

>> Hello and welcome to The Valley Today, I am your host, Janet Michael. We are on the screen today with one of my favorite, two of my favorites. Actually, I'm not going to say in which order because I don't want to die to get annoyed. But Guy Curtis is here with me from Laurel Ridge Community College, he is of course their Director of Marketing. Joining him on the screen is Carlene Hurdle, she is director of Corporate Training for Laurel Ridge Workforce Solutions. Thank you both it's our regular time to get together and chat and today's topic is something that I love, which isn't that unusual because I don't usually have people on the show to talk about things that I don't like. That just wouldn't make sense. But leadership is one of these things, it's very near and dear to my heart because I feel like there's a huge lack of it out there and at the same time there's a huge need or want from people to be better leaders and to know more about it. I'm excited that Leadercast is coming back to Laurel Ridge this year.

>> That's right. We're very excited to bring it back once again, and to do it a couple of different ways in other words. It's virtual and in-person as well to our campuses. We're very excited to have Leadercast come back and just like all of our learning and professional development annually, you should always look for ways to gain the best thought leadership, ideas and strategies when it comes to being the best leader you can be. I think that's an activity that we all should practice every year. It's tough to really keep up with what is out there and there's so many things that are changing in our dynamic business world where everything is moving so fast. And so to be a leader, to be effective at leading, whether you're leading personally at home or within your community, within the job that you work every day or a non-profit, whatever it is, it's always important to stay up to speed with the latest thought leadership and Leadercast has done that for years at Laurel Ridge. We're very excited to have it back and glad Carlene is on the call with me today to talk about her experience with Leadercast, as well as what we have planned and stored for those who are attending.

>> Carlene, let's start with the overview of Leadercast and how it works.

>> Absolutely, so Leadercast was started, believe it or not, by Chick-fil-A. They decided to do an internal corporate event every year and invite the areas thought leaders in and became so well known and so popular that other businesses started contacting Chick-fil-A and say, "Hey, we want in on this." Then Chick-fil-A decided, okay, it's its own thing, so they sold it off as a one day live event where speakers would be brought in and it traditionally was held in Atlanta. One day every spring you would have speakers come together and you would sit and listen to these speakers one after another, and people would gain insights and they would usually choose a topic. Then most recently during the pandemic, Leadercast was purchased again and moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. That's just a little bit of the background on Leadercast. But what I think is so compelling about it is that it has this long-standing reputation of bringing together the most prolific leaders and as Guy was saying, thought leaders, the folks who are on the front-lines of leadership. You've got some folks that come back every year that are just really staples. But then you get these new folks. They're like, "Who is that, or what great things are they doing?" Or some

head of accompany, someone who's just come in and done something radically new and had wild success with it. You get to sit at their feet and listen to what they've done, so that is in a nutshell, what Leadercast is. What we do is we rebroadcast that. We bring it in after the live event has occurred and we rebroadcast it. We just use the speaker's perspectives to spark ideas or pour into leaders in our community so that they have some of those insights. Not, everybody can just traveled to a one-day event, so we bring the event to them through our partnership with Leadercast. I think we've been doing this Guy. I tried to look it up. It's anywhere between 10 and 12 years that we've been doing this now. It all predates me, so that's why I can't say. I call that BC, before Carlene. I don't know for sure. Back in the day, and you guys will appreciate this technology, we would get the materials on DVDs. That's where I can't track down all of the DVDs to try and figure it out, but I know it's between 10 and 12 years and I think that's pretty incredible that you can predictably know that we will be hosting Leadercast every year.

>> I liked that when you do it on the different campuses because you're doing it at Middletown and you're doing it at Fauquier, it also makes it a little more local. Because it's great that I can go and listen to some of these nationally known people that are leaders in their businesses, in their industry, in their communities. But you're doing things right there in the room with those of us that are in attendance. That also makes it make sense for us on our local level.

>> We've add in some facilitated exercises. I think one of the biggest things that comes out of Leadercast are great relationships begin to form throughout the day as people get vulnerable, and they share, and they learn, and they start to meet folks and network with people that they hadn't really spent a lot of time talking about these deeper topics. That has been just an enormous outgrowth of the success of Leadercast. I know one that we did in Fauquier, there was a group that pulled together just on their own afterwards. They had never met one another before, they met at Leadercast and they continued to meet monthly to hold each other accountable to the promises that they made to themselves and to their organization to change their leadership style. It's wonderful things like that come out of it. But in addition to that, we do host some facilitated exercises and just really get people out of their seat and reflecting on what they had just heard from the speaker and give them a chance to apply that knowledge. Have some meaningful takeaways are playbooks or whatever it is that they need. I'm very tactical, so I like those kinds of things. I like to be able to say, this is the what and this is how.

