

The Student Leadership Training Program

True Points

a newsletter for the parents of student leaders

student leadership

The Student Leadership Training Program

Leaders walk their talk.

December, 2005

Volume 2, Issue 2

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The ReEnergizer Conference—a leadership flu shot

By Mina Makarious, SLTP Staff

Of the non-summer programming SLTP operates every year, the Reenergizer is both the most and least representative of our general way of doing things. Unlike those programs, in which we have five full days to work with students, the Reenergizer is a mere four hours, though those hours are packed to the brim with learnings. Though it might not “feel” like our summer experiences, the Ree is very intensely tied to the program’s mission of empowering student leaders because it hits students when they need it most.

Perhaps fittingly, thanksgiving is a time of full plates for student leaders. Seniors are wrestling with college applications, classes are in full swing, student groups are begin-

ning to experience tensions, even high school faculty start to feel the physical and emotional fatigue brought on by three months of hard work. It is the time student leaders are most needed to keep up the energy in a school, yet they too need someone to pick up their energy.

This is where the Reenergizer comes in. The conference works in several ways to restore energy to student leaders. First, the Reenergizer allows students to interact with half a thousand others who are facing the same difficulties and to share ideas, and emotions with them. Second, the reenergizer literally helps add student energy. Make no mistake about it the Reenergizer is an SLTP conference and as such comes with an enthu-

siastic and positive staff and a loud and productive atmosphere. Finally, the Reenergizer helps to restore the confidence of student leaders. By holding two experiential workshops, and a powerful educational play, the Reenergizer allows delegates to remember their toolbox of skills for difficult times. Ultimately, the result is exactly what we intended: a “learningfull” pick me up for students who are best poised to empower student participation and leaders.

Newsletter Submissions

SLTP welcomes contributions to our newsletters from our alumni and friends.

Articles should be no longer than 200 words. Each article submitted for publication must address a topic of interest to student leadership. The article must include a bio of the author - name;

address; email address, phone; school; year in school; & SLTP graduation year.

Opinions must be clearly identifies as those of the author.

We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity and style. We also reserve the

right not to publish articles which do not meet the criteria established in our guidelines.

For additional information, please refer to the guidelines posted on sltp.info

The Jester and Pharley Phund



"It is up to us to make a difference."

It is up to us to care."

Recently we heard from Claire, the Director of the Phund who called to congratulate SLTP for binging the message to so many students who want to make a difference. We are proud to share that over 17 alumni have begun read-a-thon fundraising programs in their towns.

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.

In case somehow

you missed this plea for help, the Saltzman family has created an opportunity for you to bring this amazing 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.

SLTP recommends and endorses this worthy cause.

Visit: www.thejester.org

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

If not you - who?

Our Connections theatrical troupe has written several plays, a number of which have been widely acclaimed. All of our plays are directed towards student leaders and the issues they face.

Last summer we produced "*silence is NOT an option*" which dealt with the issue of abuse towards women. Did you know that 1 out of 4 high school females are involved in an abusive relationship?

Three years ago we produced "*stop, look and listen*" our award winning production dealing with physical, social and emotional

bullying. Did you know that our Federal Government still insists that only 18% of high school students have ever experienced bullying?

At the ReEnergizer Conference we presented "*If not you - who?*" This production concerns the highest percentage of students in every school. That is because this production is about those who are left behind, left out, ignored, picked on, bullied or excluded from real involvement in their schools.

Like all of our theatrical productions, "if" was written by stu-

dents for students. "If" presents what we like to think of as windows to everyday occurrences – selected not because they are rare or obscure but because they are NOT. While these do not happen every day, they are ordinary everyday events – there is nothing unusual except the attention we pay by placing the events on stage.

The occurrences range from the words we use (retarded, gay, etc), to gossip, to exclusion, to bullying, to closet racism.

A school assembly by Ed Roberts, 2001 SLTP Alumnus

My senior year in high school, I had one of those moments that made me proud to be an SLTP graduate and staffer. Our school day revolved around an assembly featuring the Dudley Boys of the WWE talking to us about “Staying on top.” I respect my administration for trying to excite some members of the student body by bringing in their heroes, but I pretty much stereotyped the assembly before I got there: Two huge dudes would sit on stage, talk about their job, how hard they worked to get there, and then some genius would yell out, “Can I have your autograph?” during the Q&A portion. I pretty much had it right (one of my buddies asked for the autograph) until a sudden turn in discussion.

