

# True Points

a newsletter for the parents of student leaders

**student leadership**

The Student Leadership Training Program

Leaders walk their talk.

Volume 2 Issue 1

November, 2005

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## From Where I Sit by Jim Fitzgerald, SLTP Founder & Director

Our culture is famous for what's in and what's out. Lists abound. We even applaud when someone is voted off the island. Like most of you I read Ralph Keyes' book "Is There Life After High School," which distinguished between the students who are part of the group and those who, for whatever reason, are left out. Our students move in cliques, groups, tribes, and teams; and so do we. High school culture possesses a very clear caste system.

So what effect does a disaster such as Hurricane Katrina have on this process? What are the effects of such a major disaster on individual teenagers and where and how they fit in?

I wonder about the

teenagers who had their worlds changed dramatically when they loaded up their cars for what they thought was a few days away until the hurricane passed. Then the city went underwater, and the access roads were destroyed, and the martial law and mandatory evacuation orders stretched into weeks if not months, and now the prospect of returning to find those worlds intact has become remote. Now they are in a new school, in temporary housing, a new youth group, a new town—a new world. Their place on the sports team and the drama team is no longer secure as they are 'outsiders' to the system.

This has made me reflect about how transi-

tional many of our students are. They live in multiple homes, shared custody situations, sometimes moving to different living arrangements with unfortunate regularity. They have their world rocked by trials other than hurricanes, and for them it is simply a way of life. I am hurting anew for students who don't have stable homes or student activities or adult support. They are consistently 'outsiders' to the system. Many quickly fall into the "outcaste" roles available to them. The expectations for the outcastes are primarily negative, aren't they?

So what can we do? Well first we can look

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## SLTP Alumni Election

The annual Alumni Executive Board Elections will take place at the ReEnergizer Conference.

To be eligible for election the candidate must be a student in middle school, high school or in college (undergraduate only) and must be a graduate of OTS, LTC or ALC.

To place your name on the regional ballot, Alumni need to register by email.

Registrations should include:  
 Alumni Name—  
 Conference attended/year (i.e., LTC2 / 2003);  
 School; Grade level;  
 Town; address; phone &

email address

**Election Registrations must be received by November 16.**

Candidates will be contacted prior to the conference regarding the election rules.

Each of the three

*Continued on page 2*

## Win a Kaplan Test Prep Course

SLTP recently received the gift of a test prep course from Kaplan. The course can be any one of the excellent prep courses that Kaplan offers from their SAT prep course to any of the courses they offer for graduate school test preparation.

This was and is an enormous gift as these courses cost hundreds of dollars.

All of the attendees

of last summers programs received an opportunity to get a shot at the course. Most of the parents took advantage.

The final opportunity will be at the ReEnergizer Conference. During the lunches tickets will be available for the special drawing. The tickets are \$10. (And since the test prep courses cost hundreds of dollars—this is a pretty good deal) The winner will

be announced during the final ceremonies. All of the proceeds from the raffle will benefit SLTP camperships.

Add one more item to the list of benefits for SLTP Alumni!

## Survive and thrive

**It's often the little things that start wearing on families: time constraints, long commutes, daily chores. Does your family have the resilience to withstand the tension? Use these "traits of resilient families" from Family Life Specialist Ben Silliman to help develop a healthy, supportive environment.**

**Commitment**—Encourage family members to be diligent in keeping their promises to each

other.

**Cohesion**—Stick together but respect each other's individuality.

**Adaptability**—Work flexibility into your family rules and traditions.

**Communication**—Speak openly and listen with care.

**Spirituality**—Always act from your faith, and encourage other family members to do so.

**Connectedness**—Keep in touch with extended family and friends, and spend time in community activities.

**Time**—Set aside daily family time.

**Efficacy**—Focus on your family's achievements with pride and optimism, and support each other's explorations and accomplishments.

*... support each other's explorations and accomplishments*

## Alumni Elections continued from page 1

established regions Region 1) Massachusetts; Region 2) Rhode Island; and Region 3) Connecticut — will elect three representatives to comprise Alumni Executive Board.

**Expectations for the Regional Representa-**

**tives**—

- 1) to stage a regional differencemaker event prior to June 1, 2005.
- 2) to develop a means of communication between and among SLTP Member schools in their region to help alumni in

their region.

4) to represent their region to the SLTP AB

5) to elect the SLTP Student Executive Officers

## The Jester & Pharley Phund

The Jester has lost his jingle is among our favorite stories. Reading it at camp after the difference-makers is one of the highlights for every CC and Director.

