



# Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture & Natural Resources

## Let's Reflect

Seminar 1  
Gainesville, Florida

### Director's Dialogue

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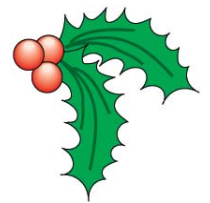
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Welcome to the first edition of "Let's Reflect." Besides being asked where Class VII is going on their international trip, the most frequent question I receive is how the new class is doing and what did their last seminar entail? To that end, we are pleased to present the first edition of "Let's Reflect," a seminar synopsis written entirely by the members of Class VII.

After the completion of each seminar, three members of Class VII will submit articles to Rochelle Strickland, our new program coordinator/editor extraordinaire. Rochelle will then format them into this template, with the hopes of getting it out to the Alumni Association within a month after the seminar ends. With this, you will be able to learn what Class VII is experiencing and follow along with their leadership program adventures. While this publication serves to inform those interested in Class VII of the WLI, it also has the added benefit of continuing the "reflection" portion of our seminars... and as alumni of this program know, "Let's Reflect" is one of the highlights of this program.

We are instituting many new features with Class VII--this publication, the iPods and mobile learning, and our other new feature,

the Class VII blog. I encourage you to check out <http://wliandr.blogspot.com>. We are encouraging members of Class VII to share their thoughts, podcasts, experiences in the leadership program, etc. in this blog. You can read these posts and even comment on what people have written. Additionally, because of the success of Class VI's blog during their international trip, we will also be posting daily updates when Class VII travels nationally and internationally, so family, friends and alumni can keep up with their travels and experiences.



This has been an exciting year for the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources! Thank you for your continued support and interest in this program as we could not achieve all our success without such an engaged alumni association, such an outstanding staff with Janice and Rochelle and such an excellent new class as is Class VII. With all the great things happening with the program, I believe our best is yet to come!

From all of us at the WLIANR, we wish you all the happiest of holidays and a wonderful 2008!!

# First Impressions....

Clay Archey



We made it – it was finally time! As we boarded the bus and headed out to the YMCA camp south of

Gainesville, Class VII was taking shape and we all knew that we were about to embark on one of the most exciting, life-changing 2 years of our lives. As faces of old mixed with faces of new, conversation filled the bus with who we worked for, what we did, and what our families were like. The beginnings of the Class VII of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources were at last together and we were well on our way to making friends and relationships that will last lifetimes.

Just off of the bus at the YMCA camp, we were faced with our very first obstacle, arranging the group without verbal communication in order from A-Z by last name. I was quite impressed

by our speed and accuracy, as was the YMCA counselor giving the orders, when we only had maybe 3-5 people out of 29 out of order. From this point on, the tone was set. We realized that the lessons learned this day, this week and throughout the entire program might be difficult, but as long as we pay close attention, and work as a team, we can accomplish anything!

The remainder of the day was spent working through problem solving and critical thinking exercises focused on team building. I myself spent plenty of time critically thinking how a “low ropes course” published in the agenda for that day turned out



Class VII members build trust while participating in the low and high ropes course

hand. The day wrapped up with a nice casual dinner at the hotel where we discussed the guidelines and objectives for the week to come and the 2 year program in general.

## Managers, iPods and Miss Manners

Clay Archey

The second official day of the Class VII started out quickly for me. Our first lecturer was Dr. Howard Ladewig, a retired professor from UF’s Department of Agricultural Education and Communication. Dr. Ladewig now resides near Dallas, Texas and seemed excited to be back in Gator Country sharing his knowledge with such a bright group of leaders. With Dr. Ladewig’s help, we discussed management styles/roles throughout history and the effects of particular leadership styles on employee/manager relationships. Primarily, the conversation focused on the two styles of leadership: transformational (thinks outside the box) versus transactional (if it isn’t broke, don’t fix it). For example a computer company with a transformational business might be Apple whereas, IBM might be considered a transactional business. The main point that was driven home in many of our minds was to invest in the growth of your employees by harnessing their ingenuity and creativity because they will be the ones to refine your organization and take your business to the next level.



Miss Crystal Matthews, a graduate student from UF's Department

of Agricultural Education and Communication, facilitated the next session, which was a quick and easy education on how to start conversations with the people we meet. This session focused on techniques to use to better remember the details of the conversation, like the person's name, their employer and details about their family. This was a very good way for us to learn skills that helped us "get out of our comfort zone." We were able to put this information to good use later in the week as we attended a dinner held at the offices of Farm Credit of North Florida. Class VII members put these valuable lessons to work, striking up conversations with

many of the special guests attending such as Dr. Jimmy Cheek, Sr. Vice President for the Institute for Food and Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr. Kirby Barrick, Dean for the

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and Dr. Larry Arrington, Dean for Extension and Director for Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

Although learning about ourselves and the skills that will make us better leaders in the future are important, the highlight

of the week for most Class VII members was when Dr. Traci Irani, an Associate Professor of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication spoke to us on the role that technology will most likely have on each of our lives in the future. During her talk, Dr.

