



LeadAR

Member **SPOTLIGHT**
Class 19

UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System



Michal Harris

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My name is Michal D. Harris and education is a primary factor in my life, having earned a Bachelor of Science in Management from the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff in 2006,

Master of Business Administration with a focus in

Human Resource Management in 2012 from Purdue University Global, and currently pursuing a Doctorate of Education in Organizational Leadership with an emphasis in Higher Education from Grand Canyon University. I received the following certifications: grant writer from Penn State University 2020, IBM Data Science Instructor Certificate, and Enterprise Design Thinking Co-Creator. I am the coordinator/chair of the Entrepreneurial Studies Department at Shorter College.

In the community, I serve on Racial Cultural Diversity Commission for the City of Little Rock, Age Friendly Commission of Little Rock, President Elect-Kiwanis of Pulaski Heights, Vice President for Arkansas State House Society, Vice President for Arkansas Volunteer Association, Little Rock Citizens Review Board for City of Little Rock, Vice President For Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Pulaski and Perry Counties Board, Family Services Agency Board member, Family Home of Little Rock Board Member, Fox 16 News Victory Over Violence Member, Friends of Mosaic Templars Young Professionals Board Member, Hat Club of Little Rock member, Central Arkansas Young Urban Professional League, Arkansas Hunger Alliance, Little Rock Rotary Club 99, member Little Rock Chamber, Lead AR Class 19, and University of Arkansas Partners Community Board Member.

Over the past four years, as the Executive Director of my own youth nonprofit “Ikarus Youth Outreach Program”, we have left footprints around the city of Little Rock and surrounding communities. Ikarus stands for “Intelligent, Kind, Adolescents, Representing Us” and is for males and females ages 7-17 years old. The focus of is education, community service, public speaking, leadership, health/financial literacy, and cultural awareness. The hard work of helping those in need has not gone unnoticed as awards received from Black Men Empowerment, Arkansas Martin Luther King Jr Commission, African American Coalition, Creative Minds, and Pine Bluff Image Awards. Understanding that communities can only be rebuilt by leaders equipped with knowledge and resources, provided the need for established scholarships and internships for high school seniors and college students through Ikarus Youth Outreach.

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

I was impressed with the success and longevity of the program. This current pandemic demonstrates the need for leaders in our communities providing resources, networking, to help rebuild and make our economy stronger.

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

Self-awareness. One of the most important characteristics of a business leader is self-awareness, and the ability to understand your own strengths and weaknesses.

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

People are always surprised that I am from Pine Bluff. I guess because of the activity and commitment to Little Rock and community they just assume I am from Little Rock. I am truly invested to not just Little Rock but my hometown of Pine Bluff and demonstrate it through providing book scholarships and academic scholarships at the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff.

What are your top three ingredients necessary for success?

Determination, purpose, confidence

What are your top three ingredients necessary for happiness?

Health and energy, peace of mind, loving relationship

Describe your personal leadership style.

Transformation leadership is the style I identify with. Transformational leadership is when leader behaviors influence followers and inspire them to perform beyond their perceived capabilities. Transformational leadership inspires people to achieve unexpected or remarkable results.

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

I hope to gain a better understanding of the political sector and improve knowledge of agriculture in areas outside of the Delta.

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

Effective leadership can identify resources, businesses, and ways to strengthen to economy. It can help find ways to decrease homelessness, the unemployment rate, and find ways to improve our education system.

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

Water, collection of USA Today newspapers, food

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

It was hard for me to sit still and be at home when the pandemic began. I am used to be on the move whether for work, meetings, extracurricular with my son, or community involvement. It is easier for me now.

What else do you want others to know about you?

I am grant writer, motivator, and self-motivated entrepreneur. Truly honored to be in this class with some amazing people.