

2009 – 2010 Annual Report
EFFECTIVE LEADERS. TODAY and TOMORROW.
July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

President's Message

On behalf of our investors, Board of Trustees, volunteers, and staff, I am pleased to submit the 2009 – 2010 Annual Report.

The Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation founded the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program in 1978. The Leadership Program is the core project of the Foundation and was created with the vision that maintaining healthy, natural resource-based industries requires knowledgeable leaders. Our mission statement is “We are a leadership development organization dedicated to advancing the natural resource industries through enhanced understanding, education, and empowerment of future leaders.”

Because of the loyalty, dedication, and consistency of our many investors who believe in the importance of purposely preparing leaders, graduates of the program use their enhanced leadership skills within the agriculture, forestry, fishery, and rural sectors of Washington State, across the USA, and around the world. Communities, businesses, and citizens directly benefit from this investment.

In order to assure that we are developing effective leaders, we examine, renew, adjust and develop our leadership training to assure our leaders are receiving leading- edge instruction and emerge from the program ready, able, and willing to lead effectively.

Our organization, like many others, has definitely had to address the difficulties caused by the recession, utilizing the best resources of our investors, alumni, participants, board members, or staff. We are extremely grateful for their dedication and hard work. Many of our investors, despite their own difficult situations, have continued their support of the leadership program, laying the groundwork for a successful future, and assuring this ongoing mission of building innovative and resourceful leaders for today and tomorrow.

Thank you for your partnership with the AgForestry Leadership Program!

Dave Roseleip
President

Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation
AgForestry Graduate, Class 1

Preface

The Leadership Program is an 18-month, 58-day intense experience for up to 24 participants in each leadership class. Universities and businesses across the state provide in-kind facilities and faculty support to assure a world-class training experience. Over 700 investors composed of individuals and businesses provide the financial resources to plan and conduct twelve 3-day statewide leadership development seminars, one 7-day national leadership development seminar and one 2-week international leadership development seminar.

Because strong leadership is required, the Leadership Program develops leaders who have excellent communication skills, the ability to collaborate, the vision to see the big picture, and the desire to seek common solutions. They also understand policy development and can work with legislators and members of Congress. They gain knowledge of social issues impacting communities, an understanding of environmental and water issues, access to a network of knowledgeable people representing a broad array of organizations and interests, and a worldview of trade and foreign governments.

Organizational Governance

- This was year three of our three-year strategic plan.
- The Board of Trustees focused intently on their fiduciary responsibility to fund the program by encouraging renewal of investors, acquiring new investors, and acquiring sponsorships for our two fundraising events, the Golf Tournament and the Gala.
- We focused on our core responsibilities to produce a high-quality Leadership Program operated on a cost effective basis.

Leadership Development Program

- During the 2009 – 2010 program year (September 09 to May 10) the Foundation conducted twelve three-day seminars within the state and two extended seminars: one in Washington, DC, and one overseas traveling to Turkey. The seminars included a total of sixty (60) days of intensive leadership development training. The Foundation has partnerships with six host institutions that provide an on-site coordinator and eight program alumni serve as Seminar Coordinators for the rest of the seminars. In Washington, DC, the Congressional offices of Representatives McMorris-Rodgers and Hastings, along with Senator Murray, provided resources and assistance.
- The Leadership Program graduated Class 31 at the Graduation celebration event in May. A new leadership Class 32 commenced their experience in October 2009.
- During the course of the program year, over 300 speakers addressed and led discussions with the classes on a wide array of topics.

Marketing

- To keep our investors informed of the results of the program, an e-letter called “Leaders in Action” was published. This gave up-to-date news of the leadership activities of the graduates of the program.
- The “Network News” newsletter was distributed by email and postal service, which includes feature stories about the program and recognition of investors.
- The website was promoted at every opportunity and includes up-to-date information on the classes, alumni, events, recruitment, fellowship applications, history, and calendars. A password protected alumni directory is also available to current investors.
- AgForestry is continuing to build alliances with key industry groups.
- A “Thank you, investors” e-letter was distributed to the network showing who renewed their memberships or newly joined the Foundation. This provided much deserved recognition to our supporters.

Capital Acquisition

Financial Capital invested wisely in a Leadership Program, builds human capital.

During the course of the recession, a majority of our investors have stayed with us. During this fiscal year 2009-2010, we received total investor income of \$314,438 from over 600 individuals and businesses who are extremely dedicated to the program and participants paid \$64,650 in participation fees. WE THANK THEM!

We had 100 donors let their membership’s lapse during the fiscal year. During the same period we acquired 223 new members.

Appreciation is expressed to our Board of Trustees and staff who worked diligently to call and personally contact current members and prospective new donors.

Our focus is:

- To grow the number of annual investors by retaining a high percentage of continuous investors, adding new investors, and upgrading the average level of giving to outpace any erosion of purchasing power of the dollar. We adhere to the model of building a broad-based set of funding resources with the central core being the graduates of the leadership program, who represent the leadership of our constituency.
- We have focused our concentration on our Annual Fund and Events. Our Endowment Fund provides a vehicle for planned giving. Follow-up contacts are made, and the newsletter contains periodic information on the options for

planned giving. In addition, the “Leadership Memorial – A Lasting Tribute to Loved Ones” Program has been used by members of the network as a way to memorialize friends and family through support of building leaders.

The Foundation’s fiduciary responsibility to our investors is taken very seriously so we understand the need to diversify how we acquire our funding. Five years ago we implemented a capital acquisition model designed to diversify our funding sources by adding two fundraising and “friendraising” events, the golf tournament and the “Celebrating Our Connections” gala.

During the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year, we held only one event, the golf tournament, and suspended the gala event for these reasons: 1) we were seeing current donors lapse at higher than usual levels, so we reasoned that those donors, and even our donors who were renewing, would not likely be in a position to be a gala sponsor; 2) we felt the current economic climate did not lend itself to having a “gala celebration” readily accepted psychologically by our members; 3) we had significant up-front costs facing us for our event manager which were stretching our budget without a clear idea as to whether they could be recovered adequately by acquiring sponsors; and 4) in addition, we were concerned about the impact of a gala on our limited staff, who were already stretched by the required extra efforts needed for the Annual Fund.

The gala is an extremely important part of our marketing and fundraising portfolio and we made plans to reinstate it in the fall of 2010.

Candidate Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment of candidates involved in production continued to be a priority. Through our Recruitment Advisory Committee, our Board, and alumni network, we had a broad slate of candidates apply. We made specific contacts with selected industry segments to encourage them to take responsibility for identifying future leaders and encourage them to apply. The six Area Selection Committees made up of over thirty volunteers did an outstanding job of interviewing and recommending an excellent Class 33 to the Board of Trustees.

Alumni Services

Specific emphasis is given to alumni assistance in recruiting program candidates, securing seminar speakers, and other resources. The Graduate Directory continues to be a valuable resource for connecting alumni as they perform their critical leadership roles for the natural resources industry and rural communities.

The Future

We expect the economy to improve, albeit slowly. Now, more than ever, effective leaders are needed. The Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program is proud to provide outstanding leaders for Washington State Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and rural communities.