

The NEED for LEAD

We hear about people all the time in the agriculture industry – you know the ones – the ones who didn't grow up on a farm. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, less than two percent of the U.S. population today grew up on farm or ranch. Technically, I am one of those people.

I didn't grow up as an active member or even know about 4H or FFA and I certainly didn't know about the variety of career opportunities there were in agriculture. I knew where my food came from and that farmers were important to feeding the world, but I never knew how technically advanced, specialized or diverse farmers and their operations were and still are today. I spent a significant amount of my youth working on my aunt and uncle's 'hobby' farm, which at the time, I didn't know it was a hobby. I attended farm shows, learned how to drive a tractor, and hayed hundreds of acres every summer, but it wasn't until later in life that I realized their farm was not a true representation of modern production agriculture.

Oddly enough, years later my career path took me from the nuclear power industry to the dairy industry. And, it wasn't until then that I started seeing the agriculture industry for the wealth of opportunities it offers, and the responsibility we have to connect the remaining 98 percent of the U.S. population to the people who feed our country, and the world.

This is the reason I applied for Class 17 of LEAD NY. I wanted to learn more about agriculture, become a bigger asset to the farmers I work for, and maybe, become a better leader in the process. For me, the need for LEAD was personal.

If you have been following Class 17 on Facebook or through these newsletters, you are seeing how the LEAD NY program is providing a platform for our class to explore the challenges that face the agriculture industry. We are currently in the second year of the program and as a class, we find ourselves building upon our personal development skills and finding ways to utilize our personal strengths and weaknesses. This deeper connection to our personalized attributes allows us a better understanding how we can contribute to our farms, businesses, organizations, and even our families to resolve conflicts, bring forth new ideas, and challenge the status quo.

During every session we talk about the challenges in front of us as an industry. We speak of the changing dynamics influencing consumers and the impact this has on production agriculture. We bring our own area of expertise, personal bias and pas-

By Jennifer Huson, Dairy Farmers of America, Class 17 Fellow

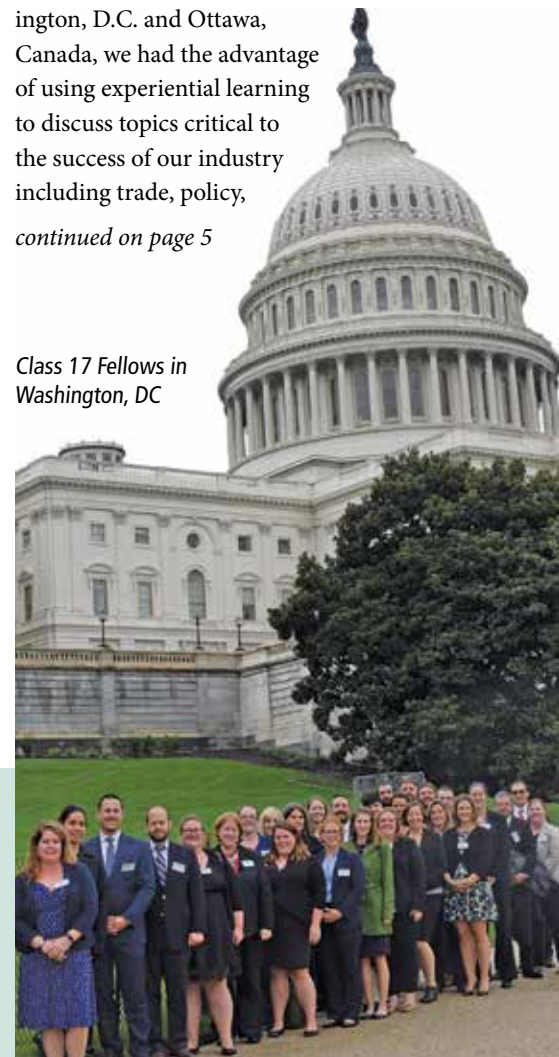


sion for the opportunities to the forefront. Through discussion, we talk about solutions. And through solutions we are determined to find, and experience change in the agriculture industry. For our class, the need for LEAD is professional.

