

April 2024



THE LEAD Story



Last Chance to Register: Celebration 2024

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

5 - 8 pm

[WJCT Studios](#)

100 Festival Avenue, Jacksonville, 32202

Help us celebrate our exemplary leaders **H. Wade Barnes, Jr.**, (LJ 1995), **Debbie Buckland** (LJ 2009), **Eric Mann** (NLS 2012) who have helped build a stronger Northeast Florida region, and will be honored at our annual Celebration 2024 event benefiting [Youth Leadership Jacksonville](#).

To buy tickets by the April 15 deadline, [click here](#).



LJ 2024 Economy, Growth and Preservation Day 1 was facilitated at Jacksonville University on March 7. Discussions with speakers and panelists focused on the current and future economic outlook of Northeast Florida with an emphasis on demographic trends, environmental sustainability, and the economic development in our region. We would like to thank Program Day Sponsor [Crowley](#), Lunch Sponsor [The Bread and Board](#), and the volunteers and speakers for their time and talents.



Alumni Spotlight: George Boston (YLJ 2018/NextGen 2023)

As a dual graduate of the Youth Leadership Jacksonville and Next Generation programs, **George Boston** (YLJ 2018/NextGen 2023) shared how much he loved the exposure he received to the city.

"Prior to YLJ, I had never visited the City Council Chambers, seen first appearance court, or the county jail. I had never been on a riverboat tour either! Through YLJ, I've become so much more aware of our community's history and all that Jacksonville has to offer and being a part of the NextGen program was one of the most impactful things I've ever done in my life - I was able to

connect with fellow young professionals in industries all across Jacksonville. The summer program defied my expectations in the most spectacular way possible. Every program day caused me to challenge my own thinking and because of that, I developed a much deeper appreciation for our community and its history. During one of my NextGen program days, we got to hear a speech from Mayor Deegan. This was my first time hearing a speech from a politician in real life and not on TV. I just remember being so impressed with her leadership and communication skills that it inspired me to take more an interest in our local government," said George.

"I cannot speak highly enough of LJ and the amazing staff and volunteers that help make the magic happen for our leaders; however, the most unique thing about my experience was by far the friends that I have made. I know everyone says this, but my class was the best class! In fact, before our last program day, my class came together and raised over \$500 to sponsor a member in the upcoming NextGen class, a true display of camaraderie. I felt that our group really clicked the second we all got together and I am so happy to say that I have made lifelong friends from this program.

"Transformation is my biggest reason for recommending YLJ and NextGen to people. While this word is sometimes overused, I do believe that it is what summarizes these experiences the best. YLJ and NextGen challenge you to think critically about the issues facing our community and our world. Every program day is an adventure into a different aspect of both Jacksonville and yourself; however, the best thing you can gain from these programs is connection with peer leaders. That is by far the most priceless reward from YLJ and NextGen.

"A piece of advice for all the readers, if you ever find yourself worrying over the future of our world, spend some time with YLJ, and you will see that our future is in very good hands," shared George.

Leadership Connect



With breakfast, lunch or happy hour options, our alumni are connecting, engaging and fostering connections across Northeast Florida.

Sign up to attend an Upcoming Alumni Gathering:

Available:

[Breakfast with Ashley Szczukowski \(LJ 2022\), April 19](#)

[Breakfast with Adam Chaskin \(LJ 2021\), May 7](#)

[Happy Hour with Meg Folds \(LJ 1999\), May 22](#)

Reservations are full:

[Happy Hour with Vicky Basra \(LJ 2017\) and Mary Pat Corrigan \(LJ 2017\), April 8](#)

[Breakfast with Tina Wirth \(LJ 2016\), April 12](#)

[Lunch with Blair Wygle \(LJ 2001\), April 25](#)

[Happy Hour with Alicia Somers \(LJ 2018\), May 1](#)

Please note: LJ 2024 class members are eligible to attend upon graduation in May.

Would you like to host a Leadership Connect gathering?
Please email Manisha Joshi at manisha@leadershipjax.org.

