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**Leadership Florida® Presents Darnell Smith with the
2019 Distinguished Member Award**

Tallahassee, Fla. — Jacksonville leader Darnell Smith has been chosen as the 2019 recipient of the Leadership Florida Distinguished Member Award. The purpose of the Leadership Florida Distinguished Member Award is to recognize a Leadership Florida member whose continued leadership activities, outside of his or her professional responsibilities, have exemplified the highest standards of Leadership Florida and whose activities achieved results or set an example of statewide influence.

Smith was honored at Leadership Florida's 2019 Annual Meeting held at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort in Orlando on June 21.



Darnell Smith, winner of the 2019 Distinguished Member Award

As the 2017 Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce chair, Smith championed efforts from the business and LGBT community to pass a comprehensive Human Rights Ordinance (HRO) that respects religious liberties and ensures that the City of Jacksonville community would not be discriminated against.

The bill passed in early 2017; it legally prevented workplace discrimination against LGBT residents and offered exemptions for small businesses and religious institutions.



“Darnell's ability to listen, compromise and collaborate were the keys to passing the HRO two years ago,” said award nominator Susan Towler, Executive Director of Corporate Social Responsibility at Florida Blue. “He lends his knowledge and expertise to government, business and community initiatives - if there is an initiative happening in Northeast Florida, Darnell is involved in it.”

Currently Florida Blue's market president for North Florida, Smith is responsible for business market growth and customer/community engagement for 36 North Florida counties. He was the 2017 chair of the Jacksonville Chamber board of directors, serves on multiple boards of directors and has been recognized by numerous groups in Jacksonville for his community service.

Leadership Florida is proud to recognize Darnell Smith, Cornerstone Class 33, with the Distinguished Member Award.

About Leadership Florida

For thirty-seven years, Leadership Florida has developed a reputation as a builder of a stronger, diverse statewide sense of community. A respected non-partisan convener of committed individuals, Leadership Florida enhances the knowledge and leadership abilities of Florida's leaders through educational programs and by encouraging collaborative work for the betterment of our state. Leadership Florida provides Floridians essential information and a meaningful forum for their opinions, and creates opportunities for shared experiences that are inviting, inspiring and of lasting value. Leadership Florida is a federally registered trademark.

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