LEAD New York and the Wedgworth Leadership Institute (Florida) Have Joint Meeting in Washington, DC

(Excerpts re-printed from the WLI Lets Reflect newsletter)

By Emma Ezell, WLI, and Jessica Gaige, LEADNY

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 form 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 form 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 continued on page 4
I am pleased to be able to share news with you about a major gift that will provide support for our program long into the future.

The Dairylea Legacy Endowment Fund, established in 2014 at the successful completion of the merger of Dairylea and Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), will provide support on a perpetual basis to the greater Northeast agriculture community by fostering a better understanding of the importance of dairy farming & production agriculture through support for agricultural leadership development programs, education and wellbeing within the dairy industry, youth and student studies in the agriculture sector and other programs that highlight the importance of research and awareness of dairy and agriculture.

In establishing the fund, Dairylea board members designated the Empire State Food and Agricultural Leadership Institute, or LEAD New York, to be the perpetual recipient of a portion of the fund’s annual earnings. The remaining earnings will be distributed annually to a variety of other programs. "Dairylea, Dairy Marketing Services, DairyOne, DFA, and individual employees at these organizations have always been generous annual supporters of our program. This gift solidifies that support for the long term, a gesture for which we are both honored and grateful" said Larry Van De Valk, Executive Director of the program.

Currently, there are over 400 LEAD New York alumni. These individuals serve in leadership positions in private business, local, state and federal government positions, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Over a dozen LEAD New York alumni have served Dairylea and its affiliated organizations in management roles, and countless others are members of the cooperative. I like to think that our history with Dairylea (now DFA) serves as a great example of the mutually beneficial relationships our program has with a number of different food and agricultural organizations throughout the Northeast.

As mentioned above, this cooperative has been a long-time and consistent supporter of our program. In return, some of our graduates serve in leadership roles for the cooperative. Indirectly, all of our graduates contribute to a more vibrant food and agricultural system, which benefits not only the dairy sector, but our entire region.

In other good fundraising news, the Northeast Agricultural Education Foundation (NAEF) has once again stepped up as our sponsor for the Class 15 Fellows International Study Trip to South Africa. They provided one $25,000 gift last year and another $25,000 gift this year, making them the major sponsor for this capstone experience for the Fellows Program.

And finally, we recently received notification of another major endowment level gift from the American Agriculturist Foundation. Stay tuned for a more formal announcement of this significant award.

Many thanks to Dairylea (DFA), the American Agriculturist Foundation, and the NAEF! 🌱
**SAVE THE DATE:**
**ILAC in Colorado, August 5-8, 2015**
The Colorado Ag Leadership Program (CALP) is pleased to announce they are the hosting the 2015 International Leadership Alumni Conference (ILAC) August 5-8, 2015 in Denver. For additional information about ILAC, CALP and its commitment to leadership development, please visit www.ilac-conference.com or www.coloagleaders.org.

**We’re Moving!**
Now that the Warren Hall renovation is complete, our office will be moving back over to that building in early January. Our new address will be: LEAD New York, 275B Warren Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Telephone, email and website will all remain the same. If you are in the neighborhood, stop in for a visit!

**Nominations sought for LEAD New York Outstanding Alumni Award**
LEADNY will once again be recognizing one of its own with our Outstanding Alumni Award, to be presented at the Class 16 Fellows Commencement Ceremony in Ithaca on April 17, 2015. If you know of a deserving alumnus that should be recognized for their leadership contributions since completing our program, please nominate them by contacting our office ASAP!

**Howland and Holtz Awarded Pro-Dairy Agriservice Award**
Corwin Holtz (class 7) of Holtz-Nelson Dairy Consultants, was recently honored with the Pro-Dairy Agriservice Award, in appreciation and recognition of outstanding contributions to NYS agriculture through support of the Pro-Dairy Program. Congratulations, Corwin!

**SAVE THE DATE:**
**We hope to see you at the NYS Ag Society Annual Forum, Thursday, January 8**
As always, the NYS Ag Society Annual Forum serves as one of the largest gatherings of LEADNY alumni for the entire year. We encourage you to attend and to take advantage of this tremendous networking opportunity. And don’t forget there will be a hospitality suite hosted by the current class following the dinner program!

**Travel Opportunity to the Netherlands in February**
The Atlantic Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) – a sister leadership program from the Canadian Maritimes – has extended an invitation to LEADNY alumni to join their program for an agricultural study tour to the Netherlands in February. Recently, several of our alumni joined a similar tour to Ireland with the Ontario leadership program, and had a wonderful time. If interested, contact Scott Allen at Worldwide Central Travel for more details: (mailto:scott@worldwide.on.ca).

**News**
**You Can Use**

**Young Promoted to Deputy Director of NYFB Public Policy**
Kelly Young (class 13) was recently promoted to Deputy Director of New York Farm Bureau’s Public Policy Department. She was previously Sr. Associate Director for National Affairs. Kelly is one of many LEADNY alumni serving in leadership roles at NYFB. Congratulations, Kelly!

