



Wedgworth Leadership Institute

for Agriculture & Natural Resources

Let's Reflect

Seminar II
Miami & Homestead, Florida

Director's Dialogue

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I often say that Seminar I of this program is the “honeymoon” phase—while a little nervous that first day, by the end of the week everyone is thrilled with the program, they have developed life-long friendships and of course, thinks that they are the best class ever. Historically, Seminar II usually bursts this bubble as personalities begin to shine through, diversity of thought becomes more apparent and that first dose of being “on the road” with 30 other people becomes quite tiring.

From my vantage point, the bubble didn't burst for Class VII during Seminar II. While

personalities certainly did begin to shine through and many interesting and thought provoking discussions were had, both inside and outside of our sessions, this class used the time in Seminar II not only to learn about the issues of south Florida, but to also strengthen their bond as a class.

From the Port of Miami, to the Federal Reserve, to the Miami

Herald and to learning about the issues of affordable housing, homelessness, immigration, Miami's ethnic populations, the Everglades, land use and agriculture in south Florida, Seminar II was a tremendous learning experience for all. Dr. Long has always been fond of asking in his “Let's Reflect” sessions, what was your “ah ha” moment? Though not a participant in the program, these seminars are still learning experiences for me as well and I had an “ah ha” moment



during our week in south Florida. It took place in Everglades National Park and wasn't a

part of the presentation given by one of the park rangers. It was the discussion that Class VII members had about their knowledge and experiences with the Everglades and Everglades restoration—and while there were differences in opinions, the dialogue was so open, interesting and respectful—and I realized that while participants feel fortunate to have had the

opportunity to go through this program, I feel extremely fortunate to be a part of this process and to have the best “seat in the house” to watch the connections, the learning and the experiences as they unfold.

The success of this seminar couldn't have happened without the help of many people—Janice and Rochelle here in the office; Don Pybas, County Extension Director in Homestead; all of the wonderful speakers and resource people who gave their time and efforts and most especially, the WLI Alumni who contributed a great deal to this seminar. Thank you to Sylvia Gordon (Class V), Mark Sodders (Class I), Francisco Pines (Class V) and Teena Borek (Class III). We are so appreciative of the willingness of WLI alumni to “give

back” to the program and make these seminars such a huge success!

We are now turning our sights to Tallahassee and will be there for Seminar III March

17th to the 20th. This will be an interesting time to be in Tallahassee and we look forward to seeing WLI Alumni in the halls of the Capitol.

I hope you all are having an enjoyable and productive 2008! Mark your calendars for the WLI Alumni Associations Annual Meeting August 8th to the 10th in Orlando!

Welcome to Miami!!!

Jennifer Batson



WOW!! What a week! I thought as a Florida resident I knew Miami. Hah!

Boy was I wrong. Hannah set us up to see parts of Miami I never knew existed.

Our first day began with a trip to The Miami Herald.

We received a welcome lunch followed by a presentation from the editorial page editor, Joe Ogelsby. He informed us of the challenges faced by The Miami Herald due to the popularity of the internet. Money used



Class VII members catch up on the daily news while listening to Joe Ogelsby at the Miami Herald

to be made with ads and classifieds, but with so many people choosing to read the paper online, new ideas had to be implemented. Obviously the online news was a priority, therefore the Miami Herald added Careerbuilder.com and Cars.com to add fresh new ways to profit. Complimentary to these ideas are ten minute spots on the local NPR radio station as well as some daily spots on the TV stations. As many

of us know, Miami is home to a large population of Hispanics and Latinos. The Herald reaches out to these demographics by producing El Nuevo Herald. This paper is in Spanish and written as a separate paper than the Herald. El Nuevo Herald covers issues that effect and influence the Hispanic and Latino communities; the ads are geared to these demographics and actually require a separate staff to produce.

Our afternoon was spent at Camillus House which was an eye opener for many of us. Camillus House was started in Miami in 1960 by Brother Mathias Barrett, as a response to the pleas of the Diocese of Miami for “a home for Spanish speaking refugees until they could find work and a home.” Camillus House was opened with a motto that continues even today “charity unlimited.” Where the original need was to serve the influx of some 30,000 Cuban refugees, their mission today is to serve the homeless and poor. With that same “charity unlimited,” Camillus House provides emergency assistance with food and clothing, job training and placement, residential substance abuse treatment and aftercare, behavioral health and maintenance, health care and disease prevention and transitional housing. All of this is provided on a 20 million dollar per year budget. Without this answer to the Diocese of Miami’s needs, the population of Miami would have been facing chronic homelessness for the refugees who had fled to the area. The hope that



was provided played an integral part in what is now the spirit of Miami.

