

RLND Class VII Graduation Gala

Black Leg Ranch, Sterling

By Marie Hvidsten

December 2017

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Twenty-nine RLND Class VII participants were recently honored at their Graduation Gala held at the Black Leg Ranch near Sterling, ND. The evening started with a silent auction and social. Gala attendees were generous in their bidding and at the end of the evening over \$3,000 was raised for the RLND Alumni Association! The funds will be used to provide future professional development opportunities for RLND Alumni.

Marie Hvidsten, RLND Program Director, welcomed everyone to the gala and introduced the guests gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of RLND Class VII participants. Jason Lindell shared a dinner blessing before the dinner buffet.

The mission of RLND Class VII is "Embracing leadership through community, diversity and self." Three Class VII participants were selected to speak on the three areas in their mission. Darrell Oswald spoke about community, Jayme Davis spoke about diversity and Georgia Miller spoke about self.

Lynette Flage, Director Center for Community Vitality with NDSU Extension Service, shared her congratulations to RLND Class VII participants and encouraged them to continue "doing good work" in their communities and organizations. The 29 members received their RLND plaque from Dr. Flage. The plaque included their class mission, "Embracing leadership through community, diversity and self" as well as a class picture in front of the US Capitol building.

David Lehman, RLND Alumni Association (RLND AA) President, spoke on behalf of the RLND AA adding his congratulations to Class VII participants and encouraged them to



Mike O'Keeffe presenting RLND Leader Award for 2017 to Kathy Tweeten.

become a member of the RLND AA and to get involved in shaping its future.

Numerous contributors to RLND Class VII were recognized and celebrated at the gala. A personalized piece of artwork from c.lizzy's in Fargo was given to Leader Corps (\$1,000 or more) contributors in appreciation of their contributions.

The 2017 RLND Leader Award was presented to Kathy Tweeten by Mike O'Keeffe, RLND Council Chairperson. Kathy has been involved with the RLND Program since its inception within the NDSU Extension Service. "I was very honored to receive the award. It means a great deal to me to see how far the program has come and to have gotten the opportunity to be part of it from the beginning."

The 2017 RLND Champion Award was presented to Farm Credit Services of Mandan (FCSM) by Mike O'Keeffe. Farm Credit Services of Mandan has supported the RLND Program in multiple ways, championing the mission of the program. "FCSM is proud to be a strong supporter of such a great program, which is creating leaders in our community." Aaron Vetter, FCSM CEO

Marie Hvidsten thanked everyone for attending the graduation gala and for their support of RLND Class VII participants and the RLND Program!



RLND Class VII