

DIRECTORY
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North Carolina Tobacco
Trust Fund Commission

Agricultural
Leadership
Development
Program

NC STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences

North Carolina Tobacco
Trust Fund Commission

Agricultural Leadership Development Program

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The social, economic, and political changes affecting agriculture and rural communities pose a challenge to farmers and rural leaders. It is important that potential leaders in agriculture be identified and trained to assume leadership roles. They must be prepared to bridge the gaps between rural and urban interests, to participate actively in issues affecting agriculture, and to foster unity among agricultural interests.

The North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission Agricultural Leadership Development Program of NC State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is designed to prepare about 30 selected outstanding young agriculturalists per class for such challenges. Support comes from an endowment from the the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, commodity and farm organizations, related agribusinesses and personal contributions.

The participants represent diverse agricultural enterprises in North Carolina, and their average age is mid-career. Each class takes part in 50 days of training over two years. There are eight seminars in Raleigh, a legislative study tour to Washington, a study tour to Brazil, and local and domestic study tours. In Brazil, participants observe agricultural production and marketing strategies of a major U.S. agricultural competitor. The domestic tours provide participants an opportunity to observe production of diverse agricultural commodities and related agribusinesses and to understand how producers deal with environmental issues.

Participants in the program focus on important agricultural issues they have identified for North Carolina and their communities. Training focuses on the following areas:

- > Mastering Self
- > Mastering an Understanding of Agriculture's Environment
- > Mastering Relationships
- > Managing Social and Organizational Action
- > Enhancing Participants' Understanding of Global and National Aspects of Agriculture

Throughout the program, leaders from government, commodity groups, farm organizations and related agribusinesses interact with the participants on issues and leadership opportunities.



Jack Jones Allen Jr.

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Jack Allen Jr. farms in Pitt County in a family farming operation. The farm consists of the following: tobacco, 625 acres; peanuts, 650 acres; sweet potatoes, 135 acres; soybeans, 300 acres; swine, feeder-to-finish, 13,440; and swine, wean-to-finish, 4,756.

Jack received his B.S. in Agricultural Business Management from NC State University in 2007. He returned to the family farm consisting of Jack Allen Farms (row crops) and Ted and Jack Allen Inc. (livestock). He is a deacon in Friends in Fellowship Christian Church.

His wife, Audra, is a registered nurse. They have one child, Mattie Kate.

Jack sees a need for farmers and agribusiness to have more of a voice in the political arena that determines much of the future of agriculture. He desires to become more educated on the role agriculture leaders play in interacting with our elected officials and government in general. Personally he would like to learn more skills and increase his ability to motivate employees into performing as efficiently and productively as possible.

He sees the following among issues facing his community: world food supply and GMO products, role of E-cigarettes and farm labor.



William Theodore "Ted" Allen

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Ted Allen farms in Pitt County in a family farming operation. The farm consists of the following: tobacco, 625 acres; peanuts, 650 acres; sweet potatoes, 135 acres; soybeans, 300 acres; swine, feeder-to-finish, 13,440; and swine, wean-to-finish, 4,756. He farms in operations known as Jack Allen

Farms (row crops) and Ted and Jack Allen, Inc. (livestock). Ted is a graduate of D.H. Conley High School.

Ted and his wife, Nicole, have two children, Emily Grace and Clara.

Ted believes participation in the agricultural leadership development program will be an exciting opportunity to further develop leadership skills and relationships that will be used at a farm level as well as the local, state and national levels. He would like to confidently represent agricultural interests, especially livestock interests, to policy makers.

Ted sees the following among many issues facing his community: disease control in livestock, public perception of food safety and labor.



Mark Wilson Blevins

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Mark Blevins is the County Extension Director, N.C. Co-operative Extension Service, Brunswick County. Mark has three degrees from NC State University: a B.S. in Agricultural and Extension Education, an M.S. in Extension Education with a Horticulture minor; and a Doctorate of Education in Extension. He has membership in the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, N.C. Beekeeper Association and Epsilon Sigma Phi Extension Honor Society. His awards and recognitions include National Fellow, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education; Search for Excellence in Remote Sensing from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents; and International Programming Award and Regional Diversity Award from Epsilon Sigma Phi.

Mark and his wife, Anna, have two children, Madeline and Audrey.

Mark anticipates the program will prepare him to more effectively lead in regards to public policy issues related to agriculture. He sees the following among many as issues facing his community: low levels of agricultural awareness and appreciation, proximity and disparities between socio-economic status groups and challenges in agricultural land transfer.

**Ryan Cahoon**

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Ryan Cahoon farms in Tyrrell County in collaboration with his father Lonnie Cahoon. The diversified family farming operation is known as Cahoon Farms. Cahoon Farms produces 1,200 acres of corn, 700 acres of soybeans, 600 acres of wheat, 100 acres of fresh market snap beans during the spring/fall, along with 50 beef cattle.

Ryan has three A.A. degrees from NC State University, which are Agricultural Business Management, General Agricultural and Field Crop Technology, accompanied with a B.S. in Agricultural Business Management with a minor in Economics. Ryan is also active in the N.C. Soybean Producers Association where he is on the Board of Directors. Ryan also serves as a Committee Member on the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) where he represents N.C. Soybean Producers. He is also a member in the Swan Quarter Christian Church.

Ryan has many concerns about the issues facing the agricultural community, one being the lack of knowledge people have about the importance of agriculture and its impact on our economy. In addition, there is a need for improvement of infrastructure in rural areas, which will allow farmers to move their products at a faster pace resulting in improving the economy. Another issue that desperately needs to be addressed is the necessity for newer and more advanced technology. This country is growing rapidly and in order for farmers to be able to continue producing enough food products and energy, we need to work with the most reliable and cutting-edge technology.

As a result of his involvement in the leadership program. Ryan aspires to raise awareness and educate his community on the importance of agriculture and be a motivating force to produce change.