**Friend of the Daniel Parrish Witter Agricultural Museum – Membership Drive**
The Daniel Parrish Witter Agricultural Museum, built at the NYS Fairgrounds in 1928, shares the story of New York’s rich agricultural and rural heritage with thousands of visitors annually. The Friends of the Witter Agricultural Museum, an educational non-profit 501(c)3 organization, was founded in 1998 to support the operation of the Museum and the development of its exhibits and educational programs, some of which the Friends create and help fund. We have been concentrating efforts on recruiting new and younger members to join the Friends. Membership truly has its benefits, including knowing you are helping to preserve our agricultural past for today and future generations. The Witter Museum pioneered the use of demonstrations to educate, a very innovative approach to museum education in the early 1900s. The Friends organization is similarly forward-thinking, helping people to appreciate the past by making connections to the present to promote understanding. Please consider joining us, to enjoy the camaraderie of individuals with common interests and a desire to celebrate the continuing tradition of excellence of New York’s agricultural industry. For membership information, please Bob Welcher, Membership Chair at (315) 652 - 6310 or at bobwelcher@verizon.net. To learn more about the Museum and the Friends’ organization, please visit http://www.nysagsociety.org/witter-agricultural-museum/.

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LEADNY thanks the following individuals and businesses who have invested in the future leadership of our industry and communities:

OVER $50,000:
Northeast Agricultural Education Foundation, Inc.

OVER $10,000:
CHS Foundation

$5,000 - $9,999:
Friends of Pro-Fac Fund
Cargill Incorporated
BASF Corporation
Eastern Produce Council

$2,500 - $4,999:
Lowell Smith Circle of Courage Fund
Erie and Niagara Insurance
New York Wine & Grape Foundation
Walnut Ridge Dairy (Hardie, Palladino, Fleming)
Dairy Farmers of America
New York Farm Bureau
James Vincent
Laurie Griffen

$1,000 - $2,499:
Brett Kreher
New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
Corwin Holtz
Keith Pierce
Saputo Dairy Foods
Jonathan Burns
Craig Yunker
Mark Bitz
Long Island Farm Bureau
McCormick Farms, Inc.
Midstate Mutual Insurance Company
NBT Bancorp
New York State Agricultural Society
Northeast Ag & Feed Alliance, Inc.
Sunoco, Inc
John Kast
Kenneth Mattingly
Dave Rockwell
Greg Wickham

$500 - $999:
Edwin Fessenden
Roger LaMont
John Mueller
James McKee
Andrew Rice
Jim Walker
Larry Van De Valk
Roberta Severson
Falcone Farms, Inc.
Garden Trends
Southview Farm L.P.
Robert Call
Richard Call
Malachy Coyne
Leonard DeBuck
David Emerson
Thomas Facer
Brian Monckton
Margaret Murray
Pete Nesbitt
Timothy Rose
John Ruszkiewicz
Douglas Shelmidine
Julie Suarez
Judith Whittaker

$250 - $499:
David Pugh
Triple Crown Nutrition, Inc.
Harold Smith
Wm. Paul McDowell
Russell Kelly
Michael Oleksak
Beverly Stamp
Kate Wheeler
Berry Brothers
Lumber, LLC
Carolina Eastern-Crocker LLC
New York Apple Sales, Inc.
Willet Dairy, Inc.
Yankee Farm Credit, ACA
Henry Adams
Gregory Albrecht
Tricia Bauer
Briana Beebe
Robert Bitz
Justin Brown
Richard Butler
Karen Cartier
Thomas Cagroge
Bruce Dehm
Thomas Felton

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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.

Roth said that 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 form 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.

**LEADNY Perspectives**

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 form each other. Our ability to go forth and learn from our experiences is what makes us leaders. 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 the 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! 🌍
Over the past year, Kevan Lamm, Program Coordinator for the Wedgeworth Leadership Institute and Doctoral Student at the University of Florida, conducted an evaluation study involving alumni from member programs of the International Association of Programs for Agricultural Leaders (IAPAL). The main objective of the study was to identify and classify expected behaviors of leadership development program (LDP) alumni, and to use those behaviors as the basis for program needs assessment. Results are now available. The summary report is 30 pages long, so we will only highlight a few results here; copies of the full report will be made available via the “alumni” tab on our program website (www.leadny.org).

Surveys were sent electronically to over six thousand alumni from 28 leadership development programs. Over 3,600 responses were received (a 58% response rate), making this one of the most comprehensive agricultural leadership development program surveys completed to date. LEADNY alumni were well represented in the survey, with 157 responses (a 60% response rate).

