

student leadership

The Student Leadership Training Program

Leaders walk their talk.

Linkage

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 9 THE SLTP ALUMNI NEWSLETTER MAY / JUNE, 2005

Inside this issue:

Survey Says	2
I voted yes	2
I voted no	2
From where I sit	3
Spring conflicts	4
Fist to Five	4
Ask the doctor	5
Opportunity	5
Action Grants	5
Conference Schedule	6
Who should attend	6
OTS	7
Tech Time	7
Thank you	8
Web to web	
A Peek	8

From where I sit by Jim Fitzgerald

Why should anyone attend SLTP? What makes us so special? Why should attending SLTP be on every kid's to-do list? Why do kids and adults thrive in our environment? Take a look at the following quotes:

The best way to get praise is to die.

--Italian Proverb
The only way to get praise is to die.

- Ben Franklin
It is easier to praise people when they are dead.

- Woody Allen
Praise is spread like a carpet on graves.

- Abe Lincoln

The common practice at SLTP, "catching people doing things right" is **revolutionary**. Last night I was looking for quotes on praise (part of my preparation for Tranquillity introductions) and I came across these. Anyway, the quotes

Continued on page 3

Time is running out



The remainder of the school year is now measured in just double figures, and it is not just the seniors who are doing a count-down. That means that before you know it SLTP will throw open its door to welcome hundreds of kids to the experience of their lifetimes.

Don't be left out!

Come and join us again this summer. Bring your friends. Send in your application now. The applications are starting to roll in, and soon choices may be limited.

If you are thinking about ALC – please keep in mind that there were 150 kids who attended SLTP last summer, and there are only 19 spaces left in ALC.

Please don't be left

out – and don't let your school go unrepresented.

All of our applications are available on line as PDF files, and every school in New England received the final packet of applications this month. Visit our website for more information or for more applications.

www.sltp.info

What's available this summer?

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 7 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 cabinets 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 65 slots available at this point.

July 5-9;
July 12-16;
July 26-30

and Aug 2-6

ALC

There are three sessions and approximately 19 slots available.

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

TLC

Registration is Closed
July 6-9

Adviser Certification

There is only one

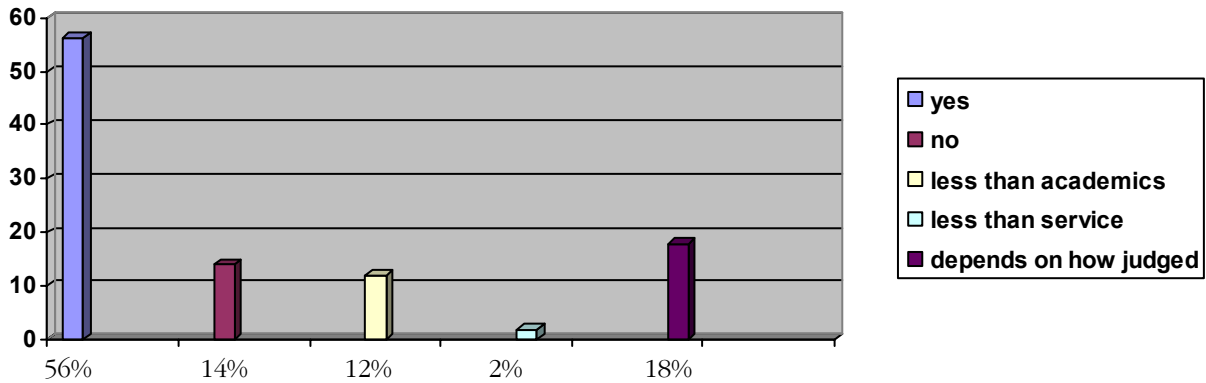
session and there are 5 slots left.

August 3-6

And the Survey says ...

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

Should character be used as one of the criteria for admission into National Honor Society?



I voted yes

by Helen Fitzgerald, SLTP Staff—CASA Executive Director

Schools must stand for something, and they must especially stand by their own words. National Honor Society lists character as a basis for selection, and further declares that honoring character is central to its mission. To gloss over character in the selection process is the height of duplicity.

