



May 2021

# THE LEAD STORY

NEWSLETTER FOR LEADERSHIP JACKSONVILLE

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leadership Jacksonville office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, May 31, 2021 in observance of Memorial Day.

### Revealing Celebration 2021 "Unsung COVID Leaders"

Congratulations to the six "Unsung COVID Leaders" who will share their personal stories of generosity at Leadership Jacksonville's annual celebration on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 7 p.m. [Make plans to watch the virtual premiere on LJ's YouTube Channel with your family and friends.](#)

**Jim Culbert**, Chief Information Officer, Duval County Public Schools

**Jon Inetta**, Chef and Owner, Black Sheep Restaurant Group

**Lexi Magnano**, SmartArt Club at Ponte Vedra High School & The Homeless Coalition of St. Johns County, YLJ Class of 2021

**Chandra Manning**, Director of Operations, Jacksonville Speech & Hearing Center

**Alberto H. Romero**, Resident Physician, UF Health Department of Emergency Medicine

**Leofric Thomas, Jr.**, Founder and Executive Director, The Straight & Narrow Project, Inc.

All of the "Unsung COVID Leaders" nominated will be recognized for their contributions during the pandemic.

**There is no cost to access Celebration 2021. Leadership Jacksonville counts on the financial support of alumni, supporters and sponsors. We hope that you will make a donation to nurture youth leadership!**

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE "UNsung COVID LEADERS"](#)

### Tillie K. Fowler Distinguished Leadership Award

Nominations are being accepted through July 16, 2021 for the 2021 Tillie K. Fowler Distinguished Leadership Award.

**Ju'Coby Pittman** (LJ 1993) received the 2020 Tillie K. Fowler Distinguished Leadership Award.

This award is given to a Leadership Jacksonville alumnus who remains active in Leadership Jacksonville (this includes dues payment) and who:

1. demonstrates exemplary community service,
2. has produced outstanding results with one or more projects/efforts (community or LJ) and
3. demonstrates components of Leadership Jacksonville core values.



Visit the [website](#) for more information and to begin your nomination.

Contact Taryn Roberts at (904) 396-6263 x4 if you have difficulty submitting the online form. Please note, submissions must be completed on a desktop computer.



## Class of 2021 Arts & Culture Day



Program Day Sponsor

Arts & Culture Day was held on April 29. Throughout the month, LJ 2021 class members participated in Stop the Bleed Trainings at UF Health and small group gatherings at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens.

Thank you to our Program Day Sponsor, PNC Bank and to The Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Foundation (reception sponsor).



LJ 2021 class members at UF Health



LJ 2021 Class at the Times-Union Center for Performing Arts  
Photo Credit: **Nemiah Rutledge**

YLJ 2021 Boat Trip



Youth Leadership Jacksonville 2021 had a bonus day on Saturday, April 24 that included a cruise down the St. Johns River, a lively version of Jacksonville's history presented by Mike Huskey (LJ 2016) and lunch at River City Brewing Company. This was their very first opportunity to meet each other in person! The weather was fantastic and the company even better.



**Kendall Ford, Saumya Poddar, Lexi Magnano**  
and **Charlotte Caccam** (from left to right)

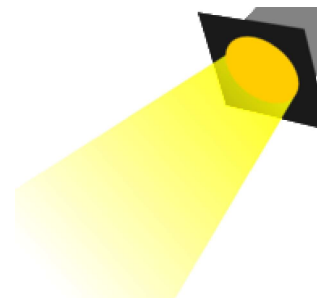
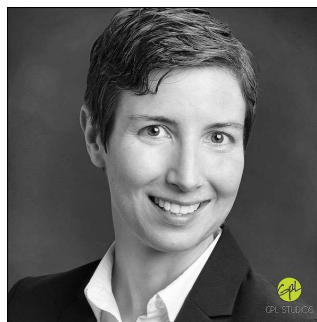


**Anara Peterson and Yun Han Shen**  
(from left to right)

## Alumni Spotlight

### **Melanie Patz** **Leadership Jacksonville** **Class of 2006**

**Melanie Patz** (LJ 2006) is Vice President of Community Investment and Impact at Baptist Health. She serves as the Chair of the Leadership Development Team and has volunteered for majority of the LJ program days.



