

Cultivating LEADership
E-NEWSLETTER

February 1, 2008

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

1984: George Orwell was a little off; NY's Ag leaders were right on!

Many of you might remember the book *1984* by George Orwell – it was assigned reading for me in school. It was the fictional story of one man's struggle with "big brother" and a utopian society where the government dictated our every move. It was largely viewed as a satirical critique of what our future might look like (remember, the book was published in 1950). Now that we've lived through that time period, we know that many of Orwell's predictions were a little off.

In the year 1984, many of New York's agricultural leaders – members of the boards of the NYS Agricultural Society, CALS at Cornell, NY Farm Bureau, and others – recognized a looming threat, and decided to do something about it. They noted that many of the individuals serving in leadership positions for various agricultural and community organizations were "terming out", over-committed, retiring, or otherwise leaving those roles, with no (younger) replacements filling their shoes. What they did to address the problem was create and launch the LEAD New York Program. This same trend was sweeping agricultural and rural communities across the country – nearly 30 state-wide agricultural/rural leadership programs were launched in the mid-1980's.

Also during that same time period, several scholars – including Bourdieu (1985) and Coleman (1988) - were writing about a phenomenon that would come to be known as "*social capital*". While research and writing about social capital existed even earlier, and increased during the 80's, it was not until the national best-seller *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam (2000) was published that the term would gain wide-spread recognition among the American public. Shortly thereafter, the problem of declining social capital in America would receive the attention of policy makers, scholars, and the popular media.

Whether they knew it or not, the founders of our program, our earliest participants, and every LEAD alumnus since then have been addressing the issue of declining social capital. We may not have realized this because we used different language. Ask just about any alumnus or other person familiar with our program what the single greatest benefit of participation is, and the answer is almost immediately "*networking*". Networking and social capital go hand-in-hand. In fact, social capital can be defined simply as: "the features of social organization such as *networks* [emphasis added], norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995). So when our alumni talk about the networking aspect of the LEAD program, they are really talking about an important component of social capital.

A perfect example of two industry leaders with vast amounts of social capital surfaced at the NYS Agricultural Society Annual Forum this past January. As I sat and listened to Dick Church present the Distinguished Service Citation to Robert and Richard Call, I couldn't help but think that they were the perfect example of the social-capital-rich generation that Putnam was talking about in his book. The list of organizations that these brothers were not only members of, but served in leadership capacities for, was extensive. Unfortunately, such involvement and leadership in community organizations has declined steadily in American society since the Call brothers' generation. The work that LEAD New York has been doing for the past 23 years is addressing that exact problem, with a focus towards the food and agricultural industry. In other words, I like to think that LEAD New York has been (re)building the social capital of the food and agricultural industry for the past two decades. Evidence of our success can be seen through the involvement of so many of our alumni on industry and community boards of directors; in elected, appointed and volunteer leadership positions; and simply through their active participation in events like the Agricultural Society Annual Forum.

The lesson the above example provided was not lost on our current class members. During our debriefing discussion after the annual forum, several class members commented on how the Distinguished Service Citation recipients epitomized the social capital that Putnam describes in his book. (Class 12 is currently reading *Bowling Alone*). Ryan Akin, a current class member, said he felt as though the audience was like an extended family. Clearly, class 12 recognized the social capital that was represented that day.

Back in 1984 - whether they called it social capital, networking, or didn't have a term for it at all - the agricultural leaders in New York and dozens of other states recognized we had a problem and decided to do something about it, by launching our respective leadership development programs. We should take pride in the fact that our founders really were ahead of their time in addressing this issue - pity that the rest of our society is trying to catch up, now that Putnam's book has finally captured their attention. Two decades later, I believe that our industry and our rural communities are seeing the benefits of our social capital (re)building efforts, and I firmly believe that our work is important to our greater society.

CLASS 12 UPDATE:

Foundations Commit \$100,000 in Support of Class 12 Study Trip

Two of LEAD New York's most generous and loyal supporters have once again made major commitments in support of the LEAD Class 12 Study Trip, which will take place in February 2009. The American Agriculturist Foundation, Inc. and the Agway Foundation, Inc. have each committed \$50,000 in support of this capstone event of the overall LEAD experience.

The American Agriculturist Foundation is an independent organization that makes strategic investments in qualified organizations that are capable of strengthening the agriculture industry of the Northeastern United States and building capacity among current and future leaders of the industry. The Agway Foundation exists to promote the

development of agricultural leadership, and supports organizations dedicated to serving the interests of farmers and rural communities in the Northeast.

Of course, LEAD New York's mission, "to inspire and develop leaders for the food and agriculture industry", is consistent with the goals of both of these organizations. On behalf of the LEAD New York Board of Directors and Class 12, we extend a sincere thank you to both of these loyal contributors.



