

Faye Norris Leadership Spotlight

Name: Faye W. Norris, LTC, USA Retired, Past PTA Local Unit & County Council President, Florida PTA Executive Committee Member & Florida PTA Leadership Consultant

What is your current role with PTA? Member

What was your first PTA volunteer position? Chair, Cultural Arts Committee, Palm Lake ES, Orange County

What was the most challenging obstacle that you encountered on the path to your current role? Usually the most challenging obstacle as an emerging leader is to “Look at Me First!”

How did you overcome this obstacle? I continually remind myself (even now as I serve in leadership positions) that even though I work hard to get to this position, I am serving in a leadership position in order to meet the needs of others and not myself. This is a concept that some of us embrace initially; but we have a very difficult time adhering to on a long-term basis.

Describe your happiest moment as a PTA leader. My happiest moment as a leader (PTA, etc.) is when I see the “servant-leadership” light come on as I assist others who are seeking to develop their leadership skills while serving in positions of authority.

What advice would you offer to a budding leader? The advice I would offer to an emerging leader is to strive to model the type of leader that you would choose to lead you. Additionally, when tensions and conflict arise, reflect and ask yourself “What did I do to contribute to this situation?” Be fair, trustworthy and humble...make sure your Word stands for something!

What advice would you offer to a PTA leader seeking to attain your current position? I do not currently occupy a leadership position within Florida PTA. However, for those seeking to move higher in this organization, I would advise them to be organized and know the Policies & Procedures and Bylaws very well. Also, keep in the forefront of your mind why you are there (for all our children).

Looking back to the beginning of your PTA leadership journey, if you were given the opportunity, is there anything that you would do differently, and if so please elaborate. Yes...Early on, I would have been more emphatic regarding ensuring that processes and procedures for running the PTA organization (at all levels) were very well clarified and captured in writing to refer to as necessary in the future. I would stress that along with increased responsibility, comes increased

accountability. As leaders, we often get busy “leading,” and at times are making quick decisions based on personalities, etc. It is imperative that we seek to ensure that policies and procedures are put in writing and executed fairly and impartially regardless of your leadership position or other personalities who may be affected.

What’s next for you? It is with great humility that I am currently serving in a capacity, with one of our legislators, to assist local high school students in being selected to attend one of the U.S. military academies; and, also serving in a leadership position, through the church, to assist in meeting the needs of parents and children of the Orlando/Winter Garden area.

Which of the figures below best reflects your leadership path, Figure A or Figure B? Please feel free to explain. I would submit that my leadership path more accurately resembles Figure A. Even though I know what type of leader I strive to be, I realize that reaching that goal takes me down various paths along the way. There are a few diversions and missteps; therefore, sometimes the pace is slow---almost to a standstill. You often second guess yourself and at times realize you may go backwards a bit in order to move forward...it’s part of development.

Most of all though, I realize that development as a leader of people is not a structured and linear process; but very complex. You stay on course not only by directing, but by choosing to be patient, flexible and humble enough to go where the people are and lead them without losing sight of the objective.



Figure A

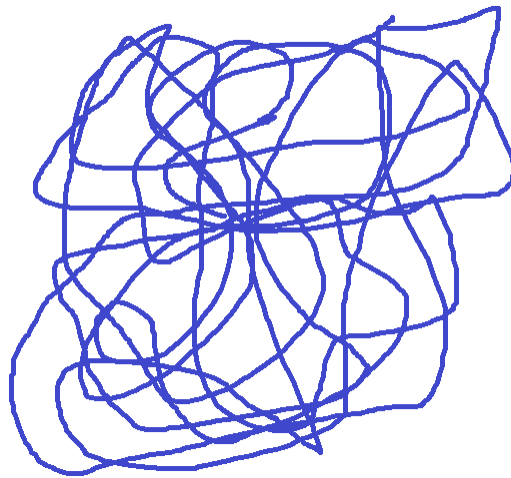


Figure B