The Saltzman family has created an opportunity for you to bring your favorite book to kids in the hospital

suffering with cancer. It is called “the Reading To Give” Program. It is a read-a-thon to raise funds to bring copies of the Jester to those kids in the hospital.

The mission of the organization is as follows: To provide educational experiences that give every child a sense

of hope, a feeling of self empowerment, a love of learning, the joy of laughter and a desire to live up to Pharley’s motto: It is up to us to make a difference. It is up to us to care.

We recommend and endorse this worthy cause.

Visit: [www.thejester.org](http://www.thejester.org)

Remember, if you decide to sponsor a read-a-thon, please keep us posted. We want to honor your achievements.

## Recognizing Community Champions

All across New England in every community there are ardent advocates for youth whose support and advocacy is not due to any self interest. Since 1993, The Student Leadership Training Program through its staff and graduates have sought to recognize the contributions of these special community leaders. Without the support of these champions, the goals of community involvement and community service that most student activity programs set would be unattainable.

The idea behind this award program is simple. SLTP hopes to assist local student leaders in their efforts to recognize community support. Essentially this award is about catching people doing things right.

The criteria for this award must vary from school to school, as each school's circumstances are different. However, the effective criterion must not be changed. This award is intended for community leaders who are ACTIVELY committed to making a difference for youth. SLTP suggests that : No more than ONE award be given an-

nually to any individual. **All Alumni and Staff** of the Student Leadership Training Program are eligible to nominate individuals for the awards.

Student leaders we have a special responsibility to nominate Champions. Certainly part of that responsibility comes from it being the right thing to do. But a more important part of that responsibility is to increase the awareness in EVERY community of the great and good things being done for the youth in the community. Please encourage your SLTPer to nominate. There are so many people doing so many things in our communities that go unrecognized.

Keep in mind the advice from Pharley—“it is up to us to make a difference, it is us to us to care.”

Reach out to your friends and neighbors. Give your SLTPer a suggested list.

And when you nominate keep in mind the basic guidelines. To be effective this program must be implemented with the full cooperation and involvement of the school administration. Involve everyone in the school that is actively involved in

the community.

Publicity is vital. Remember praise is much more effective as a form of recognition when it is public.

Yet, this recognition is much more than a certificate and a press release. This recognition offers an opportunity to celebrate and enrich school support. If possible, host an assembly or reception. Provide gifts and/or flowers. Create an event.

To nominate a community leader, please submit: their name; a brief profile; and a brief explanation of the reasons for the nomination. Send that to Stacey Hurd: [champions@sltp.info](mailto:champions@sltp.info)

SLTP will publish all of the award winners names and profiles on a special website and on the pages of our newsletter. There are two opportunities to celebrate your community Champions. The first will be at the ReE on November 26. Additional Champions will be feted in the spring at the InterLead Stu-

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## From where I sit continued from page 1

at the new students or visitors. I imagine that many of our student leaders, advisers and teachers who work with students have good intentions with regard to acceptance and inclusion. When new students join the school, I hope we can help each other to understand how desperately lonely it can be to be in unfamiliar surroundings without even knowing your place in the system, let alone having any status or input.

Teenagers are remarkably shortsighted and present-centered. Hope is easily crushed

when the current plan, team, club, activity, or relationship is suddenly ended. Most draw inward. Some act out. The new students may do both.

Secondly we can look at the students who are left behind, left out, ignored or cast out. The answers about what to do are complex, but they are also urgent.

At the ReEnergizer our staff has prepared a theatrical presentation titled, "if not you – who?" which will address the everyday loneliness and grief that teens experience everywhere.

The banality of the events

depicted is intended to add urgency for the student leaders. As always with our theatrical productions, we are striving to get our student leaders to think, and then to act.

At the conclusion of the production the players will distribute pledge cards to the audience to sign and to keep in their wallets as reminders to stand up for what is right even if they are standing alone.

## Role Modeling

**It's tough when pre-teens discover inappropriate celebrity role models. Here are some ideas from Pat Broeske (FamilyCircle.com) that may help you counteract the effects of a negative influence:**

- **Avoid being critical.** Don't demean a negative role model; simply make observations about his or her behavior or lifestyle—without condemning the person.

- **Be the best influence.** Keep in mind that a preteen's most important influence is his or her parents, not a sports figure or a music star.
- **Encourage research.** Allow your preteen to get a good understanding about the details of a role model's life by exploring magazines and Internet articles.

- **Provide options.** Don't defer to what's on television. Expose your preteen to a diversity of experiences by visiting libraries, museums, plays, and non-pop music concerts.

