



# THE DIRT

## ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

Nearly four dozen alumni and supporters Zoomed together last Wednesday for the annual meeting of members. This year's focus included hearing how to "Tackle Tough Topics" with a trainer from the American Farm Bureau Federation, an update on a Washington Department of Ag Specialty Crop Block grant awarded to the Foundation to evaluate the AgForestry curriculum, and to announce five new board members.

Chair Justin Hall also thanked current board members:

- Michael Broeckel – Bank of Eastern Washington – Pasco
- Patti Case – Green Diamond Resource Co. (retired) - Shelton
- Mel Calloway – Syngenta & Calloway Northwest – Quincy
- Justin Hall – Nisqually River Foundation – Olympia
- Nathan Putnam – SDS Lumber Co. (retired) – Glenwood
- Carol Piening – Wash. Dept. of Nat. Resources (retired) – Olympia
- Brian Sayler – Green Diamond Resource Co. – Shelton
- Chery Sullivan – Wash. Dept. of Ecology – Olympia
- Dennis Swinger, Jr. – Franz Farms LTD – Lind
- Mark Wieseler – Flying W Farms – Mesa

## **ANNUAL MEETING RECAP CONTINUED**

Chair Hall shared a special shout out to retiring board members including:

- Dwayne Faber – Faber Farms - Burlington
- Lon Inaba – Inaba Farms - Wapato
- Kristin Watts – AgWest Farm Credit - Spokane

Past Chair, and Chair of the Nominating Committee Dennis Swinger, Jr. announced new board members:

- Bonnie Fassler – Credit Officer / AVP – AgWest Farm Credit – Pasco
- Mikala Staples Hughes – Director of Quality and Technical Services – Sakuma Brothers Farms and Processing – Burlington
- Adrian Miller – Senior Director of Environmental Affairs – Weyerhaeuser – Poulsbo
- Bill Taylor – Owner – Taylor Shellfish – Shelton
- Jennifer Witherbee – Community/Business Growth Director - Larson Gross – Wenatchee

## **MEET THE AGFORESTRY TEAM**

With Class 45 about to embark on their personal leadership journey, we wanted to share a bit about the staff of the Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation.



**Vicky Scharlau** joined the Foundation in 2021 as Executive Director. She has 40 years of experience developing and managing organizations, projects and programs across the U.S. and Mexico. She has provided management, staffing, guidance, consulting, and/or coaching to dozens of organizations including local and national nonprofits, federal and state agencies, commodity commissions, and other similarly structured groups. Vicky is a graduate of AgForestry Leadership Program Class 10 and resides in Wenatchee with her husband.



**Julie Grenfell** serves as Network Engagement Director, joining the team in 2018. Growing up in a small family business in Skagit Valley, Julie understands the importance of relationship development and servant leadership. Julie and her husband live on a farm in Cheney training working border collies to move livestock.

## MEET THE AGFORESTRY TEAM



**Hannah Poush** serves as Leadership Development Director and manages the AgForestry Leadership Program. Hannah volunteers to support community initiatives and non-profit organizations when not outdoors or spending time with her family. She is a graduate of AgForestry Leadership Program Class 38.



**Kyle Brooksher** joined the team in April and serves as Leadership Program Manager & Facilitator, organizing, executing, and evaluating the AgForestry Leadership Program. Kyle is from Colorado and has lived in Washington for over a decade. Kyle's career includes developing, facilitating, and delivering trainings in online, in-person, and hybrid settings, creating learning experiences for a wide range of industries from healthcare, transportation, and banking, to airline, religion, and cannabis.

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation has scholarships available to assist producers with tuition for the AgForestry Leadership Program. This year, three participants from Class 45 have been selected for scholarships:

- **Morgan Adams** of Coulee City, Washington Wheat Foundation scholarship
- **Stacey Rasmussen** of Harrington, Washington Wheat Foundation scholarship
- **Cody LaRiviere** of Yakima, Harold S Cox Leadership Legacy scholarship
  - o Cody is the first recipient of this scholarship that honors the legacy of Harold who believed in the importance of education and of supporting those seeking leadership roles in agriculture.

[Click here](#) for a full list of available scholarships. Contact Julie at [julie@agforestry.org](mailto:julie@agforestry.org) to learn more about the available scholarships, to set up a scholarship, or contribute to a current scholarship.

## CLASS 45 KICKS OFF IN PULLMAN THIS WEEK

As you read this, AgForestry's newest class is making their way to WSU Pullman for their first seminar. They have already completed a 360 assessment which will provide them a unique perspective on their leadership skills and giving them valuable insights into their starting point. Using this knowledge, they will set meaningful goals for their time in the program.

Enthusiastic alumni and staff greet the new class to extend a warm welcome and introduce them to the vibrant AgForestry network. During the week, Class 45 will hear from Class 44 members, Amber Itle and Derek Friehe, as well as Larry Cochran, Class 11. Plus, the WSU team will inspire with insights on leading innovation, and they will wrap up the week with an engaging session on mindfulness concepts.

