



[ADJUSTING THE LENS]

Leadership Farm Bureau 2020-21

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[2020-21]



From left: Angelica Smith, Paul La Follette, Amanda Berry, Amanda Battle, Mark Avilla, Katie Byrne, Katerina Kronauge

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LFB: Adjusting the lens

By Stephanie Younger, LFB Program Director

The years 2020 and 2021 will be ones we talk about for the rest of our lives. It was a time that challenged all of us in ways we'd never imagined—and a time we found ourselves adjusting the lens when learning a new way of life.

For Leadership Farm Bureau, 2020 started much like other years. The class met in February for the first time, participated in personal assessments, began learning about one another and discussed future sessions. Six short weeks later, the entire world was turned on its axis and the program made its first adjustment: no more in-person meetings. Although the class quickly adapted to using the Zoom platform, we all held on to the hope that we would be able to reconvene in person and resume a traditional program.

By July 2020, it was clear it would be a while before the class could meet in person, so the lens was adjusted again. One of the most significant changes was extending LFB from a 10-month program to a 20-month program. During the break, two class members found they were no longer able to participate.

In March 2021, the program and in-person sessions resumed! There was much reflection on the eight months that had passed, the adjustments each member had to make and how LFB had helped support those modifications. As a result, the class selected the theme "Adjusting the Lens" because it represents what members did in many aspects of their lives. For some, it was seeing situations and issues from a different point of view. For others, it was developing a bigger, more complete perspective.

The California Farm Bureau is excited to graduate this group of seven Farm Bureau leaders who completed the first-ever 20-month LFB program. They practiced flexibility and patience as we all navigated this new way of business and programming. They took time away from their jobs and families to participate in sessions that focused on developing skills to help them in their personal lives and careers while advocating for agriculture. They bonded as a group and faced every experience with an open mind and willingness to adjust the lens. We thank them for committing the extra time to the program and being an integral part of the planning.

LFB began in 2000 to develop leaders from within our own Farm Bureau family. These seven individuals will join more than 250 Farm Bureau members who have graduated from the program. Many have become outstanding presidents and executive board members of state and county Farm Bureaus, commodity and industry associations and school and irrigation districts. If you are fortunate enough to have one of these graduates in your community, you've seen the many benefits of the LFB program.

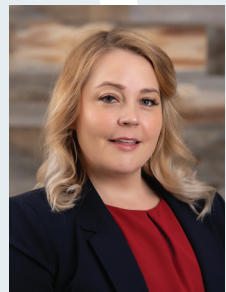
Are you looking for an opportunity to adjust your lens personally and professionally while positively impacting the agriculture industry? Fill out an application today (cfbf.com/lfb) or ask an LFB member about signing up.



Stephanie Younger

Congratulations
to the class of 2020-21!

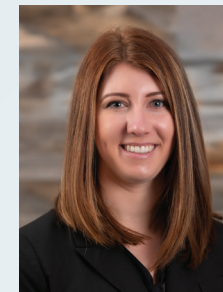
[Class of 2020-21]



AMANDA BATTLE
SACRAMENTO COUNTY
Amanda is a crop insurance adjuster with Rural Community Insurance Services, serving all of California. She is a fourth-generation cattle rancher in Sacramento County. She previously served on the California YF&R State Committee. Amanda earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural education from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.



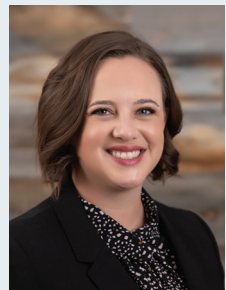
ANGELICA SMITH
SACRAMENTO COUNTY
Angelica is the program and membership coordinator for Sacramento County Farm Bureau. Angelica grew up on the non-traditional side of agriculture. Raised in Oakhurst, her family was involved in wildland firefighting. She graduated from California State University, Fresno with a bachelor's degree in agricultural education.