>> It's a catalyst it really is. Because a lot of times, and Guy touched on this too, that we know how important being a good leader is and we all want to be better leaders in our organizations, in our communities and that thing. But sometimes it's hard to know how to do that and to schedule the time for it because we're busy raising our families and running our businesses and doing all of these other things. Having this one day to be able to dedicate to just that and be surrounded by other people who are doing exactly the same thing really does give you even more growing power in learning power.

>> Totally agree with you and I think we're seeing more and more need for leadership as what I term the silver tsunami. That folks that are retiring and leaving behind all that wonderful institutional knowledge, all of that incredible breadth and depth of their experiences are gone. Now we're putting folks into those positions who don't have a lot of experience or maybe who have been fantastic individual contributors, but now they're going to be leading people, or they're going to be influencing others in the organization?

>> I think more than ever, these things are super important. As you said, to take the time out to do that because we can be busy being busy. I also want to give a nod to the fact that if you say to yourself, well, I'm not a leader in my organization. Everyone is a leader in their organization, we all have our sphere of influence, and leading yourself well is the very first step to becoming a great leader of other people. Leadercast even did an entire year on leading yourself well, I do want to give a nod to that, but if you're thinking leadership is intriguing to you, or you want to grow yourself professionally, but you don't lead other people, don't let that stop you because these are topics. Every single one of these speakers has some a takeaway topic. It is really meant for anyone trying to nudge themselves towards some personal growth.

>> The great thing about this is it's very affordable. This is not something that you have to spend thousands of dollars to go and do for a day. It's something an individual could do, a small business owner could do, or potentially, a company would pay for an employee to go and do.

>> Absolutely. We tried to keep it as low cost as possible. It's 99 dollars for the in-person event that includes some light refreshments in the morning and a lunch at lunchtime, reopen the doors at 8:00. We start promptly at 8:30, and then we try to wrap up by 3:30. It is a full day, to get that experience plus meals, I think that's a great value.

>> It so much easier when it's local for me in particular, because I could almost walk to Laurel Ridge Community College. But for those in Fauquier, it's so much nicer to be able to have someplace close that they can go to, to participate in something like this.

>> We're hoping to do this eventually at our Luray Campus as well. Do you have a new campus there and we don't need a huge amount of people, but we would love to be able to expand it to that area as well and bring Leadercast out there too. We do have some businesses who bring Leadercast in-house. That's always an option as well. This year we're doing two in-house facilitated ones for organizations that really want us to build the exercises in it for their organization and for their culture. We can add in some customized aspects of it to really have Leadercast pour into their leadership and it'd be something that bolsters the company's commitments and culture as well. That's always an option as well.

>> We're going to take a break here in a second, and then I want to talk about the speakers and how the event is going to work throughout the day. But before we go

to break, give me the details when, where, and how do I register?

>> Registration is pretty easy. We have a couple of options, you can call our offices or visit our website, laurelridgeworkforce.com/leadercast. But there was one other option besides the in-person activity is the virtual path. We do have a virtual pass in addition to the two campus locations. I know Carlene, you had the latest update with our meeting earlier this week, but we're getting close to being sold out. I think you are very interested in participating, it is ideal to go ahead and visit a website, give us a call at our offices. Secure your seat today.

>> I will put that link in the show notes page. Let's go to break when we come back, I want to talk a little bit Carlene about the speakers and your experience. What you took away from the experience when you went and participated in it in May. Can we do that in the next segment?

>> Absolutely.

>> We are on the screen at pre-recording today with Guy Curtis. He is Director of Marketing for Laurel Ridge Community College. Joining him is Carlene Hurdle. She is Director of Corporate Training for Laurel Ridge Workforce Solutions. We're going to talk more with both of them about Leadercast when we come back in just a couple of minutes.