"William Young (class 1), President of the Agway Foundation, Inc., presents a \$50,000 check in support of the February 2009 study trip to Ryan Akin (class 12), member of the study trip program team."

ALUMNI UPDATES:

Eastern Produce Council Presents Check to NYS FFA Foundation

At their December 2007 Annual Dinner, the Eastern Produce Council presented a \$5,000 check in support of the NYS FFA Foundation to **Todd Lighthall (Class 12)**, Executive Director of the Foundation. The Eastern Produce Council supported the LEAD New York program with a similar gift in 2004.

NYSTA Elects 2008 Officers and Directors

The New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA) elected its 2008 Officers and Directors at their annual meeting held during the Empire State Green Industry Show in Rochester, N.Y. on Wednesday, November 14, 2007. Newly elected directors include **Craig Yunker (Class 3)**, of CY Farms/Batavia Turf. NYSTA is comprised of green industry professionals who have joined together to share best management practices, promote environmental stewardship, support education, advance research and disseminate research findings.

Commissioner Names Members to Organic Advisory Task Force

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker announced the formation and members of the New York State Organic Advisory Task Force. The task force is the first of its kind in New York State and its members will advise the Commissioner on how the State can help the organic community address needs and take advantage of opportunities as consumer demand for organic products grows. The nineteen members of the NYS

Organic Advisory Task Force including **Cheryl Rogowski (Class 10)** - Rogowski Farm, Pine Island (Orange County). The first meeting of the Task Force will take place on February 6, 2008 at the NYS Fairgrounds in Syracuse, where members have been asked to identify the most significant issues facing the growth of organic agriculture in New York and recommendations on how the State might address them.

LEAD NY Alumnus, Robert Bishop, Accompanies Idaho Governor to China

Robert Bishop (6), Logistics Manager of Larsen Farms in Dubois, ID was asked by Idaho Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter to represent Idaho agriculture interests on a trade mission in November 2007. While in China, Governor Otter and Larsen Farms hosted a reception for the 21,000 cow Bright Dairy. Larsen Farms, in conjunction with Bright Dairy, is the first U.S. company to successfully export alfalfa hay to China. Because of their successes, Governor Otter presented an award recognizing their accomplishments at a banquet in Shanghai. Larsen Farms is one of the largest agribusinesses in the Pacific Northwest and maintains distribution centers in Retsof, N.Y. and Ocala, FL, plus an administrative and sales office in Hamden, N.Y. This is the second international trade mission Bishop has been chosen for. He represented the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service in Morocco in 1996. He was President of the National Hay Association in 2000 and is currently President of the National Forage Testing Association.

Commissioner Gathers Pride of NY Advisory Committee

New York State Agricultural Commissioner Patrick Hooker announced his appointments to the Pride of New York Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee will provide advice and guidance to the Commissioner, as well as support for the goals of the Pride of New York program. The Advisory Committee is made up of 24 individuals who represent a broad range of New York State food commodities, industries, and services. The committee will be asked to examine the current activities of the Pride of New York program, particularly as they relate to the changing and diverse needs of the food and agriculture industry, and provide the Department with guidance for the Program’s further development and future direction. The 24 Committee members include:

- **Tom Facer (Class 1), Farm Fresh First, LLC (Wayne County)**
- **Martha Goodsell (Class 10), Fallow Hollow Farms (Tioga County)**
- **Jim Vincent (Class 1), L-Brooke Farms (Genesee County)**

The Pride of New York program was founded by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets over a decade ago and is the State’s marketing and promotion program that generates interest and demand for New York food and agricultural products. Currently, the program has over 2,000 members statewide that include growers, wineries, food processors, foodservice and retail outlets, agri-tourism initiatives and other organizations that support New York agriculture. In doing so, the program assists farmers and food processors in branding their products by using the Pride of New York emblem. It also encourages retailers and restaurants to highlight the New York State products they use and sell by displaying the emblem.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Growing New York Farms in the 21st Century

Thursday, February 28, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga Springs, NY
A conference to highlight ways that public and private partners at the local level can bolster New York's agricultural economy and protect the land upon which farmers depend. Conference themes will include: Developing Economic Opportunities for Agriculture Permanent, Farmland Protection, Local Planning for Agriculture For: Farmers and Landowners, Town and County Officials, Planning and Zoning Boards, Economic Development Agencies, Planners, Extension Educators, State and Federal Agencies, Land Trusts, and others interested in New York agriculture.
Contact **Diane Held (Class 4)** at dheld@farmland.org for more information.
<http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/ny/GrowingNewYorkConference.asp>

Washington AgForestry Graduate Services International Seminar to Ireland

May 17 – May 25, 2008

The AgForestry Graduate Services Committee is offering an outstanding opportunity to experience a study/travel trip to Ireland and LEAD NY alumni are invited to attend. It's an 8-day, action-packed, cultural, business, fun agenda. The details and registration information are provided on the AgForestry website at www.agforestry.org. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Mosman at mmosman@portblakely.com or 360-596-9418. You can also contact the Foundation office at 509-926-9113 or leaders@agforestry.org.