I realize that many schools and especially school administrators are worried about lawsuits. I also realize that many schools simply turn NHS into another honor roll by

looking only at grade point averages. Schools should then call it that — the National Honor Roll.

Schools cannot shirk their responsibility to be centers of learning because they fear lawsuits. The message we send is far too dangerous when we wink at rules or regulations that are difficult. Character can be assessed by a person's actions. Doing so eliminates personal prejudice.

People of character should be celebrated. People of character should

be honored. This generation of students is doing more community service on their own than any generation EVER. This generation of students perform more random acts of kindness on a daily basis than any I have worked with in my 30 plus years in the classroom. We need to celebrate that not run away from it.

I voted no

by Debra Alworth, HS Vice Principal, SADD Adviser

Teachers and parents cannot judge a student's character. Students have been barred from NHS because they were pregnant. In those cases the judges deemed that the pregnancy was proof of a lack of character.

In my experience the character qualification has been used to disqualify students who should be recognized. NHS should be earned through achievement and service.

Those criteria are easy to measure and it takes the built in prejudices out of the judging.

There isn't time for a selection committee to make a character assessment. There is barely enough time to look at the school records.

Finally schools cannot afford the lawyers and the time necessary to defend against the inevitable lawsuits. Even in our school where the

criteria is built around grade point average, we annually have parents and students who have found a different way to calculate their grade, and who demand to be admitted to NHS. It isn't worth it.

From where I sit (continued from page 1)

above were prominently featured in four of the sources under the topic PRAISE as were a whole bunch of others which followed that train of thought

It's no wonder kids and adults thrive in our atmosphere. At SLTP praise is freely given with no strings attached, it is almost surreal in comparison.

One of my friends who is a college recruiter asked me rhetorically, "why are kids so negative today?" I replied, *it certainly does make the positive ones stand out, doesn't it?* He said, "it sure does, and those kids jump to the top of my list, but the problem is they are at the top of everyone else's list too."

In the past few weeks I have been reminded over and over again by my collegiate friends how important *Personal Development* is to anyone's aspirations for scholarship money and admission to college. As I always do at this time of year, I reach out to everyone I know who is in the business of either accepting students to college or advising them how to get there. In a very short time I will be speaking to the parents of this summer's SLTP campers and even sooner to the parents of the MassSTAR delegates. Those 300 plus parents are at a loss about the whole college admission "thing." It is different from years ago when they were applying and while the parents want as much information as they can get, they don't have a lot of access. Generally the guidance people at school are too busy or have very little information. So I make it my goal to know what I am talking about -- at least in the broadest possible senses.

In a nutshell, the four legs of the admission table remain - SATs, grades, citizenship (proof provided by resume of involvement in activities and service) and the essay. The "strength" or importance of each leg varies from school to school and a few add on a fifth leg

- an interview.

SLTP is a vital part of this picture - it's in the *Personal Development* resume references -- attending a leadership camp is not a "have to," students are not required to take the course. Students attend for themselves and BY themselves, it is not a school field trip. Attending a leadership camp is done purely for educational growth. It says a lot about the person who has taken that step. It says even more when that student attends a program with a reputation for excellence.

Each year I receive hundreds of letters from alumni noting the difference SLTP made in your acceptance to college. For most it made a positive significant difference in the amount of money they received from that college. More importantly though, SLTP made a positive significant difference in your life way beyond the college admission process.

It is time to give back to SLTP. It is time to pay your debt. Help us by spreading the word. Help some kids to make better choices this summer -- sure, they can get a job at the local CVS and make 6 bucks an hour. And wow oh wowie when they get their first paycheck after taxes, they will have 83 whole dollars. BUT, that won't help them get into college, nor will it put one cent in their scholarship account.

Last week I attended a conference of the Greater Federation of Womens Clubs with Erin Stewart for MassSTAR. GFWC is a community service organization for women. One woman came to Erin and I with a question - it seems the school in her town does not send a student to MassSTAR because they already send one to HOBY.

HOBY and MassSTAR host conferences for high school sophomores, each asks that the school send one representative. There are 150 students in the sophomore class at her

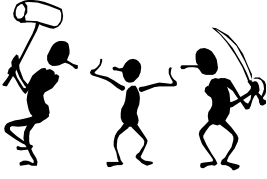
town's school -- and the principal chooses to recognize and reward only ONE of them to attend a personal development course. The woman asked me how many I thought should go -- I answered 150.

