

student leadership

The Student Leadership Training Program Alumni Newsletter

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FEBRUARY-MARCH, 2005

From where I sit by Jim Fitzgerald

This afternoon when I went to the mailbox to retrieve the usual onslaught of junk mail, solicitations from real estate agents, and bills -- there was a little white envelope addressed in crayon bearing no return address.

I get a lot of mail. I get a lot of mail from campers and from students who have been in my audiences. I rarely get any mail that is addressed in crayon -- in fact I can only remember one -- it was addressed in Orange Crayon and came from a staffer who was campaigning for the staff shirts to be orange (it was also on orange paper and contained a poem "Ode to orange.") But I digress.

Naturally my curiosity was fairly high and after being met and greeted by my dog (you gotta love dogs whether you are gone 10 minutes or 10 days they greet you with serious enthusiasm) as well as ignored by the cat. I proceeded to my comfy chair to open the crayoned envelope.

Inside the envelope was a 10 dollar bill and a letter. The letter was from me to me. For the first time in a very long time

I wrote a letter to myself at camp this past summer. I don't remember addressing it in crayon -- but it was pretty late on Friday night when I decided to write it.

I was impressed at how coherent it was. I had not started to write it until after Adam and I went to bed which was after the slide show was done which made it considerably past 3. It took me a while to get into the swing of writing it -- I spent a little too much time dwelling on the fact that part of me was really dreading the Staff Honoring Chair the next day (it was week 3 and I was facing the reality of Alyssa's final hours as CC). Anyway the interesting points were very, well . . . interesting . . .

- I had hoped that by Feb 1 we would have written two new books -- I just finished number 1 and number 2 is well on its way.

- I had hoped that Adam would get a job he wanted

- I had hoped that we had a Successful REE

- I had hoped that we

would be able to begin exploring new web possibilities -- I had never dreamed they would be this good nor done this soon.

- I had hoped that we would be able to get the Alumni Association started or at least with plans in place to have elections by the Showcase.

- I had hoped that I could be planning to direct my last camp this summer

- I had hoped that we would find the right play for the coming summer And as usual I went on and on with hopes and dreams -- very specific for some folks . . .

I'm glad I sent it. The 10 bucks really made me smile -- so did the whole letter. Enjoy yours when it arrives.

Summer Conferences

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 20 weeks to go before our summer conferences kick off. All of the applications are available on line as pdf files at

www.sltp.info

OTS

There is one session which is open to all forms of officer teams -- from full cabi-

nets to co-captains -- from clubs to classes to student government. (The team requirement is that there must be at least a pair of officers)

July 1-2

LTC

There are four sessions. Although there are just over 110 slots available at this point.

July 5-9;
July 12-16;

July 26-30
and Aug 2-6

AIC

There are three sessions and approximately 38 slots available.

July 13-16;
July 27-30;
and Aug 3-6

TLC

There is only one session and there are 3 slots left.

July 6-9

Adviser Certification

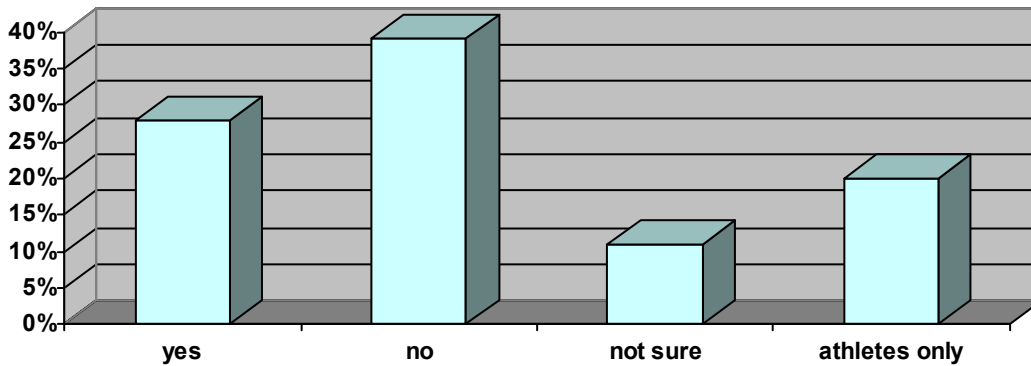
There is only one session and there are 10 slots left.

