



LeaderReader

APRIL 2021 EDITION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kimberly Berfield, '97



This is no April Foolin'! I am happy to share that our 2021 Class has participated in two comprehensive program days thanks to some of our great alumni volunteers. Wendy Barmore, Patricia Deplasco, Kim Nicholls, Jame Nichols, Debb Pauley, Rosemary Windsor, and Allie Chandler created two robust agendas around Arts & Culture, Business & Technology, Environment, Government & Infrastructure, and Tourism. Katie Gannon will be sharing about these two unique days later in this newsletter.

The 2021 Class will have two similar days during April around mid-county and south Pinellas so they can begin their independent program days in May. While the pandemic has brought many disheartening experiences, it has permitted Leadership Pinellas to offer our program in a different format as discussed over the past three years. We are in the process of collecting informative data so the Board of Trustees can evaluate and determine whether the traditional format or a "regional" approach for these topics provides a stronger opportunity for class members. The Board of Trustees will be certain to update you on the feedback we received and the recommendation we will consider moving forward in the upcoming year.

Over the past two years, the Board of Trustees has discussed establishing an annual signature event focused on developing and enhancing community leadership. This year, I have asked Tim Lima to chair a workgroup to provide an environment scan. They will evaluate the return on investment based on our organization's mission, branding opportunities, and recruitment for future classes made up of diverse emerging leaders in our community. This workgroup has been collaborating over the past two months and will be streamlining a proposal for the Board of Trustees. We look forward to sharing this proposal with you as our community evolves into a safer interpersonal and social environment.

While our traditional program year would come to a conclusion in May, this year's class will extend into June with the hope that we can confirm a visit to Tallahassee in the fall and graduate them in December.

Last spring, the Board of Trustees began to work on concepts to improve awareness of Leadership Pinellas internally and externally. We challenged ourselves to attract a more inclusive applicant pool by pursuing dimensions of diversity, which have been historically under-represented through target sources. We evaluated and revamped our selection process by identifying blind selection practices. We also assembled a diverse Selection Committee and adjusted our interview process and ranking procedures to focus on organization values (Integrity, Educating, Humanitarianism, Collaborating, and Accountability) as well as relevant skills and competencies.

I have asked Seema Ramroop, Rebecca Watson, and Sean King to assist our organization in building up this foundation of seeking to eliminate unconscious bias. This workgroup has three goals over the next two months. They will focus on improving the application process (reviewing the current application, determining what demographic data we want to collect to evaluate progress regarding diversity and inclusion), recommending application improvements and/or data collection, and establishing scoring for the application portion of the selection process. Secondly, they will improve the screening process by reviewing the PowerPoint utilized last year to see if this is the proper instrument to educate the committee members about unconscious bias and recommend new resources if needed. They will evaluate current questions to determine if these align with the culture of the organization and permit for a strong blind selection process. Lastly, they will assist us in improving the selection process by establishing scoring for the application portion associated with the interview process. They will determine whether it may be beneficial for each candidate to turn in a 1–2 minute introduction video to show off the applicant's creative insight. If you have recommendations or if you would like to engage in this effort, please reach out to one of these committee members.

Finally, plans are underway for the annual Past Presidents and Sponsors Thank You luncheon on Wednesday, May 12 at the Belleview Inn.

As you can see, work has continued and we would love your ongoing engagement. We are looking for other innovative ways to improve our organization and to stay in contact with active members like you.

Loyally,

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Kimberly Berfield



YOUTH LEADERSHIP PINELLAS UPDATE

Brian Siracusa '14

After a year-long hiatus, Youth Leadership Pinellas is thriving again. We are excited to have 66 applications from 16 different schools submit for this year's class.

The continued rise in applications and schools represented is a testament to everyone who has been a part of this program since its inception. The school system is behind the program and past participants are the best selling point for our future students.

It will be an exciting year. We will begin our interviews this month. I can't wait to meet our future community leaders!

CLASS OF 2021 KICKS OFF WITH NORTH PINELLAS DAY

Katie Gannon '21

City of Oldsmar



The first program day for LP 2021 began at the picturesque Dunedin Golf Club. Instead of traveling around North County, the leaders of North County came to the Class of 2021. We started with a quick game of putt-putt golf. Then, Dunedin Mayor Julie Bujalski '09 was literally first up to bat, announcing the return of the Toronto Blue Jays, who will open their regular season at the completely renovated spring training facility. Commissioner Moe Freaney '03, liaison to the Blue Jays and Dunedin Cares, shared her wealth of experience from her 31 years in professional and government experience. Economic Development Director Bob Ironsmith '00 explained the importance of incremental growth. We stepped outdoors with Lt. Fred Vielhauer of Dunedin Fire Station #61 for a lesson in lifesaving and the automatic aid system for emergency management in Pinellas County. Examining the equipment was a treat as every nook and cranny on the engine stores the team's many tools.

