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FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Leadership Florida members,

August is upon us and, if you're like me, this month often feels like we're ascending on top of a roller coaster before a flurry of fall activities occurs. Writer Natalie Babbitt captures this sentiment better as you'll see below.

Before the fall rush, I'd like you to consider the following as you think about your Leadership Florida membership:

- As our organization gears up for new classes, Region, and statewide activities beginning in September, how do you hope to engage?
- On your calendar, place regular check-ins to our website www.leadershipflorida.org. Wendy and staff have added several new features to provide you with timely resources and information.
- It's never too early to begin to think about recruitment for our 2024 classes. Work closely with your Region chair and council to develop a robust list of potential applicants.
- If you haven't yet completed our new **Learn & Lead** initiative, **please complete this brief survey** so we can gauge your interest and participation. You'll soon hear more about what will be offered in your area from your Region Councils. Again, special thanks to Jeff Johnson, AARP, and Lila Jaber, Lila Jaber & Associates, for leading this effort.

<https://leadfla.com/learn-lead>



Learn & Lead

Convene-Inspire-Grow

- Innovation
- Best Practices
- Reflections
- Career
- Current Trends & Critical Conversations
- Beyond Career

This month, our 2023-2024 Leadership Team will meet in Ocala to plan for our year ahead. I am so honored to work beside them to advance the mission of our special organization.

End of Summer Poetic Commercial Break: I leave you with writer Natalie Babbitt's apt interpretation of this season and wish you a very good month ahead!

*The first week of
August hangs at
The very top of the
live-long year,
like the highest seat of
a Ferris wheel when it
pauses in its turning.*

-Natalie Babbitt

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Mangan". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray rectangular background.

Amy Mangan
Cornerstone Class 37
Executive Director, AdventHealth Ocala Foundation

LEADERSHIP FLORIDA NEWS & UPDATES

Join us in welcoming the 2023-2024 Leadership

Florida Board of Directors!



Pictured above L-R:

- Chair: Amy Mangan, executive director, AdventHealth Ocala Foundation
- Chair-elect: Ron Christaldi, Tampa managing partner and president/chief executive officer, Shumaker Advisors Florida
- Past chair: Kam Patton, president and chief executive officer, Patton Solutions
- Finance chair: Augusto Sanabria, president/chief executive officer, Prospera
- Audit chair: Lawrence Lyman, vice president, Tactical Electronics Corporation
- Development chair: Fred Karlinsky, shareholder and co-chair, Insurance Regulatory & Transactions, Greenberg Traurig
- Governance chair: Madeline Pumariega, president, Miami Dade College
- Cornerstone Class 41 chair: Karen Arnold, chief operating officer, Tampa Bay Chamber
- Connect Class 13 chair: Jonathan Schwartz, vice president of real estate and business development, IT'SUGAR
- Education Class 8 chair: Brandon Johnson, executive director of elementary education, Sarasota County Schools
- Region chair representative: Bemetra Simmons, president and chief executive officer, Tampa Bay Partnership
- Region chair representative: David Gordley, president for Southwest Florida and executive vice president, First Horizon Bank
- Region chair representative: Yvette Aleman, president and chief executive officer, F.R. Aleman & Associates
- Cornerstone Class president: Jessica Clasby, director - Palm Beach County, Florida Sugar Cane League
- Connect Class president: Jeff Branch, senior legislative advocate/director of field advocacy designate, Florida League of Cities

- Education Class president: Harriet Moore, director of innovation and equity, Sarasota County Schools
- Florida Chamber of Commerce representative: Karen Moore, chief executive officer and founder, The Moore Agency
- Florida Chamber of Commerce representative: Mark Wilson, president and chief executive officer, Florida Chamber of Commerce
- At-large member: Ava Parker, president, Palm Beach State College
- At-large member: Keith Hoskins, executive vice president - branch operations, Navy Federal Credit Union
- At-large member: Michael Wynn, president, Sunshine Ace Hardware
- General counsel (ex-officio): David Nicholson, vice president of legal and general counsel, TECO Energy
- President and chief executive officer (ex-officio): Wendy Spencer, president and chief executive officer, Leadership Florida

2024 Viking Cruise to Portugal

Only SIX cabins left! 71 Leadership Florida members and guests are traveling, so let's book the rest of the ship!



September 30 - October 9, 2024

The River of Gold itinerary on this cruise includes stops in Lisbon, Porto, Régua, Pinhão, and Barca d'Alva, as well as an excursion in Salamanca, Spain, for an unforgettable tour of the Iberian Peninsula!

[Click here for more information.](#) To book your cruise, please contact Renee Bookout (Cornerstone Class 36) at reneemajestictravel@gmail.com or (850) 293-9776 .

Thank you for your support of Leadership Florida!



