



LeadAR

Member **SPOTLIGHT**
Class 19

UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System



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Development
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Amanda Lance is the Director of Hempstead Hall & Workforce Development for the University of Arkansas Hope – Texarkana where she works to bring culturally-relevant events to Hempstead County, to ensure local industries and businesses are provided with a trained workforce, and to promote and maintain a state-of-the-art conference center and theater for the area. Amanda believes an educated and skilled workforce along with an engaged community is the key to long-term betterment of rural areas, specifically Southwest Arkansas.

After spending a decade in the events industry, Amanda is excited to bring her brand of hospitality back to Hempstead Hall where she has hosted guests such as President Bill Clinton, Mack McLarty, Joe Purvis, the Kentucky Headhunters, Fairytales on Ice and more.

Amanda's educational journey has taken her full circle from the University of Arkansas Community College at Hope to Harding University in Searcy to Harding University in Florence (Italy), and finally to the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. She has earned an Associate of Arts from UACCH and a Bachelor of Arts – Journalism – Advertising/Public Relations from the U of A.

When she's not at work, Amanda enjoys baking for friends and family, learning to turn her brown thumb green, and discovering new podcasts (currently caught up in "Undisclosed: Jeff Titus"). While she never dreamed of becoming a playwright, within the last year Amanda has co-written, produced, and directed two original plays. She is a member of the Hope Church of Christ, Junior Auxiliary of Hope, Southwest Arkansas Arts Council Board, and United Way of Hempstead County Board, and volunteers with many organizations in Hempstead County.

Why did you apply to the LeadAR program? What motivated you?

I applied to LeadAR for the opportunity to build connections across our state. I believe we are stronger together than we are competing against each other and want to be part of the group that will make that happen.

What leadership quality do you admire most in others? Why?

Innovation. Listen, change for the sake of change is not always the best strategy. However, thoughtful change that moves our communities forward? Wow! I see too many people get stuck in the routine of "normal" and never challenge themselves to create a new normal. I am thankful for the leaders I've had

in my life who have said "this is the way it has been, but it doesn't have to be that way forever. How can you make it better?"

What is something people would be surprised to learn about you? Why is this surprising?

I asked my team this question and they responded with two things that had equally surprised them: 1) I was my high school's rodeo queen and 2) I used to have very blonde hair. The rodeo queen was surprising because my interests and hobbies have evolved so much over the years. And, I'm a natural brunette...and I had fun as both!

What are your top three ingredients necessary for success?

1. Preparedness - to me this means staying up to date on topics and trends that affect not only my job but my community at large and on a microlevel it means planning for what is known.
2. Teammates - success does not happen alone. You must surround yourself with good teammates and invest in them.
3. Challenges - we don't grow unless we're challenged. Some of the best resolutions I have been a part of have come because of creative solutions to unprecedented challenges.

What are your top three ingredients necessary for happiness?

1. Get to know yourself
2. Do more for others than you do yourself
3. Constantly try to choose positivity over negativity

Describe your personal leadership style.

We are part of a team. Everyone in my departments has a specific role to play. My job is to provide them with the resources to fulfill that role so that we can succeed together. Also, because we're a team, I ask for input on long-term and short-term goals. In the past I have been a micromanager. I have learned to delegate more throughout the years and instead look at that as an investment in my team's growth. I fully believe in cross-training and that everyone team member should have some basic knowledge of every role within our departments. As a team, we have a BIG long-term goal that we are working towards and I take every opportunity I can to connect some of the smaller tasks we do each day to that big goal. I also try to make sure we laugh whenever we can and create an enjoyable work area. We can have stressful situations pop up, but overall, we know that we're going to tackle those together and they won't last long.

What is something you hope to gain from your LeadAR experience?

I don't want to become complacent. It can be easy to fall into the trap of "this is the way we've always done it." One of the things that drew me to LeadAR was the intensity of the program and how challenging it promises to be. Again, I believe if we don't challenge ourselves, we'll never grow. I am looking forward to the connections with people across the state and for the self-improvement I hope to do over the next several years.

How can effective leadership help move the state of Arkansas forward?

We have to make sure that our rural and urban areas are being cared for equitably. What makes sense for Little Rock might not always make sense for Hope, and vice versa. The more we can work together to find common understanding, the better we can move forward together.

You are stranded on a desert island. What are your three MUST HAVE items?

1. Good friends.
2. A hammock.
3. And a boat. :)

What is something that was difficult for you six months ago but easy for you now?

Six months ago, I didn't have a clue about live streaming. I don't mean "going Live on Facebook," I mean actual, live broadcasting. I also don't know that I would say it's "easy" now, but we have certainly learned a lot in the last six months.

What else do you want others to know about you?

110% is a myth. You can't give 110% to anything and you can't give 100% to everything. You have to find a balance that works, and it can be a lifelong journey to find that balance. Focus on improving yourself and helping others, the rest "magically" falls into place.