Upcoming LJ Events & Program Days

LJ 2024 Economy, Growth and Preservation Day 2

Thursday, April 4

Celebration 2024

Tuesday, April 23

LJ 2024 Arts and Culture Day

Thursday, May 2

LJ 2024 Closing Retreat

Friday-Saturday, May 17-18

NextGen 2024 Meet the Class Reception

Thursday, May 30

Class Socials



LJ 2021 hosted a Breakfast Club on March 27 at Maple Street Biscuit Company in San Marco.

Pictured: **Tim Page**, **Madelen Salter**, **David Thompson**, **Adam Chaskin**, **Kaci Honeycutt Barnes**, and **Tyler Morris**.



Alumni Class Notes

Submit your news to
manisha@leadershipjax.org

1985

Cleve Warren (LJ 1985) received the The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Champion of Education award for his steadfast commitment to education and support of UNCF and Edward Waters University at the third annual Mayor's Masked Ball on March 22.

Pictured: Cleve with his wife **Patricia Warren** (LJ 1996), and

Christopher McKee (LJ 2024) and his wife Eres.



2006

Annie Grogan (LJ 2006) joined the Jacksonville Women's Business Center as the Director.

2011

Maxine McBride (LJ 2011) and Randy DeFoor are the incoming chairs for the Florida Forum and the First Coast Design Show supporting The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital.

2013

Lisa Hayes (LJ 2013) joined Pinnacle Financial Partners as a Senior Vice President/Financial Advisor.

R. Troy Smith (LJ 2013) joined the Bedell Firm as a director, bringing 25 years of litigation experience in business and contractual disputes.

2016

Monique Brown (LJ 2016) joined Greystar as Global Head of Privacy and Corporate Risk and the Global Data Protection Officer, which is headquartered in Charleston, SC.



2018

Kathleen Shaw (LJ 2018) joined the Terry Family Foundation as their first Executive Vice President.

2019

Nadia Esha (NextGen 2019) received the Thermal Calibration Team's 2023 "Innovation Champion of the Year" award at General Motors. This acknowledgment underscores the importance of the Automation Verification tool, a project that has been instrumental in her personal and professional growth.



2020

Patricia Dodson (LJ 2020) joined Lippes Mathias LLP as Counsel.

2023

Daniel Burkhardt (LJ 2023) was recognized as one of the University of Florida's 40 Gators Under 40 this year.

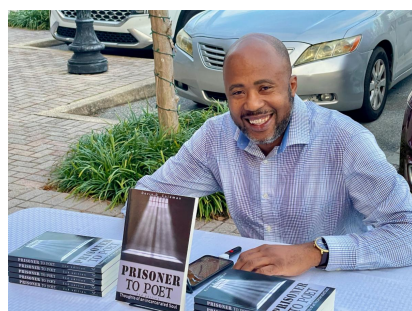
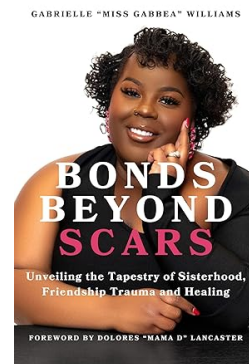
Bill Hoff (LJ 2023) was appointed to serve as the City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation

Commissioner by the Office of Mayor Donna Deegan.

Kayla Miller (NextGen 2023) graduated from the Business Intelligence Apprenticeship at Miller Electric.

Kayna Mogelnicki (NextGen 2023) was promoted to Accounting and Reporting Advisory Senior at Deloitte.

Gabriella Williams (NextGen 2023) hosted a book signing and sisterhood summit on April 1 at the Jessie Ball DuPont Center, for her new book, ***Bonds Beyond Scars: Unveiling the Tapestry of Sisterhood, Friendship, Trauma, and Healing***. The book is a depiction of her personal journey and delves into the intricate connections between women.



2024

Devin Coleman (LJ 2024) has written a book, ***Prisoner to Poet: Thoughts of An Incarcerated Soul 2nd Edition***, sharing his introspective life experiences.

Congratulations to **Tori Foster** (LJ 2024) on her promotion to Director of Investor Relations and Finance at JAXUSA Partnership.

Ernest Hamilton (LJ 2024) was promoted to Senior Executive Director at Children's Home Society of Florida.

Desiree Jones (LJ 2024) was appointed to serve as a Medical Professional on the Environmental Protection Board by the Office of Mayor Donna Deegan.

Scott Wohlers (LJ 2024) was appointed to serve on the Downtown Investment Authority board.