Jaha Cummings

Cornerstone Class 37
Manager
Coldwell Banker Sunstar Realty
Calusa Region



Vanessa Joseph

Connect Class 12
Attorney and Elected City Clerk
Catholic Legal Services
Southeast Region



Marc Spoto

Cornerstone Class 35
AVP, Marketing
JM Family Enterprises
Gold Coast Region

BECOME A LEADERSHIP FLORIDA

LIFETIME MEMBER!

Joining as a Lifetime Member is a significant commitment that yields great dividends for the future of Leadership Florida - **514** Leadership Florida Lifetime Members agree!

- **No more dues for life!**
- Unlike annual dues, this gift is entirely tax-deductible
- Invitation to a special Lifetime Members-only Reception for you and a guest for all future Annual Meetings
- Special recognition at each Annual Meeting
- Special recognition in our e-Cast newsletter
- Social media posts announcing your new Lifetime Membership
- Future social media shout-outs indicating Lifetime Member status
- Introduction at the next Leadership Florida Board of Directors Meeting
- Prominent listings in the Annual Membership Directory, including name, photo, information and special icon indicating Lifetime Member status
- Early registration opportunities for the Annual Meeting
- Occasional advance notice to "*but for Leadership Florida*" offerings, including trips and exclusive events
- A special Leadership Florida Lifetime Member lapel pin

Lifetime Membership Gift: \$5,400

Payment plans are available in the amount of \$6,000

Learn more about becoming
a Lifetime Member at
leadfla.com/lifetime



Ready to join?
Scan the QR code
to submit your
Lifetime Member
Pledge Form



[Click to learn more about Lifetime Membership!](#)

LIFETIME MEMBER FEATURE





JON LEVINSON
Cornerstone Class 7
President
REL Enterprises
Lifetime Member
Gulfstream Region

As a Lifetime Member of Leadership Florida, what are some of the ways you enjoy your membership the most?

No annual dues! Plus invites to special events and advance registration to many. And of course, knowing you have invested in the long term for Leadership Florida's success. The new car bonus gift didn't hurt either (what, you didn't get one?).

What are some examples of how becoming a Lifetime Member has affected your career?

I immediately got better looking and made 10 times the previous year's income! It's a Cornerstone Class 7 thing. Seriously, I didn't do it for that. Ensuring Leadership Florida will be around for a long time made my decision.

Have you experienced a “*but for Leadership Florida*” moment, in which the experience could not have happened without Leadership Florida?

There are so many it's hard to single one out. Welcoming Leadership Florida's Italy trip to Florence and spending time with them there was special. (Our youngest daughter, a College Leadership Florida member, lives there and she and her husband own a restaurant there so we visit them often and happened to be there at the same time as the Leadership Florida trip). And of course, the number of Leadership Florida members you run into on a regular basis makes for lots of “*but for Leadership Florida*” moments.

Do you have a favorite memory from your class year?

There were only 43 members in my Class 7, but I'd say the immediate bonding that took place was incredible. Everyone says that, but 34 years later our class still gets together on Zoom! And in 2022, our class won the largest percentage of members at the Annual Meeting in our group. One of the most memorable things was the arrival at our last class session of Wendy Walker who had just been hired as our president! Fisher Island, University Club Jax, Biscayne Babbies... any more info and I'd have to kill you.

Thank you, Jon, for your support and commitment to Florida!



BANK OF AMERICA

Bank of America thanks Leadership Florida's Lifetime Members



BARBARA SHIRLEY

Education Class 1
Calusa Region
Lifetime Member

In general, how are you spending your time during retirement?

I retired from the Sarasota County School District in June 2022 after 30 years of service, which included 15 years as a principal of a

Title I elementary school. My husband and I sold our home after 30 years of living on Siesta Key and bought a condo, which we have spent the last year renovating. We have intermittently traveled during this past year and plan to continue checking off ultimate destinations on our bucket list as we explore the U.S. and other amazing places throughout the world.

What was the most valuable thing you learned during your career that prepared you for retirement?

Among the most valuable things I’ve learned during my career is that life is an incredible journey and not a destination. We are growing and evolving every day and continued learning is one of the keys to being happy and finding fulfillment. Experiences have shown me that a strong commitment to family and developing personal relationships enhances life and makes it more meaningful.

Are you involved in activities to support anyone or any group from a younger generation?

Throughout my career, I have been fortunate to have had mentors and coaches who have supported my development. This had a tremendous impact on my growth and success. Over the past two years, I have been co-chair for Leadership Florida Education Classes 6 and 7, where I have been able to support the growth of some of the highest levels of leadership from Florida’s many diverse sectors in education. I also teach graduate education classes for developing teachers and aspiring administrators for the University of Phoenix and continue to mentor and coach educators in the Sarasota County School District.