Irani announced that Class VII would be taking part in a project very new to the WLINAR program; we would be seeing how technology commonly used for entertainment could also be put to good use for education. The most exciting news was that we would all be receiving video iPods. The iPods will allow the staff, classmates, alumni or whoever suggests specific podcasts (small recorded learning sessions) to be added to the new leadership library that the Wedgworth Leadership Institute website now features in its online leadership library. If

you know of any great podcasts please let Dr. Carter or Rochelle Strickland know so they may be added to the leadership library.

To cap off the day, Class VII traveled to the Savannah Grande near downtown Gainesville where Mrs. Myoushi Jones schooled us in the art of proper

business and social etiquette. Mrs. Jones is a professional in the field and successful business woman and socialite from Miami who worked



Class VII learns to utilize new technologies to advance their learning

hard to give each of us the knowledge we would need to compose ourselves in professional business and social environments. The session

concluded with a nice formal

sit down dinner where our newly learned skills were practiced and honed over friendly conversation, great food and great wine.



Ray Royce and Keith Wedgworth practice their new etiquette skills

To cap off the day, Class VII traveled to the Savannah Grande near downtown Gainesville where Mrs. Myoushi Jones schooled us in the art of proper

## CLASS VII SEMINAR SCHEDULE

- II: JANUARY 28-FEBRUARY 1, 2008  
MIAMI/SOUTH FLORIDA
- III: MARCH 17-20, 2008  
TALLAHASSEE
- IV: MAY 19-22, 2008  
FLORIDA PANHANDLE
- V: JULY 21-24, 2008  
GAINESVILLE/UF CAMPUS
- OPTIONAL: AUGUST 1-3, 2008  
ORLANDO AREA
- VI: OCTOBER 6-16, 2008  
D.C./REGION OF THE US
- VII: DECEMBER 4-6, 2008  
HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS
- VIII: FEBRUARY 23-26, 2009  
HAINES CITY/TAMPA
- IX: APRIL 20-23, 2009  
GAINESVILLE/UF CAMPUS
- X: JUNE 5-22, 2009  
INTERNATIONAL TRIP/TBA
- XI: AUGUST 7-9, 2009  
ORLANDO AREA

# The Amazing Race

Jorge Abreu



On Wednesday of our first week together the highlight of the day consisted of our first team effort.

Class VII was split into groups and assigned different segments of Gainesville to explore by car and air the dynamics of the section of town. We were tasked with finding the good, the bad, and the routes if any, that the city seemed to be taking to make every section of town a better place to live. You can read below to see what exactly one group went through for a first hand experience.

Group one consisted of Jorge Abreu, Thad Beshears, Greg Davis, Laurie Hurner, Karen Pate and Sanford Stein. Our morning started at 7:30 a.m. Our first “road block” came while having breakfast. Needless to say, our pleasant breakfast came down to eating and running. We

left the restaurant at 8:36 a.m. and raced to the first checkpoint where

Dr. Carter was waiting for us. We notified her we were in route via cellular. As we turned the corner into the parking lot at the airport hanger...there she was...with that look. Luckily, our team was quick to think and we had a light breakfast for her to smooth things over.

We boarded the Cessna and off we went to get a bird’s eye view of Gainesville. We flew over the northwest section of Gainesville, which we later examined on ground. What

we noticed as a group was green space, and lots of it. It was interesting to drive through town and not really see the tree canopy, but we did notice the buildings. In

our section, notable things we saw from the air were the Dollar General Distribution Center as well as lots of farm land.

When we

landed, the next group was pulling in to take their ride through the great

skies. We jumped back into the truck and speed off to see our section from the ground. The NW section was predominately rural with houses. We took pictures as we drove around to capture the feeling of the area. It was very peaceful as one would expect with so much green. We stopped off at Devils Millhopper State Park, a



Eric Hjort and Bonnie Marshall write down their desired characteristics for a community

large sinkhole/nature area. While team members Greg and Jorge ran to the bottom of the staircase lined sinkhole, the rest of the team interviewed a few people. At the bottom, we

heard a light stream and beautiful lush trees and ferns growing. We were told that the water quality in the stream was not what it used to be due to some housing developments that were on septic systems and with time, the run off would affect the park.

As we drove around the area more and more, we saw how development had moved in and was pushing more and more into this once very rural area of Greater Gainesville. Yet, we remember from the sky all we could see are trees. We pulled into the only nursery in the area just to capture the prospective of a local agribusiness in the area. It seemed



Group 2 prepares for their flyover of Gainesville



it was the same story as we had heard from the people at the park. Once it was a lot more

peaceful in the area and now it was starting to turn with development ensuing. As we headed back, we encountered another “road block” at 11:30 a.m. It was Walgreens! We tried to download the pictures we had taken for a presentation... but the five minutes promised

