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Arkansas Forestry Association is now seeking applicants for a new Emerging Leaders class, which will run from 2023 thru 2024. AFA’s Emerging Leaders Program is designed to educate young or new forestry professionals on the different aspects of the industry in the state with the end goal of making them better leaders. For two years, the class will gather for various Arkansas events, including mill tours, Project Learning Tree training, and forestry economics discussions.

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AFA PAC Supported Candidates Do Well in General Election

34 candidates supported by the PAC will be serving in the 94th General Assembly.

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AFA Emerging Leaders Applications Open for 23-24 Class

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Three Forestry Students the First Recipients of New Scholarship

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students to help them reach their career goals in the state’s forestry industry.

Before the tour began on October 28, Jack Thomas, one of the owners of the Goggans Family Tree Farm, presented scholarships to three University of Arkansas - Monticello students. The funds raised for the financial aid came from the annual clay shoot held on the property.

“My wife and I are passionate about the value of education and, equally as

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important, have strong feelings about supporting causes local to the communities in which we live,” Thomas said.

The idea initially started when he toured the Five Oaks Ag Research and Education Center. Chapman explained that seeing the different habitat initiatives and hearing about the various plans that will be implemented through Five Oaks got him thinking about what they can do on the Goggans Family Tree Farm.

“Similar to Mr. Dunklin and Five Oaks, I was inspired to use our property as a "living lab space" for the next generation of forestry professionals and habitat managers to conduct research, implement best practices, and gain the important experience needed for a career in these fields,” he said.

From there, the Friends of the G Camp Scholarship was born. Its first three recipients were Jovanny Martinez, Jacob Chapman, and Patrick Phillips. Each student has different aspirations for what they would like to do in the future. Chapman, a sophomore, is currently studying wildlife management and conservation and plans to double major in forestry and wildlife.

“I have always loved the outdoors and want to be able to contribute to our natural resources in some way,” Chapman explained. “I cannot be thankful enough to have a property like the Goggans farm to use for my school-related studies. To know that I can have a great place with many different opportunities and resources gives me reassurance that I will always have somewhere to learn more about managing our natural resources.”

Also a sophomore, Martinez hopes to enter the forestry industry after spending much of his time in high school helping his dad with his new logging business. He is still debating on what he would like to do after graduation but is very grateful for the opportunities provided by Thomas.

“It feels great to be offered the Goggans Tree Farm for future research purposes,” Martinez said. “I am excited to conduct future research projects there as it is a great spot. There are not many people who get to have a quality resource like this property.”

Phillips is currently a graduate student at the university with plans to maintain the sustainable forests of Arkansas and enhance the local and state economy through forestry-related practices.

“All over, I love being outdoors, and Arkansas has a wonderful landscape and natural beauty,” Phillips said. “So, the opportunity to give back to that is important to me since I love outdoor activities like hiking, rock climbing, and hunting.”

He added that his plans after college include entering the forestry workforce in a field pertaining to his thesis, which is creating a landowner-controlled forestry cooperative or getting a job in a forest business or economics. Phillips would also like to continue researching and contributing papers to the scientific community in forestry and economics.

Thomas said during the tour that life is better when we do it together, so making the property a “living lab space” was a big part of this scholarship. Something which couldn’t have happened without the help and support of the over 100 friends that joined them for their 10th Annual G Camp Shoot.

“This scholarship is 100% funded from that event, which has become an awesome reunion for many friends and a chance for people to meet others they wouldn’t otherwise get a chance to meet. I am forever grateful to have a place to host this event and am forever indebted to the generations of men who have gone before me to make the G Camp the recreational paradise it is today.”