July 27-30

And the Survey says ...

Last month on the SLTP home page, we asked the question:

Should students have to take drug tests to participate in cocurricular activities?



I voted yes by Kathy Dunn, Grade 6 Teacher, Student Council Adviser

It is imperative that we promote the health and long term well being of our students. Drug use of any kind damages the brain. When we allow students to participate in student activities even though they may be experimenting with drugs, we are actually sending the message that we approve.

Mandatory drug testing may also improve scores on the federally mandated tests because drugs impair the thought proc-

esses in the frontal lobe of the brain.

My children participated in high school athletic, music and drama activities. They and other "clean" students were penalized because other students took drugs.

The cost of drug testing is dwarfed by the potential savings. It is estimated that drugs cost our country as much as 300 billion each year. If we could save 10

percent by forcing intervention through drug testing, the bonus could be extra money for education.

I voted no by Helen Fitzgerald, SLTP Staff—CASA Executive Director

Mandatory drug testing for music, for band, for chorus, for my husband's famous cookie cupcake club!! Come on! First of all who will pay for this?

School budgets are ridiculously tight as it is. Where would the money come from to test one third of the school?

Cocurricular activities are not EXTRA. They provide the students the

sense of belonging that is imperative for learning to be optimized.

Should we be doing everything we can to keep kids from using drugs—of course. But turning registration for activities into a scene from CSI is not the way to do it.

Mandatory drug testing only makes sense when it is imperative — such as for students operating machines in shop classes, or for seeking per-

formance enhancing drugs for athletes.

The drug problems of our youth deserve better than a band-aid approach. Serious problems require serious solutions.

The Forgotten, but Desperately Needed Act of Service

By Liz Chase, Alumni Association Executive Board

With the media bringing such horrific tragedies as the tsunami disaster right to us in our homes, it is hard not to respond and contribute to relief in some way. However, in the rush to aid those over seas, we must not forget those in our own country who need our help just as desperately. These fellow United States citizens do not need our money, clothes, or food necessarily, but they do need something more... our blood.

Every year, high schools all over the country sponsor a

blood drive in conjuncture with the American Red Cross. The nation's blood bank is low and in desperate need of replenishing. Due to sport coaches restricting their players from donating, the pool of eligible applicants is greatly diminished.

The procedure is relatively painless... just one tiny pinch at the beginning and one tiny pinch at the end. So why haven't you donated yet?

For eligibility guidelines please visit the American Red Cross at:

http://www.redcross.org/services/biomed/0,1082,0_557_00.html

Leadership and Video Games

John Beck and Mitchell Wade, the authors of *Got Game: How the Gamer Generation is Reshaping Business Forever*, say "video games are changing American culture as powerfully as rock n roll did four decades ago."

Among the many points they raise in their book to prove their point, there are three that directly apply to leadership.

- Video games teach players to believe that they can be the

star.

- Players learn that there is always a solution
- Gamers learn that failure is a pathway to success.

Gamers learn that anyone can lead. They learn that solutions can be found through persistence and thinking outside the box. Gamers also learn that failure is not doom, it is often necessary to determine effective solu-

tions.

Those are serious leadership lessons.

VIDEO GAMES ARE CHANGING AMERICAN CULTURE AS POWERFULLY AS ROCK N ROLL DID 4 DECADES AGO.

Ask the doctor

Dear Doctor SLTP,

Our new student council adviser will not stay after school more than one afternoon each week, and she refuses to allow us to stage our annual lock-in.

What can we do?

WONDERING IN RI

Dear Wondering,

We assume you have already spoken with your principal. If not, that is the place to start. If your principal is supporting the adviser's stand on the meetings and the lock in. You need to find out why. If possible get the answer in writing.