How many kids should go to SLTP? My God, what a question!! I can only think of a few from any school I know who should not go. At Holbrook for example there are about 70 kids in the junior class -- probably 68 of them should go. At Warwick, there are about 400 kids in the sophomore class -- probably 398 of them should go. At Belchertown and Uxbridge, the classes are about 100 students each -- 98 plus should go from each. I measure the "should" with the answers to the questions: *would they benefit?*; **and** *are they going to college?*

Help us give a whole bunch of kids the best week of their entire lives! *It is up to us to make a difference. It is up to us to care.*

**TRUST NOT PRAISE,
NOR IT'S
MESSENGER. -
ENGLISH PROVERB**
VS.
CATCH PEOPLE
DOING THINGS
RIGHT!

Spring and the conflicts it brings



In any group conflict is inevitable because different people have different viewpoints. A conflict can be defined as a situation where the concerns or interests of two or more persons appear incompatible. Group members may see the needs of the organization differently because of their different ages, values, situations, jobs, or prior experiences. In most organizations conflicts arise over questions such as:

- What should we be doing?
- How should we be doing it?
- Who should do it?
- Should it be done at all?

Why can't we do it MY way?
Who says?

Since conflict is natural AND inevitable, the goal of the group should not be to eliminate conflict, any more than it should be to eliminate mistakes. Both conflict and mistakes go hand in hand with growth! At the same time though, it is not a good idea to ignore conflict any more than it is to ignore a mistake.

When conflict is ignored, or approached on a win/lose basis, communication breaks down, animosities develop and the ability of the group to function is destroyed or at least impaired.

Conflicts need to be re-

solved constructively. When conflict arises and is dealt with openly, group members are stimulated to employ creativity as alternatives are considered and commitment continues because collaboration allows positive relationships to develop.

Conflict resolution: Fist To Five



Often the biggest conflict catalyst in groups is also one of the tools that groups use to conduct their business "efficiently."

Most groups utilize some form of Parliamentary Procedure which relies on the concept of majority rules. A majority vote on most motions requires 51 percent of the members to agree. That leaves 49 percent disagreeing, doesn't it? As should be imagined and envisioned this minority voting group is ripe for resentment and conflict.

One way to avoid this black hole of negativity is to include consensus building into the decision making process. The idea behind consensus is not to have every group member agree, but simply that everyone holds a position that they can at least support an idea.

Incorporated into this concept is the time saving idea that al-

lows groups to address the issues and concerns of the minority without rehashing or arguing the majority opinion.

The method we advocate at OTS is a technique called "Fist to five." To begin the leaders restates the group's position (perhaps the motion on the floor) and asks everyone to display their degree of support by displaying one of the following hand signals:

5 fingers *It's a great idea and I will be one of the leaders working on it.*

4 fingers *It's a great idea and I will work on it.*

3 fingers *I support this idea, but I am not crazy about it.*

2 fingers *It is not my first choice, but I can support the idea.*

1 finger *I don't agree, but I promise not to block it.*

Fist *I completely disagree with this idea and I will try*

to block it if you try to accomplish it.

Members who display fewer than three fingers are the root of the opposition and they are the people with the issues and concerns that most need to be addressed. By inviting them to articulate their concerns, the entire group can address the issues (not personalities) and hopefully resolve them.

Frequently this will allow / enable those who don't support an idea the opportunity to persuade others to withdraw their support and thus save an organization from a costly error.



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

Dear Doctor SLTP,

Our town is in the midst of a budget crisis, the rumors are all over the school about which teacher is being cut and which teacher isn't. The teachers are all way down in the dumps. It is really making everyone edgy and there have been lots and lots of fights.

What can I do?
Down but not out in MA

Dear Down,

Having gone through the ridiculous tension of being laid off as a teacher twice in my life, I can really empathize with your faculty. Trust me, they know less than you do, and the rumors they hear are worse.

Right now more than ever, they need to know that some one cares. Organize some teacher appreciation events. Personally write thank

you notes. Reach out to as many of the teachers as you can.

