

“Know where the puck is going, not where it has been”

Wayne Gretzky

Gay Lea Foods Cooperative Limited began their first Cooperative Leadership Program on April 6 & 7 with a position to teach the 10 enthusiastic participants on leadership skills, understanding cooperatives and the details that make GLF a top 100 company.

Participants traveled as far from Ottawa, Ontario and Noelville, Ontario to meet at the Delta in Mississauga to begin this program, which ranged in age from late teens to mid thirties. Participants arrived the night before for a meet and greet, meeting the main employees who are the backbone of the company.

With Day one commencing, there were many different presenters to keep the day going smoothly. From GLF Chair Mark Hamel, to the ‘You Tube’ oriented Michael Barrett, and Ove Hansen, the day was complete with plenty of laughter and knowledge. We also had the opportunity to learn where GLF ingredients are found by Blair Rankie, everyone was very surprised.

After a great day, the participants and a few GLF employees made their way for dinner to meet and discuss topics with CEO Andrew MacGillivray, who had plenty of information and knowledge to pass down to the participants.

Day two was another well-organized full day. A review of dairy co-ops from around the world took the leadership participants through Gay Lea’s commitment to extending its knowledge base. An interactive sensory analysis of product and flavouring gave the group a new perspective on research and development. A group discussion on the future of the dairy industry allowed for candid and open dialogue. The icing on the cake at the end of day 2 was a tour of the Clayson Rd facility. Impressive!

Gay Lea’s commitment, enthusiasm and passion for the dairy industry and for the development of this leadership program were visible over the course of both days. The hands on learning the 10 participants were given as well as access to the best minds of the Co-operative provided optimal learning that was stimulating and refreshing.

The opportunity for these 10 participants to take part in this leadership program can best be summarized “You will never raise the level of your organization beyond the quality of your leadership”

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