**Tiffanee Conrad**

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Tiffanee Conrad is currently the Livestock Agent in Richmond County, North Carolina. Previously, she worked in Robeson, Hoke and Scotland Counties as the Area Livestock Agent with the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service. She coordinates the 4-H Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit and the Richmond County Adult Meat Goat Club. She received a B.S. from Purdue University in Animal Agribusiness and a M.S. in Agriculture Education from NC State University. A native of Indiana, she gained inspiration in agriculture from her grandfather, who was a hog, corn and soybean farmer. Tiffanee is a member of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association, the National Association of County Agricultural Agents and the Cooperative Extension Latino Advisory Council. She serves as the past secretary of the North Carolina Association of County Agricultural Agents and the past president for the South Central District Association of County Agricultural Agents. Her Extension responsibilities include Beef Cattle, Sheep, Goats, Horses, Animal Waste, Forages, Wildlife and Ponds.

Tiffanee is also the owner of Two Flag Farm in Maxton, N.C. The farm is licensed to race quarter horses at Indiana Downs and Hialeah, Florida. She is a recent winner of the Dalton R. Proctor youth programming award. She is a member of the Aces of Bases, Kountry Kutz and Lady Mustangs softball teams. Tiffanee is bi-lingual in English and Spanish and is an advocate for Hispanics in her community. She is concerned about a lack of labor for farms, low profits in farming and the youth in her community.

**Kelli Dale**

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Kelli Dale lives in Harnett County and is a project coordinator at the Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI). RAFI has partnered with NC State University on an OREI grant with the long-term goal being to increase the sustainability of organic agriculture by improving farmer access to cultivars adapted to organic systems. Kelli serves as a liaison between the university and the farmers to ensure they have access to the cultivar trial information. Kelli also helps design their on-farm trials as well as monitor the plots throughout the growing season. She has a B.S. in Agriculture Business Management and a minor in Animal Science from NC State University. She serves on the Organic Farm Advisory Board and is a 4-H project director in her county. Kelli is also actively involved in Ducks Unlimited and serves as North Carolina Ducks Unlimited State Arts Council Chairperson.

Kelli's husband, Tommie, is the Nursery Production Manager at Prestage Farms. He earned a B.S. in Animal Science from NC State University. They have two children, Brett and Elyssa.

Among the local community issues Kelli is concerned about are (1) how to cope with the declining number of young farmers, (2) how to deal with global competition for agriculture commodities produced by competitors with lower standards and fewer regulations and (3) how to relate agriculture needs to those moving into her area.

**Kevin Dixon**

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Kevin Dixon farms in Rockingham County with his uncle, Lee Rakestraw, on a fifth-generation farm. Together they raise tobacco, 55 acres; wheat, 125 acres; soybeans, 100

acres; corn, 75 acres; hay, 200 acres; and 100 head of beef cattle.

Kevin received an Associate Degree in 1997 from Guilford Technical Community College majoring in Fire Protection Technology. He has served as Vice Chairman of the Southern States Co-op Board of Directors in Reidsville and is a Charter member of the Wentworth Grange. Kevin was also awarded the 2012 Tobacco Grower Award from RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company.

Kevin's wife, Rebecca, is the Assistant Chief of Police in Gibsonville. They have been married 17 years and have 2 children, Winter (6 years old) and Levi (3 years old).

Kevin is concerned about the loss of farmland to development, the lack of interest from the younger generation and city residents moving to the country not understanding how agriculture operates.

**Chadwick Ivan Docsh**

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Chad Docsh farms in Pitt County. His operation includes cotton, 130 acres; soybeans, 100 acres; wheat, 100 acres; and corn, 10 acres. He has attended Wake Technical College, Pitt Community College and NC State University.

Chad believes participating in the Leadership Development Program will help him meet some of the challenges faced as a farmer educating the public about agriculture. He has a healthy respect for the environment and preserving his heritage that he wants to pass on to his children.

Chad and his wife, Christy, who is a litigation paralegal, have three children, Zoe, Sari and Wyatt.

Among the issues he sees in his community are more agricultural development of farmland, land lease prices and limited solutions to chemical-resistant weeds.



Robert Alan Fann

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Robert Fann farms in Sampson County in a family operation that consists of tobacco, 1,200 acres; cotton, 1,000 acres; corn, 1,000 acres; peanuts, 1,200 acres; and sweet potatoes, 400 acres. Robert has a B.S. from NC State University in Ag Business. He is on the Ag Advisory Board of Southern Bank and a member of the Masonic Lodge. His family received the N.C. Tobacco Growers' Association Farm Family of the Year in 2014 and is a three-time winner of the N.C. Peanut Growers Association Sampson County Champion Peanut Producer Award. He is an Eagle Scout.

Robert and his wife, Brittany, who is very involved in the farming operation, have one child, Konnor.

Robert expects the leadership program to improve his leadership skills and his ability to manage an organized, efficient and diverse agricultural organization and to forge new business relationships which will be mutually beneficial to those involved to create economic synergy within his community and state. Among the issues in his community are labor, representation and education.



Elizabeth (Beth) Pugh Farrell

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Beth Farrell joined the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in 2010 and is currently serving as an Agricultural Programs Specialist. In this role, she is making contributions to a broad range of activities to strengthen and enhance agriculture in our state.

A native of Piney Creek, N.C., Beth developed a deep love and appreciation for agriculture on her grandparents' dairy and tobacco farms. Prior to joining NCDA&CS, she worked for 8 years at the N.C. Agricultural Foundation, focusing on

4-H and Extension fundraising efforts. She holds a B.S. in Animal Science from NC State University. Outside of the office, Beth has held numerous leadership positions in the Junior League of Raleigh and N.C. Agri-Women (founding member and officer), volunteers with Global Hope India and serves at Hope Community Church. She is also a member of the N.C. 4-H Honor Club, American Agri-Women, Capital Grange, N.C. Farm Bureau, Wake County Agribusiness Council and Sigma Alpha Alumni Association and has participated in the Capital Leadership Initiative and Syngenta's Leadership at its Best program. She has also had the opportunity to serve on several short-term mission trips to India and Haiti.

Beth and her husband, Kevin, reside in Cary, N.C. and enjoy cheering for the Wolfpack, time with family and friends and making memories together.



