



MEET THE COMMITTEE

SPORTS, TRAVEL & TOURISM DAY



Dennette Thornton, LC'23

Director, Ticket Hospitality & Travel Programs; Arthur M Blank Sports & Entertainment

Favorite LC Memory: All the different volunteer opportunities we had to give back with our class...and the lifelong friendships.

Advice for LC'25: Step out of your comfort zone and don't be afraid to learn from every viewpoint.



Brad Meriwether, LC'22

Marketing Consultant, Chick-fil-A Corporate Support Center

Favorite LC Memory: Fall Retreat

Advice for LC'25: Be intentional about spending time with a different group of class members at each program day and LC event



Lori Phillips, LC'22

Business Owner, Honeysuckle Biscuits and Bakery

Favorite LC Memory: Spring retreat fun!

Advice for LC'25: Make sure you at least have a small conversation with every single person! Some people are not as outgoing but can be very engaging one on one.



Ellen Smith, LC'15

Partner, Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP

Favorite LC Memory: Too many to name one. Maybe Opening Retreat... can't say more: 285 Rule.

Advice for LC'25: Be present and in the moment. Appreciate that years of experience and work go into making each minute of each day exceptional. Form a relationship with everyone in your class and meet, personally, every committee member and speaker. This is an investment of your time in exposure to these people and relationship building.



Holly Quinlan, LC'00

President & CEO, Cobb Travel & Tourism

Favorite LC Memory: Cheering for the new Leadership Cobb class at Opening Day.

Advice for LC'25: Take advantage of all of the opportunities to meet people and learn more.



Michael Gordon, LC'23

Partner, Mauldin & Jenkins

Favorite LC Memory: Just getting to know our amazing class. Favorite day was Sports and Tourism. And Spring Retreat was a lot of fun.

Advice for LC'25: Just enjoy the year because it will be over before you know it.



Kim Taaca, LC'24

*Vice President, Wellstar Medical Group Operations,
Wellstar Health System*

Favorite LC Memory: Olympics shenanigans at Spring Retreat

Advice for LC'25: Approach your year with a growth mindset. Every event, day, or activity may not be in your wheelhouse, but you can always learn something.



Ellen Strife, LC'17

Realtor, Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby's International Realty

Favorite LC Memory: My class's public health day. It was amazing to see all of what Cobb has to offer!

Advice for LC'25: Enjoy each day - the time really goes so quick.



Luke Mashburn, LC'19

*Department Chair of Kinesiology and Wellness and
Assistant Professor of Sport Management, Georgia Highlands College*

Favorite LC Memory: Spring Retreat

Advice for LC'25: Live in the moment on program days. Your team or boss can wait. Put the phone down, don't check the emails, and soak up every second of this experience.



Kevin Wildes, LC'24

CEO, Wilhome

Favorite LC Memory: Fall retreat when I got to learn more about my classmates and, of course, Blackhawk helicopter rides.

Advice for LC'25: Lean in, and don't be afraid to open up! You'll be glad you did.



Diane Benson-Brown, LC'20

Director of Special Events, LIFE University

Favorite LC Memory: Graduation

Advice for LC'25: It keeps getting better and better.



Jessica Lee, LC'23

Director, Ticket Operations - Atlanta Braves & Truist Park, Atlanta Braves

Favorite LC Memory: 90's redemption at Spring Retreat!

Advice for LC'25: The kool-aid is worth the hype so drink it! And don't be afraid to be vulnerable. A good cry in a safe space feels better than you thought it would.



Karen Caro, LC'02

Director of Marketing & Communications, Cobb Galleria Centre & Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre

Favorite LC Memory: Fall retreat

Advice for LC'25: Keep an open mind at every program day to learn about all aspects of our community. Have fun always!



Matt Dale, LC'24

Executive Vice President, IMPACT Development Management



Lisa Lawrence, LC'05

Commercial Lender, LGE Community Credit Union

MEMORIES



Alexis Amaden, LC'98

EVP of Marketing and Communications, Cobb Chamber of Commerce

Favorite LC Memory: Making lifelong friends and dancing the night away at fall retreat.

Advice for LC'25: Be present and write those thank you notes, they mean the world to those who give so much to the program. Always listen to Kai!!



Stephanie Cox, LC'23

Director of Existing Industry, SelectCobb

Favorite LC Memory: Armed Forces Day

Advice for LC'25: Lean in, take advantage of every opportunity to engage with your class, and remember to pick up the phone when they call!



Richard Garland, LC'24

Assistant City Administrator, City of Smyrna

Favorite LC Memory: I loved Fall Retreat and the ice breaker activities. What a great way to start the LC journey and the beginning of a new family!

Advice for LC'25: Prepare for and expect moments of greatness, in your fellow classmates, speakers, venues, and events. This is a top shelf experience with top shelf people.