



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2024 AALP Dream Gala Raises Over \$122,157 for Ontario's Agriculture Leaders

GUELPH, August 21, 2024 – The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is pleased to announce the record-breaking fundraising results of \$122,157 by the 2024 Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) Dream Gala.

Initiated in 1984, AALP builds the skills and networks of individuals in the agriculture and food sector who in turn lead innovation and collaboration that contributes to economic, social and environmental good locally and globally.

The theme of the April 2024 event, produced by AALP Class 19 and Class 20, transported attendees back in time to “The Roaring Twenties” and featured a semi-formal dinner, silent and live auction. The auction offered unique items and experiences, and featured a Giving Back item where fresh produce was donated to a local Foodbank in the buyer's name.

“On behalf of AALP Class 19 and Class 20 a huge thank you to our Dream Gala sponsors, donors and those who attended this year's event. Your support helps to ensure the strength of the agri-food sector by investing in Ontario's agricultural leaders of today and tomorrow,” says Hayley Mackay, Trades and Tech Truck Program Manager at Skills Ontario and Dream Gala Chair. *“Also, warm thanks to AALP Class 20 and my fellow Class 19 participants for their time and effort that made this year's Dream Gala a success. It has been an honour to serve the AALP community as the 2024 Dream Gala Chair.”*

The AALP Dream Gala is a biennial event hosted by the recent graduates for the current and future AALP classes. The Gala helps to offset the costs of an international study tour by giving leaders an opportunity to experience agriculture beyond Canadian borders and to network with agricultural leaders from other areas of the world. The evening was an outstanding success, raising over \$122,157 for Class 20's AALP leadership journey while contributing to financial accessibility for future classes.

“AALP has provided us with the opportunity to learn, grow and further develop our leadership skills. It allowed us to foster rich, new relationships amongst our peers in the agriculture sector,” says Kevin Weaver, Vice Chair of the 2024 AALP Dream Gala. *“The AALP Dream Gala is an opportunity to not only celebrate the accomplishments of the program and its graduates but to also support AALP Class 20's program and their International Study Tour.”*

“My deep gratitude to our 2024 AALP Dream Gala sponsors and our generous, angel donor who matched donations generated during the event. The success of the gala wouldn't have been possible without their support,” says Gabrielle Ferguson, Leadership Programs Director at ROI. *“A special note of thanks for contributions to this year's Giving Back auction item which will provide meals at the Food Bank and top up the Emerging Leaders' Fund supporting equity deserving AALP participants.”*

To learn more about the Rural Ontario Institute and AALP, please visit:
<https://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca>.



ABOUT

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders, informing decision makers and connecting communities. ROI delivers the renowned Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) entering its 40th year of operation, and the Rural Change Maker program, a youth leadership initiative for young rural, emerging leaders to address local priorities. We provide data research and analysis on rural trends and demographics. Information is disseminated in our Rural Ontario Facts products - factsheets and accompanying dashboards. Currently, ROI is engaged in a rural housing initiative that will help communities to address the housing and homelessness crisis being faced by thousands of Canadians.

AALP is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Established in 1984, AALP has graduated more than 500 leaders who are making a positive impact across Ontario and beyond, leading in over 133 agri-food value chain organizations and businesses.

ASSOCIATED LINKS

- [RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE](#)

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