

March 2023



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)



NextGen 2023 Applications

open through April 3



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.

The Next Generation 2023 program will take place June 2 through August 5, 2023. Contact Programs Director, Meg Folds at meg@leadershipjax.org for questions.

APPLY HERE FOR NEXTGEN 2023



Leadership Connect

Leadership Connect relaunched in February as an initiative to foster alumni connections and build relationships across diverse communities in Northeast Florida. Meeting options include breakfast, lunch or happy hour at predetermined venues and times led by Leadership Jacksonville Alumni. Please note: LJ 2023 class members are eligible to attend upon graduation in May.

What LJ Alumni are saying about their experience:

"We had an AWESOME luncheon! Everyone was so enthusiastic and engaging...our hour ended much too quickly!" - **Thanh Hogan** (LJ 2019)

"The conversation was robust and we had so many things in common, most notably our shared commitment to Jacksonville. There is so much we are excited for coming our way!" - **Marlo Zarka** (LJ 2020)

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

New Leadership Summit 2023



New Leadership Summit 2023 took place February 20-21 at the Casa Monica Resort & Spa in St. Augustine. The summit brought together 15 new-to-town C-suite executives from across Northeast Florida. They each gained knowledge on the city's assets, issues, organizations, and leadership from key corporate, civic, social and educational leaders



while building relationships with one another. We would like to thank the New Leadership Summit Program Day Sponsor **Gate Petroleum Company**, the Planning Committee chaired by **Jerry Mallot** (LJ 1995) and our speakers.

Let's welcome the new NLS 2023 class: Allen Akins, Kari Bates, Bryan de Boer, Alex Burton, Terri Cope Walton, Laura Dutton, Jim Edwards, David Emanuel, Mariam Shpeen Feist, Charles Frazier, Gabriela Garcia, Moez Limayem, Matthew Marcin, Pedro Melendez, and Jessica Salazar.



Past Presidents Breakfast

The Past Presidents Breakfast brought together LJ Board leadership from 1983 to the present. This annual reunion allows LJ Presidents to reconnect, learn more about organizational happenings and share ideas and stories with one another.

Pictured back row L to R: **Nancy Veasey** (LJ 2003), President 2011; **Wade Barnes** (LJ 1995), President 1999; **Don Padgett** (LJ 1989), President 1995; **Peggy Bryan** (LJ 1987), President 2000; **Quint White** (LJ 1988), President 1993; **Carlton Jones** (LJ 1990), President 1996; **Michael Howland** (LJ 2012), President 2023; **Kathy Miller** (LJ 2015), President 2022; **Karen Mayfield**, (LJ 2006), President 2017; **John Bottaro** (LJ 1993), President 2007; **Deborah Moore** (LJ 2003), President 2015; **Bruce Fafard** (NLS 2016), President 2021; and **Doug Milne** (LJ 1978), President 1983. Pictured front row L to R: **Justin Terry** (LJ 2005), President 2013; **J. F. Bryan** (Honorary), President 1989; **Linda Lindenmoyer** (LJ 2018), President-Elect; **Gracie Simendinger** (LJ CEO), **Rosa Beckett** (LJ 2007), President 2020; **Courtenay Wilson** (LJ 1979), President 1984; and **Barbara Darby** (LJ 1993), President 2001. Not pictured, but in attendance: **Mobeen Rathore** (LJ 2003), President 2018.



Leadership Jacksonville 2023
Leading with Equity Day

LJ 2023 Leading with Equity Day expanded the participants awareness of personal beliefs and behaviors and the impact they have on others. Through different activities, facilitators encouraged open conversations to promote respect for differences and empathic leadership in the community.

Thank you to our Program Day Sponsor **JEA Academy**, Lunch Sponsor, **Nelrae Ali** (LJ 2022), and Afternoon Break Sponsor, **Community First Credit Union**.



Youth Leadership Jacksonville 2023 "Dollars and Sense" Day



YLJ 2023 "Dollars and Sense" Day explored the role business plays in all aspects of our community. Speakers addressed the importance of professional etiquette, financial knowledge,

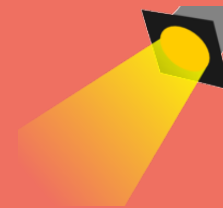
and the breadth and depth of specific professions. We would like to thank the Program Day Sponsor [Florida State College at Jacksonville](#), our afternoon hosts the [Jacksonville Jaguars](#), our speakers, lunch guests, and volunteers.

Reconnect 2023



Reconnect 2023 brought together **Next Generation** and **Youth Leadership Jacksonville** Alumni across classes. Attendees shared their program experiences and had the opportunity to meet and mingle with new friends while “reconnecting” with their fellow class members. Comedy provided by **Mike Freed** (LJ 2008) had everyone laughing as he also shared inspiring thoughts on leadership and being your authentic self.

Alumni Spotlight Coretta Hill LJ 2019



As a graduate of the Class of 2019, **Coretta Hill** (LJ 2019) shared how the connections she made inspired her to branch out and become more involved in the community. “I became more knowledgeable and partnered with other local leaders to become a founding board member of Level the Playing Field Leadership Academy and last summer, I finished my term at Changing Homelessness where I learned about the collaborative work being done to address the homeless crisis.” Most recently, Coretta joined the steering committee of the JAXUSA Elevate Women network and the Board of Directors of the North Florida School of Special Education.

Although she stays busy in these volunteer roles, she is actively involved with Leadership Jacksonville and currently serves as Education Day Co-Chair on the Leadership Development Team. “We are a very diverse community with complex challenges that impacts all of us. Leadership Jacksonville is a great avenue to help anyone strengthen and grow their leadership capacity.”

