



**ONE FRIDAY
A MONTH
COULD CHANGE
EVERYTHING.**



AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM SILICON VALLEY
FELLOWS PROGRAM



CLASS XLVI • 2026/2027

A black and white photograph of a mountain range with a red overlay containing text. The mountains are rugged and have some snow patches. The foreground shows a rocky slope with some vegetation. The red overlay has a topographic map pattern with contour lines and elevation numbers like 640, 680, and 660.

**THIS IS NOT AN
MBA PROGRAM.**

**THIS IS ABOUT
BECOMING A
BETTER HUMAN
BEING.**



The background of the page is a dark blue topographic map. It features numerous white contour lines of varying thicknesses, representing different elevation levels. Some of the visible contour lines are labeled with numbers such as 580, 600, 620, 640, 650, 680, 700, 720, 740, and 760. There are also several small white crosshair symbols scattered across the map. The overall texture is that of a detailed terrain map.

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Are our days getting longer, or is there just so much more happening in the course of 24 hours?

It's 2025, and we have been through and continue to experience unprecedented and extraordinary times. The old ways of leading, being, and problem-solving are no longer working. Information is coming at us faster and faster, and by the way—who else is tired of living through another “once in a generation” disruption?

ALF's mission statement is more relevant than ever before: “ALF joins and strengthens diverse leaders to serve the common good.”

That's why ALF was built for this moment—where leaders of companies, communities, and movements convene and commit to mindfulness and empathy-building, ground-breaking dialogues, and co-creating new ways of being and doing that serve and sustain people and our communities. You'll have access to a range of personal stories and professional experiences that you simply can't get otherwise. That's ALF Silicon Valley's secret sauce.

When I meet with leaders about the Fellows Program experience, I hear the stress in their voices and concern around committing to 20+ days of ALF classes over 13 months. They want it, they need it, but it feels indulgent and impossible. I felt the same way. It may seem next to impossible to carve out the time, but I can promise you that you'll end up looking so forward to it, circling that Friday on your calendar to be in community with your tribe. Only the very busy and impactful are invited to be a part of this fellowship. (I promise you, we all win the busy Olympics.)

For sure, the ALF Fellows Program experience made me a better leader. It taught me to ask, “What's behind your question?” to dig deeper for understanding. It also made me a better partner, parent, and citizen. My wife of 35 years still has the letter I wrote to her from atop a rock outcropping during our Wilderness Week in the Sierra. I was Executive Editor of the Mercury News (back when newspapers mattered) with a staff of 415 when I said yes to ALF. I didn't know how badly I needed to get outside of myself, my walls and my existing networks, to reflect on who I really wanted to be and what I wanted to contribute.

ALF wasn't “professional development” as much as it was a bedrock grounding coupled with the gift of trusted relationships that would teach and support me the rest of my life. I've told dozens of Fellows Program candidates that doing ALF was one of the best decisions I've made in my adult life.

You can take a brief break from having a bias toward action, from moving fast and breaking things and, instead, sit in the fire in order to imagine what better could be. The ALF curriculum walks you through a set of principles and practices that stretch you spiritually and cognitively so that you can live to your highest personal and leadership potential.

It is not for the meek. It is for the curious. And the courageous. Are you in?