Knowing why will allow you to begin planning an approach towards a solution. Before

you decide to go over your principal's head — meet with him/her several more times for clarification and to make proposals on solutions.

Eventually you may need to take your case to the superintendent or school committee — plan this presentation to be as professional as possible.

Good luck!

Portfolios = Scholarships

Personal Professional Portfolio Overview

At the core of the SLTP experience is the integration of learning with personal and professional development. It is possible to view the experience of SLTP as a set of training sessions, skills to learn, lessons to present and experiences to share. As you can see, when we write that perception it seems shallow and incomplete because it is. Purposeful learning is our goal. Purposeful learning requires connecting and relating your specific learnings and understanding gleaned through your SLTP experience to life's lessons acquired in the college classroom, in your co-curricular activities, through your service experiences,

through your part time job or through other your volunteer work.

A Personal Professional Portfolio is designed to be systematic, intentional, visible and creditable. It should enhance your professional image for job applications, college applications, scholarships and interviews. That however is truly only a by-product of its primary function.

Creating a Personal Professional Portfolio will involve writing about ALL of your learning experiences as they relate to the important dimensions and skills that professionals possess. As you assemble a collection of your best work, you will naturally and systematically be reflecting on those experiences thereby increasing your learning and understandings.

Your task is to assemble a valuable set of credentials, a paper trail of reference that showcases your talents, accomplishments and personal strengths.

Dimensions and Skills

In creating your Personal Professional Portfolio, you will be documenting your acquisition of knowledge, skills and expertise in six Dimensions and six Skills that are essential to a true professional.

Dimensions

Career Exploration
Intercultural Perspectives

Leadership / Initiative
Responsibility / Citizenship
Values and Ethics
Teamwork and Teambuilding

Skills

Analytical Ability
Cooperative Learning & Collaboration
Interpersonal Skills
Oral communication
Written Communication
Information / Computer Literacy

Nuts and Bolts—Putting it all together

1. Buy the book AND a box

Purchase a quality 3 ring binder now, it will serve as a reminder. The box will be for storage of the "stuff".

2. Divide and conquer

Use tabbed dividers to organize and separate the contents of your portfolio.

3. Use this list as a starting point for ideas of information and items to include in your portfolio:

Table of contents
Statement of purpose
Resume – full
References
Letters of Recommendation
Transcripts (if required)

Personal statement (educational philosophy; business philosophy – depending on aims

Personal Goals
Leadership / Management theory
Samples / evidence
Photos of relevant experience
Successes / failures / results

4. Tips

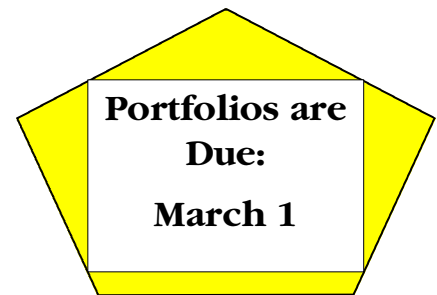
Keep it simple. Don't overload the portfolio with page after page of lengthy text or repetitive photos.

Keep it manageable. That means easy to hold and peruse.

Keep it timely. Keep it current and up to date.

Include pictures. Not too many and not too few – just right.

Make copies. Use copies in your



portfolio. For the picture pages, make copies on a color copier. Keep the originals on file.

Make it clear. Use clear plastic inserts to keep your pages neat and clean.

Keep it reader friendly. Use 12 point type for readability.

5. Work your plan

6. Learn from the experience

National Day of Silence—April 13, 2005

The Day of Silence, a project of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) in collaboration with the United States Student Association (USSA), is a student-led day of action where those who support making anti-LGBT bias unacceptable in schools take a day-long vow of silence to recognize and protest the discrimination and harassment -- in effect, the silencing -- experienced by LGBT students and their allies.