Northeast Dairy Producers Conference

March 5 -6, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool, NY

Register on-line at www.ansci.cornell.edu/prodairy/nedpa or contact dmconf@cornell.edu with questions.

The 2008 Becker Forum: Coping with Ag Labor Uncertainties in 2008

February 12, 2008 from 8 AM to 4:15 PM at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool, NY

To register: google 'Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo'

CALF Alumni Seminar – Salzburg, Austria

March 28 – April 4, 2008

LEAD NY alumni are invited to join the California Ag Leadership Foundation and its alumni, as well as world-class faculty for an opportunity to relive your International Seminar and continue your lifelong education. In partnership with the Salzburg Global Seminar, Ag Leadership alumni and their guests will examine current international issues affecting agriculture and explore historic Salzburg at the foot of the magnificent Austrian Alps. For more information or to register, visit www.agleaders.org.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS:

POSITION: UNYG&P Manager/Marketer

LOCATION: Albany, Herkimer, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario and Oswego Counties

PREFERRED HIRING RANGE: The Manager/Marketer job is a grant-funded, outcome-

based position funded until January 2010 with ongoing potential. Salary range, 45,000 depending on experience and qualifications. Benefits and travel reimbursement provided in addition to base salary.

SUMMARY OF POSITION: In cooperation with Coop Board of Directors and Members, the Manager/Marketer is responsible for achieving Coop performance targets.

Submit letter of application, resume, and 3 references to:

Remi Link
121 Second Street
Oriskany, NY 13424

POSITION: Land Protection Manager (2 positions)

LOCATION: Chatham, NY

PREFERRED HIRING RANGE: Competitive salary and benefits package, dependent upon qualifications and experience.

SUMMARY OF POSITION:

The Columbia Land Conservancy (located in Chatham, NY) seeks an experienced land protection project manager to assist in developing and implementing conservation programs, and oversee the Conservancy's Conservation Easement Stewardship Program. This position is responsible for negotiating and drafting conservation easements; coordinating the management, stewardship and compliance of more than 180 easements on 20,000 acres; planning and implementing community conservation projects; and providing landowner education and outreach to promote easement understanding and sound stewardship practices.

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in applicable field and a minimum of four years of professional land trust experience related to conservation easements, with an emphasis on stewardship; more extensive experience strongly preferred. Must have the ability to work with diverse public and private interests, including easement landowners. Background in natural science, land management, farming and forestry, and best management practices desired. Supervisory experience a plus. Please e-mail or send cover letter, resume and 3 professional references to: Marcia Cary, Columbia Land Conservancy, PO Box 299, Chatham, NY 12037, Marcia@clctrust.org. A job description can be obtained by contacting Marcia Cary at Marcia@clctrust.org.

POSITION: Graduate Student Assistantship

LOCATION: Ithaca, NY – Cornell University

PREFERRED HIRING RANGE: 2-year Master of Science Program in Crop and Soil Sciences with a Minor in Farm Economics

SUMMARY OF POSITION:

The ideal candidate has a BS degree in agronomy or animal science, a farming background, and some work experience in the agricultural industry beyond the BS degree, is interested in extension and applied research, is a team player with a can-do attitude, good work ethics, and someone with an interest in research (conducting the research and publishing in scientific peer-reviewed journals) and the application of the knowledge gained through the research (extension talks, written extension materials, development of recommendations, implementation of management changes on farms etc.). If you are interested in joining our team for a 2-year MS degree program, email Quirine M. Ketterings, Associate Professor, Nutrient Management Spear Program

in the Department Crop and Soil Sciences at qmk2@cornell.edu with a cover letter, your resume and contact information for 3 references as soon as possible. Feel free to email if you have questions as well. Joe Lawrence offered to share his experiences as a MS student in our program so if you are interested in pursuing a MS degree with us and want to get a better sense of what to expect as MS degree student, contact him (Joe Lawrence, CCA, Field Crops Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County, Ph: 315-376-5270, em: jrl65@cornell.edu).

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You may also view the LEAD New York web site at www.leadny.org .

Please feel free to contact our office at any time with questions or comments!

Have news to share? We encourage you to email us LEAD News to consider for publication. Send news items to klc43@cornell.edu.

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