



September 2020

THE LEAD STORY

NEWSLETTER FOR LEADERSHIP JACKSONVILLE

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT * ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT * CLASS NOTES

Leadership Jacksonville office will be closed on Monday, September 7, 2020
in observance of Labor Day.

LJ 2021's Virtual Opening Retreat was held on August 14-15, 2020. We are excited to share this great group of fifty-four community leaders with you! [You can meet LJ 2021 by checking out our Current Leadership Jacksonville Class page.](#)



MEET THE CLASS

Class of 2021
Opening Retreat

Fifty-five members of Youth Leadership Jacksonville 2021 celebrated Virtual Opening Retreat on August 28-29, 2020. Students enjoyed group discussions, interactive exercises and getting to know one another.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who assisted with Opening Retreat, ensuring our young leaders are prepared for a meaningful program experience.

[VIEW CLASS LIST](#)

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Alumni Engagement Opportunities

Join Leadership Connect on Thursday, September 10, 2020

You can expand your LJ network by joining Leadership Connect. Ordinarily this program brings small groups of LJ, NLS, Honorary and NextGen alumni together for breakfast or lunch but currently, Leadership Connect takes place virtually. You can stay engaged with fellow alumni by signing up today. Email Yvonne Moore, admin@leadershipjax.org to sign up to participate with Leadership Connect.

Nominations OPEN for LJ Class of 2022 on Thursday, October 1, 2020

LJ alumni can continue to stay engaged by making nominations for Leadership Jacksonville's flagship program. [Online nominations](#) for LJ 2022 will be accepted beginning on Thursday, October 1. Honorary, NLS and LJ alumni are encouraged to nominate emerging or demonstrated community leaders who are committed to serving our community. Start thinking now about who would be a great candidate for LJ 2022.

Please note, nominations are the very first step in the selection process. Nominees will receive instructions to complete the required application in January 2021.

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Alumni Spotlight



Gary Chartrand Honorary

Gary Chartrand is the former Executive Chairman of Acosta and serves on several nonprofit boards. He served on the Florida State Board of Education for 8 years and has a passion for education reform to ensure every child has a quality education. Gary is a frequent speaker for the LJ

program sharing his views and learnings on the public education system.

Gary has stayed involved with LJ because he believes it is an excellent program for rising leaders to get a great education on challenges facing our city. He takes pleasure in recommending community leaders that would benefit from participating in the LJ program. Gary's son Jeff Chartrand (LJ 2009) and nephew, Bryan Chartrand (LJ 2019) are alumni. During Gary's time as CEO of Acosta, several employees participated in the LJ program as well. Gary shares "In order to effect change, you have to first become aware of the problem, the second step is accepting it, and the third step is to act on it, fix it or make it better." He believes LJ does a great job explaining community issues to help leaders get involved wherever their passion leads.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual YLJ 2021 Program Day
Thursday, September 17, 2020
"In Living Color"

Virtual LJ 2021 Program Day
Thursday, September 24, 2020
Leading From Within Day

Nominations OPEN for LJ Class of 2022
Thursday, October 1, 2020

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CLASS NOTES

1991

Joe Debs has retired from the board of RS&H. Joe had previously retired from his role as executive vice president in 2017.

1995

Page Lemel is running for re-election to the County Commission in Transylvania County, NC.

Congratulations to **John Rutherford** who won the U.S. House, District 4 Republican Primary election. John is the incumbent and will face the Democrat challenger in November.

1998

Karen Mathis won a first place award in the Business Reporting category of the annual Florida Press Association 2020 Weekly Newspaper Contest for her article "How they Sold Maple Street."

2002

Maria Hane has resigned from her role as president of the Museum of Science & History. Maria led the museum for 11 years. She plans to focus on her Florida State University graduate program and being a caretaker. **Bruce Fafard** (NLS 2016) will serve as interim CEO until a national search is conducted in 2021.

2004

Al Emerick co-hosted the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's 44th Annual Arts Awards on September 2.

2005

Philip Mobley is now Manager at NorthStar Family Resources Center/Partnership for Strong Families.

2007

Jan Hirabayashi, is CEO of BroadBased Communications, Inc. which was named one of Jacksonville's 50 fastest growing companies by the Jacksonville Business Journal.



Becky Moore Cameron (LJ 2013) and
David Cameron

2012

Meredith Guess is now Senior Vice President Commercial Banking at First Citizens Bank.

2013

Congratulations to newlyweds, **Becky Moore Cameron** and husband David Cameron on their nuptials in June.

2014

The leaders of four First Coast companies are finalists for EY's Entrepreneur of the Year award in Florida. On that list is JWB Real Estate Capital co-founder **Alex Sifakis** and his co-founder, Gregg Cohen.

2016

Congratulations to **Michelle Cook** who has been elected to serve as the new Clay County Sheriff.

Congratulations to **Kelly Coker-Daniel** who won election to Duval County School Board, District 1.