KATIE BYRNE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY
Katie is the membership coordinator and policy associate for San Diego County Farm Bureau. She has a bachelor's degree in communication from California State University, San Marcos. Katie has a passion for supporting local agriculture.



PAUL LA FOLLETTE
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Paul is a fifth-generation farmer from Contra Costa County. He grows wine-grapes and raises game birds. A member of the Contra Costa County Farm Bureau board of directors, he works to preserve agriculture in the county.



AMANDA BERRY
CALAVERAS COUNTY
Amanda is a territory manager for Elanco in its poultry business unit. Born and raised in Calaveras County, she enjoys advocating for local agriculture commodities and businesses. Amanda has a bachelor's degree in animal science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. She is the president of Calaveras County Farm Bureau and co-founded the Gold Country Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee.



KATERINA KRONAUGE
YOLO COUNTY
Katerina Kronauge of Dixon grew up in Redwood City, where she learned about agriculture in high school while working at Hidden Villa Ranch as a student intern. She previously worked for the Colusa-Glenn Resource Conservation District, specifically on their irrigated lands program.



MARK AVILLA
STANISLAUS COUNTY
Mark is a walnut farmer and the owner of Grafted Tree Public Relations. He works to connect agribusinesses and organizations to the non-agricultural community. Mark received his bachelor's degree in agricultural communications and journalism from Kansas State University and his associate degree in agricultural science from Modesto Junior College. He is currently the chair of Stanislaus County YF&R.

February 2020

Laying the foundation



By Katie Byrne and Angelica Smith

Last year, nine individuals made the decision to pursue the opportunity to invest the next year of our lives in immersing ourselves in understanding political advocacy, issues in agriculture, Farm Bureau and personal development. On Feb. 4, we embarked on our journey as the Leadership Farm Bureau class of 2020. At 9 a.m. on the first day, we sat as strangers in a room, with only one known commonality: the desire to advocate for and be a leader in agriculture. We had a moment to share a little bit about ourselves, and we discovered the unique background and experience that each of us will bring to the table this year. Then we jumped straight into team building.

Thanks to the insightful instruction of Leo Van Warmerdam, within the hour, we knew everybody in the room by name, and by the end of the day, it was hard to believe we had just met. Leo began the

day with some light mixer exercises to help the class warm up to each other, before moving to an activity that allowed us to explore our behavioral styles. Not only did this exercise give us an opportunity to look at ourselves, but we learned that our class is full of diverse personalities. We took turns discussing our own styles, creating an opportunity to learn from each other and see how our differences complement. The day ended with an exercise that required us to put our full trust in one another. We were led upstairs, blindfolded, and tasked with making our way downstairs and outside with only the direction of a faint sound. Once outside, a few members of the class were directed to remove their blindfolds and lead the rest of us through an activity. We successfully completed the activity and that concluded our day of team building.

Day two's focus was on etiquette. Tiffa-

ny Nielson, founder of Premier Etiquette, presented a workshop titled "From Farm to Capitol Hill: How to stand out, not stick out." She led a discussion about what pet peeves we see in the workplace and ways we can approach them professionally. We walked through a variety of professional etiquette situations such as proper business attire, business cards and table manners. Our class had the opportunity to develop powerful self-introductions that will leave an impression on the legislators and other officials we expect to encounter during our year. We spent the rest of our afternoon at Macy's, where we were paired with our own personal stylist. Many of our classmates walked away with new suits or staple pieces for their professional wardrobes.

