

February 2023



LEADERSHIP CONNECT RELAUNCHES THIS MONTH

Leadership Connect is an initiative that fosters alumni connections and builds relationships across diverse communities in Northeast Florida. Meeting options include breakfast, lunch or happy hour with rotating Alumni Leads at predetermined venues and times. Please note: LJ 2023 class members are eligible to attend upon graduation in May.

[To reserve your seat at a gathering, please click here.](#)

NextGen 2023 APPLICATIONS OPEN FEBRUARY 9



Next Generation is a rewarding leadership program for individuals interested in gaining increased community knowledge, making connections and having a greater impact on their communities. Applicants are between the ages of 21-30 years old and are your rising stars, colleagues, friends or current undergraduate/graduate students. All applicants will be scheduled for a Zoom interview.

Next Generation 2023 will take place June 2 through August 5, 2023. For more information, visit the [NextGen program page](#) or contact Programs Director, Meg Folds at meg@leadershipjax.org.

ALL ALUMNI: Please share this opportunity with young professional leaders in the community!

Rescheduled!

LEADERSHIP JACKSONVILLE

RECONNECT 2023

A Gathering of NextGen and Youth Leadership Jacksonville Alumni

Monday, February 13, 2023
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

112 West Adams Street, 4th Floor
OneJax Institute office

Featuring the comedy and wisdom of
Michael Freed
Attorney, Marathon Runner, Philanthropist
and Comedian



**To register for Reconnect 2023,
please complete the registration form here.**

CELEBRATION 2023
to benefit Youth Leadership Jacksonville

Join us on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 from 5-8 pm
at the Jesse Ball duPont Center as we celebrate the accomplishments
of our three outstanding honorees.

For event details, tickets and sponsorship information,
[click here.](#)

Celebration 2023 honorees include:



Kevin Gay (LJ 2015)



Melanie Patz (LJ 2006)



Lynn Sherman (LJ 2011)



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Leadership Jacksonville 2023 Living From Within Day

LJ 2023 Living From Within Day engaged participants in activities to better understand themselves and have an appreciation for others. Thank you to our Program Day Sponsor [University of North Florida](#) and to all of the speakers, facilitators for their time and talents. In support of the Jacksonville Jaguars, class members wore their best Jags attire!



Youth Leadership Jacksonville 2023 "Are We Our Brother's/Sister's Keeper?" Day



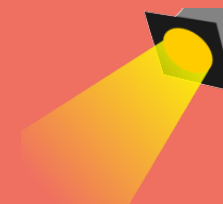
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YOUTH LEADERSHIP



YLJ 2023 "Are We Our Brother's/Sister's Keeper?" Day explored the various social service issues and challenges facing our community. Participants engaged in role-playing activities that allowed them to analyze their choices and how it affects others. We would like to thank Program Day sponsor and host [Brooks Rehabilitation](#) and Lunch Sponsor Will Smith and [The Bread and Board](#). We appreciate all the volunteers and speakers for their time and talents.

Alumni Spotlight Warner Buchman NextGen 2022



Warner Buchman (NextGen 2022) shares how the NextGen program made her feel fully immersed into Jacksonville. "Interacting with people who love and want to build a better Jacksonville gave our class the opportunity to leverage these networking experiences and find ways to connect. It is exciting and humbling to be part of this process and be surrounded by incredible individuals who want the same." As a Marine Biologist for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Warner has brought the experience from her program days into her personal and professional life. Her favorite part was interacting with and being inspired by the city and how the NextGen program tangibly brings learned experiences to life. "Our city has so much promise and hope, but we need people from every background, cultural experience, and

viewpoint to join in. Without you, what will our community miss out on?"

Reminder: Next Generation Applications open February 9, [click here for details](#).

2023 UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAM DAYS

NextGen 2023 Applications open
Thursday, February 9

LJ 2023 Leading With Equity Day
Thursday, February 9

Reconnect 2023
Monday, February 13

YLJ 2023 "Dollars & Sense" Day
Thursday, February 23

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

2004

Jeanne Maron (LJ 2004) was elected President of the Southside Business Men's Club for 2023.

2005

Jon Heymann (LJ 2005) published a new book, *[Agonizing Peace](#)*.

2010

Dawn Emerick (LJ 2010) is now serving as Chair of the Public Service Grant Council's Most Vulnerable Populations Subcommittee.

2012

Eric Mann (LJ 2012) was appointed as Chairman of the Board at Brooks Rehabilitation.

2017

Congratulations to **Priyesh Patel** (LJ 2017) on his new position as Director of Enterprise Portfolio Management at American Family Insurance.

2018

Congratulations to **Jarret Dreicer** (LJ 2018) on being promoted to President of Baptist Medical Center Beaches. Jarret replaces **Joe Mitrick** (LJ 1999) who retired January 9, 2023 after serving in the position for more than a decade.

Laura Gonzales (LJ 2018) joined Matthews Real Estate Investment Services as a Market Leader.

George Boston (YLJ 2018) was promoted to Coordinator of Graduate Operations at the University of North Florida Graduate School.

2019

Congratulations to **Coretta Hill** (LJ 2019) on her new role as Chief Operating Officer at United Way of Northeast Florida.

Kasey Wagner (LJ 2019) joined Baggett Law as a Personal Injury Lawyer.

Marcus Isom (NextGen 2019) was promoted to the Targeted Prosecution Unit of the State Attorney's Office. He was also sworn in as President Elect of the D. W. Perkins Bar Association.

Sabrina Marcos Smith (NextGen 2019) joined Fisher, Tousey, Leas & Ball, P.A. as an Associate on the Litigation Team.

