

# e-Cast



Connecting a statewide community of leaders actively engaged in understanding and serving Florida.

Volume I, No. 7, Summer 2016

## 2016 ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

The 2016 Annual Meeting is just TWO weeks away!! We remind you that registration will [close tomorrow, Friday, at 5:00pm](#). If you haven't already, be sure to check out the two **Friday Night Activities** that are still available, and ask your classmates which one they are choosing!

### [SPLITSVILLE LUXURY LANES](#)

A vintage, retro-style bowling alley with a fresh spin on music, dining and entertainment. For \$50 per person, you will get transportation to and from the bowling alley, unlimited private-lane bowling, shoe rental and dinner (pizza, chicken wings... the bowling alley usual fare!). **Family friendly option!**

### [TASTE OF UNIVERSAL CITYWALK](#)

Guests will sample cuisine and specialty drinks from NBC Sports Grill & Brew, The Cowfish and Antojito's Authentic Mexican Food. Buses will depart from the Grand Floridian at 5:30pm. This optional activity is \$60 per person and there are limited seats available. 21 and up only.



### [#BRINGABOOK](#)

**Volunteer Florida** and Connect Florida are excited to team up to host a **#BringABook** project at the Annual Meeting! We are asking all Leadership Florida Annual Meeting participants to bring one or more new or gently-used elementary school level books to the meeting. The books will benefit the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County. Don't forget to **#BringABook** to the conference! For more information, check out our recent [press release](#).

### [DISNEY WORLD](#)

We also encourage you to make the most of your visit to Disney World by taking advantage of all that's available for our members. Please click these links to get more [Disney Info](#) or purchase reduced [Park Tickets](#) for your stay.

If you are all registered and ready to go, be sure to look for our annual "Conventiongram" coming to your inbox soon. This will have everything you need to know before arriving at the Grand Floridian for a magical time. See you soon!

## A MESSAGE FROM CHAIR DEAN RIDINGS



14 class sessions, 42 regional events, and a record-breaking attendance at the Annual Meeting to come... what an incredible year we've had! The highlights for me were the opportunity to work with amazing, talented leaders who are eager to create an even better Florida, and the chance to participate in another class program with this year's Executive Program. I also want to give my most sincere 'thank you' to those who served on the Board of Directors, the Regional Councils, the various committees, and everyone on the Leadership Team for their contributions during our 2015-2016 year. I look forward to continuing to serve Florida alongside you all for years to come.

I hope to see you at Disney World,

Dean Ridings (Class XXVII)  
Chair of Leadership Florida

# #LFAM16

## REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

### CALUSA

The Calusa Region, named after the Native American people who inhabited the southwestern region of Florida, encompasses Charlotte, Desoto, Hardee, Highlands, Manatee and Sarasota counties. This year the Regional Council coordinated a holiday gathering at the home of Carolyn Johnson (Class XVIII). In March, the tight-knit region spent an evening at the nationally-renowned Hermitage Artist Retreat, touring the grounds and listening to a live performance by the New York City-based string quartet ETHEL. The Regional Council concluded the program year with a recap of the inaugural class of the Leadership in Education program, which was generously hosted by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County's John Annis (Class XXXII) and Roxie Jerde (Executive VII).



**Calusa**  
**Members: 123**  
**New Members: 13**  
**Counties: 6**

### [Leadership Team Members in the Calusa Region](#)

#### **Ashley Brown**

*Calusa Regional Chair*  
Executive Director, Women's Resource Center of Manatee

#### **John Annis**

*Calusa Regional Council*  
Senior VP of Community Investment  
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

#### **Bambi Forristall**

*Calusa Regional Council*  
President, Forristall Enterprises, Inc.

#### **Gabriel Hament**

*Connect Calusa Regional Chair*  
Campaign Manager  
Liz Alpert Campaign for Sarasota City Commission

#### **Dave Romine**

*Calusa Regional Council*  
CEO & Co-founder, Agile Thought

#### **Pam Truitt**

*Connect Liaison*  
President, Truitt Consulting, Inc.