On our final day, we took class pictures and professional headshots. Melanie Duval, chief marketing officer, reviewed the structure of Farm Bureau and its member-

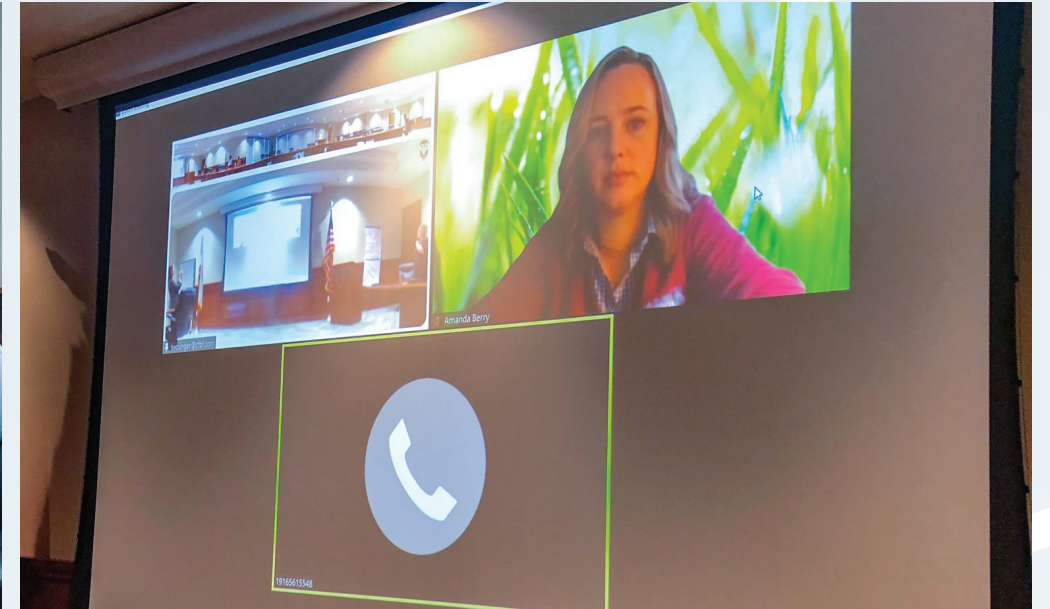
ship. We discussed membership impact in our communities and ways we can ensure Farm Bureau is around for another 100 years. California Farm Bureau Administrator Jim Houston and Taylor Roschen from the Governmental Affairs division led the afternoon discussion on California's top agricultural issues. Taylor provided a glimpse into our next session at the CAFB Leaders Conference and the variety of Issue Action Committees we will be sitting on. To round out our session, we learned more about our classmates, where they are from and their backgrounds in agriculture.

We learned a lot in our first session: who we are, what we have to give and what to expect from this year. As emerging leaders in Farm Bureau, we are excited to commit ourselves to a year of learning and growth. We look forward to a great year together as we overcome challenges and become a strong voice for the future of agriculture.



March 2021

Picking up where we left off



By Amanda Battle

2020 may have been the slowest—yet fastest—year as we all got used to a new way of life.

In mid-March of that year, we were told to stay home and distance ourselves from others to stop the spread of the coronavirus. We all expected to resume life after a few weeks. Now, here we are in March of the following year, and things are still just beginning to open.

Session two of our Leadership Farm Bureau program was the first in-person meeting that most of us had participated in for almost 12 months. We were excited to be together again, yet unsure what programming would look like going forward.

We participated in a virtual Capitol Ag Day before heading to Sacramento for the in-person portion of the session. The program began with a message from California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson. He thanked California farmers and ranchers who showed up every day during the pandemic and continued working and producing food for consumers. He also acknowledged businesses for providing

personal protective equipment to keep employees safe and all support industries that kept food on the shelves. He reinforced that agriculture is essential and that we must continue to meet with elected officials to help them understand our needs.

We also heard from California Secretary for Environmental Protection Jared Blumenfeld and Agriculture Committee Chair Sen. Andreas Borgeas. They both acknowledged how essential agricultural producers were during the pandemic.

After the program, we attended virtual meetings with elected officials to discuss three main issues: vaccinating farm employees, SB11 and funding for University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Then, we met in Sacramento for the in-person portion of the session. Things looked different from the beginning. During the one-year break, two of our class members had to resign from the program. One class member had to “Zoom in” to the session at her doctor’s recommendation, but we were happy to have this time and to connect.