Robert (Rob) Brent Fleming

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Rob Fleming farms in Halifax County in a family operation with his father and brother in operations that consist of cotton, 1,150 acres; soybeans, 700 acres; rapeseed, 110 acres; and triticale, 105 acres. He is a graduate of NC State University with a B.S. in Field Crop Technology. He is active with the North Carolina Cotton Producers Association, National Cotton Council of America, Board Member of Southern Southeastern Inc., Supervisor of the Fishing Creek Soil & Water Conservation District where he received a 10-year service award, Halifax County Farm Bureau and Scotland Neck Volunteer Fire Department.

Rob expects to learn more about himself and how to lead and work with others, especially in the many organizations with which he has involvement.

Among the issues he sees in his community are education, lack of industry and labor and succession plans for current businesses and small companies.

**Jennifer A. Gasque**

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Jennifer Gasque is Senior Sales Representative for Bayer CropScience in several southern counties of North Carolina and is owner of a ladies clothing boutique. She has a B.S. degree in Ag Business Management and a B.A. in Communications from NC State University. She is very active in the Junior League of Fayetteville, N.C. She is currently on the Co-Producers Committee of the Cape Fear Regional Theatre Board, Fayetteville Blues-&-Brews Committee, Women's Giving Circle of Fayetteville and a member of Highland Country Club.

Jennifer expects the leadership program to increase her knowledge on issues facing the future of agriculture and on how she can use her skills to become involved and make a difference in solving the challenges the agribusiness industry faces.

She sees the following issues among those facing her community: lack of high school and college graduates returning to Robeson and surrounding counties, resistance to change that could increase the quality of life for many and lack of public education on agricultural issues.

**S. Archie Griffin**

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Archie Griffin farms in Beaufort County with his father, Steve. Archie is the third generation of Griffins to farm there. The Griffin's farm consists of 250 acres of tobacco, 500 acres of corn and 700 acres of double cropped soybeans and wheat. Archie graduated from NC State University with a B.S. in Plant and Soil Sciences, Crop Production.

Upon graduating, Archie returned home to assist with the farming operation and enrolled at East Carolina University

pursuing his M.B.A. He is a member of the Wells Fargo Agricultural Advisory Board and an active member of the N.C. Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Ranchers program.

Archie expects the leadership program to build upon his communication and leadership skills, increase his knowledge of agricultural related issues and overall prepare him to become a leader and well-rounded individual. He hopes to build bonds and friendships that will help him tackle agricultural issues that he may face in the future. Archie is concerned about properly balanced budgets, education in the community sector and the loss of quality farmland to the ever-growing urban development.

**Stacy Ham**

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Stacy Ham is Vice President of Ham Produce Company Inc. in Snow Hill, N.C. Ham Produce is a grower, packer and shipper of sweet potatoes, cabbage and squash. The family farming operations cover 15,000 acres in Eastern North Carolina as well as Florida. The Hams are also partners in Yamco, a producer of aseptic purees; Covington Spirits, a distiller of premium spirits; and Natural Blend Vegetable Dehydration, a producer of dried sweet potatoes.

Stacy is a graduate of East Carolina University, with a B.S. in Business Administration. She maintains a N.C. Property and Casualty license and is an alumna of The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers at Texas A&M. Stacy is active in the sweet potato industry, serving on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission since 2012. She is also a member of Southeast Produce Council, Produce Marketing Association, Goodness Grows in N.C. and the Greene County Chamber of Commerce. The Ham Family is a founder of the Henry Covington Endowment for Excellence in Sweet Potato Research and Extension.

Stacy believes that continual improvement is essential to personal and professional success. Her father, Bobby Ham, is a past graduate of the program. She has one son, Tyler Lane, who is in the sixth grade at Arendell Parrott Acade-

my. Her fiancé, Brynn Thomas, is Vice President of Thomas Development Inc. and has a B.S. in Political Science from East Carolina University.



Miles J. Hamrick

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Miles Hamrick, a resident of Cleveland County, has been a commercial loan officer with Carolina Farm Credit since 2007, serving Cleveland County farmers from the Shelby office. His family has been involved in agriculture for several generations in Cleveland County. Miles grew up in Boiling Springs, where his family operated an 80-cow dairy farm and also produced corn, soybeans and cotton on approximately 400 acres. In 1986 his family elected to exit the dairy industry via the dairy buyout program. Miles and his family are still involved in agriculture, but on a smaller scale.

Miles is a graduate of NC State University with a B.S. in Agricultural Business Management with a minor in Economics and Horticulture. While at NC State he was an active member of Alpha Zeta, an agricultural honors society. Miles is an active member of Boiling Springs Baptist Church and also serves on the board of directors for the Cleveland County Farm Bureau. He is the past treasurer of the Cleveland County 4-H Dairy Steer Club. Miles is engaged to Alyssa Davidson of Shelby and they have a wedding date of September 2015.

Among the issues he sees in his service area are unemployment and poverty, a disconnect between rural and urban America and education support.



Caroline G. Hines

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Caroline Hines is a farmer in Johnston County with her father in an operation that consists of tobacco, sweet Po-

tatoes, soybeans and wheat. She is a graduate of NC State University with a B.S. in Ag Business Management. Caroline is active in the Johnston County Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers and serves on the county board.

She expects her participation in the leadership program will enhance her leadership skills so she can help others in the agricultural community, be an advocate of agriculture and learn more about agricultural policy and issues. Caroline wants to become more efficient and confident in communicating to rural and urban audiences.

Caroline sees the following among the issues facing her community: compliance with all of the many regulations associated with farming, technology transfer among the farmers who have not embraced competitive technology and transition to large farms at the expense of smaller farms.



Casey L. Hinnant

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Casey Hinnant is the editor/advertising director of The Carolina Cattle Connection, the official publication of the NC/SC Cattlemen's Associations. She graduated from NC State University with B.S. degrees in Agriculture Business Management and Agriculture Extension. She also owns a home/office cleaning service.

Casey is active in the following organizations: Buckhorn United Methodist Church, Alpha Zeta Alumni Association, Ceres Alumni Association, N.C. Agri-Women, Wilson County Livestock Association, Livestock Advertising Network, Livestock Publications Council and previously the N.C. Farm Writers and Broadcasters Association. She has received outstanding alumni awards from Ceres Fraternity, Alpha Zeta Fraternity and the Wilson County Livestock Association.