## Champions continued from page 3

dent Leadership Forum.

**The Final Deadline for submitting names and profiles for recognition at the ReEnergizer Conference is November 16, 2005.**

Bring your Champion to the ReE with you. Allow them to hear the applause from their peers, that is from other difference-makers.

While we would prefer

to celebrate your champion at the conference, it is not necessary that the award winners attend the ReE. If their schedules do not permit—don't worry we will still provide you with the packet to add to celebrate their honor.

Champions will receive a packet which contains their certificates, press release information and special scholarships to SLTP which will be created in their

name.

## Parent, Principal & Adviser Programs at the REE

There will be a special presentation for parents, advisers and principals at the ReEnergizer Conference. Our own Dr. Jim Fitzgerald will present “Helping teens to help teens who are hurting.”

Today’s student leaders face very real challenges and need real support systems to be able to “take back their schools.” Jim will share what he has learned traveling around the country from successful practitioners of student based activity programs.

We offer these sessions not

only because many advisers, principals and parents do the driving to get our students to the ReE, but we offer them because we want to do more to enable our student leaders to develop as much as possible.

The aim of the special workshops for advisers and principals is simple. We hope to inform and encourage every principal and adviser to maximize the development of their student leadership. Additionally there are special workshops for parents that are geared to their needs as the parents of student leaders.

We will also provide both groups a “peek behind the curtain,” which will enable them to better understand the environment we create at SLTP and how they might be best able to empower their student leaders.

Please encourage your principal and fellow advisers to attend (and to drive). We think you will be glad that they did.

## Only weeks away—The ReEnergizer Conference

It’s now just days away! AND it is not too late to register. You can still register without a late fee until November 15! The holiday and election day interfered with the registration process, so we have extended the deadline. However after November 15 — the registration fee will be \$20. And NO REGISTRATIONS are permitted at the door. All attendees must be pre-registered.

The ReEnergizer Conference is such a special event. We hope you will be among the entire SLTP family, together with all of their friends coming together at Nichols College.

Last year, the ReE hosted over 600 participants from nine different states and over 90 schools. From the looks of the way registrations are pouring in at press time – this year is going to be even bigger. Right now we are even exploring the possibility of a virtual conference link

for SLTP Alumni visiting in France and Spain—last year you may recall we had a link to Spain and China.

If you have not already done so get your registration in as soon as you can. Registration forms can be found on the our website — [www.sltp.info](http://www.sltp.info)—just go to the Conferences page and click on the REE, you’ll find a pdf file.

In case you’ve forgotten - the REE is scheduled for **Saturday November 26** at Nichols College.

The ReE comes at just the right time of the school year. First term is over and done. Traditionally the busiest term of the year for school activities is Second term and the ReE provides the necessary “booster shot” of motivation and positive energy to keep yourself and your organization on the right track.

Bring lots of friends – bring your whole student coun-

cil and even the “cookie cupcake club.” You should also bring lots of enthusiasm and bring ideas to share and questions to be answered.

Due to the size of the crowd – we will begin and end the program at the athletic center in the big gym. Plan to park in that parking lot. There is lots of room there for your school bus. To get to the athletic center, drive to the Remillard dorm turn left and follow the noise and signs to the gym parking area.

Among the many other activities and planned for the conference there will be: an Activity Fair, the Alumni Student Election, a presentation of a new SLTP play that focuses on the students who are left behind or left out (bring your administration, advisers); Community Leader recognition and much, much more!

## Directions to the ReEnergizer Conference

### Directions to Nichols College

Nichols College is located in Dudley, Massachusetts 20 minutes south of Worcester.

#### From the North:

Take I-290 to Auburn, where I-290 becomes I-395 South\*. Follow to Exit 4B (Sutton Rd./Oxford Center). Turn right off ramp and stay in the right lane. Go straight through light at Oxford Center (Cumberland Farms on right). Follow straight past light for 0.8 miles and take a left onto Dudley Rd. (produce stand on right). Follow this road for 3.7 miles until you come to a fork (you will see water on

the right and left). Bear right at the fork and continue for 2 miles through two stop signs, then straight onto the Nichols campus.

#### From the East & West:

Take the Mass Pike to Exit 10 in Auburn and get on 395 South. Follow directions from above\*.

#### From the South:

Take I-395 North to Exit 2, (Webster) and turn left off ramp. Go straight through the first set of traffic lights. Follow Route 12 South (Route 12 will turn left through Webster Center). Continue through Webster Center. After the railroad

tracks, continue straight into Dudley on Route 197 (Route 12 will turn left – do not turn left; stay straight). Turn right at Cumberland Farms onto Airport Rd. Follow Airport Rd. to the Webster-Dudley Golf Course. Bear right and take the first left onto Center Rd.

