

**Wedgworth Leadership Institute Alumni Association  
Strategic Plan  
Updated January 2013**

**Mission and Vision Statements**

The mission of the WLIAA:

*To build and maintain a broad-based network of leaders committed to promoting Florida agriculture and natural resources and expanding the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources.*

The vision of the WLIAA:

*To be the premier networking association for agriculture and natural resources leaders in Florida.*

**Executive Summary**

The four goals of the WLIAA are:

- ❑ Increase alumni member leadership involvement in Florida
- ❑ Build stronger WLIANR networks and outreach efforts to complement existing commodity group efforts
- ❑ Increase alumni participation in the WLIAA
- ❑ Educate the membership on agricultural issues, working with commodity groups where possible

**Organizational Profile and History**

In 1989, the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Science (IFAS) saw the need for an agricultural-based leadership program in Florida and began the process of implementing such a program. Fifteen years later, this program -- the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources -- has graduated seven classes, has approximately 200 alumni, and has reached an endowment fundraising goal of over \$1 million.

The alumni association was created for graduates of the WLIANR and their spouses. The first official meeting of the WLIAA was held in 1994. Since then, the WLIAA has met annually in various locations around the state. Alumni meetings include an educational component, a business meeting and a chance for alumni to interact, renew friendships and continue the networking that began while they were participating in the program.

## **Program Goals and Action Plans**

The following goals of the WLIAA were developed during the strategic planning process that took place during the 2012 Strategic Planning Committee meeting. Specific action items are included to accomplish each goal.

- 1. Increase alumni member leadership involvement in Florida**
  - A. Identify editorial outlets (e.g. trade magazines, newsletters, etc.) willing to publish a “Wedgworth” issue-oriented column
  - B. Find ways to encourage individual publishing in a variety of editorial outlets.
  - C. Continue to publish alumni leadership experiences in the alumni newsletter
  
- 2. Build stronger WLIANR networks and outreach efforts to complement existing commodity group efforts**
  - A. Promote alumni gatherings at industry meetings
  - B. Ensure calendar is up to date and increase awareness among alumni of events
  - C. Encourage participation and outreach to non-agricultural groups
  
- 3. Increase alumni participation in the WLIAA**
  - A. Promote website participation internally
  - B. Solicit personal information from all individual members
  - C. Encourage alums to provide information to the alumni association
  - D. Hold two meetings annually: a regional meeting and a statewide meeting, with components to include field days, education, etc.
  - E. Develop and implement a membership recruitment and retention plan
  - F. Encourage each class to designate a “point person” to facilitate communication as needed
  - G. Leverage social media tools to communicate activities and engage membership
  
- 4. Educate the membership on agricultural issues, working with commodity groups where possible**
  - A. Survey pertinent issues among the membership
  - B. Solicit individual trade groups to contribute explanations of hot issues
  - C. Identify issues alumni want to explore

## **Implementation**

To accomplish the WLIAA goals and specific action steps, members of the WLIAA and staff of the WLIANR were identified who would contribute to the implementation of certain action steps. To accomplish the mission and vision of the

WLIAA, the elected officers and board of directors of the organization should continually review this document to ensure that implementation is occurring and the goals of the WLIAA are being met.