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Director's Update

By Dr. Terry Hejny, Director
Nebraska LEAD Program

We are pleased to present to you, our fall edition of The LEAD Review. It is our attempt to keep you updated on the happenings of the Nebraska LEAD Program.

The word “leader” has been in the news quite a bit lately - mostly in the context of “where are our leaders?” Indeed, it appears that leaders are a rare commodity in our country today. Are we experiencing a leadership crisis? It certainly seems that few in Washington, D.C., are willing to make the difficult decisions about: fiscal responsibility, upgrading our highways and bridges, as well as our crumbling lock and dam system, passing a new Farm Bill, and fostering good relations with our neighbors near and far. Our leaders also need to promote the importance of international trade for our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities who are so dependent on this for their livelihood.

The crisis in leadership we are currently facing makes me think of the second verse of the patriotic song “America the Beautiful” - the verse that describes our heroes as people, “Who more than self; their country loved.” While they may be far and few between, I like to think those heroes are still around; they’re just waiting for some leadership training! Leadership programs such as ours are important to our future.

As I begin my twelfth year as director, I am continually inspired by the leaders who graduate from the Nebraska LEAD Program. One defining action of the leaders we produce is this: they stake an active claim in the future of the industry. One LEAD alumnus put it this way, “You don’t see LEAD alums standing on the sidelines.” Indeed, the leaders we produce feel a sense of responsibility, personal accountability, and a shared vision for the future of agriculture. Our alumni are utilizing these traits on state and national commodity boards and grower associations, in their communities, in our state, and on their family farms and ranches. Servant leadership is more important now than ever before!

Once again, I will close by thanking you for allowing me the honor and privilege to serve as your Director of the Nebraska LEAD Program.
A Message From the Chair of the Board

Stephanie Liska

Choice… it is the one of the most powerful opportunities a leader recognizes and takes advantage of. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to meet and congratulate our LEAD 38 Fellows on being chosen, and the choice they made to participate in the LEAD experience. The past six years I’ve had the pleasure to sit next to some of the strongest, most experienced leaders in our state as a member of the Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council (NALC). I’m honored to be in the role of leading this group today.

I find myself impressed each time I meet LEAD graduates, and Fellows. I admire their professionalism and passion for agriculture. Even more impactful is that these individuals chose to add to their already aggressive schedules the opportunity to learn and the commitment to lead. I have never personally had the LEAD experience, though I have had employees participate and it is rewarding to see their personal growth and broadened perspective.

As a council, the NALC will choose to continue to improve the LEAD experience. We are looking forward to reviewing survey results that were recently complied. For those of you who provided feedback, thank you! We are looking to make our excellent program even better. With that, we need you all to choose as well. Choose to invite someone you know who is an agriculturalist – one of those leaders, one of those individuals, who will choose to lead in the future and will benefit from the LEAD experience. Applications are due in June, this fall is the time to plant the seed for our future LEAD Fellows.

Thank you for your engagement. Thank you for your choice to lead!

Alumni Dinners

Information regarding the Alumni Dinners is on the READ ABOUT LEAD tab under Current Events on our web page.

http://lead.unl.edu/currentevents

Bring a LEAD recruit - their meal is on us!

Be sure to RSVP to your co-chair!

Destination: The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Poland - January 2019

Chadron State College was the site of the announcement to the group for the destination for the Nebraska LEAD 37 International Study/Travel Seminar for January 2019. In making the announcement, Program Director Terry Hejny stated, “The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Poland were selected, as special emphasis was placed on the considerations of safety and learning opportunities, as well as destinations of previous groups. The fifteen day study/travel seminar will include the major cities of Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin, and Warsaw. Those familiar with the program know of the intensity of the schedule and opportunities for learning. While a good number of formal contacts have been finalized, we will continue to tailor the international experience to fit our objectives.” The program last traveled to the Netherlands for a short stay in 2010 (LEAD XXVIII), to Belgium in 1991 (LEAD IX), to Germany in 1994 (LEAD XII) and to Poland in 2014 (LEAD 32).

Support LEAD.
Support agriculture.