The session started by revisiting some

things we learned from the first session, including our leadership styles. We had a robust discussion about how our exercises in February 2020 were beneficial as we navigated the changes that followed. Being aware of our leadership styles, understanding different leadership styles and having tools to work with other leadership styles made us better leaders, colleagues and friends.

We spent the afternoon discussing the book “Start with Why.” We were challenged to investigate why we do what we do and to find and pinpoint that passion and drive that keeps us going every day. We shared personal experiences and “whys,” creating great dialogue and insight. This also opened a discussion about how we can strive to make a difference within our own lives, agriculture and Farm Bureau.

This discussion transitioned well to the next task of the session: picking a class theme. We combined our experiences from 2020 and our “whys” and decided that “Adjusting the Lens” described something we all did during the pandemic and will continue to do. We all had to adjust our

lens throughout 2020, as we were forced to immediately learn new ways of connecting with family and friends, doing business and running everyday errands. It caused us to look at what is important to us on a large and small scale. Our perspective on things changed after not being able to do things we were used to doing.

We carried our theme into the rest of the session, when we met with Field Representative Gary Sack, who spoke about the importance of the county Farm Bureau and being active on the local level, and then again, when we met with Senior Counsel Carl Borden, who discussed the roles and responsibilities of board members. Both men have so much institutional knowledge about Farm Bureau and are resources we can reach out to as we continue to be leaders in Farm Bureau.

We learned quickly in this session that many aspects of our world had stopped, but farmers’ and ranchers’ essential work did not. No matter what challenges are thrown our way, we must continue adjusting the lens for ourselves and the agriculture industry.



April 2021

Perfecting the art of public speaking



"It is important to tell our story. If we don't speak up, other people might make untrue assumptions. I now feel more prepared to make those speeches."

—Paul La Follette

By Mark Avilla and Paul La Follette

Out of all the phobias, public speaking ranks the highest. It accounts for 19% of those suffering from phobias. It is 3% higher, even, than the fear of death. To be able to speak eloquently in front of people, and by extension in front of a camera, can be terrifying for almost anyone. For farmers who want to communicate with the public, however, it is essential.

The April session of our Leadership Farm Bureau program focused on communications training. We were each asked to prepare a speech on one of three pressing agricultural issues: wildfire insurance protection, funding for the UCANR program or the prioritization of vaccinating farm employees. Our class presented these speeches to Heidi Harris, owner of Akoniti Leadership, who gave us constructive feedback on how to improve our presentations. She also spoke to us about being able to trust ourselves and our ability to communi-

cate our message, which will allow others to trust us in turn. Heidi compared our process to a fire: Proper preparation is the kindling, obtaining knowledge is the starter wood, concise and effective delivery is the match, and the audience is the logs needed to sustain it.

The second day focused entirely on sharpening our interviewing skills. Tracy Sellers, host and executive producer of California Bountiful TV, and Dave Kranz, director of publications and media relations at the California Farm Bureau, gave us an in-depth crash course in crafting our message for the world of media soundbites. Dave presented on how to prepare for media interviews, including asking the reporter preliminary questions and researching previous articles they have written. Tracy then conducted the first round of interviews, asking questions regarding our topics we researched and presented the day before. We

then watched our interviews back, received constructive criticism and did them again, this time with Dave in the reporter's role. Dave conducted the interviews again, but instead asked us questions that required us to bridge answers to fit our messaging.

While communications training was a focus this session, we also discussed membership updates, challenges and solutions with staff from the Member Advocacy team. Our Leadership Farm Bureau class members were able to share some of their membership challenges, as well as offer examples of strategies and events that have worked well to recruit new members. Megan Marques, member advocacy liaison manager, shared new membership marketing materials with us and Corrin Armstrong, member advocacy operations manager, gave us good advice on how to engage new members in our counties. Our class also spoke with Judy Culbertson, executive director of the

California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, about connecting our farmer members with teachers to help educate children about the benefits of agriculture.

