

student leadership

The Student Leadership Training Program

Leaders walk their talk.

Linkage

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 8 THE SLTP ALUMNI NEWSLETTER APRIL / MAY, 2005

An interview with "Fitz" by Christine Fitzsimmons SLTP alumnae '03

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Do you consider yourself a leader and why?

Yes, because I know I have made a difference.

Is leadership important to you and if so why?

In the abstract, leadership is vital to life. Leaders stand up for what is right and that is pivotal to the success of society.

How do you define leadership?

Leadership is evidenced by making a difference. So leaders come in lots of different flavors. The school crossing guard who takes time to get to know kids, who shares a smile and genuinely cares for the kids helps to create in those kids a sense of belonging to the community - therefore that school crossing guard is a community leader.

So making a difference is a key ingredient. The depth and range of the differences made define the flavor (weight) of the leadership. Which should not be taken to mean the importance of the leadership. Many so called leaders in business or politics are so named merely because they wield enormous power. Power does NOT define leadership. Power is power.

Has your definition of leadership changes over time, and if so how?

Certainly it has. As a young man it was easy to confuse power and leadership. It takes quite a while to sort that out.

What are some defining moments in your life and how has this shaped you as a leader?

Founding the leadership program -- defending it and standing by its educational and non profit philosophy in the face of unbelievable odds -- those two events proved the basic philosophy of SLTP - we walk our talk and a leader should stand up for what is right even when standing alone.

How can you influence others to be a leader?

By example -- by writing -- and by teaching ... 3 things I do every day.

When did you first realize that leadership was important to you?

In high school facing some of the ridiculous rules that are pure examples of power and control that had nothing to do with the educational mission of the school.

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What's available this summer?

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 16 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 90 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 28 slots available.

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

TLC

There is only one session and there is only 1 slot left.

July 6-9

Adviser Certification

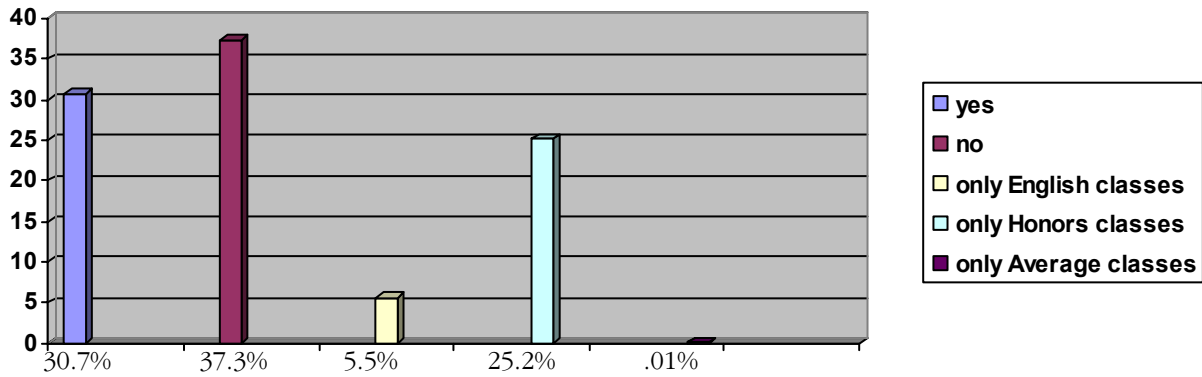
There is only one session and there are 8 slots left.

July 27-30

And the Survey says ...

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

Should profanity be allowed in school writing assignments?



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

Words are all we have, and we are out of control. Walk down the corridors of any high school. You'll get more than an earful. Very few teachers stop to correct what anyone says, so it is "anything goes."

All the utterances of profanity dehumanize, all shatter respect, all demean the user and the conversations. In between the profanity are the rest of the disrespectful exclamations— "that's gay," "that's retarded," etc. All of which

provides the backdrop for the commonplace verbal displays of misogyny.

It is not a big leap from using profanity on a paper that you have turned in for a grade—to uttering demeaning and derogatory sexually charged comments to passerbys in the hallway.

Schools are intended to be places of learning. We should aspire to more. We should expect more.