Watch for our End of Year 2018 NALC Appeal coming out in November!
**Parts of the Whole**

On a recent Saturday, driving back from Clarinda, Iowa, I listened to Scott Frost talk about the most recent loss. I will stop here and tell you, I have some strong opinions regarding the high-dollar industry of collegiate sport. In my book, it’s immoral to spend the money we do on coaches and facilities. Reason it however you will, but until anyone who wants an education can obtain one, spending millions on extra-curriculars is a poor reflection of our priorities. That being said, I was relieved to hear Coach Frost talk about making his players more multidimensional and accountable. His statement that what we see on the field is part of the larger picture of whether these student-athletes are being disciplined in academics and socially made me want to applaud. Are they respectful of food handlers; are they putting in the work to earn an education? The whole person makes the tackle, interception, run - not just the sinew and bone.

So too for our LEAD Fellows. LEAD works to build multidimensional players in leadership. That’s why not only do Fellows learn about obviously ag related topics like water usage or EPA regulations, they learn about healthcare, the penal system, religions, and much more. It’s not just about being a successful producer or agribusiness person, it’s how our Fellows lead, interact, and fit into the larger picture that is agriculture and Nebraska.

**Looking Outside**

I have learned a lot since joining the LEAD office in April. Most significantly, I have learned just how much I don’t know about Nebraska. Though I was born and raised here, I haven’t experienced much outside of my neighborhood in Lincoln. I know that agriculture is the foundation of our state’s economy, but it has always been more of an abstract concept than a reality. My world has been narrow, focused on my family, my neighborhood, and my children’s school.

I know that I am not alone in being disconnected from agriculture. Too many of us know very little about where our food comes from and how it is produced. I also know I am not alone in my narrow focus. Now more than ever, it is critical to be an informed voter and consumer. We need to go farther than looking for easy answers to our immediate concerns. We have to look outside of our individual neighborhoods and see where we fit in and how we can work to benefit the larger community.

The Nebraska LEAD Program plays an important role by developing well-rounded leaders and advocates for agriculture. I am glad to be part of such a great program. I am grateful for all that I have learned this year and look forward to learning more.
Scholarships (continued)

Gudmundsen Fellowship

Through the “Gudmundsen LEAD Program Excellence Fund”, the Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council chose Katie Kaliff-Jagels (LEAD 38) of Davenport to be the 2018 recipient of the “Gudmundsen Fellowship”. Through their generous financial support, a major portion of Ms. Kaliff-Jagels’s participant fees for the LEAD Program are being underwritten.

Pete and Abbie Gudmundsen had ranched near Whitman, Nebraska, prior to retiring to Arizona in the early 1980’s. Their strong support of the University of Nebraska can be seen in a variety of scholarships, programs, and projects funded during the past 30 years. After retiring from ranching in the 1970’s, the Gudmundsen’s donated their ranch to NU Foundation for use by IANR. The Rafter C Ranch became the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory and now serves as a 12,800 acre research and educational facility.

Katie is the twelfth Nebraska LEAD participant to be designated as a “Gudmundsen Fellow”.

Sibert Fellowship

The Nebraska LEAD Program continues to benefit from the financial support for Nebraska LEAD Fellows. “Fellowships” cover the total program cost (less participation fees) for each of the participants. Through a permanently established two-year endowment, Adam Grabenstein, (LEAD 37) of Farnam has been named the “Frank and Shirley Sibert Fellow” for this, his second year. Grabenstein is the owner/manager of LA Farms raising corn, wheat, oats, rye, cane feed and runs a feedlot and cow/calf operation.

The Nebraska LEAD Program also mourns the loss of . . .

Shirley Sibert of Kearney, who passed away on July 6. Shirley and her husband, Frank, created an endowment for LEAD at the University of Nebraska Foundation in 1998 in order to support a Sibert “Fellow” and since, 11 LEAD participants have been deemed Sibert “Fellows.”

