence in this area of Florida. I believe this was the first class that was able to see mining up close, learn more about agriculture on reclaimed lands, and understand the phosphate industry here in the state. From there, we went to Florida's Natural for a "State of the Citrus Industry" panel discussion. I'm grateful to David Crumbly (Class V) for hosting the group and putting together such a great discussion on the industry from different perspectives.

The final domestic seminar of Class X will be held in Gainesville April 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> and then it is onto Swaziland and Scotland in June! I hope to see many of you at Class X's graduation on July 26<sup>th</sup> and then the annual alumni meeting on July 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. We'll begin nominations for Class XI in the spring of 2019!

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# Class X welcomes Babies Hoffman & Himrod!



## *It's a Boy!*

Class X would like to send a very special congratulations to fellow class member Cody Hoffman and his wife Lexie on their newest addition to their family!

**Frank Allan Hoffman** was born on January 5th, 2018. Frank joins his older sister, Lydia Hoffman. We are so excited for you, Cody! We can't wait to meet baby Frank!

## *It's a Girl!*

Class X would also like to congratulate class member Aaron Himrod and his wife Kristina as they recently welcomed the birth of their second child, **Keiryn Isabelle Himrod**. She joins her older sister Everli Himrod.

On February 20th, 2018, *the first day of Class X's Seminar IX*, Aaron was just beginning to walk out to one of Driscoll's strawberry fields for the first speaker at 9:58am...when he received the message from his wife that it was time to go!

Keiryn was born at 1:05pm on the same day.

Even though you had to miss the rest of the seminar, Aaron, we are excited to meet your new baby girl!



## *You're Invited*

to

## **Class X's Graduation**

& the

## **2018 AAWLI**

## **Annual Meeting!**

**Waldorf Astoria  
Orlando, FL  
July 26th-28th**

Go to [[wedgworthalumni.org](http://wedgworthalumni.org)]  
for more information about registration,  
Class X graduation, hotel rooms,  
sponsorships, the annual Live and Silent  
auctions, the youth institute, and more!



# Meet

## Class X Member Stacy McCullough



Stacy D. McCullough is employed by Rabo AgriFinance as a Vice-President/ Territory Risk Advisor for the Eastern US. He received his BS degree from the University of South Florida with majors in Finance, Economics and General Business. He has been in the banking Industry for over 25 years with almost 20 of that being focused on Ag Lending. He is married to his wife Wendy and they have a 2 ½ year old son named Emerson.

## Insight into west-central Florida

-Stacy McCullough



### Franklin Farms

Seminar IX began with a visit to Franklin farms in Plant City. There the class met with Ray Jacobs, Subtropical Plant Breeder for Driscoll's and Richard Fiorelli, Production Manager for Driscoll's and WLI Class VII Graduate.

Ray began the tour of the farm by showing us the strawberry test plots in which they grow test varieties of strawberries in order to come up with varieties that are not only disease resistance but are also high in Brix (sweetness), have a nice appearance and a good flavor. There are 7 stages in the selection process:

- Stage 0 - 15,000 seedlings from varied crosses
- Stage 1- 150 selections selected
- Stage 2 - 15 selections selected
- Stage 3 - 2 selections selected
- Stage 4 - 1 selection
- Stage 5 - Farm trials/Field testing
- Stage 6 - Commercialization of a selection and the variety is named

It typically takes 6-7 years from start to finish of the selection process. The plant varieties have to pass through 5 stages (stages 0 through 4) before they are ever make it to field testing. Only 1 in





15,000 varieties will ultimately be chosen, named and put into production.

For the second part of the Farm Tour Richard Fiorelli, showed the class the Tunnel/Table grown strawberry trial in which plants are grown under cover on tables that are elevated about 3 feet above ground. Richard discuss with the class the pros and cons of growing plants in this fashion. One of the Pros is Rain control, since the plants are under cover the amount of water received can be monitored and controlled; whereas this can't be done with field grown plants. Another pro was measurable water and fertilizer usage an uptake. Since the plants are table grown the amount of water and fertilizer can be tracked and monitor. Some of the cons include elevated fungi and the number of plants per acre. Another con, and the one that may be the most significant, is the increased cost of \$12K to \$16K per acre. This cost includes infrastructure and caretaking.