Pictured here with **Joe Carlucci** (LJ 2021).



Combined Classes and Events

LJ Alumni members were spotted at a Breakfast Club social organized by **Tina Wirth** (LJ 2016) on February 21 at Breezy Coffee Shop.



Pictured: **Ashley Folladari** (LJ 2023), **Christine Hoffman** (LJ 2016), **Tracy Tousey** (LJ 2013), **Billy Wagner** (LJ 2016), **Jeff Winkler** (LJ 2015), and **Tina Wirth** (LJ 2016).

Alumni members **Sabrina Marcos-Smith** (NextGen 2019), **Tyler Oldenburg** (LJ 2022), **Adriel Rocha** (LJ 2019), and **Kendall Sisisky Valliere** (LJ 2024) were among the 2024 Jacksonville Business Journal 40 Under 40 award winners.

Congratulations to **Madelen Salter** (LJ 2021) on her promotion to Market President for North Florida at Office Environments & Services (OE&S). Madelen succeeds **E. Zimmermann Boulos** (LJ 1992) who retired in January 2024.

Alumni members were spotted at the Florida Philanthropic Network's 2024 Summit including **Dawn Lockhart** (Honorary), **Isaiah Oliver** (NLS 2024), **Susan Towler** (Honorary), **Rachael Tutwiler-Fortune** (LJ 2022), **Courtney Weatherby-Hunter** (LJ 2020), and **Wanda Willis** (LJ 2002).



Martha Baker (LJ 1997) and **Brian Wolfburg** (NLS 2019) are recipients of the OneJax Humanitarian Silver Medallion Award. The **2024 OneJax Humanitarian Awards event** will be held on Thursday, May 9.



Several Alumni members were honored as the 2024 Jacksonville Business Journal Women of Influence including **Allishia Bauman** (NextGen 2012), **Laura Phillips Edgcombe** (LJ 2024), **Linda Lindenmoyer** (LJ 2018), and **Cindy Watson** (LJ 2014).

Not pictured: Honorees **Anne Bean** (LJ 2021) and **Kwanza Murphy** (LJ 2022).

Isaiah Oliver (NLS 2024) spoke to the Meninak Club of Jacksonville via fireside chat with **J.F. Bryan** (Honorary) on March 18.



In Sympathy



Our condolences to the family and friends of **Betty Holzendorf** (LJ 1978) upon her passing on February 29. Betty was a Jacksonville native who graduated from Matthew W. Gilbert High School at the young age of 16. She received a B.S. in Biology from Edward Waters University, a Master's of Art in Biology from Atlanta University, and a Master's in Education Administration from University of North Florida.

Following Betty's roles as a public school teacher and administrator at Edward Waters, she began a government and political career as the City of Jacksonville's Affirmative Action Officer and as a City Council liaison for Mayor Jake Godbold in the 1970s. Betty became the first African American woman from Jacksonville to be elected to the Florida House of Representatives, where she served from 1988 to 1992. She was then elected to the Florida State Senate in 1992, representing District 2, which included parts of Alachua, Clay, Duval, Putnam, and St. Johns counties. Her platform was helping senior citizens, and securing funds for local and collegiate education.

In 1998, Betty was named Democratic Leader Pro Tempore and Legislator of the Year. In 2007, Mayor John Peyton recruited Betty to serve as co-chair of the steering committee for the anti-crime Jacksonville Journey. Betty was known for her focus and willingness to help create economic programs for Jacksonville residents and beyond. She was instrumental in legislation that re-established the Florida A&M University (FAMU) College of Law. Her support of FAMU led to being honored with the President's Award (1990), the Meritorious Achievement Award (1994), and as a Honorary Alumna. Her community service included founding the Northside Civic Association. Betty was an active member of several organizations including the National Council of Negro Women, National Conference of Black State Legislators, Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority; she also served on the Board of Directors of the FAMU Foundation.

Betty's Leadership Jacksonville family includes her son **Kevin Holzendorf** (LJ 2006), daughter-in-law **Tracee Holzendorf** (LJ 2008), and grandchildren **Kevin Holzendorf, Jr.** (YLJ 2015) and **Kenadee McCallum** (YLJ 2017).

Stay connected!

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[NextGen Alumni Facebook Group](#)

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