Calusa members enjoying a recent Education-focused member event: Patty Petruff (Class VIII), Bradenton Mayor Wayne Poston (Class II) and Lillian Elliott (Class XXXII)

## LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION CLASS I RECAP

The inaugural Leadership in Education program provided an in-depth opportunity to explore education policy from a multidisciplinary and global perspective and how it can impact students here in Florida. As you know, we picked a diverse group of educators and educational leaders for the four-session program which wrapped up in May with closing remarks from past Leadership Florida board chairman and Broward College President, David Armstrong (Class XVIII). Following are a couple of highlights from what members of Education Class I have already done with the knowledge and networks they have built as a result of being in the class.

- One superintendent reported being able to leverage state and federal dollars to increase the connectivity and bandwidth for the schools in his rural community. As of July 1, Internet connection will be 100x faster than it was previously.
- One charter network leader reported how he will be taking a group of legislators from his community and teachers from his charter network to Finland in the fall to learn in person why Amanda Ripley called the students there, "the smartest kids in the world."
- One school board member shared how she heard about one Florida district that is giving the PSAT and the SAT/ACT for free to all students and shared her board passed a budget that included a commitment to do the same.

Thank you to all Leadership Florida members for your continued support of the program. I look forward to working with Trey Csar, President of the Jacksonville Public Education Fund and Jesus Jara, Deputy Superintendent for Orange County Public Schools as co-chairs next year to prepare for Education Class II.

*Brian Dassler*

Brian Dassler (CLF IV, Class XXIII)  
Leadership in Education Program Chair



Left to Right: Mark Porter, Scott Sowell, and Janet Kahn; Jeff Moquin and Trey Csar



Left to Right: Tom Rompella, Jr., Kim Kelling Engstrom (program director) and Tracy Pierce; Mary Jane Tappen, Trey Csar, Marva Johnson, and Brent Balkaran



## CLASS XXXIV RECAP

What a ride it has been! It is challenging to try to describe Class XXXIV's collective experience in just a few sentences, but I would say if there is an overarching theme to our incredible group, it is the friendships made and the greater respect we all have for what makes Florida so unique. We all came from different backgrounds, but we quickly realized as we earned each other's trust that we had a lot more in common than we would have ever guessed. As we traveled across our state, we learned that each of our individual talents and experiences came together to create an amazing group force for the good of our State, and we can't wait to put that power to work. "Money Train" as we call ourselves, has made our State feel more like a community, and we all feel incredibly grateful for this experience.

Choo Choo!

Gus Corbella  
Senior Director of Government Law & Policy, Greenberg Traurig  
Class XXXIV Elected Representative

# #BringABook

presented by  
**Volunteer Florida  
and Connect Florida**

**JUNE 23 - 26**  
Drop off your books at the  
**Leadership Florida  
Annual Meeting**

**DONATE**  
a new or gently used book to promote literacy and support local students

Proudly presented by  
volunteerflorida connect

## AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Leadership Florida is proud to promote our members' literary works.



Karen Moore (Class XIV) has drawn from more than two decades of experience as a leader in the field of advocacy for her new book, "Behind the Red Door: Unlock Your Advocacy Influence and Success."

In "Behind the Red Door," Moore, CEO and Founder of Moore Communications Group, makes the case for advocacy as an essential part of all successful communications campaigns.

Organizations that distinguish themselves from the competition cultivate powerful relationships that transform clients and employees into loyalists and champions. Whether the priorities are to increase revenue, engage in new markets, enhance corporate brands, or affect public policy, advocacy can help accomplish those goals.

"Advocacy is no longer just a tactic used in political campaigns - we've moved beyond 'pass a bill; kill a bill,'" Moore said. "Today, it is about solving issues and effecting change - inspiring collaboration to support causes and rally for brands; it's integrating advocacy tactics with marketing strategies designed to influence decision makers."

Read the first chapter of Karen's book here:  
<http://karenbmoore.com/contact/>

[You can purchase the book here on Amazon!](#)

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Mercy Joy has been a part of the Leadership Florida staff since December 2014, immediately after graduating from Florida State University. Her responsibilities began with overseeing the Annual Meeting, College Leadership Florida and all class program logistics. Today, she is the Director of Member Engagement, overseeing communications and working with the Leadership Team: the Regional Councils, the Board of Directors, and the various committee chairs. Mercy Joy is a certified peer educator and studied



Class XXXIV Classmates in Miami: Gus Corbella, Greg Schwinghammer, Kim Brown, and Monte Lambert

## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT WENDY WALKER



Following Abraham Lincoln's advice (or was it Peter Drucker?) that "the best way to predict the future is to create it," a diverse cross-section of Leadership Florida members met for two days in late April to create a plan for the next 12-24 months. The committee's work was couched within the context of our search for a new executive, and the information gathered and conclusions reached will be extremely valuable to our next president and our volunteer leadership as they create Leadership Florida's future. Many thanks to committee members and to our excellent facilitator, Rena Coughlin, CEO of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, for getting the best from this outstanding group of members.