## Florida Pacific Farms

After touring the Franklin Farms the class headed to Florida Pacific Farms to hear from Andy Brownlee, Production Manager. Andy managers about 60 acres of Blueberries and 150 acres of Strawberries located in Plant City, Fl. The main



topics of discussion were Florida blueberry varieties, production, competition and the importance of the timing of the Florida season in order to get the Florida blueberries into the market before other states like Georgia.

## Driscoll's Cooler

Gilberto Blanco, Quality Assurance Manager and Kristal Lara, Facility Supervisor for Driscoll's took the class on a tour of Driscoll's Cooler facility. Gilberto explained that the QC group samples strawberries on a random bases as they arrive on the pallet. Each pallet is tested and the berries are tested for Flavor, Appearance and Condition. If the test sample doesn't pass all 3 categories the entire pallet is rejected and the grower is notified. Feedback on sales help with Quality Control. Driscoll's receives a small amount of feedback from Harvest Mart, which is a clam shell scan that the consumer can scan on



their smart phone and provide feedback.

Kristal Lara took the class into the cooler and explained the "flash cooling" process that helps the berries maintain their freshness for a longer period of time. After the berries have passed the quality control inspection they are brought into the cooler and placed into a "tunnel". The tunnel is a sealed area that holds 6-8 pallets. The berries are cooled for 2-3 hours bringing the temperature to between 32 and 34.9 degrees. The berries are then removed and sent to the shipping area where the pallets are wrapped and prepared for shipping. The berries are shipped cold and in refrigerated trucks. The berries are prepared for shipping as trucks arrive in order to maintain the greatest freshness.

After touring the cooler the class was treated to lunch prepared by the Columbia Restaurant and sponsored by Mark Greef, Vice President and General Manager of Driscoll's and WLI Class VI graduate.



## Circle B Bar Reserve

The session continued on Tuesday with a visit to the Circle B Bar Reserve where the class were greeted by Danny Kushmer, Director, Highland Precision Ag and Class II WLI Graduate.

While at the reserve the class had the opportunity to visit the Nature Discovery Center, take a tram tour of the reserve property as well as an airboat ride on Lake Hamilton to the P-11 replacement project. The tours and reserve visit were led by Tabitha Biehl, Environmental Land Stewardship Coordinator for Polk's Nature Discovery Center; Cindy Rodriguez, Sr. Government Affairs Regional Manager Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFMD) and Gaye Sharpe, Natural Areas Manager.

The Circle B Bar Reserve is an area of protected lands in Polk County, Florida. Comprising 1,267 acres at 4399 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, Florida. The area is managed by the Polk County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). It is jointly owned by the BOCC and the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The park was purchased in 2000 for \$7.4 million using funds provided by an environmental lands acquisition referendum approved by voters in 1994.

Circle B Bar Reserve is named after the cattle ranch that once occupied the site. It was purchased to help maintain the Banana Creek marsh area and underwent a wetland restoration effort. Circle B Bar contains 3.5 miles of unpaved hiking/biking trails and is connected to the paved Fort Fraser

Trail by the 0.6-mile paved Fort Fraser-Circle Bar B Connector Trail, which runs from Lakeland to Bartow. For more information on the Reserve you can visit: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/areas/circlebbarreserve.html>

After the tour the afternoon continued with dinner provided by Reggie Holt, President/CEO of Farm Credit of Central Florida and WLI Class VI graduate.

## The Future of Florida Citrus Panel Discussion

On Thursday after lunch the class had the privilege to travel to the Grove House Theater located at Florida's Natural plant in Lake Wales, FL. Dave Crumbly (Class V), Vice-President of Florida's Natural Growers and Class V WLI graduate spoke to the class and had assembled a panel of Industry leaders for a discussion on the Future of Florida Citrus. The 4 person panel included Dr. Bob Behr, CEO of Florida's Natural Growers; Shannon Shepp, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Citrus; Stephen Callaham, Executive Vice-President/CEO of Dundee Citrus Growers Association and Mike Sparks, Executive Vice-President/CEO of Florida Citrus Mutual.