Casey expects the program to help her become a more effective leader in her community and the organizations in which she is currently involved. Her aim is to become more involved and use the skills developed to benefit her community and industry.

Casey sees among the issues in her community the follow-

ing: loss of farmland due to development, control of invasive animal species and local impact of I-540 expansion.



Lendy Yeaman Johnson

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Lendy Johnson works for the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation as a District Field Representative in the north central piedmont region of the state. She covers 11 counties and is a member of the Young Farmer and Rancher Program team. Lendy was raised in rural Caswell County. She was very active in the North Carolina FFA Association, serving as North Carolina FFA State President in 2004. Lendy now resides in Rolesville, NC, with her husband, Michael (Mike) Johnson and their little Yorkie Bella. Mike has been an agricultural education teacher at Wake Forest High School in Wake County for 17 years. Mike and Lendy are both NC State graduates and proud Wolfpack fans! Lendy received numerous scholarships including the Honorable Jim Graham Scholarship and North Carolina Teaching Fellows Scholarship. She was an Agricultural Education Instructor in Wake County prior to her employment with Farm Bureau. Lendy holds a M.S. in Agricultural Education. Mike was also a North Carolina Teaching Fellow and holds a M.S. in Agricultural Education.

Lendy is a part of the Wake Forest Rolesville FFA Alumni and is an active member of Wake Crossroads Baptist Church. In her spare time she enjoys running and training for triathlons.

Lendy is passionate about educating the general public about the agriculture industry. She wants to encourage farmers to share their story in an effort to educate consumers regarding where their food and fiber comes from. Lendy is also interested in public policy development and protecting farmers from regulatory overreach.



James Latman Lamb

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James Lamb lives in Sampson County and is an environmental specialist with Prestage Farms. He visits all of Prestage's swine facilities in North Carolina at least once annually. He is also a contract grower of nursery swine for Prestage, with 3,040 head of nursery swine. He grows 8 acres of bermudagrass, 8 acres; 5 acres of millet 34 acres of corn and soybeans and has 10 beef cows.

James graduated from NC State University with a B.S. in Agriculture and Environmental Technology. He is active in the following organizations: Clinton Area Foundation for Education, Sampson County Soil and Water Supervisor (Vice Chairman), Cape Fear Farm Credit (Nominating Committee), North Carolina Pork Council Board Member and National Pork Board Nominating Committee. He has received the Prestage Farms Nursery Grower of the Year Award twice.

James' wife, Felicia, is a teacher and reading specialist with a Master's degree from an Eastern North Carolina University. They have two children, Megan and Kensley. Among the issues James sees in his community are unemployment, drugs and moral values.



Christina Linnea Law

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Christina Law resides in Buncombe County and works as a Veterinary Medical Officer for the Livestock Section of the Veterinary Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services under the State Veterinarian's Office as Field Veterinarian for the 40 Western counties of North Carolina. She graduated from NC State University with a B.S. degree in Animal Science and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. She has a hobby farm consisting of Shetland sheep, horses, goats and chickens.

Christina's job allows her to work with a variety of producers, organizations, agencies and other facets of the agricultural community. She expects to develop her leadership skills to be more effective with these organizations and to be an advocate for the agricultural community.

Christina sees the following local issues in her community:

- The fragile balance between agriculture production and urban development. There is a serious conflict between the price of land for farming and development.
- Lack of agricultural education for youth.
- Need for more governmental support/financing, training, benign regulations and agricultural research.



Stephen Craig Lilley Jr.

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Stephen Lilley manages a family farming operation in Martin and Beaufort counties. His operation farms cotton, peanuts and soybeans. Stephen helps manage a family owned peanut buying point in Williamston and is involved in the local cotton gin.

Stephen attended NC State University and earned a B.S. in Agronomy and a B.S. in Agricultural Business Management.

His wife, Ginny, has a B.A. in Communication Studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an M.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from East Carolina University. Ginny is a speech-language pathologist in the local community.

Stephen and Ginny attend and are actively involved at Macedonia Christian Church. Stephen plays drums and guitar in the praise band and works with the youth. Stephen and Ginny also enjoy coaching a youth basketball team at the church. They have one child, Katie.

Stephen is proud to be following in the footsteps of his late father, Steve Lilley, who completed the Ag Leadership Program in the early 1990s. Stephen hopes that the leadership program will equip him to be a better leader in his community, business practices and family.



Dana Hope Massey

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Dana Massey, Alamance County, is Vice President and Annual Grower of Plantworks Nursery in Rougemont, N.C. Plantworks Nursery is a wholesale operation that has over 200 greenhouses growing annuals, perennials, herbs, vines, vegetables, tropicals, ferns, groundcovers and ornamental grasses. A graduate of Southern Nash High School, she attended Louisburg College, then transferred to NC State University. She received a B.S. in Horticultural Science and Agricultural Business Management in 2009. She attends Hawfields Presbyterian Church and is an active member of the Mebane Fire Department.

Dana's husband, Joel, is a Lieutenant for the Orange Rural Fire Department in Hillsborough. Upon graduation from Eastern Alamance High School, he completed the Alamance Community College's Fire Academy.

Dana wants agricultural businesses to be successful. In order for this to continue, their voices have to be heard and she wants to be one of them! The insight and ingenuity of the agriculture industry is immense and the networking that will take place during this program will be greatly beneficial. Dana has the desire and, through this program, will have the ability to make notice of all the good in the agricultural industry and to stand up and fight for the necessary change as it arises to ascertain a better future. Immigration, education of the younger generations and sustainability are all issues facing our communities that need to be discussed and solutions found.



Donald Weston McCorkle

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Weston McCorkle is a Loan Officer for AgCarolina Farm Credit based in Smithfield, N.C. Additionally, he has a brood

cow farming operation with 120 acres of pasture and 50 commercial cow/calf pairs. Weston graduated from NC State University with a B.S. in Ag Extension Education with a minor in Animal Science. Weston also has a Master's degree in Adult Education.

