



**RURAL ONTARIO
INSTITUTE**



News Release

OFA supports AG-Sector Leadership with additional \$10,000 contribution to AALP Class 18

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) has kicked off fundraising for the current Class of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) with an energizing \$10,000 contribution to AALP Class 18. The money raised will offset costs of additional covid related travel requirements for more social distancing and re-planning of AALP Class 18's international study tour.

A foundational partner of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership program, along with the University of Guelph and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, OFA has been a leading sponsor for 36 years since the program's inception in 1984. Over that time 17 Classes have graduated 482 alumni who contribute their leadership skills to the agri-food sector in businesses, organizations, governments, media, and for global trade/policy/development. AALP is an experiential executive leadership program for those who want to shape the future of the agriculture and food industry and make a positive difference in rural communities across Ontario.

OFA wanted to support the 21 participants of the current Class 18 to ensure they graduate having the experience AALP is known for, strong leadership skills, a wide-ranging network and a global appreciation of the ag-sector.

“As an AALP Class 9 alumnus I know the value of building a strong network, both among the participants within an AALP Class and also with local, provincial, national and international influencing leaders. OFA values leadership skills in the ag-sector and with 9 AALP alumni as part of our board and staff we recognize the importance of building agriculture's capacity to lead.

Cathy Lennon, General Manager, OFA

“As with many agriculture and rural non-profits, covid has meant that our approach to program delivery needed to change. Class 18 will meet virtually connecting with other agriculture program participants and business/ag-sector/political leaders around the world until they can meet safely in-person and complete their international study tour. Our program sponsors have never wavered in their commitment to the program and I believe this is very meaningful to participants in Class 18.

Gabrielle Ferguson, Leadership Programs Director, Rural Ontario Institute

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is grateful to OFA their generous additional contribution of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program. We are hoping this high benchmark will encourage other agriculture and rural organizations, businesses and AALP alumni to contribute with the same recognition that Class 18 needs more support because of covid.

Donations to the Rural Ontario Institute will benefit the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program. Others wishing to donate/sponsor *AALP Class 18* may e-transfer to lthompson@ruralontarioinstitute.ca with the heading **AALP Class 18**, or by cheque to the Rural Ontario Institute 7382 Wellington Road 20, R.R. #5 Guelph, ON N1H 6J2

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