Each of the panel members spoke on different aspects of the industry and the positive things happening as well as the struggles taking place. Although the industry has seen tough times they all seemed to have a common belief in the strength of the Citrus Industry and the growers as a whole.



# Meet

## Class X Member Kiley Harper-Larsen

Kiley Harper-Larsen is a passionate agricultural advocate, farmer, nurserywoman and comprehensive compliance consultant. She and her husband Nicholas and son John live in Pahokee --the heart of the Everglades Agricultural Area . She has recently decided to combine her love of crisis communication, compliance and brand management into a new business platform called Cover Your Assets. Kiley is a graduate of both the University of Florida and Auburn University, having earned a masters degree and bachelors degree from these institutions respectively.



## Moments & Musings from Seminar Sessions

-Kiley Harper-Larsen

### Leadership Goal Setting

Valerie McKee gathered Class X for a presentation and exercise on “Leadership Goal Setting.” In addition to learning what each of us truly value personally and professionally, we worked at developing a vision statement and mission statement with measurable goals. What an eye-opening experience! I had an important realization during this session. I have been so focused on solving immediate issues for clients that I had no written vision or mission for my company, The Ag Safety Lady. I am happy to say that I do now and it

will soon spur my company into a new avenue for brand protection called “Cover Your Assets.” During this session, we also wrote a letter to ourselves that will be delivered next year. I had never written a letter to myself—let’s be honest; I struggle with Thank You notes. So, in true Brad Paisley “Letter to Me” style, I had an emotional experience and included some humor. Who needs to cry your eyes out again in a year, right? I look forward to reading this letter and understanding how impactful this session was to me.



## CPR Training

Have you ever saved someone's life? I have not, but I am ready to once again! The science for saving someone through CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, change often, so it is important to update your training every few years. Let these points guide you for updated CPR understanding:

1. Yell for assistance before starting CPR and, if possible, call 911.
2. Make sure the area is safe before you enter.
3. Check the person's carotid artery (found on the side of the neck) with two of your fingers while looking at a watch or clock. Count the beats aloud.
4. Move the person to the floor because good chest compressions can not occur on a bed or desk. You better have some stamina or someone else trained an ready to give help—100 to 120 chest compressions a minute while counting aloud are needed.
5. You do not have to give someone mouth to mouth anymore. Good thing because microbiologically your mouth is dirtier than most toilets.
6. Continue chest compressions until emergency medical assistance arrives or use an automated external defibrillator (AED). A decent AED costs around \$1000-\$1500 and can be a residual cost savings on your worker's compensation insurance.

Our instructor, Eric, also shared with us a few emergency assistance stories that even made this strong stomach sister a little weak in the knees.



“Fun fact:

Hardee County has no natural, manmade lakes other than those from reclaimed land.”



## Mosaic South Forty Mine, Reclamation Area and Agricultural Operations

UF/IFAS Agricultural Communications Graduate Heather Nedley and her Mosaic staff expertly coordinated an educational tour of the South Forty Mine, a fully-operational phosphate mine and mill in rural Hardee County. The scale of the operation can only be described as what the Lilliputians must have thought when they entered Gulliver's realm. The mine operations stretched for miles with massive drag lines being operated by a skilled equipment operator inside an excavator that looked like it belonged in the Star Wars trilogy. Our entire van full of class members and the tour guide could have driven into the massive earth shovel and still had room for a Toyota Prius. Mosaic is focused on continual reclamation as soon as a site is no longer viable and keeps community relations as a top priority. They have community stakeholder boards at each mining site. Staff participate in numerous charitable events each year and volunteer hours at schools and work to build houses.