### Strategic Planning Update Committee

**Dean Ridings, Chair**  
Class XXVII

**Jeff Wahlen, Chair-elect**  
Class XXII

**Terin Cremer**  
Connect III

**Ashley Brown**  
Class XXXI

**Andrew Fay**  
Connect IV

**Carlos Garcia**  
Class XXIX

**Jim Gilmore**  
Class XXIX

**Reeder Glass**  
Class V

**Greg Haile**  
Class XXX

**Ann Henderson**  
Class X

**Lila Jaber**  
Class XIX

**Jeff Johnson**  
Class XXXII

**Ron Sachs**  
Class X

**Chester Spellman**  
Connect IV

**Susan Towler**  
Class XXII

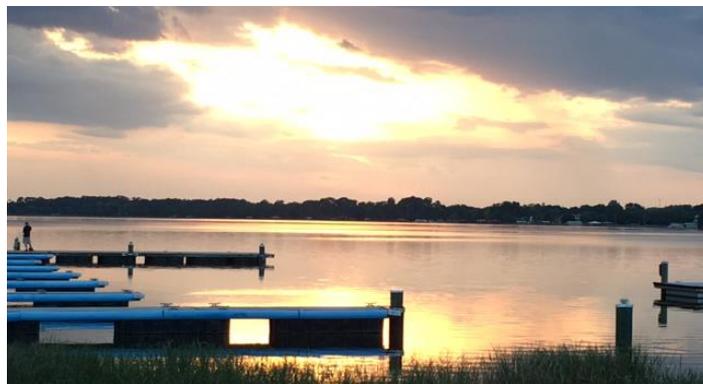
**Vicki Weber**  
Class VIII

P.S. If you haven't read [Mark Howard's editor's page](#) in the June issue of Florida Trend, please take a couple of minutes to do so now. Mark devoted his column to remembering the life and leadership of his late Leadership Florida classmate, Cliff Hinkle, and to Cliff's belief in the value of public service and of Leadership Florida.

Warmly,

Wendy Walker  
President of Leadership Florida

Pictured right: This view from the front porch of the Lakeside Inn in Mt. Dora, the site of our Strategic Planning Meeting, put the "treat" into Retreat.



Media/Communication and Hispanic Marketing at Florida State. Previously, she held communications and event planning internships at Sachs Media Group, the Student Veterans Center and Christian Campus Fellowship, all in Tallahassee. Mercy Joy is proudly from the heart of Florida, Winter Haven, and is a die-hard FSU Seminole.

### **What is your favorite LF memory since joining staff?**

Wow, if only I could pick 50! Seeing the Annual Meeting come together last year was very rewarding after being a part of the team for only 6 months. The last day with "my" class of College Leadership Florida in Orlando sealed one of my all-time favorite weeks. And lastly, the Leadership Team retreat was such a special time for me to meet all those who were dedicating their time and talents to LF - I can't wait for this year's retreat!

### **What podcast are you currently listening to?**

My secret interests are in the world of finance. On the way to work, I love listening to [Dave Ramsey's podcasts](#) on managing money.

### **What is your favorite part of Disney World?**

I'm a sucker for anything Disney World, but their hidden gem is the small Dole Stand in Magic Kingdom. The "Dole Whip" (pineapple sorbet swirled with vanilla ice cream) is a must-try and I've heard they also sell it at the Polynesian, right across the waters from the Grand Floridian!

## UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE

- **June 22:** LF Selection Meeting in Orlando
- **June 23:** LF Board Meeting in Orlando
- **June 23:** Connect Florida Selection Meeting in Orlando
- **June 24:** Connect Florida Board Meeting in Orlando
- **June 23-26:** 2016 Annual Meeting at Disney
- **July 28-30:** LF Team Retreat at The Alford Inn

Remember to check the calendar on the LF website for events.

We'd like to hear from you! Please send photos, story ideas, suggestions, comments, etc. to [communications@leadershipflorida.org](mailto:communications@leadershipflorida.org).



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FLORIDA.