2020

DeAndrea Fuller (LJ 2020) joined The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone Jacksonville as the Outreach Director.

2021

Congratulations to **Anne Bean** (LJ 2021) on her new position as President at Hylant Jacksonville.

Madelen Salter (LJ 2021) joined the Board of Directors for Build Up Downtown.



2021

Several members of **LJ 2021** attended the Leadership Florida Recruiting Reception at the Jacksonville Transportation Authority office.

Pictured: **Nemiah Rutledge, Kelli O'Leary, Carlton Robinson, Y. Michelle McGriff, David Thompson, Madelen Salter** and **Diana Donovan**.

Members of the **LJ 2021** class gathered for a social at Fore Score Golf Tavern on January 18.

Pictured: **Gracie Simendinger** (LJ CEO), **Erik Kasper, Laura Lambert, Linda Pittenger, Adina Pollan, Terri Wall, Kelli O'Leary, Tyler Morris, Madelen Salter, Carlton Robinson,** and **Nicole Bryan** (LJ Adult Program Coordinator).



2022

Charles Garrison (LJ 2022) qualified to run for Jacksonville City Council, At-Large Group 5.

Greer Johnson Gillis (LJ 2022) was promoted to Senior Vice President, Chief Infrastructure and Development Officer at Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

Congratulations to **Nina Lopez** (LJ 2022) on her new role as Grant Capacity Program Manager at World Vision.

Carly Cisson (NextGen 2022) graduated from Jacksonville University with an M.S. in Clinical

Mental Health Counseling.

2023

Congratulations to **Kimberly Allen** (LJ 2023) on receiving the Jacksonville Jaguars inaugural Duval Diversity Playmaker Award at the January 22 Jaguars game.

Leonard Chatman Jr. (LJ 2023) published a new book, *[The Art of Appreciation, The Greatest Unwrapped Gift](#)*.

Ashley Folladori (LJ 2023) joined the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville Board of Directors for 2022-2023.

Congratulations to **Logan McEwen** (LJ 2023) on his new position as Partner at Marks Gray, P.A.

Melinda Powers (LJ 2023) launched a new company, Intentional Professionals, LLC.

COMBINED CLASSES & HONORARY



Errol White (LJ 2023) retired from his position as the Director of Staff for the Florida Air National Guard on January 6.

Attending the retirement ceremony were the following LJ classmates: **Patrick McKinley, Matthew Posgay, Sarah Mannion, Melinda Powers, Chandra Manning, Chris Brown** and **Daniel Bradley**; LJ Alum **Tia Leathers** (LJ 2017) and LJ team members **Gracie Simendinger** and **Nicole Bryan**.

The Jax Daily Record CEO Insight series featured **Irvin PeDro Cohen** (LJ 2014) [on moving Jacksonville forward](#) and **Russell Baker** (LJ 2023) [on inflation and staff retention](#).

Debbie Buckland (LJ 2009) has been appointed to chair the Jacksonville Transportation Authority board of directors with **Ray Driver Jr.** (LJ 2007) serving as vice chair.

The Women's Giving Alliance (WGA) welcomed their 2022-2023 officers and steering committee members.



LJ Alumni officers pictured: First row: WGA Grants **Vicki Waytowich** (LJ 2016), Vice President **Sabeen Perwaiz** (LJ 2016), TCF Liason **Wanda Willis** (LJ 2002), and Special Committee **Karen Mayfield** (LJ 2006); Second row: Advocacy **Trina Medarev** (LJ 2013), Membership **Courtney Weatherby-Hunter** (LJ 2020), Grants **Tina Wirth** (LJ 2016), and Special Committee **Jana Ertrachter** (LJ 2003).

LJ Alumni not pictured: Secretary **Susan Rodgers** (LJ 1984), DEI **Joni Poitier** (LJ 2016), Governance **Jan Healy** (LJ 1996), and At-Large **Gracie Simendinger** (LJ CEO).

The Jacksonville Women's Network announced its 2023 Board of Directors: President **Barbara Darby** (LJ 1993), Treasurer **Meg Rose** (LJ 2017), Secretary **Kendra McCrary** (LJ 2004), Immediate Past President **Meg Folds** (LJ 1999), **Kim Holland** (LJ 2014) and **Snowden McFall** (LJ 2010).



On January 20, WeaveTales' "Journey to Florida" closing celebration of the exhibit at The Jessie was enjoyed by business leaders, educators and families as they shared the value of celebrating our differences within local communities.

Among those pictured are LJ Alumni members: **Leslie Kaplan** (LJ 2023), **Laura Bennett** (LJ 2020), **Monica Hernandez** (LJ 2021) and **Basma Alawee** (LJ 2022). LJ Alumni not pictured: **Anjali Lueck** (LJ 2020) and **Julia Taylor** (LJ 1978).

NOTES OF SYMPATHY



Condolences to **Billy Morris** (LJ 1986) and his family upon the passing of his mother, Mary Jane "Jinx" Bull Morris on December 27.

Our sympathy to **Jay Fant** (LJ 1996) upon the passing of his mother, Dorothy "Dottie" Jeanne Stephenson Fant on December 27.

Condolences to **Mia Jones** (LJ 2000) on the passing of her mother, Hannah Mae McRae on January 12.

Our thoughts are with **Jennifer Ryan** (LJ 2012) on the loss of her father, Douglas Gornto who passed away on January 23.

STAY IN TOUCH!

Click the links to follow Leadership Jacksonville:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Facebook](#)

[LJ Alumni Facebook Group](#)

[NextGen Facebook Group](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)



MAKE A LJ DONATION

[**DONATE NOW**](#)

Many companies sponsor matching gift programs that match the charitable contributions made by their employees. Check with your employer for details.

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

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