## Class VII Members

Jorge Abreu  
 Michael Allen  
 Clay Archey  
 Adam Basford  
 Jennifer Batson  
 Thad Beshears  
 Erin Boyd  
 Sean Brantley  
 Armando Campos-Cruz  
 Joe Collins  
 Greg Davis  
 Richard Fiorelli  
 Matthew Harrison  
 Eric Hjort  
 Annie Hrcir  
 Laurie Hurner  
 Bill Lewis  
 Lisa Lochridge  
 Bonnie Marshall  
 Richard May  
 Karen Pate  
 Elizabeth Pines  
 Ray Royce  
 Chloe Sallin  
 Jeffrey Spencer  
 Sandy Stein  
 Carlton Ward, Jr.  
 Matthew Webb  
 Keith Wedgworth  
 Charlie Wilson

turned out to be twenty and we had to leave them behind. As we raced to the Florida Farm Bureau, Greg had the great idea of taking I-75, but Jorge being the driver and for some reason having been gone for ten years from Gainesville, thought it would be quicker by the city roads. We screeched into the parking lot, ran up the stairs at 11:58 a.m. only to see another group coming up behind us. We were not going to be last and would not have to hear the wrath of Hannah’s words, “why are you late?” We checked in and were third in out of five groups. None of the groups were eliminated this day.

We can’t wait to see what our travels will bring us on the next trip!

Though gathering this information was used expressly for the next secession with Dr. Rod Clouser to evaluate what essential elements make up a great community, I think more importantly it taught the groups key elements of how we could use team work to



Members record their Myers-Briggs results on a chart for everyone to see

over come difficult goals. Running around from place to place, trying to take in as much information on each group’s area while making it to scheduled locations on time was challenging. It takes all hands on deck to make a team work and this “amazing race” taught us exactly that as well as a few things that make a community great.



Our Wednesday lunch was at the Florida Farm Bureau Federation with the president, Mr. John Hoblick. As a previous member of the WLIANR, he opened the floor to questions. He fielded questions from local, state and national issues. It was great to get the perspective of someone as active as him.

Thursday morning, we met with Dr. Jenna Mastrodicasa, Commissioner at Large for Gainesville and heard her perspective of growth in Gainesville. Some people embrace it, others challenge it. It all came

down to what effect it would have in the area and who would benefit as to how the public viewed it. In contrast, we had Mr. Ron Cunningham,

Editorial Page Editor for *The Gainesville Sun* read to us an editorial of what people might think or say...in his eyes. We heard two different perspectives. No one is right, we just have to use the information to collect our thoughts and come up with our own decision.

Our lovely spouses and significant others joined us

as we discovered our true colors. What I noticed with myself and others I spoke with, is that we all might be a particular color, but we all have shades of the others. We can decide which color to show or be at any particular time and adjust ourselves to someone because of their colors.

We traveled to the Farm Credit of North Florida where a bar-b-que dinner was prepared by Mr. Charles Thompson and his staff. It gave us time to talk with each other and we were honored by the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Jimmy Cheek, Dr. and Mrs. Larry Arrington, and Dr. and Mrs. Kirby Barrick. We wrapped up the evening with meeting everyone's families with a powerpoint presentation.

Friday morning the members and significant others received their results from the Myers-Briggs from Dr. Ricky Telg. To my amazement, it was close to how I am. There are four personality preference scales. They are:

1. Extraversion or Introversion
2. Sensing or Intuition
3. Thinking or Feeling
4. Judgment or Perception

Which do you think you are?

At the end of the first seminar, we had the wonderful words from Dr. Burl Long and Dr. Hannah Carter reflecting on the week as well as what is to come. She hinted China for the international trip, but she will not confirm it until a later date. So we will have to wait and let you know.

Until next time, keep smiling.

## Coordinator's Corner



Howdy! As the program coordinator for the Wedgworth Leadership Institute, I have been blessed by the many

opportunities and experiences that have been provided to me over the past seven months. When I first began working with Dr. Hannah Carter last spring, I remember telling her that I wanted to gain "experience" that I was not able to find in the classroom. Needless to say, these experiences have more than exceeded my expectations! With that, I would like to share some of my thoughts and reflections in regards to Class VII, the program, and leadership development.

The members of Class VII are an amazing group of individuals that I feel very fortunate to be working with over the next two years of the program. It was interesting for me to be able to watch them come together and form relationships with each other so quickly at the first seminar. While everyone comes from different backgrounds and sectors of agriculture, it was great to see everyone come together to learn how they could not only grow as individuals, but as a group and to

learn how they can become more effective leaders in their homes, communities and businesses.

The new ideas and features that are being implemented into Class VII's experiences are something I feel will be beneficial not only for the experiential learning process of Class VII members, but to the alumni as well as the program. While I have little experience with some of these features (like many of you), I am quickly learning to utilize them to their fullest potential. For example, I had never made a video, designed a newsletter, or created a podcast until this fall. The WLIANR is a premier leadership organization not only in Florida agriculture, but in agriculture across the country. It is my personal opinion, that if we want to continue developing effective leaders within our industry, we must be willing and able to embrace new ideas, concepts, technologies and utilize them to improve the program and our industry.

In closing, I would like to give a special thanks to Christy Windham for helping me design the first edition of "Let's Reflect." Christy is a masters student in Agricultural Communication and was willing to take out a considerable amount of her personal time to teach me how to use the technology I needed. Thanks and happy holidays to all!