



LeaderReader

DECEMBER 2020 EDITION



THIS EDITION OF THE LEADER READER IS IN MEMORY OF JUDY SIRACUSA, CLASS OF 1995.

June 13, 1943 - Nov. 14, 2020

Judy was a member of the Leadership Pinellas Class of 1995. She and her husband, Pat '97, frequently participated in Leadership Pinellas events over the last 25 years. Judy was the facilitator of the Class Opening Retreat from 1996–2013. Her dynamic personality shone through in each of her D.i.S.C. characters she portrayed. Anyone

fortunate enough to be a member of a class where Judy facilitated is among a special group that entered Leadership Pinellas with her welcome. Judy, along with her husband Pat, were awarded the Deborah Vincent Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014. Judy and Pat were regulars at LP events and socials throughout the years, whether it was a holiday party, a recruitment social, or helping with the Youth Leadership Pinellas graduation. The Leadership Pinellas community will miss Judy. We want to extend our condolences and prayers to the entire Siracusa family.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kimberly Berfield, '97



The time has arrived for us to cheer the welcoming of a new year. As this year closes, I would like to thank our alumni, Board of Directors, and sponsors for your loyalty and continued support over the past six months. We most definitely wouldn't be where we are without the volunteer and fiscal contributions made by each and every one of you, and I am truly appreciative.

While the easier way for us this year would have been to close down our cornerstone program, we decided to "lean" in. To date our 2020-21 Leadership Pinellas year has been all about development, adaptability and growth. Pride can be taken as we reflect on the past six months as we were confronted with the challenge of running our cornerstone program in the midst of a global pandemic and successfully restructuring the Class Opening Retreat with program days to meet our "Stay Safe" protocols. The 2021 Class Opening Retreat took place socially-distanced and in person in the Tiffany Room of the former Bellevue Biltmore. Other parts were held via Zoom. While this class is half our traditional size, our 2021 Class is passionate, fearless and as excited as others are traditionally. Our gratitude goes out to Suzy Sofer and Wendy Barmore. These ladies were instrumental in identifying the Bellevue Inn, which provided an air of nostalgia and history as we humbly move forward. Additionally, we have established and formalized an annual Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit community initiatives, from which the class will select their class project. Please join me in thanking Beth Tasis and the committee (Zelda O'Connell '20, Joe Riddle '20, and Kathy Prossick '20) who have established a great process and whose hard work has presented the class with some good choices.

This year we are also providing NLC Non-Profit Board Membership training, which will allow them to develop a new skillset and prepare to serve the community in another way. In 2021, we hope to start receiving requests from community stakeholders seeking strong Board of Trustee members. We have maintained our paid membership level and increased our sponsorship financial support.

To celebrate this progress and the start of a new year of hope and normalcy, we will be having a Holiday Cheers Zoom on Wednesday, Dec. 16 from 6:30–7:30 p.m. If you have not received your invitation, please reach out to contact@leadershippinellas.com. Georgie Menke has a bartender joining us to help us make holiday cocktails for our toast (one alcoholic and one non-alcoholic) to put us in the festive spirit. And she, in collaboration with Tammy Robicontti, has obtained three raffle ticket prizes which will be awarded. We hope to come together to take a moment around the meaning of this season.

Remember the seeds planted today will produce the fruits which will allow us to close out the 2020-21 Leadership Pinellas year successfully. Please continue to have faith in yourself and our future. I wish you and your dear ones a happy and safe holiday season and new year.

Loyally,
Kb



CLASS OF 2021 MEETS AT BELLEVIEW INN

Rebecca Watson '19

Leadership Pinellas Class of 2021 officially kicked off its program year with an Opening Retreat held at the historic Belleview Inn. Masked up, socially distant, and led by Dev Pathik '11, class members explored timeless principles of leadership and the power of a strengths-based approach when developing oneself and supporting others. Class members took time with Rebecca Watson '19 and one another to explore their top

five leadership strengths, unearth unique synergies, and elevate opportunities to support each other in both deepening and leveraging these assets throughout the year and beyond! The group capped off the retreat by deciding on their class project and completing Board Governance training with the Non-Profit Leadership Center of Tampa Bay. There is no doubt that the Class of 2021 will make a meaningful and indelible mark on Pinellas County and the entire Bay area! Congrats on a strong start!

The class enjoyed dinner with the Board of Directors on Friday evening. This opportunity to meet and mingle with the Board will give the class a sense of the bigger picture of Leadership Pinellas.

Many thanks to Wendy Barmore '16 and Suzy Sofer '15 for all the coordination and planning that went into a fabulous start to the Class of 2021.