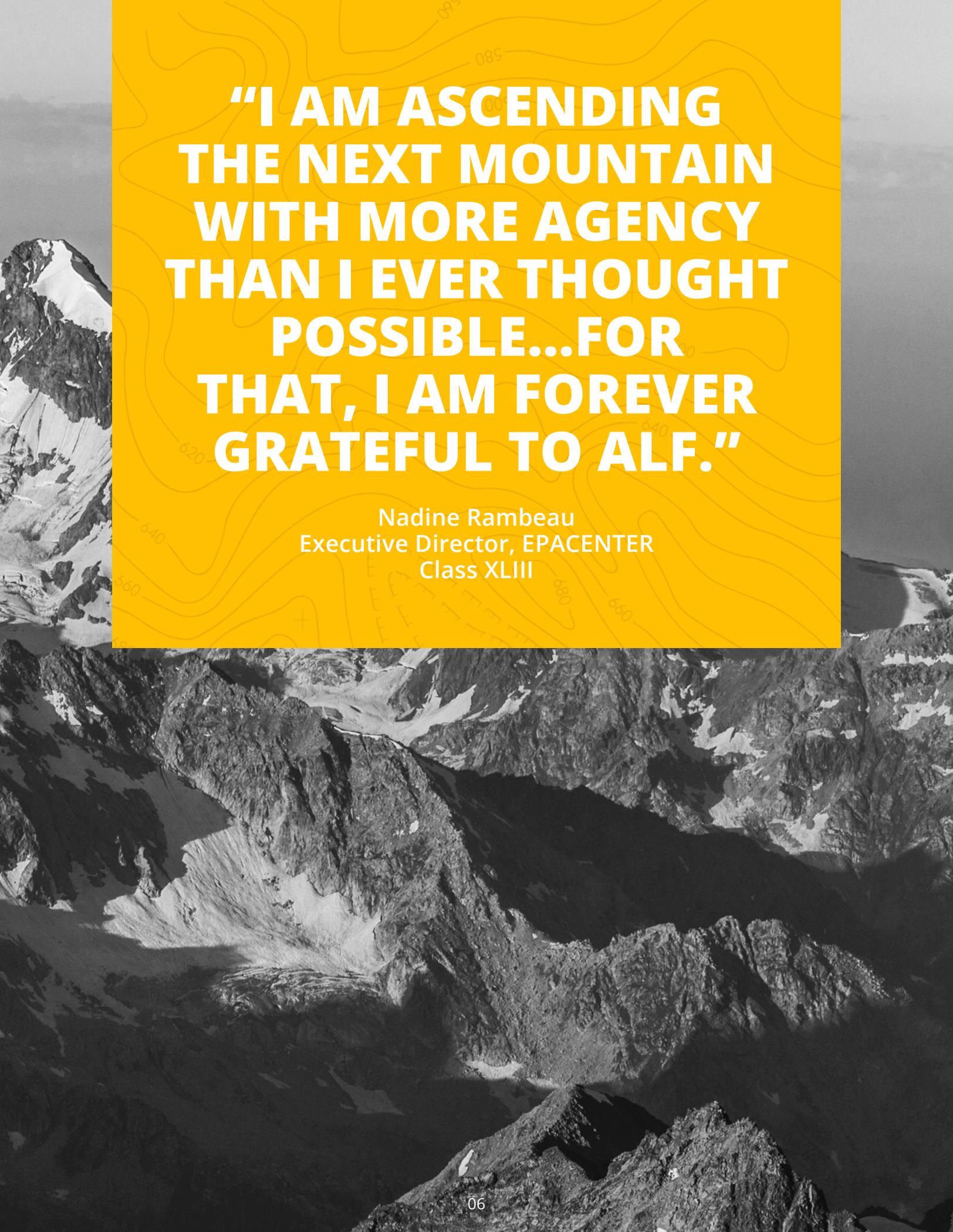
David Yarnold

Interim CEO

American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley

ALF Senior Fellow, Class XII

PS—a generous thanks to my predecessor Suzanne St. John-Crane, for being such a brilliant writer that I could borrow most of her letter from prior years.



**“I AM ASCENDING
THE NEXT MOUNTAIN
WITH MORE AGENCY
THAN I EVER THOUGHT
POSSIBLE...FOR
THAT, I AM FOREVER
GRATEFUL TO ALF.”**

Nadine Rambeau
Executive Director, EPACENTER
Class XLIII



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ANN DEBUSK
FOUNDER, ALF SILICON VALLEY



THE ALF STORY

American Leadership Forum (ALF) was founded in 1980 in Houston, Texas by Joseph Jaworski, who left his successful law practice to address what he increasingly saw as a crisis of leadership throughout the country. He envisioned an organization dedicated to bringing together diverse leaders from multiple sectors in communities across the country to deeply explore their personal leadership capacity, build deep trust among the group to help each leader to get beyond the devaluing prejudices that we all hold, and to learn how diverse people can coalesce around issues and discover new possibilities.

In 1988, our Founder Ann DeBusk was approached by former U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, John W. Gardner, to build a Silicon Valley Chapter.

