



THE DIRT

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CLASS 43 GRADUATION TICKETS ON SALE

TO CELEBRATE. TO HONOR. TO NETWORK. TO GATHER WITH ALUMS.

The evening will highlight AgForestry's newest class of leaders who experienced professional and personal growth and now join the ranks of alumni!

When: Friday, April 21

5 pm – Social Hour

6 pm – Dinner and Ceremony

Where: The Centennial, Spokane

How: [Purchase tickets here.](#)



CLASS 43 RETURNS FROM VIETNAM

Class 43 explored Hanoi and the surrounding area for the first week, then enjoyed a reprieve with an overnight cruise at Ha Long Bay before flying south to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) for the second week of the trip. Highlights for the class were:

- Learning more about the Vietnam War through visits to the War Remnants Museum, the “Hanoi Hilton,” the Cu Chi Tunnels, and sharing dinner with Vietnamese Army Veterans. The experience was sobering. It was important to look beyond just agriculture and natural resources on this trip to truly understand the culture and recognize that war shapes culture.

- Briefings at the US Embassy in Hanoi. The class met with representatives from the State Department, USAID, and had the chance to share lunch with representatives from the USDA Foreign Ag Service. Class members expressed that they hadn’t realized the extent of activity occurring at a foreign embassy and they appreciated the opportunity to broaden their understanding.

- Being challenged to rethink the regulatory environment in the US. Many of the class work within strict regulatory bounds which can feel like a “headache” at times but this trip forced a look at what happens when there is little regulation and what does exist is not enforced.



*Top L: Class photo at Hai
Phuong Port*

*Top R: Darcy Batura learning
local cooking customs*

Bottom L: Farm tour

CLASS 44 “SHADOWED” IN OLYMPIA



*Tyler West (44) with
Rep. Keith Goehner (5)*



*Tiffany Pitra (44), Brian Considine
(DNR), Sen. Kevin VanDeWege, Rep.
Mike Chapman & Rosa Dekker (44)*



*Carrie Nelson (44-DNR),
Commissioner Franz,
Natalie Sahli (44-DNR)*

Class 44 arrived in Olympia feeling a little intimidated and unsure yet by the next afternoon, they were walking the halls of the capitol and striking up conversations with their Representatives with confidence.

The objective was to immerse the class in “State Government in Action” with their first day kicked off with a walking tour and a visit to both the Governor’s office and the Secretary of State’s Office. On Thursday, each member of the class had an assignment to “shadow”: a legislator, lobbyists, or agency policy director. They came back together in the afternoon to debrief, each sharing their unique “piece of the puzzle” and collectively put the pieces together. Lt. Governor Denny Heck joined the class and area alumni for dinner, imploring and inspiring the audience to work collaboratively for a brighter future. On Friday, Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz closed out the seminar with a candid conversation about how to practically get work done with folks from all sides of an issue and the value of tools like the Timber-Fish-Wildlife Agreement.

CLASS 44 LEARNS LESSONS IN NATION’S CAPITAL

The future belongs to the curious and Class 44 spent seven days in Washington, DC and Gettysburg with fervent curiosity. Program impact was evident as the class confidently presented themselves, facilitated sessions, and represented Washington within a sea of over 100 leadership program participants from five states, including Kentucky, Kansas, Virginia, and New Mexico.

“If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu” was heard often as the class learned how to be at the table. Many expressed that they feel they have no excuse to sit on the sidelines any longer, and certainly no excuse to sit home and complain without taking action.

NATION'S CAPITAL CONT'

A leadership skill the class has been exploring is “inspiring a shared vision.” After spending time with a lineup of USDA undersecretaries and the top three from the Army for Civil Works, it was noted that we were seeing the current Administration’s vision in action: from the people appointed to positions to their priorities.

Class Member Reflections:

“If you don’t have a relationship, your message just gets lost in the sea of information and people. It is our collective responsibility to educate people and let them know our issues and what things are like in our part of the country.”

“I came to DC with the perception that one person or a few people had a lot of influence, but actually DC there are so many people here having influence and we can too.”

“I was always the person sitting at home complaining about policy, but I never did anything about it. Not anymore!”

“We need a shared vision; in this country and everywhere we lead. If we don’t elevate the vision of the people we’re leading and have a shared vision, we won’t be successful.”