Some of the results of the survey were not all that surprising, with data confirming what we already believed to be true. For example, two-thirds of our LDP participants are male, and one-third female. (Women are slightly better represented in LEADNY, with a 43% participation rate.) The average age of all participants at program commencement was 40 years. Ninety-one percent of all program respondents are white (98% in New York), with all other racial/ethnic groups making up less than 10% of the population. The vast majority of respondents are college educated, a bachelor’s degree being the most common. Master’s degrees are not uncommon. Most participants work full time, with private/for-profit employers being the most common. Organizational size varied widely, but in the national sample, most respondents worked for small organizations (1 to 4 people). In New York, most respondents work for mid-sized organizations (20 – 99 people). Finally, most respondents (71%) reported working directly in the agriculture or natural resources sector.

One demographic characteristic of note is participants’ work level at the beginning of the program as compared to their current (i.e. post-completion) work level. As can be seen in the figures below, when participants start a LDP, 15% are in a non-supervisory role, 37% are in a managerial role, and 28% are an owner, CEO or president (i.e. executive) role (8% responded “not applicable”). Currently, however, 15% report being a non-supervisory employee, 36% report being at the managerial level and 36% report being at the executive level (13% NA). Post commencement, the largest decline is in the non-supervisory category, and the largest gain is in the executive category. While we must be careful about making unwarranted causal statements, we can presume that after graduation from their respective LDP, some alumni move from non-supervisory roles to managerial roles, and some in managerial roles move into executive level positions. Some also retire, which might explain the slight increase in “not applicable” responses. (See figures 1 and 2)

Figure 1: Work Level at Beginning of Program

- Owner, CEO, President, 919, 28%
- Manager, 1209, 37%
- Nonsupervisory employee, 876, 27%
- Not applicable, 244, 8%

Figure 2: Current Work Level

- Owner, CEO, President, 1224, 36%
- Manager, 1196, 36%
- Nonsupervisory employee, 497, 15%
- Not applicable, 432, 13%
All respondents also ranked seven competency clusters in order of importance, as follows:

1. Critical thinking, strategic planning and visioning (NY ranked #2)
2. Communication (NY ranked #1)
3. Action orientation (NY ranked #4)
4. Leadership process (NY ranked #3)
5. Interpersonal traits and characteristics
6. Leadership skill
7. Change orientation

Mean scores between items 1 and 2, and items 3 and 4 were very close. The slight variation in importance ranking between the national sample and NY respondents is likely due to subtle differences in the curricula of the respective program. In other words, each program emphasizes specific topics more or less than their sister programs around the country. Most programs are in relative agreement on the importance of each of these competency clusters. Not only were these competency clusters important their respective LDP curricula, but most respondents ranked them of similar importance to their current positions, meaning the importance of these competencies carries over into employment.

In the national sample, 58% of respondents indicated they were “very satisfied” with their LDP, and 36% were “satisfied”, (2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) for an overall satisfaction rate of 96%. In New York, those percentages were even better, with 73% responding “very satisfied” and 25% Satisfied (98% overall)! (See figure 3.)

Respondents were also asked about the number and type of leadership roles they serve in. (See figure 4.) Eighty-seven percent (89% for NY) said they were serving in additional leadership roles. Most respondents served in between 1 and 5 additional leadership roles, with 5 being the most common. The number of responses for 6 or more leadership roles tapered off dramatically. The lesson here: “If you want something done, give it to a busy person, but only up to a point.” In other words, most leaders can probably handle serving in several simultaneous leadership roles, but we all hit an overload wall – and the magic number appears to be 5 roles. Not surprisingly, most of the roles held by LDP alumni are those of board member (including board officers), committee chair, or volunteer. Most of these roles exist within non-profit, advocacy group, philanthropic, education or service organizations.

If you are a “big numbers” person, consider this: These 3600 LDP alumni respondents have provided 64,963 years of leadership service in 8,535 organizations. Most work full time, participate in continuing education, and hold between one and five leadership roles outside of their primary employment. And based on their upward mobility in the workforce and their extremely high level (96%) of satisfaction with their respective program, I think we can safely say that our programs deserve at least a little credit for developing a lot of leaders for our organizations and communities!


Figure 4: Number of Leadership Positions Individuals Have Held
Be a LEADER in Agriculture...
Be a Part of CLASS 16

- Applications available 1/1/15 at www.leadny.org
- Application Deadline is 3/1/15
- Follow us on

WISHING YOU A PEACEFUL AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!
YOUR FRIENDS AT LEAD NY

YES, I recognize the tremendous value of the LEAD New York program and wish to support it with a gift.

I have enclosed a check for: □ $100 □ $250 □ $500 □ $1,000 □ Other $________

Please charge my □ VISA □ MasterCard □ American Express for the amount indicated above.

Acct. #:_____________________________ Exp.____/____ Signature:________________________

This is a □ personal gift □ corporate gift □ We are interested in sponsoring a LEAD NY workshop session or event.

Does your employer match gifts? □ Yes □ No

I pledge to make future payments: $________ on____________         $________ on__________

Name:_________________________________ Company:____________________________

Address:________________________________ Phone:___________________________

City, State, Zip:________________________ Email:__________________________

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to LEADNY, please fill out and mail in this form with your contribution to: LEADNY, Cornell University, 275B Warren Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853.