

January 2023



Dear Alumni,

Happy New Year! We hope you had restful holiday with your friends and loved ones.

As you know, last fall we reached out and asked for your help in nominating Northeast Florida's best and brightest for our upcoming LJ class. We are thrilled to report that we received 184 nominations from 127 alumni and 33 supporters. This is the **largest** number of nominees AND nominators we have had in the last five years—thanks for making this possible!

LJ 2024 applications are now open through January 25 at midnight. Feel free to share with your networks and nominees, [click here to apply](#).

As a reminder, all individuals, regardless of nomination status, must submit a formal application in order to be considered for the next class.

Thanks again for your support. Here's to a bright year ahead!

Warmly,
Gracie and team



SAVE THE DATE: CELEBRATION 2023
to benefit Youth Leadership Jacksonville

Wednesday, May 10, 2023
5-8 pm
Jesse Ball duPont Center

Honorees include:



Kevin Gay (LJ 2015)



Melanie Patz (LJ 2006)



Lynn Sherman (LJ 2011)



Leadership Jacksonville 2023 Health Day

LJ 2023 Health Day provided participants an overall picture on the status of health care in Northeast Florida and nationally. Class members discussed the complexities of the health care landscape with local leaders and explored the future of health care through new innovations. We would like to thank our Program Day sponsor [Availity](#), and Mayo Clinic for the meeting space, technology and food/beverages for the day. As with all program days, we are grateful for the speakers, facilitators, and program day committee members.



Youth Leadership Jacksonville 2023 "Everyday Creativity" Day

YLJ 2023 “Everyday Creativity” Day gave participants the opportunity to explore and experience arts and culture in Jacksonville. With live performances by local musicians, improv exercises and roundtable discussions with artists, they learned how to harness their creative side. The day also included experiences at The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens and the Jacksonville Symphony. Thank you to the Full Day sponsor the [Jessie Ball duPont Fund](#) and to all of the volunteers, artists and speakers for their time and talents.



Alumni Spotlight
The LJ Leadership Development Team




Pictured here are: **Blake Osner** (LJ 2017), **Jeff Winkler** (LJ 2015), **Bill Sorenson** (LJ 2015), **Lisa Rinaman** (LJ 2017), **David Thompson** (LJ 2021), **Gracie Simendinger**, **Nicole Bryan**, **Corretta Hill** (LJ 2019), **Kelly Coker-Daniel** (LJ 2016), **Lara Mattina** (LJ 2020), **Laura Gonzales** (LJ 2018) and **Rudy Jamison** (LJ 2021)

Not pictured: **Ashley Pratt** (LJ 2022), **Sunil Joshi** (LJ 2019) and **Terri Lewis** (LJ 2018)

The LD Team is crucial to the adult program planning for Leadership Jacksonville. The Team

oversees and provides guidance to the curriculum, makes sure the year's program goals are achieved and ensures LJ's mission is a visible thread throughout the year. Current and former LD team members share their thoughts on their volunteer leadership:

- Education Day Co-Chair **Kelly Coker** (LJ 2016) began volunteering on the Education Day Committee in 2017 and has been on the LD team for three years. "I am grateful for all the friends I made in my class. Being on the LD team allows you to expand those friendships with each incoming class as they go through their LJ program experience."
- A volunteer with LJ since he graduated, Justice Day Co-Chair **David Thompson** (LJ 2021) loves being a part of a group that truly cares for the betterment of Jacksonville. "I joined the LD team to stay connected with people from different classes and fields. Helping to structure programs and watching the classes learn information about their city and how they can give back is so rewarding."
- Education Day Co-Chair **Coretta Hill** (LJ 2019) believes in the importance of strong leadership and knows that strong leaders who are postured with a growth mindset for themselves become the best examples for their teams. "No matter what stage of leadership we're in, learning never stops. I joined this team because I get the honor and privilege of harnessing this into others, and I continue to sharpen my own tools in the process."
- Former LD Team Member **Kathy Para** (LJ 1995) shared, "Being on the LD team was one of the most meaningful ways to be involved with LJ! The level of creativity and collaboration in each meeting was energizing and inspiring as we sought to make each program day relevant, educational, and motivational for class members."

2023 UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAM DAYS

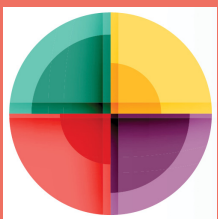
LJ 2023 Leading From Within Day
Thursday, January 12

LJ 2024 Applications open through midnight Wednesday, January 25

YLJ 2023 "Are We Our Brothers'/Sisters' Keeper" Day
Thursday, January 26

New Leadership Summit 2023
Monday and Tuesday, February 20 – 21

Celebration 2023
Wednesday, May 10



**ALUMNI CLASS
NOTES**

Submit your news to
manisha@leadershipjax.org

1977

Wayne Wood (LJ 1977) has written a new book about the city's historical architecture and notable landmarks, *Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage: Landmarks for the Future*.

1999

Jeanne Miller (LJ 1999) ended her tenure as CEO and President of the Jacksonville Civic Council on December 31 and will serve as interim CEO during the search for her successor. Jeanne will next serve as Founder and Principal of the newly established Strategic Relationships & Counsel,

a concierge legal and consulting firm working with business, government and nonprofits to create impact and growth.

2004

Kendra McCrary (LJ 2004) was selected as the incoming President for The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital for 2022-2023.

2007

Rosa Beckett (LJ 2007) has been appointed to the Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville Board of Directors.