ALF SILICON VALLEY HAS JOINED AND STRENGTHENED MORE THAN 850 LEADERS SINCE 1988 AND IS PART OF THE ALF NATIONAL NETWORK WITH OVER 5,000 SENIOR FELLOWS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

The ALF Fellows program brings together seasoned leaders—from private, non-profit, and public sectors—to explore their shared humanity, broaden their systems thinking lens, deepen their capacity to weave and leverage networks for good. Graduates of the program—Senior Fellows—share a common understanding of, dedication to, and capacity for, acting as better human citizens and networked leaders.

ALF's impact on the community springs from this engaged, vibrant, evolving and active network of leaders who, through the course of their life and work, inspire their colleagues to community action.



CONNECT.

ALF is a non-partisan organization bringing together a broad diversity of political ideologies and religious beliefs. Learn and practice different ways of approaching difficult issues, try on concepts and new practices with your classmates in a trusted, confidential environment. Reflect on your life journey and leadership approach. Appreciate and practice different ways of being, including mindfulness and meditation for self-a question, decision or area of focus to work on.

INSPIRE.

Take a journey to the wilderness with your classmates, deepening team relationships through physical challenges and exercises that explore our differences, creating renewed understanding and empathy for diverse life paths. Become comfortable being uncomfortable. Shift to a citizen mindset, creating a class and an extended network that takes care of the whole.

TRANSFORM.

Work with ALF guest faculty around the keys to achieving our highest outcomes. Engage in inquiry circles with classmates to work through barriers and begin to set a course forward.

Connect to the greater ALF network, exploring ALF principles applied through ALF Affinity Groups and the broader community. Dive into design thinking around social and civic challenges, accessing the wisdom of your classmates to co-create innovative solutions inside and outside workplaces and across Silicon Valley.

Commit to your next steps at Stand and Deliver, followed by an intimate graduation experience.

THE ALF FELLOWS PROGRAM

A YEAR OF RENEWAL AND GROWTH THROUGH ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP

The ALF Fellows Program is a year-long, cross-sector leadership experience for executives who recognize that leading in this era requires different capacities—rooted not simply in what we know, but in how we observe, respond, relate, and grow.

The ALF Fellows Program teaches adaptive leadership skills within an immersive program that deeply connects leaders through a range of real-life experiences.

The ALF Fellows Program is an environment where leaders feel empowered to bring diverse viewpoints, experiences and challenges into dialogues with one another.

American Leadership Forum creates a lifelong connection of sharing and trust forged in sharing, honesty and vulnerability. At ALF Silicon Valley we make leadership personal.

This is the secret sauce of leadership development.

Our program is presented in monthly ALF Fellows sessions which foster the space, structure, and community to develop these capacities in ways that are rigorous, reflective, and profoundly practical.

Program outcomes:

- In the workplace: adaptive leadership techniques, technology fluency, and purpose-driven decision-making
- Community: relational intelligence and systems awareness on the most current challenges
- Individual: expanded capacity for agility, resilience, and self-regulation





MY LEADERSHIP

Co-creating a brave space to be vulnerable as a leader and human. Exploring our/my personal experiences and building empathy for people on different paths. Setting personal intentions for the year. Developing and incorporating a mindfulness practice.

OUR COMMUNITY

Creating a class community built on empathy, honesty and trust. Deepening relationships and holding each other accountable. Engaging in courageous conversations. Wrestling with power, privilege, equity, and belonging, and the discomfort that arises due to differences in the room.

OUR IMPACT

Exploring new possibilities from our deepened relationships and broadened perspectives. Embracing civic responsibility and network leadership. Applying what we've learned by making decisions differently in our personal, professional and community circles. Collaborating to create a more equitable and thriving Bay Area.

THE ALF Fellows Program offers a compelling and relevant platform from which the class creates an authentic and dynamic learning environment. Three core principles help to create the most value in the program: presence, confidentiality, and generative dialogue.

PRESENCE | Show Up

The simple act of showing up and participating fully in each session may be the most powerful contribution you can make to the overall success of the program. The class curation process is methodical and intentional. Your presence and engagement is critical to the class experience. Significant individual and class development opportunities occur throughout the year without regard to the subject matter on the agenda. Therefore, we caution you not to make any judgements about whether to attend based upon the content scheduled for the day. Fellows can be surprised by all they missed in one session.