Governmental affairs and representing the rights of farmers on a political level is always at the forefront at California Farm Bureau. We met with several members of the Governmental Affairs division, including Taylor Roschen, Robert Spiegel and Danny Merkley. Taylor spoke about climate change policy and how we can assist the Governmental Affairs division. Robert discussed wildfire insurance protection and the recent controlled-burn moratorium. Danny got us up to speed in state water issues, preparing us for our May water-issue session in Northern California. We also met with Bryan Little, COO of the Farm Employers Labor Service, to hear about the labor challenges facing agriculture on a governmental and operational level.



May 2021

Where is all the water?



By Katerina Kronauge and Angelica Smith

We spent the fourth session of Leadership Farm Bureau on the road visiting industry leaders and learning more about water issues and impacts facing California. Our team had the opportunity to tour a diverse spread of agriculture, from the making of farm-fresh beer in Princeton to the Sierra Pacific Industries lumber mill in Anderson.

Before embarking on our journey up north, our class met with Danny Merkley of California Farm Bureau and Mike Wade of the California Farm Water Coalition, who provided an update on water issues. Due to the drought, tensions are high across the state as environmentalists, agriculturalists and urban populations fight for their share of our state's limited resources.

We then loaded up in our team minivan and made the trek to Knights Landing, where we met with Roger Cornwall of River Garden Farms. Roger taught us about the successful Salmon Shelter Project the farm

helped champion that included bolting large root systems from old walnut trees to boulders and then sinking them in the Sacramento River near Redding. This project helps provide shelter for salmon to keep them out of harm's way as they make their way downstream.

We then met with Sean Early of the Richvale Irrigation District, who discussed the water storage issues the state of California is trying to resolve. We also heard from fifth-generation rancher Dave Daley about how wildfires are another issue facing California ranchers, with which he has firsthand experience, having lost a large number of cattle in the 2020 Bear Fire. He stressed the importance of speaking with local representatives and making our stories heard.

We rounded out our first night with a trip to the Oroville Dam led by California Farm Bureau Field Representative Ned Coe. We

saw where the spillway failure took place in 2017. We also were shocked to see how incredibly low the water level was in our second-largest water storage in California.

The following day we visited Gorrill Ranch in Durham and met with Correen Davis of Gorrill Ranch and Ted Trimble of the Western Canal Water District. They discussed the Butte Creek Fish Passage Project, which restored 25 miles of unimpeded flows and brought the spring-run chinook salmon populations back up in Butte Creek. They walked us through the fish screens and ladders the ranch has installed to allow salmon to access their spawning grounds in Upper Butte Creek.

At Lundberg Family Farms, owner Bryce Lundberg reviewed the farm's habitat restoration projects and sustainable farming methods. He also talked about the effects of raising salmon in rice fields. Their studies showed that salmon raised in the floodplain

are larger and healthier than those in the Sacramento River.

We ended the day at Edwards Ranch in Red Bluff with Tyler Christiansen. He showed us the fish screen the ranch installed with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and discussed his experience working with the agency and the ranch's water rights. Tyler and his family then treated us to an incredible dinner at their house overlooking the northern valley.

Our final day wrapped up with a tour of the Sierra Pacific Industries lumber mill in Anderson. We learned about the logging process, from how lumber is harvested in the forest to how it is processed at the mill.

Heading into lunch time, we stopped at Farmers Brewing Co. in Princeton and toured one of the newest breweries in Northern California. We learned about its farm-to-table beers and were able to sample some of the recently released beers.

We made our final trek to Yuba City, where we met with Jon Munger of Montna Farms and heard about the challenges rice farmers are facing. He took us out to the fields and explained how rice is farmed and harvested in California.

We returned to California Farm Bureau with a new perspective and firsthand encounters of what our farmers and ranchers are truly facing. Classmate Mark Avilla summed it up by saying, "As someone who resides in Central California, being able to learn about water issues and farming in the northern part of the state was eye-opening for me. Although there may have been differing perspectives, the message was the same: California needs to invest in its aging water infrastructure in order to ensure that agriculture will continue thriving."