Learners learn best when they feel

safe. Creating an atmosphere that is respect based requires building in a sense of what is right and what is wrong.

Swearing is something you can learn anywhere, it is not a skill that schools should teach.

I voted yes by Jon Demenici, HS English Teacher, Drama Club Adviser

Profanity is an accepted cultural norm. As teachers we should not ever choose the words our students should use. We should not force them to think one way or another.

We have a responsibility to teach our students structure, form and format. We provide the grammar rules—they provide the ideas.

Should I force my students who are writing a short story to substitute

"gosh" or "oh my goodness" for the real words which fit their characters and stories?

Should I be a prude and call for a rewrite?

Or worse should I be required to turn them in to the principal?

My job as an English teacher is tough enough without worrying about being a language cop.

Writers should be allowed to write. Teachers should be allowed to teach.

An interview with "Fitz"

When did you first feel like a leader?

In high school working on Bobby Kennedy's campaign, I felt I was making a difference.

What responsibilities do leaders have?

It's actually pretty simple, leaders must do what they say they will do. Remember I teach that the word responsibility is actually a hyphenated word -- response - ability. Those who have the ability must respond. If you can see a problem, you must act. If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.

Silence is complicity.

Who do you admire for their leadership accomplishments?

The list is awfully long. Naturally it include famous people like Martin Luther King and Mother Theresa -- but it also includes folks like Rachel an SLTP graduate who got a Special Olympics program going in her town -- or Tricia an SLTP grad who got the elementary schools in her town involved with the "hands are not for hurting" project, or Greg an SLTP grad and staffer who transformed "stop, look and listen" into the incredible teaching instrument that it is.

What makes you happy?

Life and living with Helen.

What inspires you to lead?

My memories, everyday events, the news, my wife, all of the kids I work with ...

What role does success play in leadership?

I am not sure there is a score card. Lincoln and Edison's volume of failures far outnumbered their successes.

If you had to describe leadership in three words what would they be.

Walk your talk.

If you could change anything about society and the role of leadership today, what would it be?

Eliminate the concept of born leaders or entitlement.

What responsibilities do you feel with your job as a motivator?

Leaders must ensure that every member of their group receives positive affirmation of and for their progress as well as their success. Providing this necessary recognition will empower each person to motivate themselves.

What obstacles do you have to overcome to be a leader?

The biggest obstacle is to avoid being convinced that you are irreplaceable. Leaders must wrap their mind around the concept that "no one of us is as good as all of us." It is easier to do it alone -- easy is not best.

What's on tap for SLTP?

This summer, we will have four different Conference Directors. I will be directing only 1 session for the first time since 1990. Erin Stewart, Carolyn Labuda and Adam Travis will all take turns at the helm of the program.

Are you retiring?

No, no a thousand times no. It is like I said before—for any organization to be healthy its leadership must be replaceable. SLTP is very healthy, we are blessed with the participation of some incredible people. All of whom deserve the chance to grow as much as possible.

Anything else going on?

Yes, we hope to bring day conferences to New York City and Washington DC within the next calendar year. We hope to release a video for national distribution. We hope to take our new

play on the road. We hope to continue building SLTP and our parent program CASA, just as we have for the past 16 years.

Finally, any last words on your views on leadership.

In the last 20 years, the word "leadership" has been used to death. The word has been used as a tag line for all sorts of programs. Politically on the national scene there are very few real leaders—lots of bosses, lots of power wielding but very few examples of leadership. The same is true in the business world. There are an abundance of bosses -- but few leaders. Donald Trump is a classic example. A recent survey indicated that more college students admire his leadership style than admire President Bush's style. There is a lot more to leadership than simply being in charge. It is not about titles. It is not about power.

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 scheduled

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. And already 25 of our member schools have tapped to indicate they are

participating this year.

For more information about the Day of Silence visit:

[http://
www.dayofsilence.org/](http://www.dayofsilence.org/)

Ask the doctor (send your questions to: askthedoctor@sltp.info)

Dear Doctor SLTP,

My little brother is in a basic math class whose teacher is immensely popular with our school's in crowd. He is young, he dresses young, he flirts with all of the girls—he plays the game.