LEADERSHIP PINELLAS CLASS OF 2021

Nick Berry

Sunstar Paramedics

Kimberly Brown-Williams

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Rosemarie Call

City of Clearwater

Tawny Swain Castle

HEP

Joseph Citro

Ronald McDonald House Charities

Katrina Esau

Raymond James

Katie Gannon

City of Oldsmar

Adam Geissenberger

Pinellas Park Police Department

Jeff Gow

City of Dunedin

Jim Halios

City of Clearwater

Erin Hamilton-Mullin

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Bryant Johnson

City of Clearwater

Jonita Lewis

RCS Pinellas

Jaime McKnight

Pawlicious Poochie Pet Rescue

Holly Minch

LightBox Collaborative

Lelia Peterson

City of Clearwater

Kerry Ann Rainey

RMS Elite Properties

Patti Reed

Amber Glen Feed Depot & City of Pinellas Park

Jack Shanks

Habitat for Humanity

Chelsey Wilson

Achieva Credit Union

Andrew Winkler

Merrill Lynch/Bank of America

Liz Winter

BayCare Health Systems

NORTH PINELLAS DAY: JAN. 13, 2021

The Leadership Pinellas program day committees want to provide the Class of 2021 with a rich program while also creating fun, exciting experiences. The committees are tasked with incorporating a leadership lesson into their program topics at locations throughout Pinellas County.

The Class of 2021 will kick off the program year on Jan. 13 with North Pinellas Day. These region-based days will combine Government & Infrastructure, Arts & Culture, Business, and Environment & Tourism.

The class will begin in Dunedin at the Dunedin Golf Club, home of the Senior PGA, and tour the Dunedin Fine Arts Center. The class will hear from Dunedin city commissioners to learn more about what Dunedin is doing to make it such a popular destination city. The class then will head to Oldsmar to tour the reverse osmosis plant and participate in a team-building program at Empower Adventures of Tampa Bay. The group will end the day in Tarpon Springs. They will visit the Tarpon Springs Heritage Museum to see the work of local artist Christopher Still and the exhibits of Tarpon Springs' rich Greek history and Native American artifacts. The final stop will take the class to the Tarpon Springs sponge docks, where they will finish the day on a sponge boat cruise.

The committee worked hard to ensure this first program day is packed with the sights and sounds of North Pinellas. Safety protocols are in place to keep the class, committee members, and speakers alike safe. We look forward to getting the Class of 2021 off to a good start with this North Pinellas Day.

CLASSMATES COLLABORATE FOR GOOD IN PINELLAS COUNTY

Mary Jo Plews '20 & Sara Mollo '20

Since the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, many families in Pinellas County have been unsure of how and where they would receive their next meal. There are more than 7,000 chronically

hungry children in Pinellas County alone. Leadership Pinellas 2020 classmates Mary Jo Plews, L.C.S.W., Executive Director of the Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas County, and Sara Mollo, local attorney and (at the time) Chief Assistant Public Defender of the 6th Circuit Public Defender's Office teamed up to make certain that children were not deprived of food on their table during this uncertain time. Sara connected the Healthy Start Coalition, supporting pregnant women, newborns and their families with the Dillinger family's Beth Dillinger Foundation, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to providing food, clothing and education to youth in need in our community.

As of December 2020, the Beth Dillinger Foundation's Nourish to Flourish Program has donated more 10,000 meals to young children and their older siblings served by the Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas. Nourish to Flourish is a partnership between the 6th Circuit Public Defender's Office and the Beth Dillinger Foundation to feed chronically hungry children in our area. The Foundation was created in 2007 by Bob and Kay Dillinger in memory of their beloved daughter, Beth. Sara Mollo joined the 6th Circuit Public Defender's Office as Chief



Assistant Public Defender in 2003 and was newly elected to replace Bob Dillinger who, after 20+ years in public service, is planning to retire from his role as Public Defender. Mollo's background as an associate at a family law practice and civil law litigator in conjunction with her experience in advocacy for mental health allows her to understand the needs of her community including those served by the Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas County.

The Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas, Inc., a 501(c)3 charitable non-profit organization, promotes and supports healthy pregnancies, babies and families by providing services and facilitating access to community resources. Services include pregnancy health education, nutrition education, childbirth preparation, breastfeeding education and support, emotional support, and community referrals. Since the pandemic, many of these services have transitioned from face-to-face services to telehealth/virtual visits. Plews, a native of Pinellas County, has 19 years' experience with Healthy Start. In her career, she has served as a clinician, a home visitor, and as a non-profit administrator. She understands the impact that Healthy Start can make during a very important, and currently tumultuous, time for every family trying to bring a new one into the world.

Many Healthy Start Families have been homebound and unable to make it to their local food banks or meal pick-up locations. Especially early in the pandemic, pregnant women and parents of newborns were cautioned to stay at home to avoid exposure to COVID-19, which might lead to an increased risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes, including pre-term birth. Through this partnership, Healthy Start families are getting weekly "doorstep" deliveries of the Nourish to Flourish meal trays by their Healthy Start home visitor. These meals have helped so many families, who now know that their children will have healthy meals delivered directly to them on a weekly basis, especially over the summertime and when school meals are not available.

Through their connection and friendship created by being part of Leadership Pinellas Class of 2020, Mollo and Plews have been able to make a significant impact on Pinellas County families served by Healthy Start Coalition. This has brought nutritious meals, support, comfort, and relief to many children and families who now know their community supports them during times of need.



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