



LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

DALLAS

LEADERSHIP
EXCHANGE **30**
YEARS



DENVER METRO CHAMBER
**LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION**



30 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE TRIPS

For 30 years, we have taken business, nonprofit and government leaders to the source of innovative, impactful community work on the [Leadership Exchange](#). Our delegates walk away not just with strong relationships and knowledge, but also with energy and inspiration to take on big challenges together to make Colorado even stronger.

We met leaders from grassroots community organizations and Fortune 500 companies, and they reminded us of the importance of collaboration and developing a shared vision for a community. Our delegates are already reconnecting with Dallas leaders on issues ranging from education to community development and food access.

While we can't take all our Leadership Foundation alumni on our LEX trip, we hope you'll follow along with what we learned through this recap and the reflections from your fellow alumni.

We're excited to announce our next LEX will be in Atlanta. You'll see details at the end of the recap. And, you can experience the same kind of immersive learning in your own backyard through [Access Denver](#). Designed for senior leaders who are new to the community, new to their role or looking to deepen their community connections, we offer this deep dive on local issues twice a year – **Feb. 27-28 and Aug. 6-7**.

Sincerely,



Dan Lewis
Executive Director
Denver Metro Chamber
Leadership Foundation



Kirsten Vermulen
Program Director
Denver Metro Chamber
Leadership Foundation
Executive Director
B:CIVIC



44 SPEAKERS

148 DELEGATES



13 EXCURSIONS

30 INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED





EXCURSIONS AND SPEAKERS

On every Leadership Exchange, our delegates disperse across the community, visiting thought leaders who are creating change. Here's where we went in Dallas:

- [Big Thought](#) – Changing the odds by focusing on the whole child through accessible educational programs that reinforce core academic curricula, develop 21st century skills and address social and emotional needs. **Speaker: Big Thought President and CEO Byron Sanders.**
- [Child Poverty Action Lab \(CPAL\) & City Square](#) – Today, one in three children in Dallas grows up impoverished. CPAL was launched as a collective impact coalition with the goal of reducing child poverty by 50% in one generation. **Speaker: CPAL Executive Director Alan Cohen.**
- [Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind](#) – The organization is the largest employer of people who are blind and visually impaired in North Texas, manufacturing and assembling over 300 items in Dallas. Delegates toured the Lighthouse training center and manufacturing floor to learn about new partnerships with fashion designers, state agencies and the U.S. military to expand their social enterprise product line. **Speaker: Communications Director Blake Lindsay.**
- [Bonton Farms](#) – Driven by the mission to restore lives, create jobs and ignite hope in a once forgotten and neglected neighborhood with some of the most marginalized people, Bonton Farms



“For so many of us in the education space, thinking about how we build upon current partnerships and reflect all perspectives to bring about policy change that best serves our students, families and economic vitality, the Commit concept is particularly intriguing, and ties to much of the great work already underway in Denver.”

– Lorie Rabinowitz, Leadership Foundation Board Chair and CEO of the Denver Scholarship Foundation

[Read more](#) about Lorie's experience.



started out as a garden in a small lot – and has grown into two fully functioning farms and the Bonton Market. On this impactful tour, delegates explored the farm and market with staff.

Speaker: Founder Daron Babcock.

- [Dallas Arts District](#) – The Dallas Arts District is the largest contiguous urban arts district in the nation. Six different Pritzker Prize-winning architects have designed buildings in the district, which spans 19 blocks in the northeast corner of downtown Dallas. **Speaker: District Executive Director Lily Weiss.**

- [Café Momentum](#) - This restaurant and culinary training facility transforms young people's lives by providing a positive environment to receive intensive culinary, job and life-skills training, as well as continued mentorship and support. Since its launch in 2015, more than 750 youth have been involved with the restaurant, which has served more than 15,000 diners. **Speaker: Founder Chad Houser and Chief Operating and Development Officer Margaret Reid Windham.**

- [Dallas Farmers Market](#) – Since 1941, the market has been filled with produce and the fruits of local labor. Today, it exists to cultivate a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle for all of North Texas, focusing on secure food sources, community and economic vitality.