Comfort Zone Breached

Jennifer Batson

Talk about extreme, Hannah knows how to make us wiggle. We think we are just out for another day in Miami but that's an understatement.

The second day we get dressed in our business best and head over to the Federal Reserve, where we received a great lesson in how the Fed has a grip on the economy.

They have a board of directors that is comprised of six people from different professional backgrounds. This group gathers monthly to discuss and report how

they feel the economy is doing in their community. Having gathered this info from those people they encounter daily, i.e. shop clerks, store owners, customers, even family or friends, they get a feel for what's happening in their area of the state. This group puts together a report that is sent and explained to another board in Atlanta, where it is combined with other reports from the region. The combined

reports then make their way to Washington, D.C. where they are reviewed and analyzed. This information that started at a grass roots level has made its way to DC where it provides a real time evaluation of the economy from across the country. If you ever wondered how the fed knows when to adjust rates, now you know where they get the information.

So... you're wondering who is wiggling? Well then we spent the afternoon at the Lyric Theatre (original opera house of the black community in Miami), which opened in 1913. This theatre was filled with phenomenal history and spirit. Still don't see why we're squirming do you? After a brief lesson of the black history in Miami from Mr. Tim Barber, we boarded a bus for a tour of what was once a flourishing Overtown. Here we are dressed to the nines,



Class VII visit a church in Liberty City to learn about the issues in the area

being given a lesson in how the segregated nation created an environment for the African-American community to flourish. They not only had the Lyric Theatre, but a district known as "Little

Broadway", where all the top acts of the day would play. They played over in the white part of town too.... but couldn't reside there, or spend the night there, or even eat or shop there.

Our prejudice society created a venue for the more than financially stable black community. They had restaurants, night life, hotels, grocery stores, gas stations, everything a community needed

to survive, until the civil rights movement of 1964. At the time the laws were being enforced, desegregation really began to take effect in the local communities. African Americans in Miami and other states had money and felt the need to exercise their rights to live and shop where they wanted. Over a period of time blacks moved into white neighborhoods, ate at white establishments, went to white schools, and spent their free time in areas where they hadn't previously been allowed.

This change in society also brought about a change in the black community of Overtown. There was no longer a need to specifically go to Overtown to shop, eat, or stay in hotels; therefore the area soon declined. The community moved away from what was once Overtown.

Class VII Seminar Schedule

III: March 17-20, 2008

Tallahassee

IV: May 19-22, 2008

Florida Panhandle

V: July 21-24, 2008

Gainesville/UF Campus

WLI Alumni Annual Meeting

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

Dr. Dorothy Fields was raised in Overtown and remembers the community as it was. She started The Black Archives to educate the youth and community of its history and to preserve landmarks such as the Lyric Theatre for future generations to enjoy. Dr. Fields has been very instrumental in providing Miami with the history of what was once Overtown.

Anyone like myself who has not opened their eyes to the different cultures that surround us, please do. It is a heart filling experience. We do not all come from the same background but we are all from the same maker. That makes us equal.

Economy at the Port and Calle Ocho

Jennifer Batson

Well let's see what Wednesday had in store for us... a trip to the port of Miami. Home to one of the largest "clean" ports, where over a million containers are shipped and received yearly. The employees at the port are responsible for unloading, counting, stacking and organizing the containers as they come off the carriers so that they can be sent to their proper destinations. Then in the loading process they have to be organized, scanned for content, and stacked in a way that when they arrive at the next port they can be removed in an efficient manner. That's just the

freight side. On the other side of the port we have the passenger ships. Here some 750 plus cruise ships dock every year, moving 3 million tourists to vacation



Elsie Miranda, Carlton Ward, and Karen Pate enjoy part of the Cuban culture in Little Havana

destinations. These ships choose the port of Miami because of its beauty and convenience. The port of Miami is proud of its glass walled passenger terminal providing views of the ships or Hibiscus and Star islands. The passenger terminals also provide ease of passenger loading with a flexible, portable walkway that can provide access to any size ship. The port is highly influential to the economy of Miami and our state because of its capabilities and ease of access.