Locally, the company hosts an annual, free steak dinner complete with all the fixings, Santa Claus and gifts and a bluegrass band each year at Hardee Lakes Park. Class X had a delicious lunch at the Mosaic Community Center at Hardee Lakes Park and enjoyed a Q&A session with staff members. We learned the background, cost and corporate communication and active response strategy concerning the “water loss incident” that made headlines around the USA in 2016. We also learned that Mosaic is actively involved in farming in both land leases and joint ventures for cattle, sod and citrus as well as seasonal vegetable crops. Afterward, we headed to the Mosaic Agriculture Operation’s Research and Development Farm to learn about their attempts to commercially cultivate olives, pongamia and palm trees on reclaimed land. The



R&D team is constantly seeking opportunities to maximize returns on reclaimed land with minimally invasive, high yielding crops. Staff is interested in getting more joint-ventures with seasonal vegetable and fruit crops.

## ***The Gospel*** according to Gilmer *-Kiley Harper-Larsen*



**Malcom X famously said,** “The media’s the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that’s power. Because they control the minds of the masses.” Given this impactful quote, how can WLIANR’s Class X harness that power? Most producers are simply not skilled naturally in the fine art of communication, but also can not afford a public relations firm on the payroll. Well, sounds like you need a former journalist, television producer and experienced crisis media strategist to provide instruction, right? Montgomery College’s VP of Communications Ray Gilmer (Class IV) taught WLIANR Class X how to prepare, collaborate with other professionals and effectively answer planned and un-planned questions

from diverse media outlets. And, yes, if you are wondering, he did tape team interviews.

Gilmer did not enter the Terrace Hotel in Lakeland, Florida wearing a superhero cape, but I think he left with one...or, maybe I’m now just a “Gilmer Groupie.” With 20 plus years at United Fresh/FFVA and BASF and having helped the produce industry survive the fresh spinach E.coli O157:H7 outbreak in California, Salmonella in Mexican serrano peppers which was originally blamed on Florida tomatoes, and the mother of all food media crises—the Jensen Farms cantaloupe linked *Listeria monocytogenes* outbreak—Gilmer is a seasoned communication veteran. He even spoke to us about some of his battle scars.



For those who do not eat breath, and sleep compliance like me, the Jensen Farms case caused the entire produce industry to wake up on a number of areas. These areas include adding sanitizers to and regularly checking sanitizer strength of wash water, bending to market pressure on globally-benchmarked farm through facility audits like PrimusGFS, SQF and GlobalGAP, and testing facility water, drains, cooling units and even your forklifts for pathogens. Unfortunately, many producers gave up farming cantaloupes after 2011. Consumers demand has not gone back to numbers prior to the Jensen Farms Listeria outbreak.

If you consider these food safety issues and the recent climate of animal and labor welfare group infiltration tactics in Florida and elsewhere, every farm and rancher needs a written communication plan. They also need an authentic, even-keeled and knowledgeable set of internal “truth warriors” who are ready to share information and respond to questions. Unfortunately, video clips can easily turn into accusations and potentially incriminate their brand. Another food industry professional once told me, “Sometimes, you don’t win a compliance battle; you just survive it.”

Below, you will find key “Media Survival Tips” from Ray Gilmer:

- Understand your real objective for doing the interview and focus your talking points on that objective
  - Repeat your core messages and provide illustrative details
  - Do your research on the reporter with previous articles and background and try to develop rapport
    - Ask for questions in advance and who they have interviewed prior and who they plan to interview after you
    - Be prepared to answer touchy questions about current issues like immigration, social welfare, outbreaks, environmental regulation, and water and property use
    - If you make an offensive tweet, delete it and post a new tweet explaining yourself. Better yet, don’t make offensive Tweets!
    - Have an American flag on a wall ready. When discussing topics about trade, immigration or just struggles in farming, it matters what is behind you in the shot. Our flag still stands for freedom and is a powerful symbol that lends strength to your message.

- If you are ambushed for an interview, you should respond politely and ask them to schedule a time with you later. Do not respond with a hand in the camera lense or expletives. You may live in infamy online.

