

Inclusive PERSPECTIVE



DFA University candidates, Class of 2024

DFA University's Annual Day At The Races

The DFA University Team enjoyed an educational off-site tour of the Hot Springs' Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort. Jason Milligan, Vice President of Horse Racing, spoke to the group. He provided a history of the track as well as information on the increase in average daily purses and expansion of operations in recent years resulting in Oaklawn being among the most competitive racetracks in the country. After a good view of the horses in the paddock, the group went to the rooftop for a special opportunity to watch the first race of the day. The team learned about the basic operations of Oaklawn and the business areas overseen by the DFA.

The afternoon included watching races from box seats and ended with a tour of the casino gaming, led by Bruce Jones, VP of Casino Gaming, and Greg Stechyshyn, Casino Slots Manager. The team asked questions and gained insight into the inner workings of the Casino. In whole the trip offered a valuable chance to build DFA networks and enjoy the race track.



EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP: LESSONS FROM THE WARRENS

One of several distinctive attributes of the DFA-U Leadership program is the exposure it provides to the insights and experiences of local leaders from outside the DFA. The March session was no exception. Judge Joyce Warren (retired), and her husband James “Butch” Warren were guest speakers and shared their thoughts on leadership.

As the first female Black judge in Arkansas, the first Black law clerk for the Arkansas Supreme Court, and the first Black woman to graduate from the University of Arkansas Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law, Judge Warren is a recognized leader who was recently inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame. Her husband, a 1968 graduate of Little Rock Central High School, worked for 25 years as a General Contractor and Registered Home Builder, and he also served eight years as Assistant Superintendent of the Pulaski County Special School District.

Judge Warren worked as an attorney in both the private and public sectors of Arkansas, prior to becoming a judge. She spoke to DFA University about the qualities of true leaders, “Leaders have to be decisive, prompt, and fair in their decision-making,” she said as she described the impact of her own leadership as President of the Arkansas Judicial Council. When decisions are tough, “...land somewhere and defend your decision. Learn and move on, don’t boil on it.” Most importantly, she explained the value of honoring each other’s differences and encouraged all to “love each other heart to heart.”

The Warrens displayed that model of love for each other, apparent as she shared that she and her husband of over 50 years met as youngsters in their hometown neighborhood. Mr. Warren explained that he was a little mischievous when he was young, and Judge Warren quickly agreed. However, those activities elevated his leadership skills at a young age. Since then, he has learned that “you must have an open mind, let ego and arrogance go, and never let the power of a position take over. Do the right thing every day and things will be okay.”

Mr. Warren shared his experiences in his leadership as the Assistant Superintendent. He said that he took pride in the fact that he was the first one in and usually the last to leave. He said it was important for him to talk to others routinely to understand performance and morale. He also paid extra attention to ensuring he knew everyone’s name. Putting the work in early to get to know others was imperative for him to negotiate and work with many different personalities. He said his management style was not to micromanage, but instead to let his team complete their assignments independently and do weekly reviews to measure their success.

The Warrens’ emphasis on qualities like decisiveness, fairness, open-mindedness, and love for others highlighted the importance of effective leadership. By sharing their personal stories and lessons learned, the Warrens demonstrated the significance of building relationships, making tough decisions, and empowering team members to succeed. Their inspiring example serves as a reminder of the enduring impact of authentic and compassionate leadership.



Judge Joyce Williams Warren (Retired) & James “Butch” Warren

To be a leader you must be able to create positive change.

John C. Maxwell

Sage Advice: Insights from “THE” Herb Scott

DFA University was honored to have special guest Herb Scott share his valuable leadership wisdom with the candidates and mentors. Scott served the state of Arkansas at DFA for 40 years, where he started as a Clerk Typist. He retired in 2019 as the Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management (formerly a division of DFA). He explained that he successfully worked for six different governors, each with their own style, their own program initiatives, and their own direction. He urged the group to “embrace change, don’t run or hide [from it]”, he continued “learn from the powers to be. Learn who is in charge and understand that if your name is not on the outside of your building, such as Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, then you are not the one [emphasis added] in charge.” It was clear that Mr. Scott is a loyal supporter of the DFA family.

The list of personal tips Mr. Scott provided is treasured insight to successful leadership in state government. Before he embarked on his secrets to success he stated, “It is up to you to lead, follow, or get out of the way!”.

- Follow the **Golden Rule**.
- Listen and communicate effectively.
- Learn to say, “I don’t know”.
- Admit mistakes.
- Be yourself in your management style.
- “*Manage*” your team.
- Teach, train, and demonstrate.
- Do what’s right, not what’s popular.
- Involve staff in decision-making.
- Document, Document, Document!



**SUMMER INTERNS
ARE COMING
TO A DFA OFFICE
NEAR YOU!**

Be on the lookout for new faces in May. The DFA Summer Internship and the State of Arkansas Internship programs begin this summer.