Years ago when Melanie was assisting with the LJ Opening Retreat, she prepared an exercise to facilitate discovering your passion. She personally uses the exercise to help others in the workplace and created her own personal mission statement during a time of transition in her life. Melanie believes LJ helps others find and determine what they are passionate about through reflection and helps reveal where you should place your energy and efforts. "Leadership Jacksonville is informing and equipping Jacksonville's leaders about our assets and challenges and inspiring them to create a better Jacksonville for all," she stated.

Melanie recalls an impactful moment during a "Justice Day" check-in with LJ class members. Through their collective reflections, she recognized that the program day crystalized the importance of justice for others. "You don't know what people are thinking or feeling unless you ask," she shared. Education is one of the values Melanie believes LJ does well. She is inspired to continue learning from former LJ alumni and current class members which helps her personal growth, and she is inspired to take action.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Virtual LJ Board of Directors Meeting**  
Monday, May 10, 2021  
12 p.m.

**LJ 2021 Closing Retreat**

Friday, May 21 - Saturday, May 22, 2021  
Hammock Beach Resort

### Virtual Celebration 2021

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

7 p.m. on [LJ's YouTube Channel](#)

### NextGen 2021 Meet The Class Reception

Thursday, May 27, 2021

5:30 - 7:30 p.m., Jessie Ball duPont Center, Rooftop Garden

### LJ Office Closed

Monday, May 31, 2021

## CLASS NOTES

Submit your accomplishments to LJ by emailing  
[aleta@leadershipjax.org](mailto:aleta@leadershipjax.org)



**Julie Negrete-Anderson** (LJ 1997)  
celebrating with her UF award

### 1995

Congrats to **Tonyaa Weathersbee** on being inducted into the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications Hall of Fame.

### 1997

**Julie Negrete-Anderson** was honored by University of Florida for her founding company, OnPay Solutions being ranked #58 out of the world's fastest growing companies led by a Florida Gator – Gator 100 award ceremony took place on April 23.

### 2008

Congrats to **Odette Struys** upon her marriage to William "Bill" Adams in April. The newlyweds had an Apache wedding on Moapa Tribal Land in the Valley of Fire at Seven Sisters Canyon.

### 2009

Congratulations to **Mark LeMaire** on receiving the Rural Community Impact Award from the Taylor Leadership Institute at University of North Florida. Mark was recognized for his work connecting Putnam County school kids with C.A.M.P. Osprey at University of North Florida through the support of the Frank V. Oliver, Jr. Endowment.

### 2011

**Debbie Johnson** has joined the board of directors for Greenwork Jacksonville.

### 2013

JAXUSA named **Trina Medarev** the International Individual of the Year for her work at the World Affairs Council of Jacksonville. Congratulations! The award was presented to Trina by her fellow LJ 2013 alum, **David Davis**.

### 2014

**Joe Grass** has joined the Brooks YMCA Board.

**Steve Gilbert** is the President of the Brooks YMCA Board.

### 2017

**Vicky Basra** presented at TEDxFSCJ: Wonder on April 10. At the virtual TEDxFSCJ

event, Vickie's talk was titled "It's Time We End Invisibility."

**Chris Quinn** has been selected as the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce President and CEO beginning April 29. Chris will be working remotely until he makes his move to Virginia at the end of May.



William "Bill" Adams and **Odette Struys** (LJ 2008) on Moapa Tribal Land in the Valley of Fire at Seven Sisters Canyon

## 2019

**Tessa Duvall** alongside her peers was recognized as **ProPublica AI Nakkula Award runner up** for The Courier Journal, Reporting on Breonna Taylor. The award honors the late AI Nakkula, a 46-year veteran of the Rocky Mountain News whose tenacity made him a legendary police reporter. Nakkula passed away in 1990.

**Lakesha Burton** has filed her paperwork to be a candidate for the Duval County Sheriff's race in 2023.



**Andi Williams, Kemal Gaspel and Thanh Hogan** (LJ 2019) at JaxUSA Partnership Breakfast (from left to right)

## 2020

Congratulations to **Kimano Edwards** on being appointed to The Florida Bar Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This is Kimano's first appointment and he will begin his term for the 2021 – 2022 year on June 1.

### New Leadership Summit

**Michael Mayo** (NLS 2012) has been named the interim president and CEO of Baptist Health.

**Woody Woodall** (NLS 2012) was recognized as one of Jacksonville Business Journal's 2021 Ultimate Finance Executives honoree.

