



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AALP Founders and Builders support the development of ag-sector leaders by donating to the Dean Rob McLaughlin Leadership Awards

GUELPH, ON, September 14, 2022 - Founders and Builders of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) have kicked off fundraising with \$37,200 towards the total goal of \$110,000, including matching funding by the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) Alumni Foundation. Money raised will be used to help make leadership development in the ag-sector accessible to worthy recipients.

All donations up to a collective total of \$55,000 will be matched by the OAC Alumni Foundation and go towards securing ongoing **Rob McLaughlin Leadership Awards** for AALP participants.

“Agriculture has always been dynamic, full of creative people wanting to make a positive difference”, says Rob McLaughlin, past Dean of the Ontario Agricultural College, “I’m pleased that nineteen awards have been granted to deserving AALP participants since 2004. It is gratifying to see their desire to become top ag-sector leaders. I’m grateful to the OAC Alumni Foundation for matching donations so that this fund can continue for the future.”

Annually the OAC Alumni Foundation provides up to \$4,000 in grants to AALP participants in recognition of OAC Dean (1990 – 2000) Rob McLaughlin’s contribution to the program during his tenure on the Board (1990 – 2001) and as its Chair (1999 – 2001).

“These tuition awards have been and continue to be critically important to some participants in many Classes,” says Gabrielle Ferguson, Leadership Programs Director. “Thank you to AALP’s founders and builders for spearheading this opportunity for future AALP participants from all parts of the ag-sector and province. This helps to ensure that all voices in the agricultural value chain are part of building Ontario’s capacity to grow.”

“I was a part of 7 AALP classes during my time with The Centre for Rural Leadership/ Rural Ontario Institute,” said the Honourable Rob Black during a presentation to AALP in July 2021. “Through AALP I have had many tremendous opportunities to engage with current and emerging leaders here in Ontario...folks like you who put their ‘lives on hold’ to gain valuable leadership experiences; I’ve had the opportunity to engage with leaders from beyond our provincial borders and build valuable personal and professional networks that are still supporting me to this day.”

Over the next year the Rural Ontario Institute invites AALP alumni and those wishing to support the development of agricultural leaders to help top up the fund to secure grants for the future. Donations can be made by cheque to Rural Ontario Institute or by e-transfer to hbogl@ruralontarioinstitute.ca. ROI will provide a charitable tax receipt for your donation.

Thank you to the following donors for kickstarting fundraising and for leading the way to making AALP accessible to all:



- Rob & Kathie McLaughlin
- Dennis & Pat Mighton
- Peter Hannam
- William Weaver
- Honourable Rob Black
- Susan Leuty
- Gabrielle & Dave Ferguson
- Gay & John Slinger
- Marilyn & Tom Jenkins
- Lyle & Sharon Vanclief
- Dwight Greer
- Geoff Innes

ABOUT

The Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) is an 18-month 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. AALP has graduated more than 500 agriculture leaders. Each AALP Class is created with attention to the diversity of participants and the development of peer-to-peer mentorship, interrelationships and a broad network are developed.

CONTACTS

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MEDIA RELATIONS

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