- [Klyde Warren Park](#) – The park serves as a central gathering space for Dallas and its visitors. Conceived as a public-private partnership, the 5.2-acre deck park was constructed over one of the busiest freeways in Texas, restoring the connection between the city's arts district and uptown. **Speakers: Tara Green, former executive director of Klyde Warren Park; Bill Lang, vice president of transportation for Jacobs; and Debbie Neubert, senior project manager for Jacobs.**

- [Southwest Airlines Training Center](#) – Greeted with a cheering team of Southwest employees and a walk down their red carpet, delegates met CEO Gary Kelly and then dug deeper into Southwest's innovation, company culture and brand storytelling. Southwest employs 59,000 and serves 130 million customers annually – making it the largest domestic carrier in the nation, as well as one of the most admired companies in the world. **Speaker: Chairman and CEO Gary Kelly.**



“Today, I understand that leadership boils down to multiple paradigms and philosophies – failing frequently, learning through shared experiences and being vulnerable enough to share my story ... The common theme I learned from the Dallas leaders was the importance of storytelling and active listening.”

– Selena Quintanilla, Student Delegate from the University of Colorado-Boulder

[Read more](#) about Selena’s experience on LEX.

- [George W. Bush Library](#) – The George W. Bush Presidential Center is a state-of-the-art facility on the campus of Southern Methodist University, home to the library and museum and the George W. Bush Institute. The library and museum includes a replica of the Oval Office, a Texas Rose Garden and the popular Decision Points Theater, which enables visitors to experience the presidential decision-making process firsthand.
- [Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum](#) – Founded in 1984 by a group of Dallas-area Holocaust survivors, the museum is dedicated to teaching the history of the Holocaust and advancing human rights to combat prejudice, hatred and indifference.
- [Trinity Strand Trail](#) – The Trinity River Project, covering 20 miles, or about 10,000 acres, is an effort to redevelop the Trinity River as it runs near downtown and into Southern Dallas. The project is meant to provide flood protection and create multi-use fields, hiking, biking and walking trails, among other recreational opportunities.





30 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT LEX

- 1) The **first LEX trip** was to Seattle in 1990 – and we returned there in 2003.
- 2) In Seattle we learned about metropolitan cooperation – the **spark for the regionalism** that metro Denver is known for today.
- 3) A lot has changed since 1990: the downtown area has seen revitalization, most recently with Denver Union Station. Denver International Airport opened and was named the best U.S. airport in 2019 by Skytrax (based on traveler surveys). Our economy has diversified, and we now have nine major industries. We've seen investments in the arts, sports and tourism. And, often our LEX delegates have been engaged in this work to **strengthen our community**.
- 4) LEX was the second program of the Leadership Foundation – the oldest program is Leadership Denver, which **celebrated its 45th class** in 2019.
- 5) In 30 years, **we've traveled 36,169 miles, spanning North America and Europe**. With all those trips we've circled the globe almost one and a half times.
- 6) We love to learn – and that includes the language of the places we visit. We've **spoken Spanish, French and German** on our journeys.
- 7) Our furthest trip was to Munich, Germany – our **first intercontinental trip** – in 2017.
- 8) Our trips are normally three days and two nights, but with the distance, our Munich trip grew to **five days**.

“Now that institutions and cities are striving to be more inclusive and advancing ideas that uplift and celebrate what makes us unique as Americans, it is encouraging to see models like Dallas emerge. Even more so, it is exciting to know that Denver's political and business leadership are also challenging antiquated systems and habits of thought that have prevented greater connectivity and civic engagement.”

– Malik Robinson, first-time Delegate and Executive Director of Cleo Parker Robinson Dance

[Read more](#) about Malik's LEX experience.





9) While in Munich, we learned more about their apprenticeship model and how it can be applied to our education system. Did you know? Colorado is building the most educated workforce in the country – with **74 percent of jobs** requiring some education after high school.

10) Our closest trip? To **Salt Lake City** in 2016.

11) Our first LEX took more than 80 business leaders – today we welcome **160 business and community leaders**.