Recently during our sessions in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa, Canada, we had the advantage of using experiential learning to discuss topics critical to the success of our industry including trade, policy,

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Class 17 Fellows in Washington, DC



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PERSPECTIVES

By Larry Van De Valk,
Executive Director, LEAD New York



Over half of all kickoffs result in a touchback. It takes a team to march the ball down the field, and to recruit an applicant!

It's football season, and I thought a football metaphor might be a good way to make my point about recruitment in this *Perspectives* column...



According to ESPN's football statistics website, fewer than half of all kickoffs in the NFL are returned by the receiving runner, meaning most kickoffs result in a "touchback", where the receiving team automatically begins their offensive possession on their 25 yard line. They need to march the ball another 75 yards down the field if they hope to score a touchdown. Furthermore, during the 2017 season, only 7 of 1003 (0.7%) kickoff return attempts resulted in a touchdown. The point is that scoring a touchdown on a kickoff is a very rare thing, and most of the time a lot of additional effort is required for a receiving team to get the ball into the end-zone.

So what does all of this have to do with recruitment for LEAD New York? The

recruitment equivalent of a touchdown in football would be a completed application - received by our March 1 deadline - by a well-qualified applicant.

We are just beginning our recruitment efforts for class 18. During this time, our alumni, current class members and other stakeholders frequently send us the names of people they consider to be good prospects for participation in our program - this is great, and we appreciate your help! But I want to make the point that this is the equivalent of a touch-back in my football metaphor. A name in our prospective applicant database is just that - a name in a database. We have a long way to go before that name turns into a completed application on March 1st.

Throughout the fall and winter, Terri and I will be attending multiple industry events, running ads in trade publications, writing recruitment articles for newsletters, and sending brochures, letters and emails to prospects in our database. The football metaphor offers another valuable lesson here as well: Touchdowns aren't scored by individual (mine or Terri's) effort, but through the contributions of all team members. So it is with LEAD recruitment - we need your help.

Like any marketing campaign, if the receiver of the message doesn't know or at least recognize the sender, all of that messaging may go in one ear and out the

other (or straight into the recycle bin). This is where you come in. If you know a person well enough to recommend them to us, then chances are you know them at least a little better than we do! We need *you* to deliver the LEAD message to our prospective applicants. Why should they participate? What will they get out of it? What did you gain from the program (if an alumnus), or how do you benefit from our network of leaders (even if you are not an alumnus)? Share your personal connection to the program - that is a message they will pay attention to.

There's one more lesson to be learned from our football metaphor. It usually takes multiple plays (combinations of passes and runs) for an offensive team to reach the goal line. Rarely do teams get there in just one play (sorry, I didn't look up that NFL statistic). So it is with our recruitment efforts. We rarely get a completed application from a qualified applicant after just one contact with them. Contact your prospects often. Enlist the help of another LEAD alumnus, class member or other stakeholder to also make contact with the prospect. Check on them as the March 1st deadline approaches to make sure they have submitted their application. If they haven't, ask them why not and try to address their concerns.

Recruitment, like football, is a sustained team effort. The LEADNY team needs your help to make sure we score some recruitment touchdowns! 🍀



CLASS 17 DONOR ROSTER

The roster below represents all donations received for Class 17. The donation period represented is July 1, 2017 through November 7, 2018. If you have made a donation since this issue went to press, or we have inadvertently omitted your name, please accept our apologies.

Donors in BOLD have established endowment accounts for LEADNY. Donors in italics are LEAD alumni.

We sincerely appreciate your continued investment in our program. Without your support, we would not be able to continue to offer this high-quality leadership development experience to our future industry and community leaders. Thank you!

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SPOTLIGHT ON...