Our team looks forward to our next session, when we will be packing our bags and heading to Texas!



August 2021

Texas farming seems familiar



"I enjoyed talking with the farmers about issues that impact both of our states and exchange ideas on how to address them."

—Angelica Smith

By Mark Avilla

The late Ann Richards, former governor of Texas, once said, "There is a special mystique to Texas. Texans represent many things to the uninitiated: We are bigger than life in our boots and Stetsons, rugged individualists whose two-steppin' has achieved worldwide acclaim, and we were the first to define hospitality."

Our Leadership Farm Bureau class can attest to that! During our time in the Lone Star State, we got a crash course in Texas agriculture and the legislative issues it's facing.

Our first day in Texas, we were greeted with humidity, warm temperatures and great hospitality. Our first tour was hosted by Superior Livestock Auction, a world leader in satellite load-lot feeder and seedstock cattle auctions. Vice President Joe Lichtie gave our class a tour of the facilities, including walking us through a recent video sale, guiding us through the company's complex IT department and giving us a peek at the sets of "The American Rancher" and "Superior Sunrise." While learning about SLA's virtual sale process and value-added pro-

grams, we saw some familiar names from back home on the big sales screen. After a long day of travel and our tour at SLA, the class rounded out the day with dinner and live music at the Fort Worth Stockyards.

The following day we connected with the grassroots of the Texas Farm Bureau. We began in Waxahachie and were treated to the hospitality of The Yellow Farmhouse, owned by John Paul and Heather Dineen. We were served a homemade breakfast made almost entirely from products they grow or raise themselves, paired with local dairy products from another family farm. First-generation farmers John Paul and Heather shared with us about their own farming operation, how they work hard as a family to promote and protect Texas agriculture by being transparent and educational with customers at the local farmers markets, and how they work on being strong "advocates" within the media and as part of Texas Farm Bureau.

Our afternoon tour was with Rodney and Susan Schronk. We arrived in time to watch a few rounds of the combine, as

corn harvest was in full swing. After giving an overview of their operation, consisting mainly of corn and cotton, Rodney shared with us some of the concerns facing the industry in their county as well as their state. Major concerns that were voiced were the ever-expanding population and the impending lack of water that will follow. All of the problems that he brought up were very similar to the issues we face here in California, and it was easy to empathize with his concerns. Our talk was cut slightly short as Rodney raced off to fix a mechanical issue at their grain elevator, giving us a true glimpse into the life of a farmer.

We ended the day at the Texas Farm Bureau office in Waco, learning about their organization's structure and challenges they face.

We started our third day at STgenetics, creator of sexed semen, touring their facilities and learning about their global business. We spent the rest of the day at Texas A&M University, first at the Rosenthal Meat Science & Technology Center, where we bought some of its famous beef jerky,

then at the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. We finished our day speaking with Dr. Elsa Murano from the Norman Borlaug Institute discussing its global mission and how we can have more of a servant-leader mentality in our own lives.

Our final day started with a tour of Royalty Pecan Farms in Caldwell, where we got to see one of the oldest pecan trees in Texas. After lunch, we met with the Texas Farm Bureau lobbying team at the state Capitol. We started with a tour of the building, then sat down and learned about Texas legislative issues and challenges facing the Texas Farm Bureau and Texas agriculture.

Our trip was one that was filled with unique experiences, people and hospitality. When asked about this session, LFB class member Mark Avilla said, "Our experience in Texas showed our group that there are lots of issues and challenges that both states can work together to meet. The wonderful thing about the Farm Bureau and programs like ours is we get to get outside of our own bubble to see that others are facing the same successes and challenges as we are."



November 2021

Last stop: Washington, D.C.



By Angelica Smith, Katie Byrne and Paul La Follette

If there is one thing that the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us, it is to embrace change. Over the past two years, we have all had to be flexible to the new ways that we work, communicate and travel. With COVID guidelines constantly changing, our Leadership Farm Bureau class was not feeling too optimistic that we would be able to participate in the Washington, D.C., portion of our program. But finally, after months of monitoring D.C. activity and protocols, we received the green light.