The Day of Silence is sched-

uled to take place on **April 13, 2005**.

The Day of Silence is an awesome opportunity to create more inclusive school environments and make some noise by being visibly silent. The Day of Silence has been taking place annually since 1996 and this year tens of thousands of students are expected to participate. Last year many of the SLTP member high schools and colleges participated.

For more information about the Day of Silence visit:

<http://www.dayofsilence.org/>

The DifferenceMaker Showcase—April 3, 2005

The *DifferenceMaker Showcase* is a very special conference. We believe that service should not be a “have to.” Service should be a “get to.” Service is leadership in action. This conference is about expanding service opportunities, learning how to stage particular events and exploring the possibilities for service inside and outside of school.

Our attendance goal is 250 – just one carload. It’s

only 10 bucks each!

We’ll learn who won the Student Leader of the Year.

We’ll learn who won citations for Public Service.

We’ll learn who won citations for Personal Development.

We’ll celebrate the Lifetime of Difference Award winners.

We’ll learn, we’ll listen, we’ll laugh, we’ll see old friends and make some new

ones.

So mark your calendar now – bring your friends and your friends’ friends for a spectacular spring afternoon. It’s **Sunday, April 3rd.**

See page 9 for a registration form.

Try this one: Extreme makeover

This activity works well as part of a lock-in program or a special evening program. It can help to promote some serious discussions about basic respect and acceptance.

You’ll need makeup, hair gel, hair spray, nail polish and clothing from a thrift store.

Form two groups and have each group choose one person to be “made over.” The groups job is to transform

the person with an extreme makeover. Encourage the groups to have fun and to not take the makeovers too seriously.

Unless you are sure that you can control the actions of your males—do not allow them to be made over. The guys tend to take the makeover as an opportunity to be very offensive.

When the transformations

are complete try these questions to stimulate discussion:

- What are the top 5 reasons people want to change who they are?
- Why are celebrities setting our standards?

Special Environmental Service Ideas

Rapid advances in technology come with a price: the equally rapid pace of obsolescence. The average lifespan of a computer, for example, will have dropped from 4.5 years in 1992 to approximately two years by 2005.

As a result, "e-waste"--discarded computers, TVs, cell phones, and other electronics--comprises one to four percent of the municipal solid waste stream, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. What's worse, this equipment is often made from non-renewable resources and contains hazardous chemicals including lead, chromium, cadmium, and mercury.

Here are some ways you can cut down on this e-waste:

Buying

* Before you buy replacement technology, assess your current equipment. Can you improve your computer's performance with a memory or video card upgrade? Do you need a cell phone with all

the newest features when your old one works just fine? Is it worth buying a new portable CD player if you eventually want an MP3 player?

* Choose a product that has all the features you will need for the foreseeable future, has space to add components such as memory if needed, or takes the place of two separate gadgets (for example, you could consolidate equipment by buying a cell phone with integrated personal organizer, or a printer with integrated scanner or fax).
* Purchase used or refurbished electronics (but be aware that these products might not come with a warranty).

Reusing

* Before discarding obsolete electronics, find out whether a local repair shop, electronics training program, or even a technologically inclined friend or family member could use it for parts or practice.

* Consider donating used electronics to a nonprofit organization or shelter. Some organizations, for example, reprogram used cell phones for emergency use by senior citizens or victims of domestic violence. Computers that are less than five years old should be donated through an electronics refurbisher (see the link below), who will clean out old

files and software and ensure all of the components are running properly. Computers that are more than five years old should be recycled, since software and technical support for older systems is difficult to find.

Recycling

* General electronics: Many cities and towns now offer electronics recycling as part of their household hazardous waste collection program.

Contact your local public works department to find out what equipment it will accept and on what days; some charge a small fee per item.

* Computers: If your town does not accept computers, look for a commercial recycler that can break down and distribute usable components and dispose of the rest properly (see the links below).

* Cell phones: Many cell phone manufacturers and service providers will take back used phones for reuse or recycling.