**Tom Gerow (Class 12), Eric LaClair (Class 16)
and Ty Bowgren (Class 17)**

Teamwork Influences Leadership at Wagner Hardwood



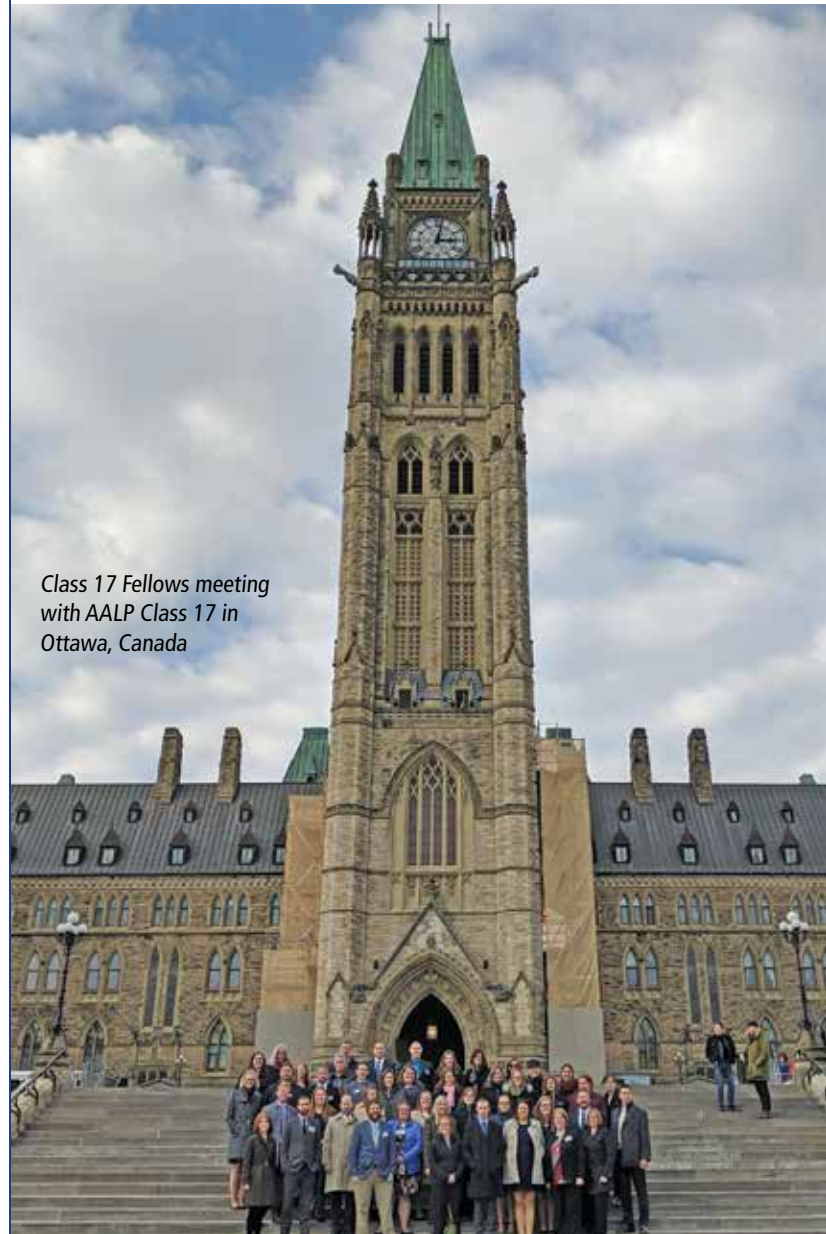
AS WITH MOST COMPANIES, OWEGO, NY BASED WAGNER HARDWOODS realized that one of the many things that contributes to success is positive teamwork among all of its players. Wagner Hardwoods operates three sawmills in Owego, Cayuta, and Nineveh. Green Lumber in Davenport New York, owned by parent company Baillie Lumber, is also managed by Wagner Hardwoods. With many staff spread over several locations, it became important for Wagner to focus on leadership in order for all these sawmills to coordinate for the best possible results. That is where LEADNY entered into our leadership building program. Tom Gerow, Wagner's General Manager is a Class 12 graduate along with Eric LaClair our head forester (Class 16). Tom began sharing his leadership knowledge about ten years ago with Eric joining him three years ago. Ty Bowgren, Head of Procurement joined the LEAD program two years ago. This combination of leadership put Wagner in a very advantageous position to build teams at all levels of management that are proof positive of the influence the LEAD program has on overall leadership throughout the Wagner Hardwood Company.

