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Tall XIV

Session 1 -"Extension, Education, Expectations"

College Station, Texas

July 8-11,2014

Day 1: Tuesday, July 8,2014

It is very hard to put into words how excited (and nervous) I was to be in College Station minutes away from starting the TALL Program. When Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz started his welcoming statements I knew this would be an incredible journey. He described in detail how the applicant selection process was applied, I knew then the Lord blessed me with this awesome opportunity. Then Dr. Douglas Steele opened our session telling us about the importance of leadership and how we are the future of agribusiness. Wow, what an honor to be thought of as agribusiness leaders. To break the ice between class mates Dr. Jim had us introduce ourselves and our businesses. It is great to know this class is comprised of men and women from all sectors agribusiness.

"Texas Department of Criminal Justice Agriculture Today" Dr. Todd Swick

Dr. Todd Swick described how the state uses its resources to save tax payers dollars by producing (all types of row crops and livestock). Before his lecture my view of state land and resources couldn't be any further from the truth. The numbers of acres and livestock managed by his department are amazing, and I feel every person in Texas should know and be proud our state practicing these achievements.

"Welcome and Overview of Texas A&M Forest Service"

Unfortunately fire is a real risk to Texas agriculture, thankfully for Mr. Tom Boggus, Don Galloway ,Don Hannemann, Curt Stripling, Hughes Simpson, agriculturist can be sure they're well informed and supported by such an outstanding organization. Mr. Boggus spoke about the enormous challenges the forest service faces daily and the tools used to meet those challenges. Then, the floor was given to Mr. Galloway he carried us even deeper into the workings of the forest service. Showing the amazing tools they used to monitor risk, and respond to all types of hazardous situations. Mr. Hannemann demonstrated the awesome tools and technologies at his finger tips to monitor and educate the public about potential risk. Using live satellite maps to monitor and dispatch. Mr. Stripling and Mr. Simpson showed the class what was available through the risk assessment portal. What an amazing tool they developed for the public to use to manage all types of unforeseen risk.

"Etiquette Training and Meal" Dr.Susan Quiring

When I found out this first session of Tall included etiquette training I was anxious to learn, but also worried I had a lot to learn. Walking into the banquet room I saw Mrs. Quiring I knew she was a

professional just by her body language. Right then I started learning my body language is the key to first impressions. Mr. Quiring was very helpful in my understanding the reasons for proper etiquette. I understand now by moving to agribusiness leadership role it is very important to use proper etiquette during business transactions and being in the public eye. Also, she was very helpful showing the need to research other countries etiquette so you will be prepared to enjoy their dining experiences and not to offend them by accident.

Day 2: Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Ag Media Training

Wow what an experience! When our class walked in the room lights, cameras all the making of a real press conference. I was expecting some training before the real deal happened, no that wasn't the case they put us straight to work defending subjects with only two minutes to prepare. I was fortunate my group was one of the last to perform, this provided us some education. This practice helped me to learn how to use positive words and chose them correctly while trying to maintain the subject at hand. And, also how misinformed the public can be, and it's our job as agribusiness leaders to provide timely and correct information to the public.

"A Different Kind Of Career: Under Cover In The CIA" Jim Olson

It was an extreme privilege to here Mr. Olson's life story. He started with, he wanted the regular small town life with white picket fences. Oh how his life was changed by one phone call from the CIA. From the law school in Illinois to the undercover life of a secret officer of the CIA. He then had to lie and cover everything he did even to his own family. Wait the story gets more interesting he met his wife which was also CIA, and they had children together, not to mention they were all in grave danger constantly while serving our country. His families work during the cold war was a major mile stone to ending the war. His story proves without agents like himself more soldiers would die before a war could come to an end. I am so very thankful outstanding individuals like him and his family serve our country to protect us and keep us free.

Lunch And Program: John & Connie Giesenschlag

To start, how nice and inviting Mr. and Mrs. Giesenschlag greeted all of us was a great feeling. They truly believe in the Tall Program to provide the next generation of agriculture leaders. When we walked into the dining hall it was decorated nicely with home raised products (Milo, Corn, watermelons). Since my family heritage is German I felt right at home (especially The smell of sauerkraut). We could all recognize the hard work and time spent to serve Tall XIV the AWESOME meal. I thoroughly enjoyed the local producers and suppliers taking time to speak to us. They're words of

encouragement is something I will always remember. Hearing their story will help me to press on when times are tough, and be full of thanks when times are good.

"Tour Wiggins Watermelon Warehouse" Jody and Clint Wiggins and Family

After a full stomach and good conversation we traveled a few miles to Wiggins Watermelon Warehouse. We had a warm welcome by Mr. Wiggins and he spoke in detail from beginning of watermelon production to the consumer. It was eye opening the amount of labor it takes to have the privilege to buy a watermelon at the grocery store. He then described the difficulties producers face during the growing season. Then harvest which is all hands on except the sorting conveyors and back to hands on boxing and loading. It was very obvious to my class mates and I the watermelon warehouse was built to run very productively. Mr. Wiggins showed us through his marketing practices that producers have other avenues to market product other than the major commercial pipelines, such as selling direct to the retailer.

"Tour Blue Bell Creameries" Paul Kruse

At first arrival Mr. Kruse and company officials were ready to greet us and give a behind the scenes tour. This is when I realized the sponsors of the Tall Program truly view us as the future generation agricultural leaders, wanting to invest time and money to show us their businesses. During the tour it was hard not to notice the relationships established while the employees worked. From Mr. Kruse and senior executives to the labor force everyone was very happy. That is a great example of happy people produce good products for a reasonable price. Then after the tour was the long awaited ice cream parlor. What a treat! Even more we made our way to the board room to discuss their business model and free to ask questions to the CEO of Blue Bell. Now that was the real treat!