- Consider following all interviews with a consistent Twitter and Facebook post restating your message and points

- An “on background” request means that a reporter does not yet have an angle and you do not know how your quotes may be used.

- SME = subject matter expert. If you are not one on the subject, do not pretend to be a SME.

- Messages should be simple and concise. Can your kid understand what you are trying to say? How about your grandmother?

- Block and bridge = You do not have to answer a question, but can use it as a launching pad for your messages.

- Do not wait for the right question to happen. Get your message out early.

- Ask the reporter questions. What media do they work for; why today, why you, are other people interviewed, what did they say, when is the story running. Ask for a chance to get the story straight by seeing a copy before publishing

- Ask these questions to yourself before agreeing to the interview and afterward. Will the story benefit me/my company/industry, how can it backfire, who will see it, are you really the best spokesperson, is the reporter fair?

Learning from history and experienced professionals, preparing your statements, understanding your audience and the reporter’s angle can lead to a great interview. A quality interview can also yield new customers and media perspectives regularly. “The Gospel According to Gilmer” as well as his intense interview process, made Class X disciples of an often used mnemonic “Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.” We also had way too much fun watching others and ourselves get interviewed!



# “A Cup of Joe” with Dr. Joe



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

## “Be A People Person- Effective Leadership Through Effective Relationships”

by *John C. Maxwell*

This book title grabbed me because I feel I have always tried to be a people person and want to have strong relationships with those I interact with on a regular basis. This book did not disappoint. But before I get into the book a little information on the author, John C. Maxwell, seems in order. John Maxwell is an American author, speaker and pastor. He was also the son of a pastor who thought him the importance of being good with people. He has written numerous books, mostly focusing on leadership topics. His books have sold millions of copies, some of which were on the New York Times Best Seller List. He has lead churches in several states including Florida where he serves as a teaching pastor at Christ Fellowship in Palm Beach Gardens. Because of his religious background his books on leadership frequently use biblical examples and analogies.

Be a People Person is about relationships and Maxwell's journey to improve his people skills. He begins the book with Five Ways You Want Others to Treat You: encourage you, appreciate you, forgive you, listen to you and understand you. Maxwell says to accomplish this we need to

develop qualities we admire in others:

- The least important word is: I ( gets the least amount done)
- The most important word: we (gets the most amount done thru relationships)
- The two most important words are: thank you (shows appreciation)
- The three most important words are: all is forgiven (shows forgiveness)
- The four most important words are: what is your opinion? (Shows you are listening)
- The five most important words are: you did a good job (shows encouragement)
- The six most important words are: I want to know you better (shows understanding)

“People don't care how much you know, Until they know how much you care.”

The book's eleven chapters explore these attributes, but chapter 11, Developing a Winning Team, explores what we as leaders need to accomplish to become successful – learn how to help others become successful both as individuals and as teams. Maxwell provides guidance of how to make a successful team by learning how to hire the right people and let those go who are helping the team. He points out that winning teams:

- Play to win
- Take risks
- Keep improving
- Care about each other

According to Maxwell, the basic truth to take away from this book is “People don't care how much you know, Until they know how much you care.” It is a quick read of 192 pages. Read it and become a better People Person.



# **MORE PHOTOS** from Seminar IX!





# Coordinator's Corner

*"Where there is no vision, the people perish"*

*-Valerie McKee, Program Coordinator*

This "Coordinator's Corner" starts with an excerpt from a blog post I wrote four years ago:

“ It was 3:30 in the afternoon. The 50lb. neon green plastic kayak was scorching hot to the touch. The black oar was even hotter, but that couldn't stop me. With my floppy straw hat and my Costas, I felt outfitted enough to take on the Florida sun that brightly beamed over our little canal. I splashed some saltwater on my vessel and paddle instrument, and then I dipped my legs into the ocean on either side of the kayak. The saltwater burned my skin, reminding me that I had shaved my legs the night before. Still, my heart yearned for an adventure, and the kayak was my ticket to going wherever I wanted on the flat waters behind Big Torch Key.