2023 UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAM DAYS

NextGen 2023 Applications open now

through Monday, April 3

LJ 2023 Economy, Growth and Preservation Day 1 & 2
Thursday, March 2 and March 30

YLJ 2023 Closing Retreat and Graduation
Saturday, April 1

LJ 2023 Arts and Culture Day
Thursday, April 27

Celebration 2023
Wednesday, May 10



ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

Submit your news to
manisha@leadershipjax.org



1992

Susan Datz Edelman (LJ 1992) retired from The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida after ten years.

2011

Congratulations to **Lynn Sherman** (LJ 2011) on her new role as Executive Director, Community Transformation at Baptist Health.

2013

Congratulations to **Pat Geraghty** (LJ 2013) for his recognition as Business Leader of the Year by Florida Atlantic College of Business.

2017

AJ Dunn (LJ 2017) joined the Mayo Clinic Board of Trustees. AJ is currently the Chief Administrative Officer at Mayo Clinic in Florida.

Sunil Joshi (LJ 2017) joined the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board as a City Council Appointee in the Medical Profession category. He will serve as member of the Air, Odors and Noise Committee and the Water and Hazardous Materials Committee.

2018

Terri Lewis (LJ 2018) was honored as one of the Top 50 Women Leaders of Jacksonville for 2023 by Women We Admire.

Brad Talbert (NLS 2018) has accepted a role in Savannah, GA as the Chief Financial Officer for Memorial Health.

2019

Coretta Hill (LJ 2019) was named the new Chief Operating Officer for United Way of Northeast Florida.

Keith Lechwar (LJ 2019) was awarded 2022 Team Captain of the Year by Bike MS for his fundraising efforts representing Corporate Traffic Logistics.

LJ 2019 Alumni attended the 2023 VyStar Credit Union Duval County Public Schools EDDY Awards, which celebrated Teachers of the Year across the county.

From L to R: **Coretta Hill**, **Kemal Gasper**, **Andrea Williams** and **Sel Buyuksarac**.



2020

Laura Bennett (LJ 2020) has accepted a role in Memphis, TN as the Leadership Instructor and Executive Coach for the Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare System. She will be co-creating a comprehensive, data-driven leadership development program for their system.

Robyn Cenizal (LJ 2020) joined Manhattan Strategy Group as a Director.

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

2021

Nemiah Rutledge (LJ 2021) is celebrating his second year on Jacksonville's Visionaries of the Year Leadership Team. Nemiah was also appointed the Safety and Crime Reduction Committee Commissioner for the City of Jacksonville.

Brady White (YLJ 2021) is only one of two Florida representatives selected in the 2023 U.S. Senate Youth Program scholarship competition. Brady is a senior at Fleming Island High School.

2022

Steven Libman (NLS 2022) celebrated his third anniversary at the Jacksonville Symphony. The Jacksonville Symphony also extended his contract through 2028.

2023

Darren Brownlee (LJ 2023) was recognized as a Top 20 Under 40 at the [Florida Black Expo](#), which was held on February 9. This group of individuals have exhibited talent, gifts, leadership and were nominated based on their business success, leadership skills, community involvement and the impact of their service.



Congratulations to **Daniel Burkhardt** (LJ 2023) on his marriage to Janine on February 10.

Ulysses Owens Jr. (LJ 2023) [took home his third Grammy win](#) with the Generation Gap Jazz Orchestra. Ulysses has been featured on eight previous albums that were nominated

for a Grammy Award. He recently received the Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures Award presented by the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.



Zac West (LJ 2023) and his wife Hannah welcomed baby Gwyneth Kay West on February 6.

Jennifer Wolfe (LJ 2023) has accepted a role in Syracuse, NY as the new Chief Information Officer for Empower Federal Credit Union, effective March 20th.

COMBINED CLASSES & HONORARY

Several LJ Alumni will be performing in [River City Dancing with the Stars](#) at the University of North Florida on April 15 including **Mark Bennett** (LJ 2017), **Ashley Folladori** (LJ 2023), and **Adrian Rust** (LJ 2007). **Giselle Carson** (LJ 2005) is the Showcase Performer.

The Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) welcomed new LJ Alumni board members **Barbara Darby** (LJ 1993), **Whitney Meyer** (LJ 2022), and **Susan Towler** (Honorary).

The following Alumni are among this year's class of 40 Under 40 honorees selected by the Jacksonville Business Journal: **Kari Bates** (NLS 2023), **Darren Brownlee** (LJ 2023), **Sarah Mannion** (LJ 2023), **Linzee Ott** (LJ 2022), **Amanda Polematidis** (LJ 2022) and **Nemiah Rutledge** (LJ 2021). With a wide range of industries and backgrounds, these honorees were chosen based on the impact they have had on their organizations, business community, and the First Coast.

The River Club welcomed its 2023 Board of Directors including LJ Alumni: **Robert Harris** (LJ 1993), **Steven Libman** (NLS 2022), **Trina Medarev** (LJ 2013) and **Donnie Smith** (YLJ 1992).

LJ 2021 and LJ 2017 collaborated for a tour of Rethreaded led by **Kristin Keen** (LJ 2016).



The Florida Chamber Foundation Board of Trustees is now led by **Susan Towler** (Honorary) and includes new Trustee **Ashley Pratt** (LJ 2022).

NOTES OF SYMPATHY



Our condolences to **Alicia Somers** (LJ 2018) on the passing of her mother, Carol West on February 2.

STAY IN TOUCH!

[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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