>> Hello, I'm Katherine Dobbs, a graduating senior at Mountain Vista Governor's School and we're partnering with the local environmental non-profit Sustainability Matters to help you help yourself while helping the planet. Here, sustainability tip for the day plant native Virginia is home to hundreds of beautiful native plants and they're better for the environment than non-native ornamentals are. Because they're adapted to our climate and soil native plants require less water, fertilizer, and maintenance. When you're buying seeds for your garden, grab native indigo mountain laurel and blue eyed grass instead of exotic flowers, invasive shrubs or turfgrass. Our native birds and insects depend on these plants for food and shelter. Think of it as making your yard into one big bird house. Thank you for listening. This has been an ecologically exciting message from Mountain Vista Governor's School and Sustainability Matters, reminding you that together we can keep the river clean and the valley green.

>> Welcome back to the Valley Today, I'm your host, Janet Michael. We are on the screen today talking about leadership. Guy Curtis is joining me. He is Director of Marketing for Laurel Ridge Community College. Carlene Hurdle is here with us as well. She is Director of Corporate Training for Laurel Ridge Workforce Solutions talking about Leadercast happening on the Middletown Campus June 16th from 8:30 to 3:30 on the Fauquier Campus on June 24th from 8:30 to 3:30. But Carlene, you went to the live version in May and actually got to see how it works behind the curtain.

>> I did, yes, there were 11 speakers. I think the one thing that I found a little bit surprising was that being there live, it's not that much different than watching the

re-broadcast because they shuttle speakers in and they shuttle them out. It's speaker, speaker, speaker take a break. Speaker, speaker, speaker, lunchtime. I would have enjoyed a little bit more interaction at the live event, it was great to be there though. I mean, I geek out at some of these speakers. I have met Andy Stanley in person. This year I was seated near the green room door and Molly Fletcher came out and put her arm around my shoulder and said, hello. I just didn't know what to say, I was so blown away Molly Fletcher. My goodness the female Jerry Maguire. I was like, Oh my gosh, I didn't know what to say, I just looked at her and say, hey. I don't have my whole life and it was just wonderful to meet her and it was right after her talk. that stuff is interesting and cool but there wasn't a lot of time for networking and there wasn't any facilitated activity. I just wrote notes as quickly as I possibly could and then left and I remember thinking, gosh, who can I call or who can I talk to you about all this great information. I really was craving a way to process it to the live event, didn't really allow for that. We are trying to embed that into the event that we have so that you do have that time to really say, let me stop and reflect on what I've just heard, let me take some notes, let me talk to a few people about it, let's process that. What's meaningful for how can I apply that until that you've got that richer experience.

>> Because you really do want people to leave at the end of that day, having a notebook, not just full of notes, but a notebook full of ideas and things that they are going to do to change, to move forward, to learn, to be better. That's your ultimate goal at the end of the day.

>> Absolutely. I'll just give you an example, Andy Stanley came out and obviously he's rock-solid, he's a staple at Leadercast. I could not even imagine how many years he's been doing it. But he came out and he did an entire framework and he gave all of these numbered points then he posed a very meaningful and thoughtful question, and then he gave you some barriers to overcome in answering that question. I would have loved to have stopped at that point and said, let's do that, let's walk through that and see what that looks like, I need to hear what other people are thinking or saying. We have taken his talk and prepare that as an exercise so that we can walk through it. The hope is that people walk away with a list of action items, a playbook of things that they can truly take an action out in their daily lives so that it's not just a conceptual awhile these are great leadership topics. Glad I got to listen to them, but this is how I'm going to apply this in my daily life. This is how I'm going to grow from this experience.

>> There are 11 speakers and each of them had there one thing. The odds of walking away at the end of the day with at least one of your own things and probably 4, 5, 6, maybe even 11 things is pretty good.

>> Every year they come up with some so a topic or Leadercast and then the speakers all speak to that topic. This year I think because we've come through such a rough two years. The question that was posed to these leaders is, what is the one thing that makes you a leader worth following, you have 11 speakers, you have 11 one things. Each one of those things on its own is a very rich and deep topic. But

what our hope is is that one of these topics will spark something. It will spark something within you to say, that's what needs to happen in our organization or hey, that's where I need to grow the most. We definitely have some great exercises, some fun things planned. But the idea is for you to walk away knowing what it is that really, it's going to change the trajectory of your leadership experience.