Following the economy lesson we visited La Carreta, fantastic Cuban cuisine, calle ocho, and Dominoe park, all part of what the locals call "Little Havana." Here we saw what I think is the heart and soul of Miami. There was a McDonalds, but there were many privately owned restaurants, art and antique stores, grocery stores, florists, places for nightlife, doctors, and the list could go on. If you need it, "Little Havana" has it. People were flocked to Dominoe Park where tables and chairs were set up for women, men and the young people to come for a game or two of dominoes. Music was playing and it was a Wednesday afternoon. There was no indication this was a special event. They appear to do this every day, building the sense of community, people sitting out in front

of their stores just watching the passersby. It was like a great little neighborhood right in the middle of downtown Miami. Two streets over was the locals homes, very well kept, 40's built stucco mission seemed the style of choice. Very inviting and comfortable. Our speakers at lunch shared some stories with us about being Cuban and the history of the need to be here in America instead of Cuba because of Castro. When we walked through "Little Havana" you could feel the sense of pride and accomplishments. It makes me wonder what kind of country Cuba could have been if these people could have stayed in their homeland and built it, because of what they have done in their new home of Miami.



The Outskirts of Miami

Thad Beshears

On Wednesday evening, we were hosted by the Pines' family to attend the annual reception which was a wonderful event for all of the class. Hannah informed us when the bus would be leaving and emphatically told us that it would be leaving on time. I am sure some of the previous classes had warmed her up to the events that would be taking place and she knew everyone would be full into





their holiday cheer. She kept her word, and some folks had to find rides home on their

own. Thanks to the Pines' family once again for the wonderful reception they hosted for us. What a wonderful setting!

The next morning a few people ran late thanks to the wonderful reception the night before. Brooks Tropicals Inc. in Homestead, Florida had a facility

that imports and exports fresh fruits. Mr. Pal Brooks, owner-president, explained how most of their production facilities have been moved to Belize. He gave the ins and outs of production in America versus Belize. He gave several examples of why many American businesses are transferring their production facilities out of the country. Mr. Brooks really made us think and understand why the labor in America has become so tough and why America is so hard to do business in because of rules, regulations, and hoops you must jump through to do business in America.



Bill Lewis utilizes his "break" to listen to his iPod

It was very apparent that he really enjoys doing business in Belize. It was a great learning experience to hear from someone who is successful in the tropical fruit business.

Ms. Mary Oslund, director of marketing at Brooks Tropicals was then kind enough to take us on a tour of the packing house. She demonstrated how they culled/graded out fruits on a conveyor belt and spoke of the importance of keeping a sanitary environment. She toured us through the coolers of fruit that were imported from Belize and told how they were distributed to the big box grocery retailers. It was an impressive facility that operated very efficiently. With such a clean state of the art facility, you could certainly understand why they are successful. In conclusion and the best part of the tour at Brooks Tropicals, was the fresh papaya

and star fruit they shared with us at the end of the tour. Many thanks to this wonderful facility for the informative tour and delicious fresh fruit!

Then we were off to the Fruit and Spice Park for lunch! We had three speakers for the afternoon. The first was Ms. Margi Buster, President of Redland Tropical Gardens. Her presentation was entitled *Agri and Eco tourism in Miami/ Dade County*. The second was Mr. Tom MacVicar, President of MacVicar, Federico, and Lamb. He spoke on *Evolution of the Water Management Solution*, and the third speaker, Ms. Eva

Webb, Assistant Director of Field Services District 7 for the Florida Farm Bureau Foundation, gave a presentation entitled *Agriculture in South Florida and the Everglades*.

They all gave their perspective on how agriculture has played a large part in the development of southern Dade County (Homestead) and how the farming community has stretched into the Everglades and though it has helped economic growth in the area, it has also harmed the Everglades. In 2000, Jeb Bush and Bill Clinton worked together and stopped the agricultural sprawl of the Everglades. We all had very different views from the speakers, so they gave us a good perspective of the pros and cons of agricultural development in the Everglades. This is a topic that I am sure we will continue to discuss and expound upon in our travels of Florida.

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 Hrcncir
- 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

Everglades National Park

Thad Beshears

us more dependent on foreign imports for our agricultural needs.



We departed for the Everglades where we rendezvoused with Ranger Rudy. Ranger Rudy wore his emotions on his sleeve as he certainly gave his perspective and showed his love of the everglades. Even though he was a young guy, he certainly wanted to do his part to save the Everglades. He gave us a tour showing us the natural wildlife found in the Everglades. He was a great guy who took his job to heart! There certainly need to be more Ranger Rudy's out there.

Upon departing the Everglades we were sent to the Hampton Inn that was no longer a Hampton in. It had changed names. (Hannah we won't hold it against

you as we found it anyway.)