2017

Patrick Kreschowski has been named chair-elect of the ULI North Florida District Council, He will become chair for a two-year term effective July 1, 2021.

Tahoma Guiry has started a new role as Director of Operations & Marketing for the ICX Group.

2018

Kathy Barbour has been elected into the College of Fellows for PRSA, the nation's leading professional organization serving the communications community. The **College of Fellows** is an honorary organization within PRSA comprised of more than 350 senior professionals and educators, each of whom has left a significant footprint on the public relations profession.

Jessica Cummings is serving as president of the Alumni Association at the University of North Florida.

2019

Coretta Hill has been selected to participate in Leadership Florida's Education Class 6 for 2020-21.

Adriel Rocha has been promoted with the Jacksonville Jaguars to Director of Jaguars Foundation and Community Impact.

2020

Leah Palestrant has announced her engagement to Jewel Butler.

Kimano Edwards was selected to serve a one-year term as an Associate in the Chester Bedell American Inn of Court.

Obi Umunna has joined the Joe Biden Team in Florida as the Regional Political Director for Northeast Florida.

Congratulations to **Kevin Carrico** who finished the special election for Duval County City Council District 4 in second place and will be in a runoff election in November.

2021

Congratulations to **Lori Hershey** who won re-election to Duval County School Board, District 7.

Honorary

Congratulations to **Tracie Davis** who won re-election for Florida House District 13.

Congratulations to **Warren Jones** who won re-election to the Duval County School Board, District 5.

Youth Leadership Jacksonville

Robert Williams (YLJ 2015 and NextGen 2019) is a direct support professional with Devereux Pediatric Advanced Behavioral Health at their Residential Treatment Facility in Kennesaw, GA.

Joseph Jarrett (YLJ 2017) is a furloughed regional flight attendant for American Airlines. As a temporary position, Joseph is beginning training as a pharmacy technician. He is currently working toward completing an Associates in Arts degree from the University of North Florida and will pursue the Healthcare Administration program in 2021.

At St. Johns Country Day School's Commencement Ceremony on Friday, June 26, 2020, **Jordan Sabo** (YLJ 2019) was honored as valedictorian and was the recipient of The Carol A. Hart Math Award. **Sheila Hodges** (YLJ 2019) was the recipient of The Edwin Paul Heinrich Award and a Service Award.

Taylor Richardson (YLJ 2020) is hosting a **Drive-Up Back-2-School Jamboree** in partnership with Alpha Starz, Inc. and Gabrielle White to provide 1,000 students and families with backpacks filled with school supplies and community resources.

Deyona Burton (YLJ 2019), **Ayanna-Rose Gray** (YLJ 2019), **Winston Peele** (YLJ 2019) and **Taylor Richardson** (YLJ 2020) were recognized as 18 Under 18 Honorees by Folio Weekly 2.0.

Various

Congratulations to the 2020 Jacksonville Business Journal Tech Leaders: **Dale Johnston** (LJ 2020), **Ravi Raheja** (LJ 2018) and **Bernard Schmidt** (LJ 2020).

Kevin Hyde (LJ 2005) and **Cindy Reynolds** (NLS 2019) have joined the Regional Advisory Board of Teach for America for three year terms.

Gwen (LJ 1990) and **Alton** (LJ 1988) **Yates** recently celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary. August 19 was their anniversary and also Alton's birthday. Happy Anniversary to the Yates!

Congratulations to the LJ alumni who are among the Jacksonville Business Journal's 2020 Women of Influence: **Patricia Dodson** (LJ 2020), **Dawn Gilman** (LJ 2018), **Carla Miller** (LJ 1985), **Wendy Norfleet** (LJ 2020) and **Deborah Thompson** (LJ 1982). Awards will be presented at a virtual event on September 17.

Alex Travis (Next Gen 2019) and **Cyndy Trimmer** (LJ 2020) have joined the Downtown Vision board of directors.

Congratulations to the members of Leadership Florida's Connect Class 11 for professionals ages 25 - 39: **Kimano Edwards** (LJ 2020), **Jeremy Miller** (LJ 2010) and **Nemiah Rutledge** (LJ 2021).

Leadership Florida's Cornerstone Class 39 Members for the 2020-2021 Program Year include: **Bill Adams** (LJ 2014), **Sunny Gettinger** (LJ 2012), **Sean Hall** (LJ 2010), **Abel Harding** (LJ 2013), and **Paola Parra Harris** (LJ 2003).

RS&H has announced that **Leerie Jenkins** (Honorary) has retired from his position as Chairman of the Board of RS&H as of the end of August. **Dave Sweeney** will serve as interim Chair in addition to his role as CEO until a new Chair is elected.

NOTES OF SYMPATHY

Our condolences to **Robin Bass** (LJ 2006) and her family upon the passing of her stepson Eric Bass on August 22.

Our condolences to **Pegine Echevarria** (LJ 2017) and her family upon the death of her mother Ida Echevarria in August, 2020.

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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