>> How many people do you typically have in the room for a live event? Guy said at the end of the first segment that it was filling up. That's the other piece of this, is you got to get registered so that you can be in the room. We're going to talk about virtual on a second, but how many people typically are in the room?

>> At our Middletown location we can do up to I think a 150 in that one and then over in Fauquier, we usually cap at around 80-85. We do purchase 300 tickets. We have 300 seats total that we can sell either through the virtual pass or through the in-person experience. We have only six seats left in block here, and we have roughly 42 tickets remaining total. It is going quickly. I did want to give a nod to the virtual path idea as well. If you can't attend either date, please still don't miss out on this. This is just such an incredibly rich experience. I can't say enough good things for the one thing, we do have a virtual pass. You just purchase the virtual pass, tell us what day you want it to start and you'll get an email and then it'll open up the viewing window for either three or five days. I can't remember which it is. Then you can watch, you can pause, you can rewind, you can watch at your own pace. You won't have the richness of the in-person experience, but you will have the ability to at least view the speakers in the privacy and comfort of your own space.

>> That's a really good alternative. If you really are interested in this and want to be a part of it and want to learn and want to be a better leader, but those dates just aren't dates that gel with your calendar, don't just not do it. Opt for the virtual end of it because you're still going to get all of the information that then like you said, after you were done, you were like, I need to talk to somebody. I have to process this. All of us probably have somebody that we can then call and say, "I just sat through this thing. Can I go through this with you?" Maybe it's a coworker, maybe it's a friend, maybe it's your boss. It's still good, valuable information to get, no matter how you're getting it.

>> I think it's wonderful that we have the ability to do the virtual as well. The virtual is at your own pace. It's not a virtual into the event that we're having. It's just a set of the videos for the speakers, that we just felt like it was so important that we didn't want anyone to miss out. We created this virtual path opportunity for folks. I've done it both ways. I much prefer the in-person, but if you have some folks who like I said, can't get away or only have little pockets of time, you can watch a speaker by speaker, you can watch an entire session, whatever works for you. I just would encourage folks to take the time, especially after everything that we've been through with the pandemic and everything. These are some really thought provoking conversations. Just to give you an idea, David Horsager is there and he's talking about the foundational trust that has to be rebuilt in organizations. I think that's just such an incredible topic. Father Richard Rohr talks about humility and how

important humility is within any leadership structure, and so on and so on. I don't want to give away too many spoiler alerts, but there are some fantastic information here. It would be who've anyone to do that. I want to say this once again, I mentioned it earlier, but we can bring this into an organization. If you want to do this for your department managers, or you want to bring this into your organization, for some of your frontline folks, we are doing this for a healthcare organization, for example, to pour back into the people who really poured themselves out during the pandemic. I think it's a fantastic way to reward your employees and give them something that's meaningful to really refill their cup again so that they have something to give again.

>> We've talked about that in previous conversations about how staff and employees have different priorities now, post-ish pandemic, then a comma in their paycheck, they are looking for more things. They're looking for things like professional development. They're looking for those things to help them grow internally as well as with the company. This really does check those boxes as well.

>> I think we all have a sphere of influence whether we want to recognize that or not, we're all leading someone. People are watching whether you have children, whether you work in a job where you have colleagues, or whether you're serving customers, it doesn't matter. Whatever you're doing out in the world, what you do matters. It does have that reverberating ripple effect. It's important to know what you're doing and how you're impacting others. I think these topics bring up something incredible. There's Steven Kotler talks about a concept I'd never even heard of before. He learned this, studying high-performance athletes. I think, wow, to be able to tap into the mind structure of a high-performing athlete and take that mindset and apply it to my own life. That's incredible. Yes, I think this event is for anyone and everyone. I can't say enough good things about it. I think it's fantastic.

>> I think she enjoyed it, Guy. What do you think?

>> I think so. I'm just excited to hear LeVar Burton, the Reading Rainbow guy.

>> Right? I know that was the headline of our meme, like, wait what?

>> For example, a lot of these speakers, we've known for various reasons. An example like Steven Kotler too, Carlene, and I think it's interesting to get these perspectives from those who have more experiences at different levels and industries than our own. I'm very curious to see what they say. I'm excited. I'm personally attending the Middletown location and excited not only just for the speakers, but the networking too with those local other folks in our region, and it's been a while since we've had some on campus events with a lot of folks in the room. I think that's also part of that as well. Getting into network again with a lot of the co-world leaders in our region. I'm excited for that and great lunch too. It's always nice to have a lunch with part of your professional day. It's great.