Information on the web

For more information:

- EPA--eCycling
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67496>
- High Tech Goes Green
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67497>
- Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67498>
- Computer Take Back Campaign
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67499>

- Ten Tips for Donating a Computer
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67500>
- MAR Refurbishers
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67501>
- Electronic Industries Alliance--Cell Phone Recycling and Donation Programs
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67502>

- EPA--Computer Take Back Options
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67503>
- Recycling Resources
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67504>
- Electronic Industries Alliance--National Database of Reuse and Recycling Programs
<http://www.ucsaction.org/ctt.asp?u=111402&l=67505>
- www.ecologyproject.org

Newsletters for Parents of Student Leaders

Among the features of our newly restructured website is the full service section for the parents of student leaders. We sought contributions from Parents at all of the Parent Orientation Programs last summer, and the results are plain to see.

In the Parent section there is a great deal of information to help explain the feelings and the dynamics of SLTP. Something we

all struggle to explain to anyone who has never attended our program. There are resources.

There are suggestions on how to support an active student leader, and beginning this month—there is a sign up for a monthly newsletter.

The newsletter is called “True Points” and like this newsletter it will be available each month electronically.

We hope to provide parents with information on what is going on in student activities and we hope to provide as much support as we can—check it out yourself, and then get your parents to check it out and register for it.

Each month we will post a newsletter to the web—and each month we will send parents the notification by email of its posting.

Conference Profile—TLC

The Leadership Center is our newest conference. The concept is simple — an exploration of leadership learnings, understandings and practices with serious, committed students of leadership.

The enrollment has been limited to twelve students. The primary instructor will be our own Dr. Jim Fitzgerald.

The successful applicants will be graduates of both LTC and ALC and will have demonstrated the ability and desire to make a difference. Each applicant will be asked to

either bring a project they have been working on or will develop a project during the session.

Central to the core of the curriculum will be a study of organizational behavior and group process. Increasing participation, increasing ownership, motivating membership, dealing with finances, increasing resources, cutting through “red tape” and creating working teams are among the other curricular topics.

Among the topics to be explored will be SLTP itself. Dis-

secting the SLTP operational model will provide insight into a learning organization. The conference will also explore leadership ethics and responsibilities.

It is a full plate. And every approach will be advantaged. Last summer during the very first meal all of the delegates were blindfolded. It was a serious problem solving experience.

To be sure, it will be wrapped in a package that includes plenty of fun, enthusiasm and friendship—afterall this is SLTP.

Alumni Association News

When you visit the newly enhanced SLTP website, be sure to visit the Alumni pages. There you will find a great deal of information and a great many resources.

Register for your SLTP Alumni Card, which will make possible an even wider array of

services.

If you have moved or if you believe we do not have your correct snail mail address or email address, please visit the change of address page to update your information.

The Alumni Association Executive Board met recently at

Trinity College in Hartford to begin planning events and to work on the DifferenceMaker Showcase. If you have ideas or suggestions for the Alumni Association please tap them to Jen McGonagle, our Alumni Relations Liaison.

jen@sltp.info

The 2005 SLTP Conference Schedule

Where leaders learn HOW
to make a difference!

- **The DifferenceMaker Showcase**
April 3
- **Leadership Training Conferences (4)**
July 5 - 9; July 12 - 16; July 26 - 30;
Aug 2 - 6
- **Advanced Leadership Conferences (3)**
July 13 - 16; July 27 - 30; Aug 3 - 6
- **The Leadership Center**
July 6 - 9
- **Officer Training Seminar**
July 1 - 2
- **Adviser Certification**
July 27 - 30
- **The ReEnergizer Conference**
November 26

We're on the
Web!
www.sltp.info
Information for
Parents, Teachers,
Students,
Administrators
Applications *
Photos

Monthly Activity Spotlight

Operation R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Reality, Equality, Sincerity, Politeness, Encouragement, Caring, Timeliness

By Liz Chase, Alumni Association Executive Board

Everyone knows what I mean when I say that there are ticking time bombs all around us. It could be the boy who sits in the cafeteria at lunch all by himself, buried behind a book. Maybe it's the girl who sits in the front seat of the bus with her headphones blaring as she stares out the window. Or maybe, that ticking time bomb is you.