2009

Congratulations to **Andrew Scott** (NextGen 2009) on his marriage to Caroline Louise at The Glass Factory on October 22, 2022.

2011

Congratulations to **Ronnie King** (LJ 2011) on receiving the Community Health Hero award from Agape Community Health.

Anna Valent (LJ 2011) has joined Dreams Come True of Jacksonville as Director of Strategy and Development.

2013

Jacksonville University has extended **Tim Cost**'s (NLS 2013) contract through 2027. Tim has been President of his alma mater since 2013.

2014

Nat Ford (LJ 2014) received the 2022 Honorable Ray LaHood Award which honors a "man of the year" who is a leader in the transportation industry and has been instrumental in advancing the Women in Transportation Services (WTS) mission to attract, sustain, advance and connect women and strengthen their careers in the transportation industry.

2015

Marcia Morales Howard (LJ 2015) administered the Oath of Allegiance to 75 citizenship candidates including members of the U.S. Navy, Army National Guard and several families on December 18 at the Jaguars game.

2016

Congratulations to **Renee McQueen** (LJ 2016) on her marriage to Ashley Lawson on September 24, 2022 at The Grand on Foster in Dothan, Alabama.



2019

Alumni from **LJ 2019** enjoyed happy hour at



Intuition Ale Works on November 30.

Pictured: **Kevin Carrico, Kasey Wagner, Trey Mills** and **Tim Johnson**.

Austin Franklin (NextGen 2019) has been selected as an Advisory Board Member for the Johnson Family YMCA.

2020

Taylor Richardson (YLJ 2020) was honored with the National Resolutions Award by the Jacksonville chapter of The Moles. The award is given to outstanding citizens who have an exceptional track record in making a difference in their respective communities.

2021

Over 30 **LJ 2021** Alumni gathered for a Holiday reunion aboard the USS Orleck on December 1.



Carmina Montesa Aldana (LJ 2021) is one of the authors of *[DISRUPT 4.0. Filipina Women: BEING: The Fourth Book On Leadership](#)* by the Foundation for Filipina Women's Network.

David Garfunkel (LJ 2021) was [featured in Florida Trend](#) magazine as a Rising Executive sharing various aspects of his personal and professional journey.



Erin Mangan (LJ 2021) and her family welcomed their baby boy, Parker Robert on December 9.

2022

Warner Buchman (NextGen 2022) married Jackson Hooten on November 19, 2022 in Savannah, GA.



Congratulations to **Shaneka Ferrell** (NextGen 2022), on receiving the Wolfburg Fellowship for Social Justice in Education.

2023

Andrea Barnwell Brownlee (LJ 2023) was [featured on the Capital Analytics Associates](#) website sharing her insights on her role at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens and on tourism and hospitality.



Several **LJ 2023** classmates had the opportunity to hold the flag at the Jaguars game on December 18.

Pictured: **Will Landreth, Ali Jaffery, Darren Brownlee, Daniel Bradley, Cindy Pearson** and **Sarah Mannion**

COMBINED CLASSES & HONORARY

The 2023 OneJax Humanitarian Awards Event will be on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at the Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts. The award honorees include the following LJ Alumni: **Nina Waters** (LJ 1991), Gold Medallion for Lifetime Achievement; **Cindy Funkhouser** (LJ 2014), Silver Medallion; and **Kimberly Allen** (LJ 2023), Acosta-Rua Young Professionals Award.



A group of LJ Alumni attended and/or facilitated the The LJD Jewish Family & Community Services Resisting Hate, Repairing the World discussion on December 15.

Pictured: **Christen Luikhart** (LJ 2023), **Colleen Rodriguez** (LJ 2013), **Kimberly Allen** (LJ 2023), **Gracie Simendinger** (LJ CEO) and **Hope McMath** (LJ 2006)

Not pictured: **Martha Barrett** (LJ 1981), **Glenn Ullmann** (LJ 2007), and **Joni Poitier** (LJ 2016)

The Jacksonville Business Journal Women of Influence honorees include several LJ Alumni: **Jessica Evans** (LJ 2015), **Monica Hernandez** (LJ 2021), **Sarah Mannion** (LJ 2023), **Terri Florio** (LJ 2004), **Thresa Giles** (NLS 2007), and **Whitney Croxton** (NextGen 2006). The honorees are recognized for the work they have done to help build a better Jacksonville and are selected based on their professional success, community involvement and impact on the region. The event will be held in March 2023.

HONORARY

Dawn Lockhart (Honorary) received the Downtown Achievement Award at the 8th annual Downtown Jacksonville Awards event held November 29.

NOTES OF SYMPATHY

Our condolences to **Dreama Farmer** (Honorary) upon the passing of her



husband Guy Farmer on November 11, 2022.

Our sympathy is with **Deborah Hardman** (LJ 2015) on the loss of her mother Anne Gary who passed away on November 27, 2022.

Condolences to **Judy Poppell** (LJ 1996) and her family upon the death of her husband Ronel John (Ron) Poppell on December 6, 2022.

Our thoughts are with **Mary Daniels** (LJ 2022) on the passing of her husband Steve on December 21, 2022.

STAY IN TOUCH!

Click the links to follow Leadership Jacksonville:

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[LJ Alumni Facebook Group](#)

[NextGen Facebook Group](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)



All LJ Alumni are required to reset their membership password on our NEW website.
Need help? Email: manisha@leadershipjax.org

MAKE A LJ DONATION

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[This is a great way to enhance the impact of your giving.](#)

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