CONFIDENTIALITY | Keep It In The Class

The Fellows Program offers a unique opportunity for leaders to learn from each other. From day one we request an agreement among all to hold our conversations in confidence. This confidence will allow individuals to explore important issues and opportunities in a community of supportive peers.

GENERATIVE DIALOGUE | High Quality Conversation

ALF is a non-partisan organization bringing together a broad diversity of political ideologies and religious beliefs. Dialogue across differences is core to our curriculum and a commitment that we make as Senior Fellows to practice. The capacity to both engage in and sponsor dialogue for the common good is a distinguishing characteristic of an ALF Fellow and Senior Fellow.



“WE NEED A LANGUAGE THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER ABOUT THE DEEPEST THINGS WE CARE ABOUT RATHER THAN PUSHING US APART.”

Joseph Jaworski, Founder
American Leadership Forum

APPLIED LEARNING

Throughout the year, each Fellow is asked to apply ALF principles and practices within their scope of influence. What each Fellow chooses to do can vary tremendously. A Fellow may change an organizational structure or alter regularly occurring meetings; another may host a dialogue following a significant community event.

HOSTING A SESSION

Fellows will be invited to host one of the class sessions throughout the year. This is an opportunity to “bring your classmates to work” and provide some insight into your company, and your world.

CLASS XLVI 2026-2027 SCHEDULE

Pre-Orientation

Finding Our Rhythms: An immersive, fun introduction to the year.

MAR 13

Orientation*

Taking Leadership Personally (Overnight)

APR 9-10

Leadership During Exponential Change

MAY 8

Pre-Wilderness: Practice Hike

Introduction to technical and adaptive transformation.

JUN 12

Wilderness Experience* (Overnight)

Please note: There is no cell or internet access for all but a brief stop on a hike. There is a landline for emergencies only.

JUL 10-15

Social Gathering

with significant others/families

AUG TBD

Dialogue Across Difference

Gathering diverse political, social, work-based perspectives to strengthen leadership resilience.

SEP 11

Attendance is expected at each class day, and participants may not continue in the program if they miss a session marked with an asterisk.

Most days will begin at 8am and adjourn at 4pm.

CLASS XLVI 2026-2027 SCHEDULE

Forecasting the Future for Leadership

OCT 9

Design and Innovation:

How to lead your team to design effective change.

NOV 12-13

Using the perspectives of your colleagues to build your leadership effectiveness and community connection.

JAN 8

Taking Stock Retreat* (Overnight)

FEB 11-12

Drumming Encore

MAR 12

Graduation*

Braiding Sweetgrass: Tending teams and networks.