Due to a rainstorm that flooded portions of the Central Valley, a few of our classmates were not able to attend. The three who did participate were joined by California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson, Vice President Shannon Douglass and California Farm Bureau staff.

We hit the ground running on our first day in D.C. Our first meeting was with Sean O'Brien, executive director of the Western Caucus Foundation. We learned more about what the caucus does and its efforts to unite like-minded legislators. We then met virtually with Craig Regelbrugge of American Horticulture for a robust conversation on immigration and how it affects

our labor force. Next, American Farm Bureau Federation staff joined us to discuss AFBF's efforts in our nation's capital.

Our class was met with more change—a sign of the times—as the House of Representatives offices were closed to the public. Instead of meeting members of Congress in their offices, they joined us across the street at the Capitol Hill Club. Reps. Doug LaMalfa, Bruce Westerman, David Valadao and Dan Newhouse all took time out of their busy schedules to discuss key issues including water shortages, port congestion and wildfire prevention.

We weren't completely deprived of the traditional D.C. experience, as Sen. Jerry Moran of Kansas graciously welcomed us to his office to discuss the overlapping issues of California and Kansas agriculture. Following dinner with Sen. John Boozman of Arkansas and a few ranking Agriculture Committee staff members, Rep. LaMalfa treated us to a rare, behind-the-scenes Capitol tour. We couldn't be more grateful to him for being so generous with his time to ensure we didn't miss one of the greatest experiences of D.C.

After spending the next morning at the

American Farm Bureau office and playing tourist at the Museum of Natural History, our group embraced another meeting-packed afternoon with more members of Congress. We continued to share the issues discussed the previous day in conversations with Reps. Jim Costa, Josh Harder, Jimmy Panetta, Mike Thompson and Salud Carbajal, and a staff member from Rep. Rosa DeLauro's office.

We quickly learned that one of the most beneficial parts of D.C. is the constant opportunity to network. After wrapping up our meetings for the day, the Capitol Hill staff from the previous meetings joined us for dinner and a social hour. This gave us more opportunity for networking, this time outside of the Capitol halls.

We wrapped up the last night in D.C. with some fun as President Johansson led us on a walking tour of the National Mall. He has no shortage of D.C. trivia and took us on a detour to The Round Robin Bar inside the Willard Intercontinental Hotel—a hotel where, he pointed out, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote his "I have a dream speech" and the mint julep was made famous.

Our last day was met with excitement

as we arrived at the Canadian Embassy. Ambassadors greeted us to discuss California-Canada trade agreements. Their motto: "Let's keep a good thing growing."

The pinnacle of our trip was our meeting with Sen. Dianne Feinstein and her staff. President Johansson led an in-depth discussion on the importance of water infrastructure and the severity of the drought in California—and more importantly, the impacts it has on our farmers and ranchers. Sen. Feinstein listened to our concerns with sincerity and a determination to be part of the solution.

Our trip wrapped up at United Fresh Produce Association, where we enjoyed lunch with another organization that has the same heart for advocating for agriculture.

We are excited to take back all that we have learned to our own counties and help make a difference and encourage all members to meet with their local representatives and staff members when they are in their district offices—and to consider attending California Farm Bureau's next policy trip to Washington, D.C. Change happens all around us, but change can also start with us.

Are you ready to join the class of 2022?

DISCOVER the potential within

Leadership Farm Bureau is a one-of-a-kind experience and the only program in Farm Bureau that invests in key individuals instead of a demographic. Through LFB, participants receive more than 250 hours of hands-on experience in the halls of our state's and nation's capitols, exposure to farming and ranching operations nationwide, and instruction on key elements of leadership and the inner workings of Farm Bureau at all levels. Leadership Farm Bureau is the one-year experience in California agriculture you've been looking for. Visit us online and apply today.

The deadline to apply is December 17, 2021.
cbbf.com/lfb



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