12) More than **3,000 leaders** have traveled as delegates on LEX.

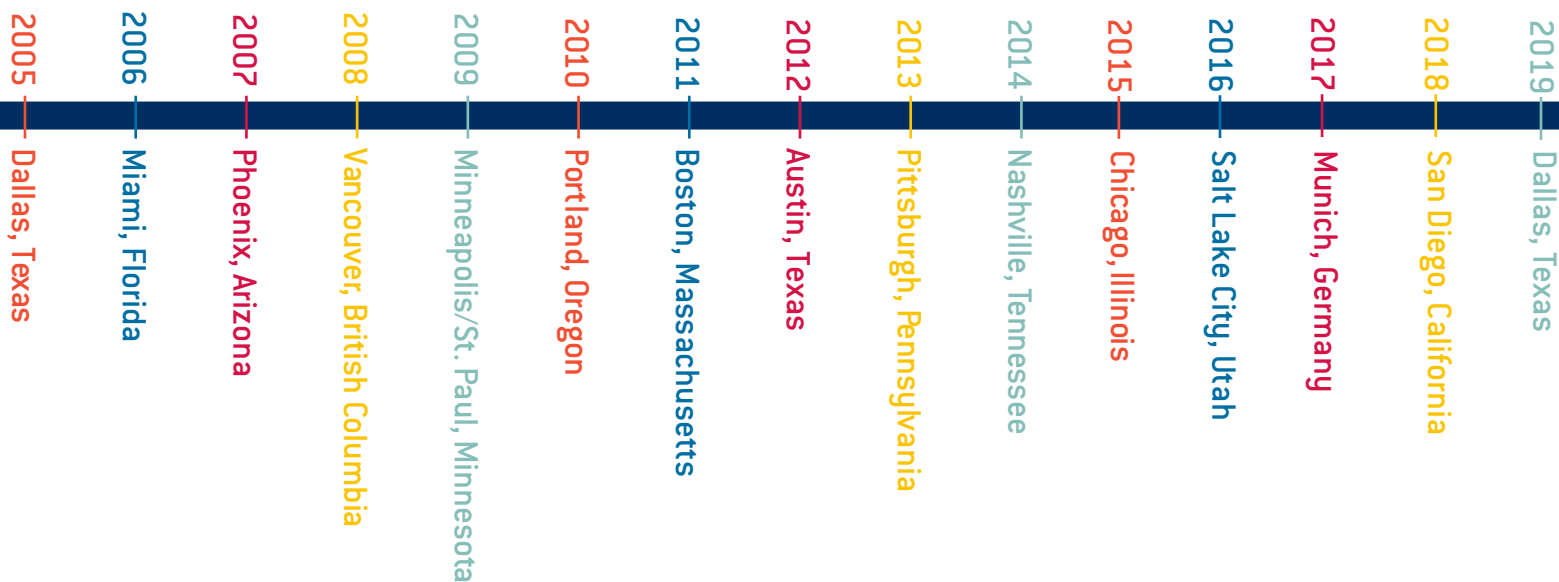
13) And, they learned from **more than 900 leaders**, who shared their expertise on these trips.

14) Former Gov. John Hickenlooper gave a **shout-out to LEX in his memoir** “The Opposite of Woe: My Life in Beer and Politics,” highlighting his attendance on LEX: Atlanta in 2002, when he was considering his run for mayor of Denver.

15) So nice we visited twice? There are **nine communities** that we’ve returned to as we continue our learning: Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Minneapolis-St. Paul, San Diego, Seattle and Vancouver.

16) Visiting a high-tech high school in San Diego was the precursor to the **founding of the Denver Schools of Science and Technology**, which now serves 6,000 students across nine middle schools and six high schools in Denver and Aurora.

17) Trips to Toronto and Atlanta showed us what was possible when developing a transit system and placemaking along that system – important context in **advance of FasTracks**,



the 122-mile rail and 18-mile bus rapid transit system approved by voters in 2004.