Proceed to Remillard Dormitory (last building on the left) turn into driveway behind the Dormitory, follow around until you reach the Athletic Center.



Where in the world is Nichols College?

## Final Call – Photo CD

In your manual and on the Crew CD you will find an order form for the Camp Photo CD.

The Photo CD includes both of the slide shows featured in the Closing Ceremonies as well as all of the photos taken by the staff throughout the week – from Dorm Squad through closing circle.

To order a Photo CD simply mail a request for the specific week you desire to Helen together with a check for \$12.50

**Photo CDs will be delivered at the ReE!**

Mail to:

Helen Fitzgerald, Photo CD

108 Observatory Way, Marshfield, MA 02050-4101

make the check payable to CASA-Lead

## 2006 SLTP Conferences

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

- **The ReEnergizer Conference**  
November 26
- **InterLead—the Interstate Student Leadership Forum**  
April 2
- **Officer Training Seminar**  
July 6 - 7

- **Leadership Training Conferences (4)**  
July 11 - 15; July 18 - 22;  
Aug 1 - 5; Aug 8 - 12
- **Advanced Leadership Conferences (4)**  
July 12 - 15; July 19 - 22;  
Aug 2 - 5; Aug 9 - 12
- **Leadership in Athletics**  
July 27 - 28
- **Adviser Certification**

July 27 - 28  
**The Leadership Center**  
July 12 - 15

## Building

Once upon a time a carpenter was hired to build a house. Though he had never built a house, he wanted the job bad enough to agree to do a “rush job,” with no blueprint, no trained workers, nothing but the expectation that he’d be able to build a fully functional house without hassling his bosses.

Extraordinary enthusiasm accompanied the start of construction. He was greeted by countless numbers of people who offered to help—each one shouted, “just call if you need me.”

When the first volunteer showed up, she said, “I love wallpapering. I’ll start on that right now.” The carpenter hesitated but said, “sure, I’m glad to get all the help I can.”

A second worker arrived, he said, “I love roofing, can I get started on that?” “we’ll definitely need a roof, Go for it,” the carpenter replied. “I’ll go buy some shingles,” said the worker who left for the store.

Within a few hours work was underway all over the place, with volunteers all working on the projects that they wanted.

In addition to all of the volunteers, there were almost 100 people looking on, all shouting advice and instruction. Some calling the carpenter on his cell phone. “Paint it red.” “Have you looked at the house down the street, we need a house just like that.” Watch your workers, some on them cannot be trusted.” “Haven’t you heard, you can’t build houses that way any more.” “No, no, no, we tried that once

before and it did not work.” “You are doing it just like the last guy.”

But if one message was heard more than any other it was “hurry.” Activity boomed, hammers flew, people screamed orders, trucks arrived from Home Depot every hour on the hour. The boss came by regularly and gave no advice, nor any encouragement.

You don’t have to be an expert builder to predict the end to this story, do you? But if we are honest this picture is a far too accurate picture of the way most student activity programs get built. It is assumed that an enthusiastic staff and eager students will be enough, and that assumption is inevitably wrong.

Don’t misunderstand, it is possible to have “flash-in-the-pan” dramatic growth if you happen to be an intensely energetic kid-magnet who is unafraid to build a program entirely around your own personality. But a long term, sustainable, deep impact student activity? Nope.

It is time for schools to stop building hurry up activity programs and to realize that the kinds of programs they yearn for won’t come quickly and will never come without real building plans. That is, plans built around developing student leadership and the personal development and growth of the student activity adviser.

Whether it is the Drama Club, the Student Council, Key Club, Yearbook, National Honor Society, or any other student organization — ALL need to be

operating according to a plan. Creating that plan requires the leadership team (adviser plus officers) and the membership to agree as to the purpose and mission of the organization. The mission and purpose should be defined in concert with the administration.

With a mission and purpose in place, then the leadership team can go about setting the goals of the organization and thereby provide the necessary activity.

All of that requires training much more than willpower.

We suggest four steps. Step One: Enroll the leadership team in the Officer Training Seminar — this is a nuts and bolts conference specifically designed to assist student activities. Step Two: enroll the student officers in LTC. Their Personal Development will greatly enhance the development of the group. Step Three: enroll the adviser(s) in the Adviser Certification Program. Here they will find the know how. Step Four: get as many of the younger members to enroll at LTC as possible. Grow the future.