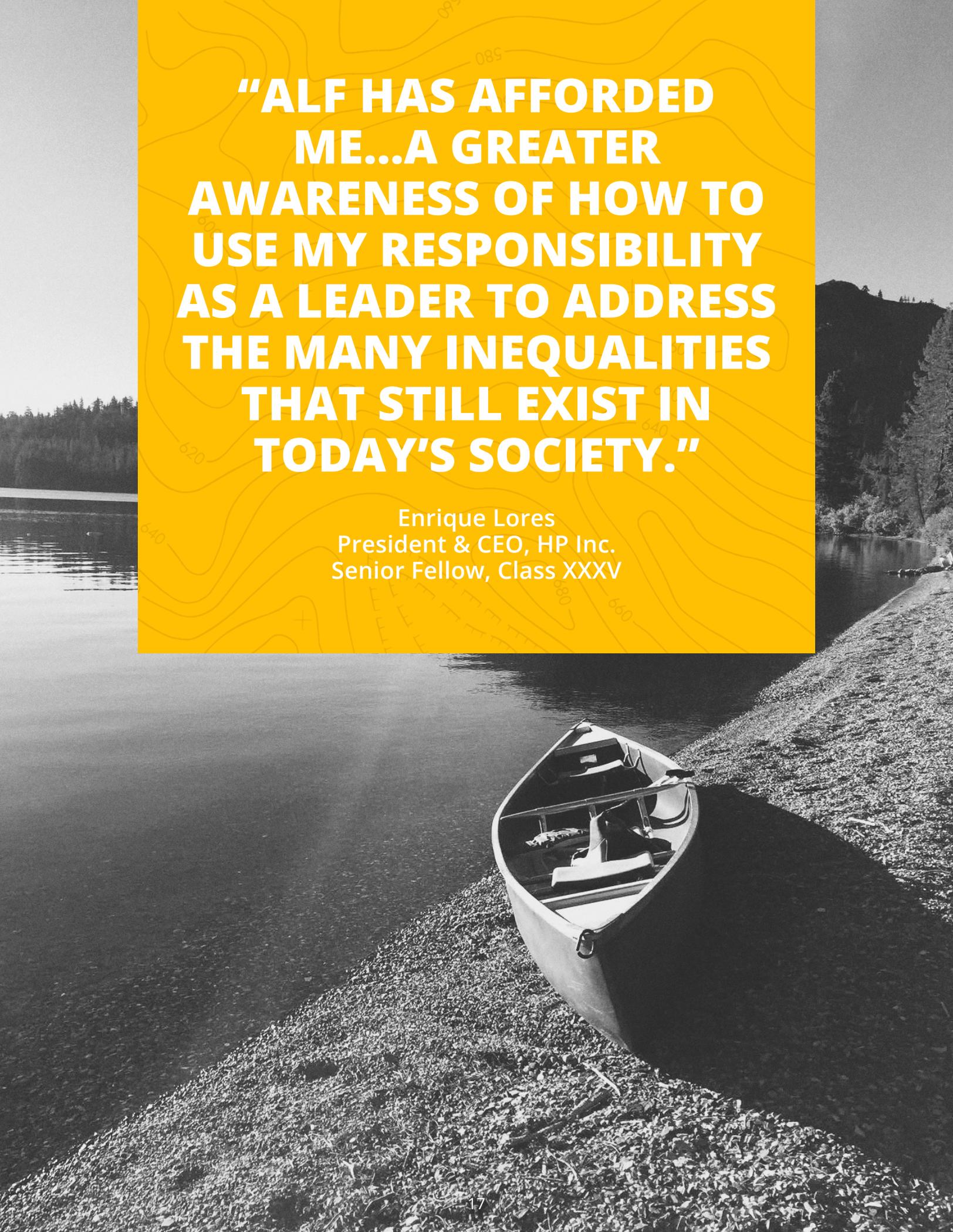
MAR 26

Post-Graduation Check-In

OCT 7

Attendance is expected at each class day, and participants may not continue in the program if they miss a session marked with an asterisk.

Most days will begin at 8am and adjourn at 4pm.



**"ALF HAS AFFORDED
ME...A GREATER
AWARENESS OF HOW TO
USE MY RESPONSIBILITY
AS A LEADER TO ADDRESS
THE MANY INEQUALITIES
THAT STILL EXIST IN
TODAY'S SOCIETY."**

Enrique Lores
President & CEO, HP Inc.
Senior Fellow, Class XXXV

HOW TO BE A PART OF THE EXPERIENCE

ONLY 28 ARE INVITED.

**PRESENCE, COMMITMENT,
AND PARTICIPATION ARE
REQUIRED.**

ALF's Network Development Committee selects up to twenty-eight leaders from across sectors annually who have been nominated by the broader network of Senior Fellows, the graduates of the Fellows program. The primary source of value in the ALF Fellows Program is the commitment of each Fellow to one another. We, as an organization, deeply invest in the care and development of these twenty-eight Fellows and therefore, ask for your complete presence, commitment and participation throughout the Fellows year.

Historically, classes have honored the needs of a Fellow who misses a session because of unique and unavoidable circumstance; however, many classes have struggled when a particular Fellow missed more than two sessions. **ALF may decide to exit a Fellow from the program should they miss more than two classes. Please manage your calendar to make all scheduled sessions.**

TUITION

ALF Fellows Experience Tuition is \$18,000 + \$750 commitment fee.

In order to secure your spot, full or partial payment is due within forty-five days of your invitation to the program. If this presents a hardship, payment plans may be arranged.

Please note: Once you accept the invitation into the Fellows Program experience by signing a Commitment Form, 30% of tuition is collectible and non-refundable. Many Fellows are sponsored by the organization where they work with tuition being funded via professional development or travel budgets. Some Fellows cover their tuition personally. The personal commitment fee must be paid by the ALF Fellow.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

As a part of the Fellows experience, you will join your class on a six-day wilderness trip typically held in the Lake Basin region of the Sierras. Accommodations are shared, with two nights in tents.