## **CLASS 44 EXPLORES SYSTEMS IN BELLINGHAM!**

Module Three is now the focus for Class 44 as they gear up for Bellingham next week. The class took the lead in curating this seminar and includes exploring the world of shellfish to diving into berries and dairies as they uncover the intricate connections between various industries and how they contribute to a larger system. The time at Taylor Shellfish takes them out of the traditional classroom setting and gets them into boots in the dirt (or mud!). This is a hands-on experience to broaden their horizons and deepen their understanding of the complex systems at play in shellfish as well as other related industries.

### **WHAT WE'RE READING**

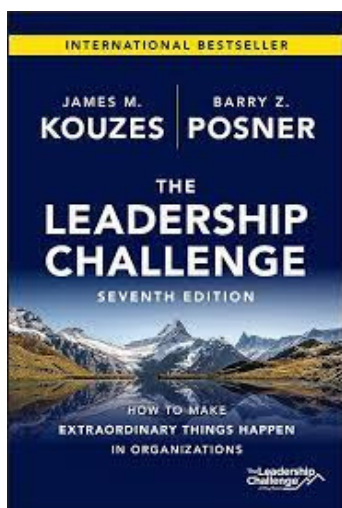
The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations

By James Kouzes and Barry Posner

Read by: AgForestry Staff

Review by: Kyle Brooksher, Leadership Program Manager and Facilitator

As Class 45 begins, staff reread and discussed The Leadership Challenge as it serves as our core “text book” for Module One. The Leadership Challenge outlines what makes a leader extraordinary through five key practices any leader can adopt. The five practices are based on what people across industries, sectors, demographics, and time from when they've seen the best in leadership from themselves and those they follow. Simply put, “When leaders are doing their best, they Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart.” The book contends that the frequency a leader exhibits these five practices determines their perceived and realized success as a leader.



The AgForestry Leadership Program instills these five practices into program participants to increase impact as leaders. We discuss the book in detail with the class in the first three seminars. To help staff “Model the Way”, we are discussing our insights as a team. During our last discussion we reflected on what it means to lead based on our values and the values of our organizations. We shared what it takes to understand values of those we lead and how we intentionally lead where our values overlap.

## **FOUNDATION NETWORKING RECEPTIONS**

Join AgForestry Class 44 and 45 at one their seminars in coming months plus have the chance to see colleagues, peers, and friends.

➔ **Pullman: Thursday, October 5 Class 45**

5:00 pm - Networking Reception

➔ **Lynden: Thursday, October 12 Class 44**

4:30 pm - Educational Tour at Eaglemill Farms

6:00 pm - Networking Reception with Guest Speaker Director of Ag Derek Sandison

Thank you, Larson Gross & AgWest Farm Credit, for sponsoring this event!

➔ **Spokane: Thursday, November 2 Class 45**

6:00 pm - Networking Reception

Thank you, University of Washington (Spokane), for hosting!

➔ **Vancouver: Wednesday, November 8 Class 44**

6:00 pm - Networking Reception

➔ **Ellensburg: Thursday, November 30 Class 45**

6:00 pm - Networking Reception

➔ **Walla Walla: Thursday, December 7 Class 44**

6:00 pm - Networking Reception at Reininger Winery. Thanks to Kelly Tucker (19), Sarah McClure (31) and Sharla Wagoner for hosting!

### **Click here to register**

Would you like to help sponsor a Networking Reception? Contact Julie at [julie@agforestry.org](mailto:julie@agforestry.org)

#### **Mission:**

We cultivate leaders in agriculture, forestry, and natural resources who communicate, collaborate, inspire, and serve.

## **Thank You to our Supporters!**

*Has your name slipped off this list? No worries! With the click of a few buttons, you can regain your position on the list of those that believe in leadership development in Washington's natural resource sectors! Click here to contribute to the Foundation today!*

Brian (38) & Megan Baumann  
Brett (24) & Lisa Bishop  
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Guy (25) & Ruth Gifford  
Lon (12) & Sheila Inaba  
Matt (36) & Erin Kloes  
Jordan (38) & Olivia McDevitt  
Jeff (15) & Michel Pitts  
Chuck (16) & Sharon (20) Podlich  
Wendy (23) & Chris Sammarco  
Tim Scherer (10) & Mary Kangas  
Mark (10) & Ginger Schoesler  
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Mikala Staples Hughes (43) & Corey Hughes  
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### **Grant**

Union Pacific Railroad

### **Alumni Receptions**

Yakima  
Sponsor: PayneWest  
Sponsor: DAC Consulting Inc.

Bellingham  
Sponsor: Larson Gross  
Sponsor: AgWest Farm Credit

Pullman  
Host: Washington State University

Spokane  
Host: University of Washington

Walla Walla  
Hosts: Kelly Tucker (19), Sarah McClure (31) and Sharla Wagoner

### **Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation**

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