18) A tour of Carnegie Mellon’s Entertainment Technology Center on LEX: Pittsburgh sparked a partnership between Comcast and University of Colorado Denver to **create the Comcast Media and Technology Center**. Opened in 2017 on the CU Denver campus, it brings together students from across disciplines with the aim to inspire innovation, creativity and research.

19) Seeing the work done by Chicago Public Schools to use data to identify students who were veering off track and providing support, Colorado Succeeds adapted a version for Colorado in 2016 – the **Colorado Readiness Report**.

20) A tour of **The Other Side Academy** in Salt Lake City had an impact on a number of LEX delegates, who witnessed the transformative power of the two-year mentoring program on those who have previously been incarcerated or dealt with substance abuse. Inspired by the opportunity, a group of delegates led by Andrew Schmidt raised nearly \$3 million and partnered with TOSA: Salt Lake to open a Denver campus in 2019.

21) For his work leading TOSA: Denver, Andrew Schmidt was a **2019 9NEWS Leader of the Year finalist**. Watch more about him [here](#).

22) Our **Executive Director Dan Lewis** first attended as a delegate of LEX to Vancouver in 2008. He joined the Leadership Foundation in 2015 and traveled with us to Chicago as the organization’s leader – and he’s been on 11 LEX trips in total.

23) LEX is invitation-only to reflect our diverse business community and those who have expertise in the areas we’re discussing, but did you know that you can **submit a nomination** to attend LEX? Learn more [here](#).

24) We also **provide scholarships** to attend LEX or any of the programs our Leadership

Foundation offers to ensure we open the door to more leaders with diverse viewpoints and backgrounds. Learn more about our [Leading Colorado Scholarship Fund](#), and how you can support leaders on their journey.

25) To **celebrate our 30th trip**, poet Theo Wilson shared what the experience is like, based on his experience on LEX: San Diego. You can hear his poem, set to video, [here](#).

26) Speaking of San Diego, when we visited in 2018, we learned about a project they've taken on with the Brookings Institution to understand disparity in their community. We want to better understand this in our community as well, and how we can help more people access economic opportunities we've worked so hard to create. We are leading these efforts as [Prosper CO](#), thanks to the **support of 31 organizations** from across sectors and critical research partners Brookings and City Center at University of Colorado Denver.

27) Did you know we have **30 pieces of flair**? We create a pin for each trip, which we give to our delegates.

28) Our LEX Program Director Kirsten Vermulen has planned **seven of our LEXs** – that's more than one-fifth of all LEX trips planned.

29) On our **30th trip to Dallas**, we focused on building strong talent and helping businesses lead the way in investing in a community and its success.

30) **Where are we headed next?** Atlanta, which we last visited in 2002.



“The regions we have visited on LEX truly open themselves up for our delegates to learn, and it has resulted in many of our biggest successes here at home ... What makes our LEX program work is that 150 civic leaders take the time to learn together and then exhibit the leadership to implement those ideas.”

– Kelly Brough, President and CEO of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

[Read more](#) about Kelly's experience.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my experience on the LEX trip in Dallas. It opened my eyes to the issues being addressed by the City of Dallas and the similarities to what we are experiencing in Denver. The presentations and excursions were thought provoking and energized me as a leader to think about how we can apply these lessons here in our great City of Denver.”

– Bill Lang, Vice President of Transportation for Jacobs, which chaired the LEX: Dallas trip

[Read more](#) about Bill's experience.





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“The LEX trip to Dallas was very impressive. Each excursion reinforced the need for Denver to be more collaborative with decision-making. The Dallas communities came together to work on a common cause. This resulted in the innovation, commitment and successes experienced in Dallas. Denver will find our own path and realize our own potential. LEX allows a space and time for this to happen.”

– Diane Reinhard, Leadership Foundation Board Member and Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer for Craig Hospital

[Read more](#) about Diane’s experience.