All across the back wall of this teachers classroom are examples of student's work — only it is not a wall of fame—it is a wall of shame. The posted "works" are all punishment assignments.

My brother has several of these assignments on the wall and that's the problem. He has reveled in this new identity. He plays the role of a punk now. When the year started he was just struggling to find himself. He tried out for some teams and some clubs—but that all stopped.

At camp my friend and I learned all about the power of praise and how everyone looks for roles in groups—I believe this teacher helped my brother find a negative role.

What can I do?

Worried in MA

Dear Worried,

I wish I could say that yours is an unusual letter—but it is not. In colonial times, communities had stocks in the town squares to humiliate people into better behavior. It did not work then and it does not work now.

Show this letter to your parents. Show this letter to your guidance counselor. Show this letter to your principal.

Your parents and your guidance counselor can help your brother. Expect some heat from him, but it will be worth it if he can be made aware of how he was manipulated.

Hopefully your principal can reel in this teacher and help him to learn more modern teaching methodology.

Dear Doctor SLTP,

I want to run for president of our Student Council. Our adviser wants me to run for Secretary, as no one is running for that office and my best friend is planning to run for President.

What should I do?

Confused in CT

Dear Confused,

First question—have you and your best friend talked about running against each other? If not—that's where you need to start. Then if that friendship is safe—go where your heart takes you.

Dear Doctor SLTP,

Our new advisers are not interested in doing anything. They restricted the frequency and length of our meetings. They have eliminated

more than half of the projects and activities we used to do. They won't let us meet at night. They wouldn't let us have our lock-in. Only the seniors have a voice.

Desperate in MA

Dear Desperate,

The most difficult thing about this situation is that we must assume that your principal is backing your advisers. If that is the case—go over his/her head.

If nothing else, your group need to be told why all of the limitations have been imposed.

Dear Doctor SLTP,

I have some advice for last month's writer "Doing the PP Dance in MA".

I suggest going to the town Health officials. There is no way they can be aware of the bathroom locking. I shared the letter with my Dad and he is a member of our town's Board of Health. He said he would never let that happen in our town.

I bet that your Board of Health is unaware. Sympathetic in MA

National Bullying Awareness Week– April 17-23

Six years ago, on April 20th, 1999, our nation's worst school shooting took place at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Thirteen students and a teacher were killed, and 23 other students were wounded. The two young attackers, who had been bullied by their schoolmates, also died.

We must learn from this tragedy. We must join the organizations, school districts, teachers, and parents who have already spoken out against bullying.

We must do our best to make people understand the harm it can cause. In addition, we must show younger students, through actions as well as words, that their emotional and physical well-being is important to us.

SLTP's fight against bullying in school must not, of course, be limited to one week a year. However, in remembrance of the Columbine shootings, and as a symbol of our year-round struggle against bullying, we invite you to do something and to join the na-

tional effort to raise awareness.

For most schools in New England, this national week coincides with the April vacation—so plan events before or after the week.

For more information visit: <http://www.bullypolice.org>

Why didn't anyone say anything? *by Jean VanBourgondien, SLTP Staff*

Recently in Red Lake, Minnesota, the most deadly school shooting since Columbine took place. This tragedy leaves many people asking questions and trying to find solutions. Some have even suggested that teachers should be able to carry guns in school. However, the solution can be found in the most obvious question, "If so many people noticed that things weren't right, WHY didn't anyone say anything?"

This reminded me of probably one of the most ironic (and most tragic) situations I ever was involved in. I was in the 6th grade when the Columbine shooting happened. The next day, a boy in my homeroom came in to school wearing a Marilyn Manson T-shirt. A girl in my homeroom, one of the most popular girls in my grade, was appalled, caused a scene and said something to the extent of "He's wearing a Marilyn Manson Shirt when just yesterday 2 boys who worshipped Marilyn Manson killed a bunch of people at their school." She then proceeded to instruct the rest of my homeroom to form a circle with our chairs, deliberately excluding this boy as punishment for his insensitivity and we all formed a circle a few yards away from where the boy was sitting.