Tom, Ty, and Eric agree that LEADNY provides a solid foundation in leadership skills that enables them to share and build upon with all the managers and supervisors throughout the Wagner companies. LEADNY spurs our motivation to become better communicators and builds self-confidence in our abilities as leaders. We learn self-awareness along with the importance of listening in our role as leaders. With the training from LEAD we have all become better at teambuild-

ing within our organization. Putting together good teams that can work and problem solve together often surfaces some conflict , but with LEAD training we are now better equipped to deal with day to day conflict before it grows into an organizational issue. We are also successfully building networks to enable Wagner to form coalitions with many other leaders in our industry as well as with state and local governments.

While Wagner has always strived for success and optimal growth, the LEAD program affords additional skills and opportunities for our organization. With growth comes unforeseen risks and requires decisive problem solving at all levels of the organization. With our ability to teach others and be role models of ethical leadership we can lead our teams to success regardless of what problems we may face. Our LEAD participants develop a sense of honesty and the ability to be straightforward in dealing with all our teams. As we build our own ethical behavior our teams follow and become cohesive in their work. By training our employees about the importance of self- awareness they have become more confident teammates. We have seen that through our confidence we can inspire all workers to trust in team work and the decisions that drive that work. LEAD training provides participants opportunity to develop courage which in turn enables them to delegate work to the teams they lead. It is important that we all understand that with clear, consistent communication our teams will maintain high morale and feel important to the success of our organization. LEAD is an important aspect to Wagner’ s ability to build leaders at all levels of management.

Tom, Eric and Ty have seen our employees’ confidence grow and we more easily place our trust in our employees’ ability to solve the difficult challenges we place before them. By inspiring others to learn more and become more we are able to not just motivate, but also inspire others to realize the vision and goals of Wagner Hardwoods. The LEAD program has had a positive influence over the way Wagner visualizes leadership and the role it plays in the success of an organization. Our participants have experienced numerous opportunities to learn and grow their individual leadership skills and share them throughout the various branches of our company. Over the years Wagner Hardwoods has become a respected leader in the forest products industry as well as a friend to the communities in which they are located. We look forward to continuing our partnership with LEADNY as we grow our expertise in developing strong leadership and strong teams in achieving our vision for the future. 🌱



*Class 17 Fellows meeting
with AALP Class 17 in
Ottawa, Canada*

The NEED for LEAD

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labor, and much more. We have talked to successful and influential leaders of the U.S. government and watched the Canadian government debate critical issues to their country’s future. We have explored the systems in place for agriculture in terms of what works, what doesn’t, and what needs to change. We have debated with each other as a class and challenged industry representatives with questions about why we do what we do, when will it change and who will help. The need for LEAD in our industry is educational.

I think it’s safe to say, as we continue to work our way through the last half of our LEAD NY journey, our class knows the need for LEAD. We are building a strong network of peers, seeing the opportunities within our industry and ourselves, and we are developing into the next level of leaders in our own communities. We are finding new ways of thinking to bring forth to the agriculture industry because the need for LEAD is truly transformational. 🌱

Kohn Named to "40 Under 40" List

Jenny Crist Kohn (Class 14) was recently named to the Fruit Grower News' Inaugural "40 Under 40" Award, intended to recognize those under the age of 40 "demonstrating strong leadership qualities, innovative thinking and commitment to industry advancement." Jenny is a 5th generation grower at Crist Bros. Orchards in the Hudson Valley, where she manages payroll and budgeting among other leadership roles. Congratulations Jenny!

If you have news to share...

Please send news to lvj4@cornell.edu. We can also run short pieces about funding or job opportunities, as well as upcoming events that might be of interest to our newsletter readers.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

ALUMNI NEWS, OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

\$10,000 is a big carrot!