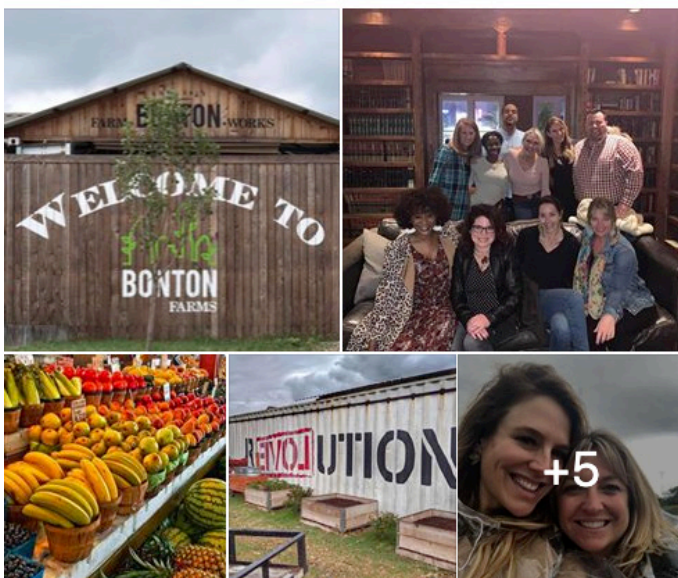


SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT



Gloria Schoch is with Malik Robinson and 11 others.
October 28, 2019 · 🌐

From seeding social change through urban farming, goat selfies in the largest US urban forest, food forward mixed-use developments, and insights into Southwest Airlines world renowned big-hearted culture through authentic storytelling, #LEX19 stretched our lenses in so many unexpected ways. Kudos to the Kirsten Vermulen, Lorie Rabinowitz & the entire Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation team for curating another inspiring trip! #boardduties #30years



👍❤️ You and 61 others

7 Comments



Like



Comment



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J. J. Ament • 2nd
CEO of Colorado's largest private sector Economic Development Organi...
2mo · 🌐

Happy to lead a conversation with Gary Kelly, Chairman and CEO of Southwest Airlines, today at the Denver Metro Chamber's Leadership Exchange Trip in Dallas.



LeadershipFoundation on Twitter

twitter.com

👍❤️🌐 72 · 2 Comments



Dr. Carrie B. Hauser @CMCPresident · Oct 25, 2019
Remarkable leader @cynthmarshall @dallasmavs CEO spends time with @DenLeadership @DenChamber #LEX19 #Dallas



Craig Hall @craighall · Oct 28, 2019
Thank you @DenLeadership for inviting me to speak to your impressive group of Denver civic and business leaders last Friday at #LEX19 @nashersculpture. It was a great way to collaborate and knowledge-share about the art of placemaking in our cities.



🔄 5

❤️ 15



Jennifer Hallam @jhallam · Oct 26, 2019
Thank you @southwestair for your incredible service and patience with the #LEX19 group from @denleadership. You all rock!! @ Dallas, Texas [instagram.com/p/B4GMFialWwbK...](https://www.instagram.com/p/B4GMFialWwbK...)



🔄

❤️ 3



Will Simpkins, Ed.D. @willsimpkins · Oct 24, 2019
So wonderful to be with @bigthought here in Dallas for #lex19 talking about creativity and social wellbeing!



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🔄

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2019 LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE: DALLAS



Anthony Aragon
October 24, 2019 · 🌐

Happy Thursday!! Off to Dallas for the Chamber Leadership Exchange LEX trip! I definitely hit the Mentor jackpot. Christine Benero is my Mentor on the trip 😊 #LEX19



👍❤️ Laura Giocomo Rizzo and 103 others 8 Comments 1 Share

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Jim Licko
@DenverPRguy

Some of the #LEX19 "DeleGoats"
@DenLeadership @BontonFarms #DadJokes

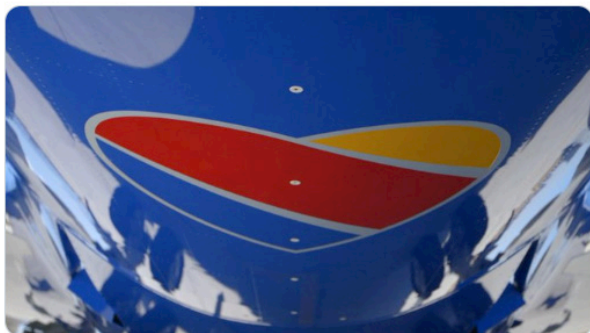


2:43 PM · Oct 24, 2019 from Texas, USA · Twitter for iPhone

2 Retweets 5 Likes



Dustin Whistler @DustinWhistler · Oct 25, 2019
At Southwest HQ in Dallas on #LEX19. Culture: Warrior's Heart, Servant's Approach and a Happy Attitude @SouthwestAir