It's hard to look at someone and see what's going on behind the scenes. To quote an excellent play, "Bang, Bang You're Dead," "you make your face a mask. A mask that hides your face. A mask that hides the pain. A pain that eats your heart. A heart nobody knows."

We have all had experiences

that have deeply touched us and for some, have made us question whether or not life was even worth living anymore. But now there is a way to diffuse these bombs before one ruins someone's life and the lives of those around them.

Each one of us is called a student leader for a reason. We are all students, and we all have felt the need to step up to the challenge of working to make our schools better places. Now is not the time to find excuses to procrastinate, but the time to start actually working on that goal.

Operation R.E.S.P.E.C.T. was my answer to this challenge. Each of the seven words that make up the acronym

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. is an aspect of how we SHOULD be treating each other. Operation R.E.S.P.E.C.T. is completely student run and managed and is working to serve as a reminder that our words and actions towards others can deeply affect them.

Isn't it time you took up the challenge?

Rememberies by Phil Loomis, SLTP Staff

One of the most distinct memories I have maintained from my TLC experience last year was an activity that we did early in the week. The activity led into our discussions about ethics and morals in leadership; forcing us to make some hard decisions that compromised such values. We were given a scenario about the typical "it's the end of the world...who will you save" theme, but we were given a dossier on about 10 people. We could only

save maybe 3 or 4 and had to choose which ones we would want to save. Each of the people had weaknesses and strengths that were taken into consideration. After we made our choices as to who we would save, the TLC'ers came together as a group to discuss our conclusions.

Naturally, it was not unanimous as to who we wanted to keep. Our discussions became a little hostile and people were vigorously campaigning to leave

one person or another out of the shelter to meet the end of civilization. It was funny to see and be a part of a rabid, wild pack of student leaders. Needless to say we were labeled as hostile, brutal, heartless people for the rest of the week.

In addition to being fun and frivolously stressful, this activity also spawned a great deal of interesting discussion and was well worth the frustration.

Tech time with Adam by Adam Travis, SLTP Conference Director

Computers continue to become more and more prevalent in our lives. For student leaders, they can provide valuable tools for organizing, communicating, researching, and more. Computers are supposed to help us and save valuable time, but when things go wrong any productivity gains can quickly be lost. This series is designed to help keep your computers up and running, in order to help keep you up and running.

When it comes to protecting your computer from Viruses and other threats, there is a lot of bad advice out there, and even more misinformation. There is no such thing as perfect protection, but using many approaches can help keep you safe.

First and foremost, you need to have a good Antivirus program. It must be one that is constantly protecting you and can automatically update itself when you are online. In June 2004, PC World magazine tested a number of leading programs. They found McAfee VirusScan to be the most

effective but a little difficult to use; Norton AntiVirus to be almost as effective and a little easier to use; and PC-cillin (from Trend Micro) to be sufficiently effective, and very easy to use (also the only one to offer free telephone tech support). PC-cillin also costs less than it's main competitors. In my personal experience, McAfee works great on Windows XP, but has problems with other operating systems, Norton is effective, but does things that I don't want it to do. I haven't used PC-cillin, but other software from Trend Micro has been effective and easy to use. I know a lot of Macintosh users that think they are immune to viruses, and they couldn't be more wrong—this is software that everyone needs.

Now having Antivirus software is not enough, you must keep it updated with the latest Virus Definitions. Most companies require you to renew your subscription with them each year in order to get these updates. It is absolutely critical that you do this—most companies release new virus definitions at least once a

week, so being more than two weeks out of date can be a serious weakness.

For more information, see <http://>

www.pcworld.com/reviews/article/0,aid,115939,00.asp

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