Have you experienced a “*but for Leadership Florida*” moment during your retirement (i.e., something that would not have occurred without your engagement as a Leadership Florida member)?

Over the past year, my leadership involvement with Education Classes 6 and 7 and being on the Board of Directors and Region committees has provided many educational, cultural, and exciting “*but for Leadership Florida*” opportunities. Each experience has allowed me to network and make friends

with a diverse group of personal and professional colleagues that would not have been available without the membership and experience of Leadership Florida. I am looking forward to the Meet us in the Mountains gathering in North Carolina in September, which will provide an opportunity for the next “but for Leadership Florida” experience.



AARP proudly recognizes Leadership Florida's Retired Members



If you are retired or planning to retire soon, [please let us know here!](#)



MIKE BENNETT
Cornerstone Class 36
Supervisor of Elections
Manatee County
Navy
Calusa Region

When were you enlisted?

I enlisted in November 1963.

Why did you choose the service branch you joined?

I loved the water and loved to travel. They were actively recruiting, and I did not want to wait for the draft.

How did your service and experiences affect your personal and/or professional life?

Besides my wife, the military was the most memorable and life-changing thing I ever did. The GI bill allowed me to go to college, which was never even a dream when leaving high school. Because of the GI bill, I earned my

bachelor's degree and then an MBA. I was working on a doctorate when it ran out and I went to work.

What was the most valuable thing you learned during your service?

I learned discipline, responsibility, and my love for this country. I went from a very wild kid to a very dedicated man. I learned that everyone, male or female, should be given the opportunity to serve this country in some fashion - not just military, but growing up ready to face the world's challenges.



Truist proudly honors Leadership Florida's Veterans and Military Members



If you are a veteran or active duty member and are not listed in our [directory](#), please let us know [here](#).

MOVERS & SHAKERS



Check out the latest news from your fellow Leadership Florida members on our blog [here](#)!



Karen Moore
Cornerstone Class 14
Northwest Region
Lifetime Member



Sophia Nelson
Cornerstone Class 35
Gulfstream Region
Lifetime Member



Henry Mack
Connect Class 9
Northwest Region

Henry Mack began a new

Karen Moore was honored as a PRNEWS Top Women in PR Entrepreneur.

[Read more](#)

Sophia Nelson was appointed to the Florida Democratic Party's Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

[Read more](#)

position with The Southern Group as lead education and economic development consultant and lobbyist.

[Read more](#)



Kimano Edwards
Connect Class 11
Northeast Region
Lifetime Member

Kimano Edwards was recently admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar.

[Read more](#)



Ryan Duffy
Connect Class 12
Southwest Region
Lifetime Member

Ryan Duffy received the Rotarian of the Year award from the Clewiston Rotary Club.

[Read more](#)



Carralyce Buford
Connect Class 11
East Central Region

Carralyce Buford was named the incoming president for the Rotary Club of Lake Mary for the 2023-2024 year.

[Read more](#)



Audie Confesor
Education Class 7
East Central Region
Lifetime Member

Audie Confesor began a new position as principal of Island Village Elementary School in the School District of Osceola



Kim Moore
Cornerstone Class 33

Kim Moore was named chief workforce innovation officer at Yavapai College in Prescott Valley, Arizona.



Bemetra Simmons
Cornerstone Class 38
West Central Region

Bemetra Simmons was honored among the First Ladies in African American History by the Woodson African American Museum of Florida.

County.

[Read more](#)

[Read more](#)

[Read more](#)



John Horne

Cornerstone Class 28
Calusa Region
Lifetime Member

John Horne was inducted into the Bartow High School Hall of Fame.

[Read more](#)

C.J. Maier

Cornerstone Class 33
East Central Region

C.J. Maier was re-appointed to the Central Florida Expressway Authority by Governor DeSantis.

[Read more](#)

Megan Almasi

Connect Class 8
East Central Region

Megan Almasi was promoted to senior director of community relations at Orlando Health.

[Read more](#)



Jaha Cummings

Cornerstone Class 37
Calusa Region
Lifetime Member

Jaha Cummings was chosen as a 2023 fellow in the inaugural class of New America's Us@250 Initiative.

[Read more](#)

Tony Carvajal

Cornerstone Class 27
Northwest Region

Tony Carvajal began a new position as CEO of the Association of Florida Colleges.

[Read more](#)

Lauren Vickroy Purdy

Connect Class 8
Northeast Region

Lauren Vickroy Purdy was named president of the Florida State University College of Law's Alumni Association Board of Directors.

[Read more](#)

HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?

Let us know!



leadfla.com/submit-news

Have news to share? [Click here](#) and let us know! You could be featured in next month's Movers & Shakers blog, our social media channels, and our e-Cast newsletter!

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