

Ohio AgriBusiness Association's LAUNCH

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this a "canned" program?

LAUNCH (Leaders Achieving Unexpected New Career Heights) was developed specifically to address the looming void of leadership talent in agribusiness. It is estimated that 50 percent of the agribusiness workforce will retire in the next 15 years, which means there is an immediate and compelling need to develop next-generation leaders and identify talent in our current ranks. This LAUNCH program was developed by the Ohio AgriBusiness Association and Wilt Public Relations and was tailored specifically to meet the needs of OABA's membership.

2. Who developed LAUNCH?

Wilt Public Relations developed LAUNCH in 2008 to address concerns expressed by their client – Heritage Cooperative, Inc. – about future leadership. The original program served to instill confidence in those leaders while identifying promising leaders to take the business to the next level. Wilt PR helps organizations proactively manage their reputations by implementing effective public relations strategies. Using PR-based research and planning methodology, Wilt PR developed LAUNCH, which became the strategic program designed to help Heritage Cooperative, Inc. meet its goals. The curriculum has been reviewed by a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), and OABA's Board of Directors provided input on the session topics to ensure its alignment with OABA's strategic priorities.

3. Who will do the actual curriculum instruction?

The LAUNCH curriculum is designed for an adult audience and includes hands-on, interactive sessions taught by professionals in a variety of fields. While the session agenda is currently being finalized, the sessions and some of the confirmed presenters include:

January, Columbus Session

- Personal Insights, Strength Finding, Encouragement Affecting Others' Behavior – Phil Sorentino, Humor Consultants
- Personal Goal-Setting – Melanie Wilt, Wilt PR
- Capstone Project Overview – Eric Parthemore, Mike MaGinn, Chuck Swinehart, Heritage Cooperative, Inc.
- Intro to Ohio AgriBusiness Association – Chris Henney, Angela Davis-Haines, Ohio AgriBusiness Association
- Statehouse Tour and Programming – Various state legislators
- Ohio Department of Agriculture and State Lab Tour – Various regulatory division chiefs and agency directors
- Human Resources Principles, Business Models in Agribusiness – Roger Nicol, Trupointe Cooperative, Inc.
- Financial Principles for Agribusiness – Matt Thomas, Luckey Farmers, Inc.
- Speaking Out for Agribusiness, Authentic Voices Communication Training – Melanie Wilt, APR, Wilt PR
- Best Places to Work Panel – Waiting on panel confirmations*
- Getting to "We" – Dr. Bernie Erven, Professor Emeritus, The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

February, Maumee Session

- Understanding Generations – Bob Cohen, Braintree Consulting
- Critical Thinking & Community Engagement – Sereana Howard Dresbach, Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University
- Dinner & A Movie – Discussion of *Food, Inc.* and Contemporary Ag Issues
- World Hunger Breakfast – Waiting on speaker confirmations*
- World Food Supply & Demand Panel – Waiting on panel confirmations*
- Results Mastery: Time Management & Delegation – Steve Konig, Results Plus
- Conversation with Consumers – Participants
- International Trade in Agriculture – Waiting on speaker confirmation*
- Marketing, Merchandising and Retailing – Waiting on speaker confirmation*
- Lessons from the C-Suite: Strategic Planning, Goal Setting, Organizational Skills, Etc. – Waiting on speaker confirmation*
- Capstone Project Presentations – Participants

* Speakers have been determined, but are not confirmed at this time, so we cannot promote their names.

4. What will the Capstone Project be, and what will it entail?

Participants will receive detailed Capstone Project guidelines upon their selection to the program. Each participant, along with their supervisor/sponsor, will be required to select a Capstone Project that will expand their knowledge of the agribusiness in which they work and build their leadership skills. The project should use the individuals' skill set to make a contribution above and beyond the scope of their current job description. Some examples include capital improvement projects, feasibility studies, marketing plans, safety audits, etc. The Capstone Project will include research, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, planning timelines and budgets. Each LAUNCH participant will present their Capstone Projects to a review panel on the last day of the last session.