ACCOUNTING – CORPORATE TAX – EXCISE TAX – DRIVERS SERVICES &
MOTOR VEHICLES – FIELD AUDIT (ALL DISTRICTS) – INFORMATION SERVICES
– INCOME TAX – INTERGOVERNMENTAL SERVICES – REVENUE LEGAL

**Stop by these offices this summer to
welcome the interns to DFA!**



2024 Spring Intern, Selin Wei
& DFA Secretary, Jim Hudson

DFA-U Class of 2024 Graduates on May 3!



Check out the summer edition of this newsletter
for the latest news on the celebration!



Are You Dressed for Success?

Candidates Learn Tips for Elevating Their Professional Image

As director of the Center for Student and Career Services at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Shannon Gwinn is no stranger to misfit and inappropriate attire. While what you wear may not seem like a big deal, in reality, your clothing choices can have a significant impact on how you are perceived by others and can greatly impact your career success. That is why Ms. Gwinn articulated the importance of following a business professional dress code without breaking the bank. In the April session at DFA University (DFA-U), she shared her experiences in helping professionals learn how simple it can be to dress for success.

Gwinn explained how she conducted an experiment in her class by wearing the same black suit, on the same day of each week during the semester. She accessorized with different pieces to create a new look every time. At the end of the trial, she asked the students if anyone noticed that she had worn the same suit on so many occasions. The class was surprised to learn how she transformed her look each day, with minimal costs.

Ms. Gwinn along with DFA Human Resources Administrator, Amy Valentine, shared their perspective with DFA-U on how to best follow the DFA Dress Code Policy, which outlines acceptable attire along with the “Oh No’s” or unacceptable attire. For the third consecutive year, Ms. Gwinn delivered her presentation to the DFA-U group, and she continues to captivate the audience with her fun personality and stories of real-life wardrobe malfunctions.



Shannon Gwinn, UALR
Photo credit: UALR College of Business



UALR Trojan's Career Closet Program
Photo credit: arkasonline.com

TEAM TALK:

Introducing the faces of DFA University 3!



DFA University is in its third year of growing leaders from within. This year's class includes 22 candidates who are expected to graduate in May 2024.

CAITLYN Morehead*State Revenue Office*



MY FIRST JOB WAS: A cashier at Harps grocery store.

A TYPICAL SATURDAY NIGHT FOR ME INCLUDES: Movie night with my girls stuffing our faces with popcorn and loads of snacks!

THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES THE MOST WITH ME: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; It is the courage to continue that counts" *Winston Churchill*

MY FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Hogwarts

MY MOST UNUSUAL TALENT: I can touch my nose with my tongue.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Ambitious, Dependable, and Honest

Timothy Keltner*Office of Field Audit*



THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES THE MOST WITH ME: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

FAVORITE PLACE IN ARKANSAS: Hot Springs National Park

THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED: Work hard!

MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Being able to still find ways to learn and grow every day.

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I have always wanted to be an airplane pilot.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Adventurous, Analytical, Curious

MY FIRST JOB WAS: Tutoring at the elementary schools for the Osceola School District.

THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES THE MOST WITH ME: "You must unlearn what you have learned." *Yoda*

THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED: "Put some gratitude in your attitude" *My Grandfather*

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN ARKANSAS: Fayetteville in the Fall is absolutely beautiful! Plus, Razorback fans on The Hill is always a vibe. WPS!!

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Passionate, Loyal, and Empathetic

MY FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Greece, specifically Mykonos and Santorini



MY MOST UNUSUAL TALENT: I am extremely organized. Everything has its place, and most likely needs a label.

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN ARKANSAS: My own backyard.

THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED: Find the beauty in EVERYTHING. There is always hope and light in the darkness.

THE BOOK/MOVIE/PLAY/ART THAT HAD THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON ME WAS: My Bible. All the instructions for most of life's questions are given.

SOMETHING I THINK EVERYONE SHOULD TRY AT LEAST ONCE: Bungee jumping or spelunking. *(See might be surprised to find out!)*

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I am absolutely terrified of heights and small confined spaces.



MY FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: A trip to the Azores.

THE MOST DELICIOUS MEAL I'VE EVER HAD: I had a TV dinner at The Palisades Restaurant in Eggleston, VA

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I am also a Licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer.

THE THING THAT MAKES ME LAUGH THE MOST: Jump scares

THE BOOK/MOVIE/PLAY/ART THAT HAD THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON ME WAS: *The Monster at The End of This Book* Sesame Street

CAREER ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SELF IS: Trust yourself, you know what you are doing.



MY FIRST JOB WAS: Telemarketing

CAREER ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SELF IS: Believe in yourself so fiercely that others will take note and do the same.

FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Morocco

THE MOST DELICIOUS MEAL I’VE EVER HAD: I was in Venice, Italy. It was a Caprese salad and wine shared in a courtyard a block away from St. Mark’s Square; fresh, delicious food and wine, along with the sounds of laughter and whispers of the Italian language.

A TYPICAL SATURDAY NIGHT FOR ME INCLUDES: PJ’s, my fiancé, and a good movie



THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES THE MOST WITH ME: “Practice within when you’re without.” *Dan Pena*

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I spent a large part of my preteen and teenage years playing the piano and drums at different churches.

FANTASY VACATION DESTINATION: Dubai! Or anywhere there is a beach, ocean views, and great food.

SOMETHING I THINK EVERYONE SHOULD TRY AT LEAST ONCE: A marathon and something spontaneous like skydiving.

MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: It hasn’t yet happened in my opinion. For me, it would be starting a family of my own.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Kind, Quiet, Analytical



MY FIRST JOB WAS: Trinity Village Nursing Home as a Dietary Aide

A TYPICAL SATURDAY NIGHT FOR ME INCLUDES: Lounging around the house watching tv and cleaning up

MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Returning to college and to complete what I started a long time ago

PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND OUT: I like to collect ink pens, notebooks with quotes on them, and Coca-Cola items. I am shy.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Quiet, Observative, and Willing to Learn

CAREER ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SELF IS: Never be afraid to accomplish something that you want.



MY FIRST JOB WAS: Secretary for McCullough Law Firm

A TYPICAL SATURDAY NIGHT FOR ME INCLUDES: Spending time with family

MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Raising two beautiful daughters.

THE QUOTE THAT RESONATES THE MOST WITH ME: "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome."
Booker T Washington

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME: Supportive, Loyal, Protective

BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED: Don't be afraid of being told "No"



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RELATIONSHIPS WERE BLOOMING DURING SPRING RECRUITMENT



3RD ANNUAL
National HBCU
Black Wall Street
CAREER FEST

Photos: Event staff and students; Dept. Of Corrections representative, Dept. of Workforce Services representative, HBCU event founder, Edmond Davis, DFA Recruiter, Courtney Brown



Hendrix College, Conway: DFA Secretary, Jim Hudson and DFA Human Resources Administrator, Amy Valentine pose for their "mug shot" photo as alumni of Hendrix College.

Recruiting On Campus

DFA continues to actively recruit on campuses across the state to find top talent. See where we have been lately!



University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff



University of Central Arkansas, Conway



Shorter College, North Little Rock



Pulaski Technical College, North Little Rock



University of Arkansas, Fayetteville



University of Central Arkansas, Conway

For more information about DFA recruiting email Courtney Brown:

recruitment@dfa.arkansas.gov



DFA University alumnus and mentor Terrill Gilliam gives a thumbs up prior to his speech.



DFA-U leadership team member and mentor, Tiffany Robinson, along with DFA-OCSE Controller Robert Hallmark, depict their career journey.



DFA-U leadership team member, Edith Crowell waits to share her story.

DFA University Members Return to the Classroom

A group of DFA University (DFA-U) team members and DFA leaders embarked on a new educational journey, stepping back into the classroom to share their career journey and recruit new talent to DFA. In April, the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) hosted its annual Exploring Your Career Field Day event. Here employers visit college classrooms to speak to students about their world of work. Because of previous success at this event, DFA Recruiter Courtney Brown expressed, "I received a tremendous amount of interest from our leaders in attending this year. We are thrilled to have sent multiple groups to showcase the great work we do at DFA."

Representatives for DFA included: Charlie Collins, DFA Commissioner of Revenue, Edith Crowell, DFA Tax Division Manager, Micheal Palmer, ASC Administrator, Rob Allen, Field Audit Assistant Administrator, Terrill Gilliam, DFA Division Manager, and Tiffany Robinson, DFA Division Manager. Each gave a five-minute presentation and addressed questions from a personal perspective. They fielded questions like, "What type of professional is DFA looking for?"

"What do you really do all day?" and "What types of career paths and incentives exist at DFA?"

For Terrill Gilliam, DFA-U Alumnus, this is an opportunity that he says DFA-U has prepared him for. "DFA-U has been an instrumental part of my career, shaping me into the confident and capable person I am today. I was able to develop my public speaking skills and leadership qualities through the various projects I undertook." Tiffany, DFA leadership team member and current DFA-U mentor, also expressed joy in what she calls a fantastic experience, "we thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to network with everyone."

As the event ended, the DFA team members were filled with a sense of pride and accomplishment. Terrill shared, "I hope that I was able to inspire some of the students to pursue their careers within DFA with the same passion and determination [that I have]." Together, all divisions across DFA can work towards a brighter future for both DFA and the talented individuals who have the potential to become a part of our team.