>> Carlene, what do you hope people do the next day after they've attended this entire event and they go home and they sleep on it. What do you hope happens

after the event?

>> Leadership never stops. Just because the event is over, doesn't mean the leadership journey doesn't continue. One of the things that we do is we provide some post-event resources. We don't provide them during or before because we want you to formulate them, but we come along behind you and besides you after the event and give you some additional notes, some additional thoughts from each one of the leaders. We've compiled a set of notes and quotes and takeaways from each one of them. That will be sent out to every participant after the event. Then we do have leadership programs that can continue this journey. We have a first time leadership program called leadership base camp, which is a fantastic way to get started if you've just moved from being an individual contributor or a technical person into leading people for the first time. The wonderful program. It has six core classes and four electives, you do get to customize it a bit for yourself. Then, for middle managers, we have something called Leadership Institute, that's an 11 month program that's going on right now, and leader cast is always included in Leadership Institute. That's fantastic way to take those deeper dive into some of the management topics and some of the role-playing and really application types of leadership exercises. Then at the very top of our leadership tiered program, we have something called leadership excellence, which is really that C-suite or executive level type of cohort model that fit together based on some book studies. I did want to mention, now that I think about books. Winchester Book Gallery is going to be at both events offering the latest leadership titles and the speakers' books. If you like to shop local, please hold any of your purchases and see Winchester Book Gallery. They were with us last year and they did a fantastic job. I don't know how they hold all those books, but they brought enormous amounts of inventory with them and I know,

>> Christine has a really big wagon, I will tell you.

>> She must. But I walked out of there with six books because different speakers, will even mention other people's books that influenced them. She's done all the research and gone through and pull all of those books together. We're super excited that she's coming back.

>> She is my soul sister. Every time she does the radio show with me, I get text messages and phone calls from people who joke that we sound like the same person and they have a hard time figuring out which one is me and which one is her because we talk the same way, we talk about the same things, and we are like one brain when we have a conversation.

>> That's funny. Now I'm going to throw the challenge down to you, Janet, how do you think you want to attend leader cast this year?

>> I want to come in person. We were talking about this right before we started recording for the show. I want to come in person. I am way too close to not come in person. If somebody is listening and they want to come watch my dogs for the day, I am all in to go in, in person. But if I can't do that, I am 110 percent going to do this

virtually. If we can't do a radio show, maybe we'll do a podcast add-on bonus episode, and we'll talk about it after the fact, and you and I can get all leadership geeky together.

>> There you go. I'm all in for that. Count me in.

>> Guy, how can people register one more time? Do they register for the virtual the same way they register for the in-person?

>> Yes, that's correct. We have a couple of options. If you know our corporate training team members, Sonya Thornhill or Larry Baker, you can reach out to them directly. Our registration team within the Workforce Solutions office area can also assist in the process. Whether you are registering yourself or your organization with multiple individuals, there's a couple of different steps. Easily get a lot of that information, at laurelridgeworkforce.com/leadercast. But give us a call if you have any questions or want to talk through logistics and so forth, 540-868-7021.

>> We are old school. We still pick up the phone, you can still talk with any of us.

>> People still do that? Are you serious?

>> We do.

>> We're bringing it back.

>> Before we wrap up. If I can't do June 16th, but I can't do June 24th. It doesn't matter that I live in Middletown. I can still go to bulkier and go to that one?

>> Absolutely.

>> I may be able to scooch out at lunch, let the dogs out, and then come back. I may have to miss the lunch, but I'm used to for so many years doing this radio show at lunch. I don't even eat lunch anymore. It's not that big of a sacrifice for me I think.

>> Maybe it's a go box for the time being.

>> Doggie bag.

>> Thank you both for taking some time to give me all the details for this. I do appreciate it.

>> Thank you.

>> Thanks, Janet.

>> I will be back tomorrow. It is strolling Strasburg tomorrow and we have already strolled right on over to the Strasburg town park. I'm talking with Olivia Hilton and her cohort tomorrow about Front Porch Fridays that kicked off last weekend, and I have to take a deep breath every time I say this. The fish fry float for Father's Day or alliterations. Those are the details you'll get tomorrow when you tune in just a few

minutes after noon.