Won't you apply or encourage another in your region or community to apply for a grant from the NYS Agricultural Society Foundation to support a project to educate youth about agriculture? Application deadline is December 1 at: <http://www.nysagsociety.org/foundation/apply-now/>

AUCTION to be held at the NYS Agricultural Society Annual Forum on Thursday, January 10

Class 17 Fellows will again host both a silent and a live auction at the NYS Agricultural Society Annual Forum on Thursday, January 10 at the Holiday Inn, Liverpool. Silent auction items will be on display and available for bid in the exhibit room throughout the day. Successful bidders can pick up their items following dinner that evening. A few items will be reserved for a live auction – always a fun event - in the LEADNY hospitality suite later that evening. Come and bid often – run up the price on that item your buddy wants so badly! It all goes to a good cause...

Zick, Gallagher pair up to bring "What's On Your Plate" to Milner School of Hartford, CT

All LEAD Fellows are required to do a "Local Issues Leadership Project" in the second year of our program. Many fellows choose to tackle a project with a classmate, which is exactly what Christina Zick (CoBank) and Jean Gallagher (Farm Credit East) are doing in their three-part project. They have been working together to bring agricultural curriculum into their local (urban and suburban) schools over a series of events. Part I involved visiting a couple of 3rd grade classrooms to lead them in a farm web activity, designed to get students to think about how agriculture is a part of their lives every day.



Most recently, they hosted two 3rd grade classes from the Thirman Milner School of Hartford, CT at the 4-H Education Center at Auerfarm, where they helped deliver the "What's On Your Plate" curriculum. The next step in their project will be hosting a teacher training seminar in the spring regarding the Food, Land & People curriculum. Nice job, ladies!





Ag Ambassadors visit the NYS Fair

Nine Ambassador Scholars attended the NYS Fair on August 24 to polish their leadership and advocacy skills, including participating in a leadership workshop led by Larry Van De Valk. Megan Clancy of DFA in Syracuse shared “What struck me was the overview of effective leadership research, and the 67 competencies that have been identified that leaders in multiple situations need to exhibit. There is not a one-size-fits-all recipe. This experience provided by LEADNY was a great stepping stone to develop the skills and knowledge to become an effective leader.” Keep an eye out for the ambassadors at the 2019 forum, and introduce yourself to these aspiring young leaders!

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE to the Class 17 Fellows Fundraising Campaign!

Thank you to all of our donors that have already made a financial contribution to the Class 17 fundraising campaign (see accompanying donor roster). If you haven't yet contributed (or would like to increase your giving level), please use the donation card in this newsletter to send in your contribution today!

As of this printing, we are only about 25% of the way towards our current fiscal year fundraising goal, so we need your help – *please contribute today!*

LEAD Board to engage in strategic planning work in 2019

Among other recommendations coming out of our recent external program review, the LEADNY Board will be tackling a significant re-write of the program's strategic plan in 2019, with the assistance of an external facilitator. Other review recommendations are already being implemented or will be in the near future. Stay tuned for more updates in a future issue of this newsletter.

Class 17 getting ready for **KENYA!**

Class 17 Fellows are eagerly awaiting their study trip to Kenya in February 2019. Of course, a lot of preparation work goes into this trip. In September, we had a panel of speakers talk to us in Washington DC about East African food and development issues. In January, we will have several other speakers give the class some additional information to help them prepare for their experience. Their fall reading assignment – *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein – is also intended to get them to do some deep thinking about what they may learn from their study abroad. Finally, class members have also been sharing lots of articles and other information about the continent and country via their class Facebook page. Stay tuned to follow along on their journey!



This Changes Everything – The Book

Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction
Observer Book of the Year, New York Times Book
Review 100 Notable Books of the Year

Forget everything you think you know about global warming. The really inconvenient truth is that it's not about carbon—it's about capitalism. The convenient truth is that we can seize this existential crisis to transform our failed economic system and build something radically better.

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**CLASS 17 FELLOWS PREPARE
TO TRAVEL TO KENYA IN 2019**
SEE PAGE 7 FOR DETAILS



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Larry Van De Valk, PhD

Executive Director

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