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RLND Class VI Graduation Gala

By Marie Hvidsten
Bismarck, ND

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The graduation gala honoring Rural Leadership North Dakota (RLND) Class VI participants on their completion of the 2013-2015 RLND Program was held Friday, November 20th at the Heritage Center in Bismarck.

The evening started with a silent auction and social. Gala attendees were generous as they bid on the 20+ auction items. At the end of the evening, the silent auction items brought in over \$1,900 for the RLND Alumni Association! The funds will be used to provide future professional development opportunities for RLND Alumni.



Silent Auction

Marie Hvidsten, RLND Program Director, welcomed everyone to the RLND Class VI Graduation Gala and introduced the guests gathered to celebrate Class VI participants and their accomplishments. Kyla Kinzler, Class VI, shared a dinner blessing before the dinner buffet.

Stacey Lilja, Will Meyer and Bob Lawson; Class VI participants; shared their experiences as a Class VI participant. Stacey spoke about the word grow, Will spoke about the word inspire and Bob spoke about the word lead. Marie spoke about the word impact. These four words; grow, inspire, lead and impact; create the mission of Class VI participants – Grow. Inspire. Lead. IMPACT.



RLND Class VI

Chris Boerboom, NDSU Extension Service Director, talked about the need for leadership development across the state and congratulated Class VI participants on the impact they have had over the past two years. The 18 Class VI members received a RLND plaque from Dr. Boerboom with the class mission, "Grow. Inspire. Lead. IMPACT., engraved under the class picture.

Cory McCaskey, RLND AA President, spoke on behalf of the RLND Alumni Association, adding his congratulations to Class VI participants and encouraged them to become a member of the RLND AA and to get involved in shaping its future.

Numerous contributors to the RLND Program were recognized and celebrated at the gala. A glass piece created by Jason Lindell, owner of Sundog Glass in Park River, was given to the Leader Corps (\$1,000 or more) contributors in appreciation of their contributions.

The RLND Leadership Award was presented to Jerry Doan, former RLND Council member and chair, by Mike O'Keeffe, RLND Council Chairperson. Mike shared examples of Jerry's outstanding leadership on the council and thanked him for his continued support of the program.

Marie Hvidsten thanked everyone for coming to the gala and celebrating the success of Class VI participants!