Participants will be involved in strenuous physical activities that include walking on uneven terrain, hiking uphill and downhill with a 10- 25 lb. pack for distances of 5 – 8 miles at altitudes of up to 8,000 ft., and rock climbing and rappelling. These activities are not required but are a part of the group experience. We recommend that all Fellows see their doctor for a physical prior to the trip.

ALF has accommodated a wide variety of physical limitations and health needs, from Fellows in wheelchairs or on crutches, to severe dietary restrictions, to C-PAP machines. Please do not hesitate to ask for medically necessary accommodations prior to the trip.

BECOMING A SENIOR FELLOW

At your last class session, you will complete the first part of your ALF journey and begin another. Senior Fellows are graduates of the ALF experience and are part of a network unlike any other. We are 850+ strong and growing, with influential cross-sector leaders from across the Valley.

You will gain access to the full directory and contact information for ALF Senior Fellows.

Being a Senior Fellow comes with incredible opportunity, as well as responsibility. We ask all Senior Fellows to make these commitments:

TAKE THE CALL & MAKE THE CALL.

USE THE NETWORK.

DIALOGUE FIRST. SUSPEND JUDGEMENT, BE CURIOUS, BE OPEN, LISTEN.

EDUCATE, INNOVATE, DONATE.

BE A PART OF SYSTEMS CHANGE.

ENGAGE IN ALF.

YOUR PARTICIPATION MAKES US ALL STRONGER!

ALF CONNECT

Once you graduate, you will be given access to ALF Connect, a website and smartphone app connecting Senior Fellows from all ALF chapters. You will be invited to join Affinity Groups, participate in Discussions, register for Events, and connect with other Senior Fellows with similar areas of interest.

AFFINITY GROUPS

Senior Fellows are encouraged to start or strengthen ALF Affinity Groups, where Senior Fellows connect across classes around life, work, and community concerns. Some groups are meant to be social or coaching circles, while others are deeper dialogue opportunities around community issues with tangible outcomes. Affinity Groups are one way we as Senior Fellows connect beyond our classes and can deeply access the full potential of the network. A list of current Affinity Groups is online.

ALF INSIGHTS

Bring the power of ALF facilitation and convenings to your business or organization. ALF Insights has the ability to emerge new frameworks for how an organization, team or network of leaders manages change and embraces dynamic processes. Learn more at alfinsights.org.

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

ALF does not shy away from difficult dialogues on entrenched, systemic issues. Quite the contrary — we embrace them. ALF hosts speaker series and small group dialogues throughout the year. You are invited to suggest / host / attend.

BOARD & COMMITTEE SERVICE

Senior Fellows are invited to be a part of ALF organizational work, from helping to seat classes to providing financial oversight. A couple of graduates are generally invited to join the Board of Directors.

ALF POWER CIRCLES

The ALF Silicon Valley team assists with connecting you to a strategic group of Senior Fellows to help advance your defined project.

ALF SILICON VALLEY FACULTY



DR. BYRON BURKHALTER / ALF Fellows Program Lead Facilitator

Byron is the founder of Out of Privilege, a company which works with corporations, nonprofits and educational institutions to create inclusive spaces by changing organizational language, values and practices.

Byron earned his doctorate in Sociology from UCLA focused on detailed studies of interaction, laws concerning racial and sexual identity in the workplace, biracial identity, whiteness and multiracial political coalitions in US history. He has taught at the university level, spoken at large public rallies and published on coalition building across race, sex and class differences. Byron also runs discussion groups where people from different backgrounds build connections by grappling with current issues.



CHRISTIE HARDWICK

Christie Hardwick is an inspirational speaker and facilitator in a variety of forums and provides strategic thinking and spiritual guidance services to clients across the United States.



JENNY NIKLAUS

As Chief Facilitation Officer, Jenny Niklaus works to support leaders to use their leadership as a catalyst for dynamic social change. Her work is deeply connected to the work of inclusion and race equity.



CHIKE NWOFFIAH

Chike is an actor, theater director, educator, and award-winning filmmaker, and consultant on theater, film, television, and multimedia projects.

*Note that Faculty are invited to sessions based on the needs and interests of the Fellows.
Facilitators and faculty are subject to change, based on class needs and availability.*



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