Weston is active with the following organizations: National Alpha Zeta Fraternity (High Chancellor 2011-13), N.C. Cattlemen's Association, Johnston County Agri-business Council, N.C. Dairy Association and Swift Creek Rural Fire Department. He received the AgCarolina Farm Credit 2013 Top Performer Award in 2014 and Swift Creek Rural Fire Department Lifetime Membership Award.

Weston sees among the issues in his local community the following: decrease in the number of farmers and level of interest in agriculture by youth, urban sprawl and lack of public education about the educational needs to be a successful farmer and the role farmers play in protecting the environment.



Peyton Gunter McDaniel

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Peyton McDaniel farms in a Nash County family farm that consists of 500 acres of cotton, 100 acres of wheat, 400 acres of soybeans, 150 acres of tobacco, 150 acres of sweet potatoes and 150 acres of peanuts. He is a graduate of NC State University with a B.S. degree in Agricultural Business Management. He is on the Organic Farm Advisory Board and produces organic grown tobacco for Santa Fe National Tobacco Company (received Pride in Tobacco growers-Quality Award twice) and attended the 2013 Tobacco Short course at NC State University.

While at NC State, he was active in the Agronomy Club and The Order of the Cross and Chalice.

Peyton sees the following issues in his community: possible tolling of Interstate 95, lack of an adequate supply of labor and access to fresh and health food sources.



Hugh Gerald Miller Jr.

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Gerald Miller works for the North Carolina Department of Commerce Agricultural Services Division (Kenansville DWS) as an Agricultural Employment Consultant covering Duplin, Wayne and Onslow counties. He is also involved in a family farming operation (H&H Farms) in Duplin County with his dad, Hugh Sr., where they tend corn, soybeans, wheat and grow pasture-raised pork for special meat markets. Gerald holds a B.S. in Political Science from North Carolina A&T State University, where he graduated with numerous honors.

Gerald is a voting board member of Duplin County Farm Bureau and is very active in the local bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher program. He is also a Captain with the Sarecta Volunteer Fire Department, where he received Fireman of the Year in 2012. H&H Farms is Animal Welfare Approved and they are members of the N.C. Natural Hog Growers Association and Twin Rivers Small Farmers Cooperative.

Gerald is concerned about the availability of jobs in the rural North Carolina counties, high tax rates imposed on the citizens of these rural areas and the outbreak of several diseases that have affected our state's agricultural producers, such as Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) virus.



Matthew John Moore

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Matt Moore farms in Sampson County in a family farm consisting of 650 acres of blueberries, 30 acres of muscadine grapes and 1,000 acres of corn, wheat and soybeans. He attended the Agricultural Institute at NC State University.

Matt is a fourth generation blueberry farmer who expects participation in the leadership development program will develop his leadership skills and agricultural knowledge. He

also expects to gain more self-confidence that would make him more effective in their farming operation.

Matt sees among the issues facing his community the following: farm labor, ag water and management of spotted wing drosophila that target blueberries.



Jessica Ann Morgan

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Jessica Morgan is an agriculture agent, covering livestock and row crops for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Anson County. She has a B.S. in Animal Science and M.S. in Extension Education from NC State University.

Jessica is serving as vice chair for the South Central District of County Agricultural Agents in addition to being a member of the State and National Associations. She serves on the Anson County Tourism Development Authority as well as being an active member of the Anson County Chapter of N.C. Young Farmers and Ranchers program. She is the 4-H club leader for the Anson County 4-H Livestock Club and a board member of the Anson County Cattlemen's Association. Jessica is an active member of Concord United Methodist Church in Ansonville.

Jessica's husband, Jeff, holds a B.S. in Athletic Training from Boise State University and an M.S. in Biomechanics from East Carolina University. He is employed with Novant Health in the Sports Medicine division.

Among the agricultural issues she identifies are the following: 1) the increasing age of farmers and producers, 2) the need for reliable, quality farm labor and 3) increasing regulations that add costs and complexity to farms and agribusinesses. Jessica hopes that through the leadership program she will be able to broaden her abilities to advocate and promote agriculture to a variety of audiences, especially youth and government leaders.



Joy Elaine Morgan

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Joy Morgan lives in Wake County, but grew up in Granville County on a small beef cattle and tobacco farm. In high school, she was involved in both FFA and 4-H. Participation in these two organizations led her to pursue a degree from NC State University in Agricultural Education with a concentration and minor in Animal Science. Upon graduation, she completed a M.S. in Agricultural Education, then returned to Granville County where she taught agriculture classes for five years at both the middle school and high school level. She recently completed her doctorate in Agricultural and Extension Education and is employed within the Agricultural and Extension Education Department at NC State, where she teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses.

Joy is an active member of the Granville County Cattlemen's Association, where she is a past president and currently is the scholarship committee chair. At NC State University, she is an advisor for Alpha Zeta, an honors Agricultural Fraternity and assists with other student organizations.

While teaching, Joy helped implement a PALS (Partners in Active Learning) program at a local elementary school. It was here that she saw the extreme disconnect between today's children and agriculture. With today's news media, Joy believes agricultural literacy is even more important to promote agriculture in a positive view. Joy has also traveled to Honduras with a group of agricultural educators and is very interested in the role of agriculture in international development. She believes that the leadership program will help her serve her community and students.

The following are among the local issues she sees: lack of ag awareness, immigration reform and cost of fuel.



Joshua Eugene Outlaw

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Joshua Outlaw is an engineer for Murphy Brown LLC. In this capacity, he has been involved in the conversion of company sow farms to group housing. Recently, he has been of part of the company's efforts to find productive and commercially feasible alternative uses of swine waste.

Joshua graduated from NC State University with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. His wife, Julie, is currently a social worker at Holly Tree Elementary in Wilmington, N.C. She has a B.A. in Sociology from NC State and an M.A. from UNC-Wilmington. Joshua and Julie attend First Christian Church in Wilmington. They have twins born in January 2015.