Safety Harbor City Manager Matt Spoor '11 touched on the difficulties of waste management and recycling in the world economy and his career path from leisure services to city manager. Fire Chief Josh Stefancic explained his interpersonal management strategies for building relationships. Co-Founder of ShamC, Todd Ramquist, explained the impact of the grassroots volunteer-based art center that is making an impact in music, schools and façade beautification around Safety Harbor. President and CEO of the Dunedin Fine Arts Center George Ann Bisset '07 explained her leadership style and how the Center has avoided "mission drift."

After lunch, City of Oldsmar Mayor Eric Seidel '18 explained the history of the city founded by RE Olds, inventor of the Oldsmobile. He described the city's vision for developing a walkable downtown corridor.

Assistant City Manager Felicia Donnelly '05 discussed the importance of planning and zoning to avoid "corridors of lost opportunity." Public Works Director Nan Bennett '20 reminded us about the "Three Ps" that save our sewer systems from clogs. Debb Vitraelli '16, the city's marketing specialist, explained how the city managed to thrive in 2020 despite the pandemic by providing citizens socially-distanced (and safe) events all year long. The day ended with team-building exercises with the folks from Empower Adventures in Oldsmar. A riotous game of speed charades (loaded tater tots?!) and a half-blind drawing contest reminded us all of the importance of communication and teamwork.



CLEARWATER DAY

Katie Gannon, '21

The second program day for LP Class of 2021 began with the sunrise over the Bay at the Clearwater Beach Recreation Center and ended with a fantastic display of waterworks on the intercoastal.

First, Chief Scott Ehlers of Clearwater Fire Rescue showcased the talent and training of the 211 first responders on staff in the city who answer every call—from high rise condos on the beach to traffic emergencies on the Courtney Campbell Causeway.

Clearwater Mayor Frank Hibbard '00 shared how leadership, even in the face of a vocal minority, is required when the economic future of the community is at stake. Hibbard and Planning & Development director Gina Clayton explained how Beach By Design and the famous promenade forever changed the economic engine that is Clearwater Beach.

Following a super grouper sandwich from the iconic beach staple Frenchy's, the class learned about how bed

tax dollars affect more than just the hospitality industry from Phil Henderson, President of Starlite Cruises and member of the Tourism Development Council.

LP2021 learned from Clearwater Marine Aquarium staff how to identify bottlenose dolphins by dorsal fin nicks and notches, a low cost and non-invasive research program used to track health and migration of these marine mammals.

Arts and culture experts Roberta Klar '09 of the Clearwater Arts Alliance and Steve Weinberger '03, CEO of Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation, joined a panel discussion about how art can serve as the unifying voice of a neighborhood. Speaking of unifying, the Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition shared their vision for a North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area which they believe will provide lasting economic results in the most impoverished region of Pinellas County.

Finally, David Habib, founder of Yo Mama's Foods, explained how the keto-niche food brand grew from his parents' living room to a 6,000 sq. ft. repurposed warehouse in Clearwater. And Library Director Jennifer Obermier shared how libraries have become community centers for podcast neophytes, weekend historians, and how they loan much more than books.

The day ended with a spectacular demonstration of seafaring maneuverability and fire-fighting power from Clearwater Fire Rescue Boat 44 with narration from Fire Rescue Training Chief David Kadau.



CLASS OF 2021 CLASS PROJECT

Chelsey Wilson '21



Leadership Pinellas class of 2021 is proud to partner with FEAST Food Pantry in Palm Harbor for a food donation drive! The FEAST mission is to compassionately provide food and personal care items for families in need in North Pinellas County. On Saturday, May 15 from noon to 4 p.m., we invite you to drop off a food donation at the FEAST office (2255 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor). Most-needed items include canned goods, cereal, peanut butter, and side dishes.

Connect with FEAST Food Pantry to learn more about their work in the community!

Website: <https://feastfoodpantry.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/feastfoodpantry/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/feastpalmharbor/>

UPCOMING EVENT

Canopy Lounge Happy Hour Social

Thursday, April 22, 2021

6-8 p.m.

340 Beach Drive, St. Petersburg 33701

The Canopy Lounge is located on the rooftop of the Birchwood Hotel in downtown St. Petersburg. The view is incredible, and the open rooftop offers innumerable options for social distancing, cocktails, and socializing with your alumni friends. Dress is business casual.

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