Secondly make sure that student voices are heard. Students are the real experts on school budgets—face it you have been going to school almost your entire life—no one has more school experience than you. Adults are going to make choices that will greatly affect your life, do not be silent. Find a way to let them know.

Dear Doctor SLTP,

We need to raise money but nobody wants to do the work. Is there an easy way to raise a lot of money, that does not involve a lot of work or a lot of people?

Cash starved in RI

Dear Cash,

No!

Fundraising is always a lot of

work. But it can and should be FUN. It all depends on whether the funds are being raised by people who truly believe in the WHY the funds are being raised. Last month hundreds of people ran in the Boston Marathon to raise money for charity. Running 26 miles is not something you do unless you believe. The same is true for doing a car wash or mowing a lawn. Unless you believe, you will find the work distasteful.

So start there. Make sure everyone raising the money understands WHY. Then take on projects that have some fun in them.

A new opportunity for SLTP Alumni

At the most recent meeting of the Administrative Board (the governing committee for SLTP), a proposal to dramatically expand the outreach of SLTP was heard and acted upon.

This summer the students attending SLTP will be given information about a very new and most exciting opportunity to exercise STUDENT leadership back in their schools and communities.

CASA will sponsor the

Leadership Action Grant Program. In a nutshell, this program is designed to provide funds for a specific project designed by an SLTP graduate.

We all know many ideas for wonderful service projects do not get off the ground because funding cannot be found.

While it will not be possible to fund every idea an SLTP graduate has (at least not yet), we hope to be able to fund several pro-

jects this coming Fall..

Details about the program and the grant application process will be available on line as soon as they are finalized. The goal is to have information about the grant program included in the camper manuals and Parent Orientation Packets this summer.

Leadership Action Grant Program

The CASA Leadership Action Grant Program has been established to further empower students who graduate from the Student Leadership Training Program by providing the means to engage them as a resource to bring positive community change by supporting their initiative.

Any student who has completed LTC, ALC or TLC and any adviser who has completed our Adviser Certification Conference is eligible to apply for a grant to fund an action plan of their design.

Proposals should be submitted on the forms provided and must

be submitted by September 30. The CASA Administrative Board will select proposals based on the feasibility and community impact. CASA will offer support, advice and various levels of funding to help implement the action plan.

Grant Requirements

- Must be initiated by a graduate of SLTP (LTC, ALC, TLC or Adviser Certification Conference)
- Must be planned and carried out by school aged youth
- Must improve or benefit the com-

munity

- Must have at least one adult supervisor
- Must submit complete grant application by deadline
- Must interview with the Grant Committee
- Must make available a presentation to the SLTP community to discuss the successes and failures

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

Who should attend?

So, who should attend a program like SLTP ?

Our answer is based on just one qualification.

We believe SLTP is for *any student or adviser* who is interested in learning how to make a difference ! **Student leadership does not require a title.** Nor is it defined through membership in certain activities. Nor is it defined by popularity. To that end, we do not believe that ANY one activity is THE most important activity in a school. Each activity helps to create the fabric of belonging, and therefore ALL of the activities are THE most important.

The majority of students who attend SLTP are very involved in their school and in their community. All are seeking to learn how TO DO more.

The willingness to learn is vital. So is the understanding that leadership is about DOING. Leaders are defined by what they do - - not by the titles they

hold or by the organizations they belong to.

The only program requirements that exist are based on experience.

- *Delegates to the LTC's* - must be secondary students (junior high or high school).
- *Delegates to the ALC's* - must have completed the first level.
- *Delegates to the TLC* - must be graduates of both LTC & ALC.
- *Delegates to the Adviser Program* - must be practicing or aspiring coaches or advisers.

Delegates to the OTS - must be officers and /or advisers and have **at least one** other team member in attendance.

What each participant should "bring"

*a desire to make a difference
a willingness to learn
enthusiasm
an acceptance of growth
a desire to master change
a dream to work on*

What SLTP will provide
*an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance
significant learnings and understandings
the opportunity to practice what we teach*

Conference Profile: the Officer Training Seminar



Even though leadership does not require holding a title, SLTP recognizes the need to train and prepare student officers for their SPECIFIC roles, which is the role of the Officer Training Seminar.