He is active in the Schoolview Homeowners Association, Outlaw's Angels (fundraising team for the Brain Tumor Center at Duke) and the North Carolina Pork Council. Joshua is concerned about the following issues in his community: water usage and dwindling freshwater supplies, foreign ownership of local agricultural interests and an overall lack of understanding of agriculture by the general public. While growing up on a farrow-to-finish farm in Duplin County, Joshua learned the importance of agriculture to North Carolina. He plans to take over the current 8,000 head nursery operation in the future and through the Agricultural Leadership Program, he hopes to learn tools to help him be an effective advocate for agriculture and keep the family business viable.



Maurice Wayne Smitherman

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Maurice Smitherman is a dairy farmer from Yadkin County. Shady Grove Dairy is family owned and operated by Maurice, Tim, Vickie, Sterling and Parker Smitherman. The dairy was started by Maurice's grandfather, Glenn Smitherman.

The dairy has approximately 900 Holstein cows. The family raises a variety of crops for the dairy including corn, soybeans, barley, grass hay and alfalfa hay. Maurice is also involved in custom silage cutting.

He is a graduate of Dal Fort Aviation Technical School and Guilford Technical Community College. He attends East Bend Evangelical Methodist Church, where he is a Sunday School teacher and lay speaker. Maurice is a member of the state and national Corn Growers Association. He is married to Shonda, and they have three daughters.

By participating in the Agricultural Leadership Development Program, Maurice hopes to become a better leader in his community and across the state. He hopes to gain better communication skills that will assist in the growth of the family owned dairy operation. His agricultural concerns include competition for farmland, the need for a reliable workforce and educating the community and others about the importance of agriculture.



Dustin Wallace Sumner

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dustin.sumner@southernbank.com

Dustin Sumner is a Loan Officer with Southern Bank and Trust Company who makes agribusiness and commercial loans. He has an agribusiness loan portfolio of about \$32 million dollars annually. He attended Pitt Community College and has a B.S.B.A. in Managerial Accounting from East Carolina University and graduated the North Carolina School of Banking. He is active in the Ahoskie Jaycees and Como Ruritan Club. Dustin has received three times the banker of the year award from Southern Bank and Trust Company as well as the Community Re-investment Act Award.

Dustin expects the leadership program will increase his skills and provide him expertise to make knowledgeable and more efficient decisions. He expects to become more diverse and more open to the ideas and approaches of others.

Among the issues Dustin sees for his community are the declining population of college-educated and skilled labor, age of agricultural producers and agribusiness owners and global commodity competition.



Zachary Graham Taylor

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Zach Taylor, Pitt County, is the Technical Service Manager for Helena Chemical Company's Eastern Specialty Business Unit. He is responsible for managing all company-funded, university and private research trials in both the row crop and turf and ornamental markets.

Zach attended NC State where he received his B.S. in Agronomy and his M.S. and Ph.D in Crop Science. Both of his graduate degrees focused on flue-cured tobacco production and investigated the use of two experimental compounds in an effort to reduce MH residues and delay ripening. While at NC State, Zach served as an instructor in the Agricultural Institute, teaching Field Crop Production for three years and as the Academic Advisor to Farm House Fraternity.

His wife, Amanda, received her B.S. in Nursing from ECU and is nationally certified in oncology nursing. Amanda is employed as an Inpatient RN Case Manager at Vidant Medical Center in Greenville, N.C. Zach and Amanda have one daughter, Harper, who is two years old. Both Zach and Amanda are active members at Oakmont Baptist Church in Greenville, N.C.

Zach believes that participating in the Leadership Development Program will allow him to recognize the leadership potential that he possesses and further increase those skill sets. He also feels that participation in the Leadership Development Program will increase his knowledge of agricultural related issues facing both producers and industry in North Carolina. He is excited to learn about agricultural policies and how they are implemented. Zach is also interested in the viability of the Land-Grant University remaining in the research and development arena.



Jamie Thomas

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Jamie Thomas lives in Raleigh where she was also raised. She is the Recruiting and Training Manager at Hog Slat Incorporated, which is based in Newton Grove, N.C. Hog Slat supplies hog and poultry farmers throughout the world with facilities and equipment to help them in raising safe and healthy animals.

Jamie earned her B.S. degree in Agricultural Business Management from NC State University, where she also participated as a member of the school's National Agri-Marketing Association team. She is currently involved with the North Carolina Pork Council, including its Intern & Scholarship Committee. In 2015 she will serve as an Alternate Delegate on the National Pork Producers Board.

Jamie's husband, Spencer, is a Manager for Dillon Supply Company in Durham. He also earned his bachelor's degree from NC State. They have a three year old daughter named Reese.

The issues that are most important to Jamie regarding agriculture are related to communication between the farmers who produce our food supply and the families that consume it. She feels that too often, food discussions are being held without the presence of farmers and, therefore, legislation is being shaped around them rather than with them. Jamie feels that fostering leadership skills among farmers and participants in the agricultural industry at every age will improve the message that consumers understand when making food choices.



Susan Epps Ward

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Susan@BrothersOnFarms.com

Susan is a "new" farmer who created Brothers On Farms,

named for her two sons, when starting a summer project growing mushroom logs. That project soon grew to raising sheep. In a few short years of operating the 45 acre sheep business with her husband, Gary, Susan developed a vast knowledge of effective livestock management. She received an Ag Options Grant her first year of operation where she quickly applied Amazing Grazing practices and responsible stewardship. Within her second year, she received her meat handlers license, joined ASAP Appalachian Grown Certified and earned Animal Welfare Approved Certification. Also she created a new Thursday night farmers market with a neighboring farmer, Evening Harvest Farmers Market, on the Hayesville Square. With a festival atmosphere, having live music and themes, the new market revived the city square and gave farmers another venue to sell.

Susan has always been active in her community and she served five years on the "Community in Schools" board, is the WNC Field Rep for EAA Young Eagles and is actively involved in the 'Small Town Initiative' project to help bring revitalization to her community. Susan feels that it is important to find creative ways to get the community to work together. With the popularity of "Local Grown" and Agritourism she realizes this opportunity to attract young people to farming by supporting these trends and hopes it brings the family farm back in vogue. She plans to assist her community with the issues of economic downturn and protection of existing farmland and to help recruit stronger leaders for both the private and administrative sectors.