"Tour Brazos Valley Recycling" Charlie Mancuso

With eyes getting heavy from eating too much ice cream we traveled to Brazos Valley Recycling. I'm thankful the Mancuso family was willing to stay after hours to show us their business so we could get even a closer look at the operations. Their innovations truly bring the unwanted back to life in one form or another. By handling waste through their procedures it is eliminating literally tons material from landfills. The Mancuso family has a true passion to save the environment. By seeing this passion I carried home a new look at what I thought was waste. Also, always look for opportunities in all areas, not just production but different uses for what once was the undesirables.

Day 3: Thursday, July 10,2014

"Challenge Works" Bob Gantt

This was a new experience for me not having been through a course like this. I really appreciate Mr. Gantt and his staff having so much enthusiasm. When we first started Mr. Gantt ask several simple questions like (how you like toilet paper to unroll). Looking back now he was using simple tactics in a genius way. Crazy me I thought he was trying to get to know us but instead he was teaching us about each other. After these few short exercises the class was really warming up to each other. Then on to the team building the games we performed looked so simple at first glance, but started to challenge our team work and thinking ability together as a whole. Using this process he proved to us, to use each other's individual attributes while working through situations. Now it's time for whatever body has been waiting for THE ROPES. Just a few days earlier we introduced ourselves to each other. Now we have a close knit group, trusting each other with only a rope and safety harness climbing to new heights. Hats off to Dr. Jim in selecting the class that works well with each other, and activities to speed the human process of learning and trusting each other.

"Tour Texas Engineering Extension Service" Mike Wisby

One more awesome stop for Tall XIV. Mr. Wisby had no reserve giving us a up close and personal tour of TEEK. I'm proud to be part of a country and state that offers the most advanced training to fire professionals. Mr. Wisby indicated the people taking the course for the next two weeks would be five thousand men and women from Mexico and Honduras. This facility is state of the art real life props that are lit on fire using a controlled fuel. These simulations are real and great experience for fire fighters to train. Watching the simulations take place in person I learned in my life when things get hot always remain calm in every situation.

"Social And Reception at the AgriLife Center"

Arriving at the AgriLife Center for a reception for my class that I'm a part of was breath taking. Then even more amazing was the accomplished people there to support us in our journey. We all had our individual pictures taken while trying to take it all in. While trying to work the room my nerves started working against me. Then looking around other class mates having the same problem to. The reason I stated that was to say, the people there to support us noticed it as well, then started approach us for conversation making it easier to control the nerves and make us more comfortable enjoying this experience.

Greetings were giving by Mr. Jim Prewitt congratulating the class mates on be selected. Introduction was giving by Dr. Bill Douglas , Acting Vice Chancellor and Acting Dean for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Keynote was giving by Dr. Mark Hussey, Interim President, Texas A&M University thanking the Tall Class XIV for being ready to except the task of Agribusiness Leadership. He complemented our hard work for seeking this new journey in our lives and supports Tall XIV the next generation leaders.

Again Dr. Jim took the podium and ask the Tall XIV class members to introduce themselves and give a brief background. Each class member there to represent different sectors of the agribusiness. Then Dr. Jim introduced each host for dinner sponsor and guest. My dinner host experience was more than I ever expected. We talked about concern in the agribusiness and they also ask for my personal input about how John Deere could make technological advancements to aid the producers.

Day 4: Friday, July 11,2014

"Setting The Context: Strategy, Policy, and Fate of the Nation" Dr. David McIntre

Our next speaker Dr. McIntre really showed the class very interesting points about our homeland security. He has a way of saying so much with few words. This lecture was eye opening for me on what is hidden from the public and what is giving to the public in terms of propaganda. His views on policy and strategy are crystal clear. He described the difference between the two and how they are used to achieve goals.

Brigadier General Joe Ramirez delivered the most inspiring message of how young men and women serve our country without notice. His story of the young man's funeral he conducted in Nebraska was most inspiring to me to live each day with no regrets and always thank those who sacrifice daily to provide our freedom. His work and all those with him will never be over looked.

"Responsibilities of the TVMDL" Dr. Terry Hensley

Dr. Hensley delivered the most informative message of the duties the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory performs. Including all the livestock show animal drug testing, animal diagnosis for veterinarians, and also personal cases submitted to them directly. Dr. Hensley and his highly trained staff are a vital part of Texas Agriculture maintaining the high quality of livestock health we enjoy in this country.

"Behind the Scenes tour of the George Bush Presidential Archives" Dr. Robert Holzweiss

Upon arrival to the George Bush Presidential Library it was hard to imagine all the important documents and gifts that had created history during his Presidency. Dr. Holzweiss started by giving us a general over view of the purpose and roles the staff plays in maintaining document quality and credibility. I was amazed at the quantity of the documents store for research and historical purposes. Then we gathered in the object inspection room where presidential gifts and objects key to his term in

office were stored and logged. After seeing this first hand I realized how important each president has been in molding our awesome country with his individual service.

Summary Session 1: College Station

After talking with Tall Alumni I knew this is a once and a lifetime experience. You truly have to be there to realize how awesome it is to be a part of this organization. Dr. Jim has built the best program possible by covering all aspects of teaching, and leading by example to produce effective Agribusiness Leaders. Thank you to Dr. Jim and all Tall, alumni, sponsors, supporters, teachers, mentors. I am also thankful the Lord has blessed all of you with the knowledge to share with us, and the financing you all donate to make this program what it is. GOD BLESS AMERICA !!!