After paddling on down the winding canal where our family's rented vacation home is located, I finally made it to the front. Like a painting, my view of the open bay in between the two main islands was flawless, with flat waters that sparkled from the sun's reflection as far as I could see.

I made up my mind that I wanted to be smart about where I would go, knowing that I would be tired on the stretch heading back home. The wind seemed to be blowing westward, as the smallest of crinkles in the water moved steadily in that direction. I decided to then paddle east against the wind and towards the many oceanfront houses that decorated Big Torch's edge. I paddled and paddled, pushing and pulling my arms forward and back in opposite directions. The front of my little kayak bounced up and down as cut through the small waves that pushed against it. I could hardly see the ocean bottom because of what little wind blew and blurred the surface, even though the water was no more than 2-3 feet deep and clear.

But there was one house, one two-story tannish home with a long wooden dock

out front that was probably 3/4 or close to a mile away from our canal that I had set my sights on. With everything within me, I wanted to reach it. I wanted to brag to my parents and parent's friends who would be joining us later that evening that I had made it that far, that my arms and my kayak were enough to get there.

In FFA, the student organization that I was a part of throughout my middle and high school years and beyond, there is a method used to explaining and teaching the concept of goal-setting. "S.M.A.R.T." goals stand for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. If your goal was all of these things, you were set to go forth and conquer; your kayak would be turned in the right direction and your destination would be reached soon enough.

However, as convenient and cute as the "S.M.A.R.T." acronym is for the purposes of teaching goal-setting, I feel like there was yet a valuable question left out of the conversation. This question came to me as I found myself exhausted and half-way to my tan house goal. I then realized that even though the wind had been blowing against me all this time, the tide had been pushing me forward, making it easier to go in that direction. This meant that to turn around and head for home would require much more energy on my part than what I had expended to paddle that far. But there was no way I could stop before reaching my goal destination.

*"WHY???" Why did I have to paddle that far? Why did I WANT to paddle that far? What was my motivation to reach this goal? Would I be a failure if I turned around sooner? Would I feel ashamed if my parents asked me how far I went and I would point to halfway between where I started and where only I knew I wanted to end up? ”*

During Seminar IX, I had the grandest privilege to facilitate a session with Class X on

the topics of vision, mission, and goal setting. For those of you like me who still get confused between vision and mission, "...based on your Core Values, a Vision Statement describes the ideal future state of something... after you accomplish what you set out to accomplish in your Mission Statement." Whereas, "...based on your Vision Statement, a Mission Statement describes what you need to accomplish because of your Core Values."

My role in the session was to introduce these concepts to the Class and then guide them through the process of thinking through their core values, vision, mission, and goals in their personal and professional lives. In case you didn't know this already, Class X is chock-full of incredible leaders with inspiring visions, missions, and goals for the future! I was so humbled to hear them share these with each other, and I was moved by their sincere passion and honesty.

However, what grounded me most in the session was realizing that Class X, a group of established and recognized leaders in Florida's agriculture and natural resources industry, all shared areas for improvement, parts of their lives where they dreamed of more, doing more, serving more. Within Class X members are visions for themselves, for their communities, and for their industry. They aren't satisfied with the status quo or with settling. These visions, empowered by their core values, are what will motivate them to be successful leaders. Their visions are their WHY; vision is what will sustain them to achieve their goals.

From strawberries to blueberries, from airboats to trolleys, from CPR to media training, and from phosphate mines to citrus groves, Seminar IX covered the gambit of topics in west-central Florida. With just one more seminar before the international trip and graduation, it is overwhelming to think of the issues Class X has been exposed to in less than two years. It would be easy for them to get lost in what to do next after the program ends, easy to give up after paddling against the wind for too long (and truthfully, they will encounter some pushback in their pursuits), easy to settle for just what they've accomplished thus far, easy if it were not for the visions they hold.



## WEDGWORTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

*Developing Leaders for Florida Agriculture & Natural Resources*

For more information about the  
**Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and  
Natural Resources**

*please see our website:*

**wedgworthleadership.com.**

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