Quotes that stood out to the class:

“Optimism is a force multiplier.” - Jeff McCausland and Tom Vossler, Diamond6 Leadership and Strategy

“People are policy.” - Sanah Baig, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics

“New, weird, and different. Try something new, weird, and different!” - Jaime Pinkham (Class 9), Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Army for Civil Works

“Look for your policy window because important things are worth the wait.” - Robyn Colosimo, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works for Project Planning and Review



CLASS 45 APPLICATIONS CLOSE APRIL 15

Do you know someone with leadership potential? Are they up for a challenge? Are they willing to commit to a leadership journey that will profoundly grow them both professionally and personally? Send them our way!

There are two more Q&A sessions for applicants to learn about requirements, expectations, cost, scholarships, and benefits. Prospects may sign up for a session by clicking [here](#). Attending a Q&A session is required for applicants to ensure an understanding of the demands and rigor of an 18-month program spanning two years with 13 seminars that occupy 58 days. See the Class 45 seminar schedule [here](#) and see the list of available scholarships [here](#).

FINE PRINT:

Applications are accepted until April 15.

Steps to apply:

- a) Attend one of four [Q&A sessions](#)
- b) [General Application](#)
- c) [Essay Questions](#)
- d) [Self-Evaluation](#)
- e) Employer Release and Reference
- f) [Three References](#)
- g) [Resume](#)
- h) Signed Memorandum of Understanding

BOARD MEETS TO ASSESS PROGRESS, PLAN THE FUTURE

The Board of Directors met in Shelton for two days at Green Diamond's Colonial House for regular Foundation business as well as to evaluate progress to date against goals set in the new strategic plan and to lay out plans for the coming fiscal years. The goals include:

- Provide first-class leadership training programs
- Increase impact and awareness of AgForestry through strategic marketing
- Strengthen AgForestry's financial capacity
- Activate the AgForestry network (constituents-alumni)
- Increase stakeholder partnerships (stakeholders)
- Govern AgForestry to ensure accountability, growth, and clear strategic direction
- Manage AgForestry to ensure mission advancement and effective implementation of board policies and directives

Each member took their turn citing both progress as well as opportunities for the future in round robin discussions. Following the meeting, an outline of key targets will be built for each of the next three fiscal years against each goal.

The board also took time to tour Taylor Shellfish with guides Nels Whipple and Erin Ewald (40) to experience shucking and packing of oysters, clams, and mussels.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR LAST FISCAL YEAR

Check out our progress!

[Click here](#) to view last year's annual report if you haven't.

THANK YOU TAYLOR SHELLFISH



Pictured L to R: Nels Whipple (Taylor), Mark Wieseler, Michael Broeckel, Hannah Poush (staff), Dennis Swinger, Jr., Chery Sullivan, Patti Case, Justin Hall, Brian Sayler, Vicky Scharlau (staff), Kristin Watts, Carol Piening, Nate Putnam, Erin Ewald (Taylor), Julie Grenfell (staff - behind the camera)

ROAST & TOAST HONORING SID MORRISON

As the then Washington State 4th Congressional District representative, Sid Morrison was Class 12's choice to receive the first "Stu Bledsoe Leadership Award". Sid has made impact on Washington state and its resources for decades and central Washington wants to say "thank you".

The Central Washington Fair Association is holding a "Roast & Toast" set to be the funniest fundraiser of the year. Sid's legacy of philanthropy and community service will be honored with all proceeds benefiting the 'Sid Morrison Ag Education Fund' supporting youth agricultural education and programming through the Central Washington Fair Foundation.



Save-the-Date

Saturday, June 24, 2023

State Fair Park & Event Center, 1301 S. Fair Avenue, Yakima, Washington

Social Hour 5:00 pm | Dinner 6:00 pm

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS



Ken Miller (22)
Capital Press



Dennis Swinger Jr. (38)
Washington Grown @17:46



Don McMoran (26)
The Seattle Times

In Remembrance



Lynda Pheasant, Class 16

A quote from Lynda's 1993 AgForestry application regarding what qualities are needed in leadership: *"Leadership is dependent on the acquisition of knowledge and skills to utilize information to greatest advantage. The ability to select appropriate goals, to focus on essential actions and to articulate a position are additional requirements. A sense of timing is critical. And, most importantly, leaders must value their followers."*



Rick Maib, Class 15

In Rick's 1992 AgForestry application he said, *"A leader should supply vision and set goals rather than bureaucracy and management. ... Management is doing the things right while leadership is doing the right things."*

Thank You to our Supporters!

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WA State Crop Improvement Assn.
Washington Fruit & Produce Company
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Yakima Pomological Club

In Memory of Alex McLean (1)
Dave (1) & Jan Roseleip
Jack (1) & Geri DeWitt

In Memory of Linda North (10)
Martinez Livestock

Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation

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