Thursday evening we were welcomed by Teena Borek, who sponsored a nice evening reception/dinner at her residence. She

is a WLIANR Class III member. Teena, Thanks so much for the wonderful steaks and hospitality!

Our final day in South Florida started and ended at the Miami Dade County IFAS extension office where we had speeches from a four person panel speaking on *Land Use Issues in Miami-Dade County*.

The speakers were, Mr. Don Pybas, County Extension Director, Mr. Charles LaPradd, Agricultural Manager Miami-Dade County, Commissioner Katy Sorensen, District 8 Miami-Dade County Board or County Commissioners, and Mr. Carla Alger, Broker/Owner Alger Properties South, LLC Alger Farms, Inc. We learned there is an unbelievable amount of pressure on the farmers from the development community in the Miami-Dade area because the land there is worth more if it is used for development rather than farming. The panel explained how local government had to draw a boundary line on the county map of where the

development has to stop and the agriculture has to start. There is a constant fight/conflict between the agricultural community and development industry

because of different points of view of how the land should be used. Many family farms in the area are selling out to the developers and moving north. Some are starting new farms further north but some are just moving out of the area and retiring or starting new careers or businesses. This movement makes

In closing the whole week was an eye-opening experience for many members of the class seeing and understanding the vast differences between South Florida and the rest of the state. I am sure we will be reliving and remembering events and circumstances from this week throughout our travels and experiences together.

Alumni Reflection Sylvia Gordon, Class V

Planning an event is not a new thing for me. However, Miami-Dade is so large and its parts so different, it was a challenge to put together an exciting, diverse program without it feeling like a random patchwork. For me, everything planned for Class VII's second seminar had to have a greater meaning than just seeing the sights. For example, first experiencing the Port of Miami and then immediately going into Little Havana to be immersed in one of the cultures that helps make the bustling port so memorable. Then listening to history from three powerful women that represent part of the backbone of what Miami has become, or to see the blighted areas of Overtown and Liberty City against the contrasting backdrop of the Federal Reserve. Finally, to get a feel for the overall size and diversity of the area, by leaving the



Class VII meets agriculturalists from Bolivia



urban part to visit the slightly more rural farming region, which has its own

history and issues. These are all integral parts of the *je ne sais quois* that makes the city of Miami and Miami –Dade County what it is today.

Seeing my city again from the eyes of Class VII was an awesome experience. I found it tough to keep my mouth shut and act like the alumni facilitator I was supposed to be. I was an observer rather than a participant this time around and observe I did. Class VII is very smart, and somewhat different from my own, Class V. The members are a bit more vocal than those of preceding classes, less reserved with lots of emotions within the questions that were asked and in the opinions I heard expressed. I saw particular excitement during the discussions on the subjects being presented - these intriguing debates frequently seemed to take on a life of their own.

This particular event helped me make contacts that I might never have made. It taught me more than I knew before about this city, my home. The lessons I learned as an alumni observer were different, but just as rewarding as those I had during Class V. The Wedgworth Leadership Institute is a powerful program, an incredible opportunity and I am extremely grateful and honored to have been, as alum of the program, such a large part of the Miami seminar with Class VII.

Coordinator's Corner

Class VII continues to amaze me with their deep insight, thoughts and knowledge of the many issues surrounding Florida agriculture. During Seminar II, I too was presented with a different side of Florida that I had no idea existed. While I had visited Miami, it had just been a small portion that was not representative of the entire Miami-Dade area. Thanks to individuals like Sylvia Gordon, I was once again able to go outside of my box along with the many Class VII members.

Watching and listening to the members of this class at the Everglades National Park was the highlight of my week. While I en-

VII. The passion for and knowledge of Florida agriculture and the Everglades was beyond anything I had imagined I would experience while visiting Miami.

One of the greatest results of this program is the networks and relationships. For myself, it has been a pleasure to begin building these relationships and networks with Class VII and the alumni of WLI as well as watching each of the new class members build their own bonds with each other.

As Seminar III is now just around the corner, I look forward to the many more discussions that will be held and the relationships that will be built by this class. The diversity of ideas and backgrounds allows everyone in the class to learn not only from the presenters, but from each other more than ever. Overall, my experiences thus far have been more than I imagined and I look forward to continuing to be a part of this great organization.

I hope you are all having a wonderful year so far and I hope to see you in Tallahassee!



Class V Alumni, Sylvia Gordon, helps Class VII see what Miami is about joyed visiting the Federal Reserve, Camillus House, Brooks Tropicals, and the many other locations, the Everglades experience sticks out in my mind because of the discussions held by the members of Class