Justin Michael Williams

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Justin Williams farms in Wayne County with his father and grandfather in an operation that consists of 400 acres of corn, 700 acres of soybeans, 200 acres of tobacco, 700 acres of wheat, 1,600 hogs and 60,000 turkeys. He has an Ag Engineering degree from NC State University. He is active in his local fire department and is an Eagle Scout.

Justin expects the leadership program to help him manage

a work place in which the willingness to work hard is enjoyable, profitable and successful for each person involved. He believes leadership skills are very important in any business and especially a small business.

The following are among the issues he sees in his community: amount of land used for highway construction, lack of support for the school system and lack of interest in politics.



Der Xiong

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Der Xiong is a horticultural extension agent in Catawba County for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a B.S. degree in Public Health. She also works on her family's 15 acre farm, where they grow cut flowers.

Der Xiong is active with the Catawba Farm Bureau, North Carolina Community Garden Partners and North Carolina Association of County Agricultural Agents. She has received a Nourishing N.C. Community Garden Grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

She expects the program to develop skills to help her communicate with policy makers at all levels and to work as a team member in the network she developed.

Among the issues she sees in her community are the aging farmer population; development of farmland; and lack of outreach to small, beginning and minority farmers.

Previous Leadership Program Participants from North Carolina Classes

1984-86, 1986-88, 1989-91, 1992-94, 1996-98,
1999-2001, 2002-04, 2005-07, 2008-10 and 2012-14

Jamie Ager	Fairview, N.C.
William Andrews	Fuquay Varina, N.C.
Linda Andrews	Fuquay Varina, N.C.
Andrew Arnold	Washington, N.C.
John Ashe	Reidsville, N.C.
David Askew	Elm City, N.C.
Amanda Aycock	Louisburg, N.C.
James Barbour	Clayton, N.C.
John Barnes	Spring Hope, N.C.
Brandon D. Batten	Four Oaks, N.C.
Charlie Batten	Four Oaks, N.C.
Stan Biconish	Fuquay-Varina, N.C.
Scott Bissette	Spring Hope, N.C.
John Bizic	Winterville, N.C.
Bill Blackman	Wilson, N.C.
Jonathan Bone	Nashville, N.C.
Donnie Boyette	Kenly, N.C.
Art Bradley	Rocky Mount, N.C.
Phill Bradley	Sanford, N.C.
Preston Britt	Lumberton, N.C.
Jeffrey Broadaway	Monroe, N.C.
Talmadge Burgess Jr.	Henderson, N.C.
Andrew Burleson	New London, N.C.
David Burns	Laurel Hill, N.C.
Bill Cameron Jr.	Raeform, N.C.
Ann Camden	Raleigh, N.C.
Kelly Carlton	Wilson, N.C.
Billy Carter	Eagle Springs, N.C.
W.L. Carter Jr.*	Scotland Neck, N.C.
John Clapp	Greensboro, N.C.
Michael Clapp	Gibsonville, N.C.
Scott Clayton	Cedar Grove, N.C.
Jody Clemmons	Supply, N.C.

Eileen Coite	Goldsboro, N.C.
Rodney Coleman	Wilson, N.C.
James Crews	Oxford, N.C.
DeShon Cromartie	Hillsborough, N.C.
Amy Dalrymple	Sanford, N.C.
Tommy Dalrymple	Sanford, N.C.
David Davenport	Greenville, N.C.
Charles Davenport	Greenville, N.C.
Lawrence Davenport	Greenville, N.C.
Max Denning	Benson, N.C.
Sam Dobson	Statesville, N.C.
Dennis Durham	Four Oaks, N.C.
Jack Edmondson Jr.	Maury, N.C.
Julie Edwards	Bladenboro, N.C.
Scott Edwards	Bladenboro, N.C.
Dave Elkin	Warsaw, N.C.
Angelo Enoch	Burlington, N.C.
John Fleming	Halifax, N.C.
Elizabeth Foster	Roper, N.C.
Allison Fowler	Cornelius, N.C.
Daniel Fowler	Roanoke Rapids, N.C.
Mike Gaster	Sanford, N.C.
Walt Gerard	Washington, N.C.
Howard Gentry	King, N.C.
Richard Goforth	Monroe, N.C.
Steve Grady	Mount Olive, N.C.
McRay Greene Jr.	Walnut Cove, N.C.
Matt Grissom	Henderson, N.C.
Ben Haines	Elizabeth City, N.C.
Bobby Ham	Snow Hill, N.C.
Tim Hambrick	Dobson, N.C.
Farrah Hargett	Monroe, N.C.
Charles Harrell	Stantonsburg, N.C.
Norman Harrell	Lucama, N.C.
Norris Harrell	Macclesfield, N.C.
David Hartman	Walnut Cove, N.C.
David Haynes	Dobson, N.C.