When my homeroom took the initiative to be so obviously hypocritical, cruel and to exclude we were in the 6th grade so we were probably about 11. This behavior had been taught to us; we had

been taught to exclude and had been taught to accept it and to not stand up for what's right. Largely, it had been taught by example, what solidified this knowledge were the teachers' response, or lack thereof. I don't remember my homeroom teacher stepping in or saying anything. One of his students were being so blatantly bullied and disrespected by his peers and nothing was done. It is possible that he didn't intervene because of the sensitive nature of the subject - a school shooting. But wasn't the tragedy caused because people were being bullied and isolated and no one taking the initiative to step in?

Maybe if someone had stepped in or just taken the effort to comfort or befriend the boy in Minnesota it still would have happened, but maybe not. We all know how wonderful it feels when a teacher or student takes the time to reach out - we all also know what it feels like when no one does. I felt bad about excluding that boy that day, but I also wanted the popular girl to like me and feared falling out of her good graces. We need to do more than merely feel bad for a person, we need to act on that feeling & reach out. While we can't excuse school shootings, we can prevent them through knowing that Marilyn Manson (or whoever is the next celebrity who gets blamed) doesn't make a person murder any-

one, it's a deep feeling of loneliness and bitterness caused by being bullied. If society is going to create the lonely and the bitter, it needs to take responsibility and at least learn from the tragedy. Instead of finding a scapegoat, whether it be a 6th grader or a rockstar, people need to reflect on why something happened and what could be done to stop it from happening again.

Marilyn Manson was interviewed about the Columbine tragedy by Michael Moore, for his documentary "Bowling For Columbine." Moore asked Manson what he would have said to the two boys before the killings, he replied, "I wouldn't say a single word to them; I would listen to what they have to say, and that's what no one did."

The only way to end school shootings is to care; if people notice that things aren't right, they need to say something, say anything that could help.

Otherwise, it's going to happen again.

12 superstars—the Student Leader of the Year Nominees

Each year we endeavor to celebrate and honor the achievements and involvement of SLTP graduates through the prestigious Student Leader of the Year Awards.

The accomplishments and involvement level of the graduates of SLTP is well known across the country. SLTP Alumni continue to make their mark in their high schools, in their communities and especially at the colleges they choose to attend. This year we had 12 students nominated for the award. Each of the twelve clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of student leadership and the evidence of that effect was plain to see in their accompanying resumes and testimonial letters.

All were feted at the Difference-Maker Showcase Conference in

front of their parents, teachers and peers. All received SLTP scholarships and camperships for deserving students back at their school.

Here are the nominees:

Sarah Bourbeau—Belchertown HS, senior

Kayla Charest—Northbridge HS, junior

Liz Chase—Northwest Catholic HS, senior

T Jay Cinq-Mars—Warwick Vets HS, junior

Taylor Corey—Cumberland HS, junior

Tim Endicott—Malden Catholic HS, junior

Theresa Griffin—Falmouth HS, sen-

ior

Andrew Lawton—East Hampton HS, junior

Jen Merigold—Bishop Feehan HS, junior

Laura Murphy—Belchertown HS, senior

Lauren Nutter—Uxbridge HS, junior

Kayla Wilcox—Cumberland HS, junior

The Student Leader of the Year

The four finalists for the Student Leader of the Year Award were feted for their achievements with yet another SLTP scholarship and even more camperships. The finalists were: Sarah Bourbeau, Kayla Charest, Kayla Wilcox and Theresa Griffin.

The 2005 SLTP Student Leader of the Year is Kayla Charest.

Kayla attended LTC in 2003 and ALC in 2004. She is a MassSTAR alumnae and has participated in virtually every leadership program that has become available to her.

She has striven to learn all she can about how to make a difference. She has been very involved at Northbridge High and in her community.

According to Kayla, “the most valuable lessons I learned at SLTP has been leading from the middle. It helped me to know when to step back and when to step forward.”

In your mailbox soon

The third and [final](#) Mailing of SLTP's entire Application Packets will arrive at your school in the next two weeks -- please direct this packet to the students and advisers who are interested in learning how to make a difference.