💬 1 ❤️ 3 ➦



Tasha L. Jones @tashalvjones · Oct 26, 2019
Thank you, @DenLeadership and @SouthwestAir for a phenomenal #LEX19 experience. Ready to return to #DENVER full of inspiration from #DALLAS.



💬 1 ➦ 1 ❤️ 4 ➦

Scott Hutchings @ScottHutchings1 · Oct 25, 2019
 #LEX19 this was amazing! What a way to head into a meeting with my friend @jonlehmnn1 @SouthwestAir CEO!



6 2 24

Savinay Chandrasekhar is at Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation.
 October 25, 2019 · Denver · 🌐

Nearly 2 years ago I remember reading about Cynt Marshall joining the Dallas Mavericks as CEO to overhaul a culture that was toxic at best and destructive at worst. I was excited to see how her leadership showed up.

Today at #LEX19, we got to see the results. We were able to hear from Cynt and leadership from AT&T and Jacobs about cultural transformations in their orgs. What has happened at the Mavs in the past two years is perhaps most remarkable.

In Sep 2017, reports surfaced that the then-CEO of the Mavs had not only allowed a culture that ignored reports of harassment and discrimination, but had himself been accused of multiple incidents of harassment and discrimination.

Owner Mark Cuban immediately fired him and brought in Cynt to run the show.

Cynt talked to every single one of the 140 employees, crafted a 100-day plan, and executed it exceptionally. Now the Mavs are not only one of the most diverse leadership organizations in the NBA (with women and people of color comprising nearly half the leadership team) but also one of the most exciting and promising young teams in the NBA.

Surprise — strong cultures of inclusion and diversity aren't ends in and of themselves — they lead to exceptional results.

<https://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/.../09/23/Opin.../FORUM.aspx>



39

2 Comments

Su Hawk · 2nd
 Association, STEM and Non-Profit Leader Focused on Transformative Initiati...
 2mo · 🌐

LEX is one of the most influential programs in our state. Proud to have been on the '95/Vancouver, '96/Boston, '97/San Francisco, and '98/Toronto trips as a VP at the Chamber, when **Carolyn Love PhD** successfully coordinated. Such a great history recap from **Kirsten Vermulen**, who with **Dan Lewis** is doing such great work!



Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation

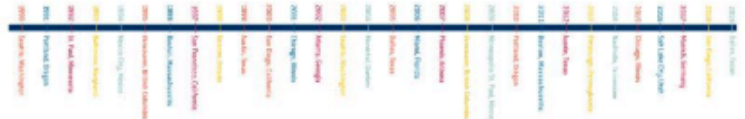
2,128 followers

2mo · 🌐

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Tomorrow we jet off to #Dallas for our 30th Leadership Exchange trip, and we've been to a lot of amazing cities since our first trip to Seattle.

...see more



30 Things You Didn't Know About LEX

denverleadership.org



Kirsten Vermulen · 1st
 Empowering Others For Impact
 2mo · 🌐

Thank you **Café Momentum**!

Such a powerful model to change lives with employment, a place to find hope and a future supported by the extended Dallas family - serving 800 youth - ending recidivism - saving 35 Million for TX taxpayers by shedding assumptions, getting under root causes and leading with heart!

#lex19 #socialenterprises #dallas #goodbusiness #leadershipmatters



2019 LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE: DALLAS



DALLAS PHOTOS





VIEW ALL PHOTOS FROM
THE 2019 TRIP TO DALLAS



LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE



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**By invitation only. Nominations accepted at denverleadership.org/leadershipexchange.*



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