**Aundra Wallace** (NLS 2014) has joined LISC Jacksonville's Local Advisory Board.

## Next Generation

Congratulations to **Rachael Tutwiler Fortune** (NextGen 2006) on receiving a Community Leadership Award by the Taylor Leadership Institute at the University of North Florida.

**Peter Blumeyer** (NextGen 2009) served as one of four judges of the 2021 Episcopal School of Jacksonville Science Fair.

**Lawrence Luksha** (NextGen 2019) has left Morgan & Morgan and started a new career as a financial advisor with Northwestern Mutual.

**Robert Williams** (NextGen 2019, YLJ 2015) is accepted to Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing's Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program at Emory University and will begin in fall 2021.

**Austin Franklin** (NextGen 2019) is seeking nominations until June 4, 2021 for high school and college students to become **Good-Natured DifferenceMakers** this summer.

## Youth Leadership Jacksonville

Episcopal School of Jacksonville Senior Track Captain, **Don Kohla** (YLJ 2019) won the district championship in the 800 meter and he was also a member of the winning 4x800 relay team.

**Will Sylvan** (YLJ 2019) has been named a Male Honoree for Soccer by the High School Sports Awards of Greater Jacksonville.

St. Johns Country Day School soccer program were selected as No. 1 in the nation by the United Soccer Coaches. **Ellie Rosenau** (YLJ 2019) and **Kennedy Brown** (YLJ 2021) are members of the St. Johns Country Day School soccer team.

**Ava Meadows** (YLJ 2020) will be attending University of Florida in summer 2021.

Congratulations to **Audrey Gunnlaugsson** (YLJ 2020) and **Jackson Crass** (YLJ 2020) for being inducted into the Cum Laude Society at Episcopal School of Jacksonville.

**Taylor Richardson** (YLJ 2020) was awarded 2021 Black Girl Magic by My Brother's Keeper Spartanburg chapter for her commitment and contributions to community and sisterhood.

## Various

Jacksonville Business Journal 40 under 40 included: **Chris Clark** (LJ 2020), **Tia Leathers** (LJ 2017), **Tameka Holly** (LJ 2014), **Jason Spencer** (LJ 2015) and **Ashley Strickland** (NextGen 2013).

**Brian Coughlin** (LJ 2016), **Asghar Syed** (LJ 2018) and **David Thompson** (LJ 2021) are among eight candidates running for election to six seats on the Jacksonville Bar Association's board of governors.

A group of LJ alumni has joined together to begin the process of restarting JCCI. To date the group includes organizer **Ramon Day** (LJ 1990), **J.F. Bryan** (Honorary), **Joni Poitier** (LJ 2016), and **Katie Ross** (LJ 2013).

**Joni Poitier** (LJ 2016) and **Kenneth Reddick** (LJ 1989) are serving on a merit selection panel to consider applications for the U.S. magistrate judge vacancy in the Jacksonville Division.

**Cleve Warren** (LJ 1985) has been appointed to the Baptist Health System board. **Rachael Tutwiler Fortune** (NextGen 2006) and **Marsha Oliver** (LJ 2001) have been appointed to Baptist Jacksonville's board, and **Michael Ammiano** (LJ 2004) joined Baptist South and Baptist Nassau's boards, respectively. Wolfson Children's welcomed **Michael DuBow** (LJ 1999) as the new chair of its board of directors and Baptist Jacksonville welcomed **Michael Diaz** (LJ 2009) as the new chair of its board of directors. The newly appointed board members will serve three-year terms.



LJ 2021 class members with **Nicole Bryan** and **Laura Bennett** (LJ 2020) at The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

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## NOTES OF SYMPATHY

Our belated condolences to the family and friends of **Mark Mrozek** (LJ 1987). Mark passed away at home in Vienna, VA on October 13, 2016. Mark served in the Army during the Vietnam war and then had a successful career in hospital administration. During his time in Jacksonville Mark was the Administrator of Memorial Medical Center.

Our condolences to the family and friends of **Martha Sue Register Martin** (LJ 1980) who passed away on April 18, 2021 following a struggle with congestive heart failure.

# MAKE A LJ DONATION

Many companies sponsor matching gift programs that will match the charitable contributions made by their employees. This is a great way to enhance the impact of your giving. Check with your employer for details.

[DONATE NOW](#)



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