Applications for all of our summer conferences are rolling in at this point. We are expecting our highest enrollment to date. (Check the article on page 1 for the avail-

able openings as of the publication of this newsletter.) One very important note—because of staffing limitations this year, we may have to restrict the size of some of the sessions -- so if a particular session is the only one you can attend -- register soon. Applications are readily available on line as pdf files.

Do not be left out.

One deadline is fast approaching -- and that is the deadline

for TLC (the Leadership Center, which is our most advanced leadership seminar) -- the deadline to apply for TLC is APRIL 25 or as soon as it is full -- we only had 1 space available at press time.

The 2005 SLTP Conference Schedule

Where leaders learn HOW
to make a difference!

- **Officer Training Seminar**
July 1 - 2
- **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
- **Adviser Certification**
August 3-6
- **The ReEnergizer Conference**
November 26

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

Monthly Spotlight

The SLTP Staffer of the Year—Dr. Dave by Jean VanBourgondien, SLTP Staff

Once a year SLTP's entire staff attends a weekend-long conference to begin to prepare for camp and become a more cohesive staff. Part of becoming closer as a group is to recognize its outstanding members and this year Dave Tapscott, a Leadership Instructor (LI) who's been on SLTP's staff for four years, was recognized as being SLTP's staffer of the year. This celebration came towards the end of the conference, after he had demonstrated his ownerfulness of SLTP by presenting two interactive workshops demonstrating first aid (the workshop even included an energizer concerning what to do in an emergency). He applied his knowledge (he's a doc-

tor) to enhance SLTP and create an even better prepared staff.

Dave taking ownership in SLTP was not just apparent during the staff conference but in his constant dedication. He's made it part of his daily life; his daughter, Tanika Tapscott who's also an LI, said that "If I ask him how his work day was he finds some way to bring SLTP into it. He sits on the computer for quite a while most nights, really reading everyone's e-mails and thoughtfully replying to most of them."

In the final assembly only Dave was surprised when he was named Staffer of the

Year, everyone else recognized how much he deserved the award and gave him a standing ovation as he remained seated, happily baffled by this recognition.

He had said later that one reason why he is a part of SLTP is because of its policy of unconditional respect, which isn't surprising because he constantly proves its effectiveness by example.

Respect it is not just for our team *by Liz Chase, SLTP Alumni Association President*

I left the 2nd Round CT basketball tournament game extremely disappointed... not to mention deaf and mute. Not only had my school's team been beaten but what had disappointed me even more was the way in which both schools' fans had treated each other and the opposing team during the game.

Being in a tournament is incredibly exciting. The school colors are worn with fierce pride, the foam fingers dusted off and the war paint applied very heavily. For my high school, the colors green and white were worn with as much pride as red, white and blue are worn on the Fourth of July. We had packed into the opposing school's gym and had left the bleachers groaning under the number of fans we had on them.

From before the game even began, the jousting began. Calling words out like "you suck" and very loud "boos" began long before the warm-up period had even ended. From the moment the game began, the mood turned dark. Each side in turn yelling harsh and mean things to the players, the other fans, and the referees. In response to some particularly bad calls, fans from my school yelled out "get some glasses!" And "how much did they pay you ref?" Not to mention the loud chorus of "boos" from every student's mouth.

Being founder of a program dedicated to raising respect I was ashamed to admit to having yelled some harsh chants myself. It wasn't until that moment that it settled on me that it was only a

game. No matter how important it may have seemed, it was still only a game and that is no excuse to ever treat someone without respect. Respect isn't just for our team... but for all the players who worked hard all season to be out there playing.

Tech time with Adam *by Adam Travis, SLTP Conference Director*

Article 3: Protecting your computer from Online Threats, part 3 – Updates and Firewalls.