The primary objective of OTS is “nuts and bolts” preparation for the roles, procedures, duties and responsibilities associated with the traditional student officer and adviser positions.

Separate practical workshops will be held for each of the cardinal offices—president; vice presi-

dent; secretary and treasurer. Other officerholders or team captains will attend either specific job related workshops or tutorials to be determined by the enrollment.

In addition to the specific officer and adviser workshops, the curriculum includes workshops on building effective teams, calendaring, **modern** meeting management, motive-action, time management, goal setting and project planning.

Since the roles and responsibilities of student officers are interdependent, student officers may only attend this seminar as a TEAM. The minimum number of officers for each team is 2 which may include any combination of student officers including the adviser.

Registration is limited and

since many schools & organizations do not hold their election of officers until later in May or in early June - schools may deposit registrations to hold / reserve spaces for their officer teams.

Applications for OTS can be found on our website www.sltp.info

Tech time with Adam by Adam Travis, SLTP Conference Director

Article 4: A better browser.

If you're like 90% of people that use the web, you are probably using Microsoft's Internet Explorer as your web browser. Microsoft integrated IE into its operating systems and it quickly became the dominant web browser. Since then, IE has been rather stagnant while other companies have been innovating new features and developing better software. Now Microsoft has a number of competitors and there are good reasons to think about using them.

The hot new browser on the scene is Firefox from the Mozilla Foundation. Firefox is easy to use and displays web pages very quickly. It is a small download and easy to install and expand. It includes great built-in features, like tabbed browsing, an easy way to search popular search

engines, and pop-up blocking. Firefox is an “open source” project, which means that anyone can look at the programming code and is free to use and modify it to create their own custom browser. To download or find out more, visit <http://www.mozilla.org/>.

Some other popular browsers include Opera, Netscape, and the Mozilla Suite. With the exception of Opera, all of these are available for Mac, and Mozilla makes a browser just for OS X, called Camino. Right now, Safari is the leading browser for Macintosh, which led Microsoft to cease all development and support for IE for Mac.

So maybe you are wondering, if 90% of the world uses Internet Explorer, why should I switch? Better features and better security are the simple answer. Because IE is so closely integrated

with the operating system, a security flaw in the browser puts your entire computer at risk. This past summer, the Department of Homeland Security, issued a memo suggesting that using an alternate browser is one step that will increase computer security. There are a few sites on the web that only work with IE, so you can't ditch it completely, but you can use something better most of the time.

Thank you—webbie to webbie



Thank you for all of the contributions, notes and emails in support for our newsletter during this academic year.

This issue will probably be the final full edition for this year as we must concentrate all of our effort in the next two months on preparation for the summer conferences.

Just a reminder that contributions, suggestions for the SLTP newsletter are quite welcome. Send them to: jim@sltp.info

We'll see you "at camp." Good luck closing out the school year.

A peek at what's ahead for SLTP

Obviously we have a full summer ahead — but even before and after that SLTP will be busy.

- ◆ On June 4th, the SLTP Connections Theatrical Troupe will present "stop, look and listen" our nationally acclaimed play on bullying to the delegates at the MassSTAR Citizenship Conference at Bridgewater State College.
- ◆ Later in June, we will be filming "stop, look and listen" to produce a DVD that will be distributed nationally.
- ◆ In the next six months, the Alumni Association will be sponsoring state wide service events in Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts — details will appear on our website and via email.
- ◆ This summer, SLTP will sponsor nine conferences beginning with OTS.
- ◆ This summer, SLTP will debut a new play, "Silence is NOT an option." The play centers on what leaders can do about violence against women.
- ◆ Applications to join the 2006 SLTP staff are available on line and are due the second week of August.
- ◆ The Leadership Action Grant Program will sponsor several community service projects initiated by SLTP alumni this Fall.
- ◆ This Fall, SLTP will be sponsoring a day long leadership conference in New York City.
- ◆ The Core Adviser Seminar will be held this Fall for advisers and coaches across New England.

Join us. We pledge to continue to stand up for what is right, even if we are standing alone. We pledge to continue to do everything we can to empower student leaders.