David Heath	Dover, N.C.	Lex Mann Jr.	Washington, N.C.
David Hinnant	Kenly, N.C.	Gregory Manning	Nashville, N.C.
Kenneth Hinnant	Kenly, N.C.	Brandon Marshall	Engelhard, N.C.
Russell Horton	Hurdle Mills, N.C.	Charlie McClenny	Mount Olive, N.C.
Chase Hubbard	Asheville, N.C.	Allen McLaurin	Laurel Hill, N.C.
Jeremy Hudson	Newton Grove, N.C.	John McLawhorn	Hookerton, N.C.
Josh Hudson	Newton Grove, N.C.	Roland McReynolds	Pittsboro, N.C.
Pelmon Hudson, Jr.	Turkey, N.C.	Richard Melton	Wadesboro, N.C.
James Huggins	Clarkton, N.C.	Miles Mercer Jr.	Lumberton N.C.
Brent Hunter	Yadkinville, N.C.	James Morris	Colerain, N.C.
John Isley	Reidsville, N.C.	Mann Mullen	Bunn, N.C.
John Ivey	Mount Olive, N.C.	Morris Murphy	Albertson, N.C.
Major Ivey	Mount Olive, N.C.	Paul Myers	Blanch, N.C.
Rouse Ivey	Mt. Olive, N.C.	Daniel Nelson	Warsaw, N.C.
Jennifer Johnson	Pikeville, N.C.	Kelvin Norris	Princeton, N.C.
Kevin Johnson	Pikeville, N.C.	James Overton	Creedmoor, N.C.
Teresa Johnson	Mocksville, N.C.	Dale Parker	Pfafftown, N.C.
Tony Jones	Mount Olive, N.C.	Drew Parker	Angier, N.C.
Thomas Joyner	Rocky Mount, N.C.	David Parrish	Princeton, N.C.
Whitney King	Ash, N.C.	Keith Parrish	Benson, N.C.
Kevin Kinlaw	Bladenboro, N.C.	Jimmy Pate	Rowland N.C.
Emily Lancaster	Pittsboro, N.C.	Jeff Peed	Aurora, N.C.
Dudley Langdon	Angier, N.C.	Raeford Pernell	Warrenton, N.C.
Sandy Langdon	Dunn, N.C.	Pate Pierce	Ahoskie, N.C.
Jerome Lanier	Burgaw, N.C.	Stuart Pierce Jr.	Ahoskie, N.C.
Summer Lanier	Wallace, N.C.	Elbert Pitt	Macclesfield, N.C.
Adam Lassiter	Conway, N.C.	Tom Porter	Rocky Mount, N.C.
Donny Lassiter	Conway, N.C.	Kelley Precythe	Faison, N.C.
Mark Lassiter	Conway, N.C.	Rodney Purser	Marshville, N.C.
A.K. Leach Jr.	Raeford, N.C.	James Radford	Mount Airy, N.C.
Brent Leggett	Nashville, N.C.	Melvin Ray Jr.	Whiteville, N.C.
Susan Leggett	Nashville, N.C.	Shivaugn Rayl	Raleigh, N.C.
Cody Lewis	Fuquay-Varina, N.C.	Bryan Redfern	Indian Trail, N.C.
Dan Lewis	Orrum, N.C.	Richard Renegar	Harmony, N.C.
Steve Lilley*	Williamston, N.C.	Jeremy Rhodes	Four Oaks, N.C.
Dwight Little	Durham, N.C.	Suzanne Rhodes	Four Oaks, N.C.
Craig Lovette	Lumberton, N.C.	Alton Roberson	Kinston, N.C.

Mark Ross	Williamston, N.C.	Ralph Tucker Jr.	Greenville, N.C.
Kenneth Rudd	Greensboro, N.C.	Jeff Turlington	Coats, N.C.
McCray Sadler	Edenton, N.C.	Kent Turlington	Coats, N.C.
Larry Sampson	Rowland, N.C.	Jeff Tyson	Nashville, N.C.
Chris Sawyer	Greenville, N.C.	Kerry Venable	Belews Creek, N.C.
Milton Sawyer Jr.	Greenville, N.C.	Kerry Venable II	Belews Creek, N.C.
Dewey Scott	Lucama, N.C.	Linwood Vick	Wilson, N.C.
Linwood Scott III	Lucama, N.C.	Betty Vollmer*	Bunn, N.C.
Zane Sells	Kernersville, N.C.	John Vollmer*	Bunn, N.C.
Thaddeus Sharp IV	Sims, N.C.	Stacy Walker	Mocksville, N.C.
Thomas Shaw III	Henderson, N.C.	Keith Waller	Mount Olive, N.C.
Clay Shields	Scotland Neck, N.C.	Bobby Walls Jr.	Goldsboro, N.C.
George Simpson	Beaufort, N.C.	Danny Walters	Fairmont, N.C.
Billy Slade Jr.	Bath, N.C.	Dan Ward	Clarkton, N.C.
Anthony Smith	Pink Hill, N.C.	Bartley Warren	Newton Grove, N.C.
Gary Smith*	Yadkinville, N.C.	Brad Warren	Faison, N.C.
Martha Smith	Durham, N.C.	Brandon Warren	Clinton, N.C.
Bill Smith	Cary, N.C.	Brian Warren	Newton Grove, N.C.
Randy Smith	Deep Run, N.C.	Logan Watson	Monroe, N.C.
Arlie Snider	Mount Airy, N.C.	Mark Wellons	Princeton, N.C.
Bryant Spivey	Smithfield, N.C.	William Whaley Jr.	Kinston, N.C.
Suzanne Stallings	Elizabeth City, N.C.	Faylene Whitaker	Climax, N.C.
Wiley Stancill	Ayden, N.C.	Richard Whitaker	Climax, N.C.
Michael "Bo" Stone	Rowland, N.C.	Shane Whitaker	Climax, N.C.
Manley Stovall	Sandy Ridge, N.C.	Garland Whitford Jr.	Ernul, N.C.
Clay Strickland	Clinton, N.C.	Scottie Whitford	Grantsboro, N.C.
Clint Strickland	Salemburg, N.C.	Joseph Wiggins Jr.	Trenton, N.C.
Reginald Strickland	Mount Olive, N.C.	Jay Willard	Gable, S.C.
Jarman Sullivan	Faison, N.C.	Ashley Williams	Raleigh, N.C.
Jay Sullivan	Faison, N.C.	Ernest Winstead	Nashville, N.C.
Grace Summers	Brown Summit, N.C.	Alton Wood	Elizabeth City, N.C.
Lee Swinson	Mount Olive, N.C.	Allen Wooten	Burgaw, N.C.
Victor Swinson	Mount Olive, N.C.	Larry Wooten	Raleigh, N.C.
Elizabeth Taylor	Whitakers, N.C.	Bryant Worley	Princeton, N.C.
Dale Threatt-Taylor	Raleigh, N.C.	Harold Wright	Bladenboro, N.C.
Winslow Tew	Albertson, N.C.		
Mark Tucker	Madison, N.C.		

* deceased

**Agricultural Leadership Development
Program Team**

Blake Brown, Director

W. K. Collins, Assistant Director

Lanny Hass, Facilitator

Eleanor Stell, Facilitator

Carolyn Bunn, Administrative Assistant

Dale A. Hill, Volunteer, Brazil Study Tour

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