One of the single most important things you can do to protect your computer is to keep the Operating System up to date. This advice applies equally to all computers—Mac, PC, and Linux. For Mac users, under Control Panels (OS 9) or System Preferences (OS 10), use the Software Update function to find and download updates. You can even set this up to check automatically, but be aware that many MacOS updates can be 30 MB or larger, which could take hours to download with a modem. For PC users, visit windowsupdate.microsoft.com or use Automatic Updates from the Control Panel. If you do not use the automatic settings, you should probably check for updates every 1 to 3 weeks.

Firewalls come in two main varieties, hardware and software. Both are useful and both have advantages and disadvantages. If you connect to the internet through a high speed cable or DSL connection, you may already be using a router that has some firewall capabilities. That's a great first level of protection, but using a software firewall (sometimes called a personal firewall) will greatly add to your level of security.

A good software firewall can prevent outside attackers from getting to your computer, and can prevent spyware/worms from sending information from inside your computer to the outside world. A simple firewall comes with Windows XP, which is easy to configure but only protects from outside attacks (Go to Windows Firewall in the Control Panel). McAfee and Norton have

firewalls that work with their anti-virus software, but I don't find them to be user friendly at all. PC World (June 2004) liked the Trend Micro firewall that works with PC-cillin, but found the best one to be ZoneAlarm Pro from ZoneLabs. There is also a free version of ZoneAlarm that is widely used and very popular, which can be downloaded from <http://www.zonelabs.com/>. For more information, see <http://www.pcworld.com/reviews/article/0,aid,115939,00.asp>

Celebrating a lifetime of differencemaking

Closing out the DifferenceMaker Showcase, is a traditional event, the celebration of SLTP's Lifetime DifferenceMaker Award.

As with all of the awards in our recognition program, this award is intended to honor and respect individual effort and achievement.

The key word which defines the award is "lifetime."

We are blessed in our business, we get to meet and work with extraordinary people who go about their daily business doing good things for people, making differences and changing lives.

There are hundreds and hundreds of people who dedicate themselves to making a difference for young people everyday.

A few do so for a lifetime.

This year we presented the Lifetime DifferenceMaker Award to a high school science teacher and

adviser from New Milford, Connecticut, Jack Bouclier. "Bouc" has toiled at his craft for 34 years and goes about his day to day dealings with students with both zeal and grace. Students are greeted with a smile and genuine caring.

New Milford is a large school, yet he seems to know everyone and something about them. Walking through the corridors, he has a greeting for every student he meets on the way.

Among the recommendations and testimonials we received a comment from his principal Ms. Baldelli stands out," His dedication, commitment, and love for our kids is overwhelming. This award is a wonderful way to give back to a man who never stops giving." Those words were echoed in the student recommendation, "Mr. Bouc is just like my favorite story. He is New Milford's Giving Tree."

So we congratulate Mr. Jack Bouclier for his 30 plus years of making positive significant differences with and for his students, and we celebrate his selection as the recipient of our Lifetime DifferenceMaker Award.

**"MR. BOUC IS
JUST LIKE MY
FAVORITE
STORY. HE IS
OUR GIVING
TREE."**

Conference Profile - Adviser Leadership Studies

Everyone involved in student activities understands the value of co-curricular programs to both school and community. That value has been acclaimed in virtually every national study of our system of education. Yet very little training has been offered for the advisers, sponsors or coaches who are charged with those activities.

Essentially this program provides the opportunity to learn and master the techniques and methodology of advisership. It is a comprehensive program quite unlike most hour long workshops and even day long seminars that merely skim the surface by offering only idea sharing. To begin with, our program reviews the basic skill areas that are essential to successful advisership - *organization,*

group process, structure, project planning, involvement, motivation and leadership training, then we approach the step by step progression through all the aspects of activity programming as teacher preparation.

Fundamentally we hold that successful advisership is the result of actively teaching and preparing students to lead themselves. So the intent of the program is to enable and prepare advisers to teach leadership skills to their students. As a result, our program is experiential in nature.

The registration fee covers program materials and meals for the four days. The dorm and classrooms are air-conditioned.

The program materials include: a leadership manual, an adviser's manual, a book of ideas, an adviser's "toolbox", a program shirt, and a group photo.

Registration is limited. Professional Development Points will be awarded.

Applications and more information can be found on line.

Join us—August 3-6!