LeRoy Thom of Hastings, who passed away on July 29. LeRoy and T-L Irrigation have been long time supporters of LEAD and in 2011 LeRoy and his wife, Jean, the T-L Foundation, and the Thom Family began providing significant financial support to the Nebraska LEAD Program.
Our New Board Members

Jolene Messinger graduated from Doane University in Crete, Nebraska, with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration with emphasis in Finance and Marketing. She also received her Master’s Degree in Business Administration with emphasis in Management (MBA) from Arizona State University’s W.P. Carey School of Business. She worked in the financial planning industry for 10 years in the greater Phoenix, Arizona, area before returning to Nebraska in August 2011. She is a licensed commodities broker who is a Branch Manager of SRB Capital Management, Inc., co-owner of Messinger Lands, Inc., and also works in the feeder finance and Human Resources divisions of her family’s commercial cattle feeding operation (Southwest Feeders, LLC). She grew up in Hayes Center, Nebraska, and currently resides in McCook, Nebraska, where she is a Board Member of her local NRD (The Middle Republican), has a standing place on the Red Willow County election board, and is a committee member for her local Nebraska Cattlemen’s chapter as well as Nebraska Corn. Jolene has many hobbies and interests outside of agriculture. She enjoys reading, movies, gardening, fashion and beauty, music, and cooking. Jolene’s all time favorite past time is travelling to new places stateside, as well as foreign, and experiencing different lifestyles and cultures.

Dennis L. Nun grew up on a farm near the village of Ohiowa in Fillmore county Nebraska and is a graduate of the University of Nebraska with a B.S. in Animal Science and Ag Economics (’74) and a Master’s Degree in Agricultural Economics (75). He founded and operates Heartland International, Inc. a business that has marketed and distributed CONKLIN Products within the U.S. and internationally since 1974. Dennis was selected as a member of the Nebraska LEAD Program Class IV that traveled to India, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. He currently serves as the Chairman of the LEAD Alumni Association. Dennis and his wife Patricia live in Lincoln, Nebraska. They have six grown children and nine grandchildren.

Dennis is a lay pastor and has been involved with several ministries including The Gideons International, Mexico Outreach with APU (Azusa Pacific University), and Southeast Nebraska Youth.

Tracy Olson of North Platte is a 1985 graduate of the University of Nebraska, as well as a graduate of LEAD Class 31. She and her husband Kirk are involved in the 4th generation Olson family farming and cow/calf operation. Since their marriage in 1986, the family has constructed two feedlot sites, expanded the size of both the cow/calf and farming entities, and added an annual production horse sale.

Tracy operates the daily cattle accounting program for both feedlots, is a member of the Lincoln County Extension Board, a former 4-H club organizational leader, a member of Family, Youth and Community Partners, and she and her husband Kirk are members of the Nebraska Cattlemens Association, Nebraska Farm Bureau, and North Platte Cody Calvary Association.

They have three daughters and two grandchildren.

Scholarships

Nebraska Farm Bureau Scholarship

Since 2003, the Nebraska Farm Bureau Services, Inc. has offered $1,000 scholarships to Nebraska LEAD Program Fellows meeting certain criteria. Please join us in congratulating the following LEAD Fellows for being selected as this year’s Nebraska Farm Bureau Scholarship recipients: (from LEAD 37) MerleAnn Raichart, Benkelman; Scott Sorensen, Cairo; and Scott Speck, Gothenburg and (from LEAD 38) Shane Greving, Chapman; Haley Miles, Ainsworth; Paula Peterson, Waverly; and Becky Schwarz, Bertrand.

Scholarship applicants must be a current member of their local Farm Bureau and have “Professional Producer” status. Upon their completion of the LEAD Program, the scholarship recipients must agree to serve in county Farm Bureau leadership in one of the following capacities: officer, director, committee member or committee chair; or on a state Farm Bureau committee.

(continued on next page)
Applications for Nebraska LEAD Group 39

There’s No Time Like the Present

Applications are available for Nebraska LEAD Group 39.

The application deadline is June 15, 2019.

Seminars begin fall 2019.

Contact Cassondra in the LEAD office now for an application at 402-472-6810 or dobbs2@unl.edu.

Whether you are applying for the first time or reapplying, there is no time like the present to complete your application.

Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council (NALC)

Notice of Annual Meeting

Friday, March 15, 2019

The application deadline is June 15, 2019.

Applications are available for Nebraska LEAD Group 39.

The application deadline is June 15, 2019.

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There’s No Time Like the Present

Applications for Nebraska LEAD Group 39