D-Von, the articulate one, mentioned how he and his partner Bubba Ray often went to schools to discuss problems facing that particular school. They disclaimed that whatever they said was probably going to be a repeat of everything our teachers and parents have ever told us. Anyway, Bubba Ray offended most of the audience when he said that our problems didn't really matter compared to those of kids in some of the other schools that he had visited. I understood what he meant, addressing a largely middle to upper-middleclass crowd. But what about the kids in single-parent homes or the poor ones trying to fit in with their more well off peers?

Then he dropped the line that actually caused me to move to the edge of my seat. He said that the only problem he was told that our school had is bullying. My reaction was, “good, our administration realizes this.” Then he

pointed to a freshman boy in the front row and said, “You were the one who told me that when I walked in right?” The poor kid kind of shook his head, embarrassed and aware of the reaction that awaited. I scanned the auditorium at that moment and saw that some kids were slouching in chairs while others erupted in howls to mock the thought that bullying was an issue. So the ever sharp Bubba Ray asks the audience, “Are there any bullies out there?”

What, they we're gonna stand up and form a line to the stage? He and D-Von were visibly uncomfortable with the issue, admitting that they had never discussed it in the hundreds of assemblies they had done. I thought that was absurd, that bullying exists in every school they've ever been at. These guys travel around the country speaking at all kinds of schools, so why shouldn't they talk about something pertinent to every single one of them? That way, they would avoid their fear of duplicating the same lessons most faculties try to teach.

Bubba Ray went on to say in as many words, “Bullying is bad. Don't do it.”

D-Von told a personal story about a kid who bullied him and then ended up being thrown out of an apartment window because he tried bullying his own brother. Their attempt was noble for being made up on the spot. I chuckled when D-Von said, “a coach told me one time that if you fail to plan you plan to fail.” First off, his coach stole that from John Wooden and second, that's a terrible bit of advice to give

after a speech in which he, “winged it”.

Later in the afternoon I was talking about the assembly with a kid in my class while we were working out. This kid was one of those who mocked bullying as an issue during the assembly. But he got the same feeling I did about the fact that the Dudley Brothers had never spoke about bullying. “How can you have never talked about something that goes on in every school?” he asked.

I thought back to the plays we have presented at SLTP addressing the issues that no one else is truly prepared to deal with. It will be infinitely more effective than two WWE stars looking to kill time before their event at the Mohegan Sun.

***“Bullying is bad.
Don't do it.”***

The Early Birds Expire January 12

Already we have lots of kids registered for next summer. There are nearly 30 students who have signed up for LTC and ALC and it is only early December.

In the student packets at the REE, there were special applications. These applications are the “Early Birds” and they include a discounted tuition offering substantial savings for making an early decision. The deadline for these applications is

January 12, 2006

Like the Earliest Birds, these applications offer significant discounts and are NOT be available on line. Only those students who attended the ReE or their friends have access. So if for some reason you could not attend the ReE but you are in a position to sign up now for camp — reach out to your crew-mates from last summer and get a hold of an Early Bird.

Next summer is shap-

ing up to be SLTP’s largest ever. We have added staff and we are exploring every means to increase our capacity.

But the best advice we can give is to register EARLY. So put on your nicest smile and go ask Santa to give you SLTP for Christmas!

Since 1990

Since 1990, SLTP has collected over 20,000 pounds of food.

Since 1990 the Student Leadership Training Program has been identified with the phrase “making a difference.” Every summer during each of the sessions, students and staff join to make differences within each other so that they may make differences for their schools and communities when they return.

One of the unique ingredients of the SLTP experience has always been the commitment to make a difference while “at camp.”

Since 1990, SLTP has :

- Collected over 20,000 POUNDS of food
- Collected over 24,000 articles of clothing
- Made over 8,000 ornaments resulting in that many toys for needy kids
- Made eleven videos for children residing in battered women’s shelters
- Made thousands of holiday cards for service men and women overseas
- Plus — 30,000 Peace Angels; dozens of Baby quilts; Games books; coloring books, pencil boxes place-mats and thank you letters to servicemen.

Buying a computer for college by Adam Travis, SLTP Director

Many students buy a new computer when they head off to college. Some schools have specific computer requirements, but most do not, which leaves many questions about what you should buy.

One of the biggest

questions is laptop vs. desktop. Unless you are planning to do a lot of animation, video editing, or some other intensive specialized work, I would always recommend buying a laptop computer. There is a greater risk of theft, but the convenience of being able to

bring your computer to classes or the library can’t be ignored. Plus you will really love your laptop every time you move in/out of your dorm or apartment.

Unfortunately, the lifespan of most computers

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is only 3 to 4 years. So you might be able to get through college with one computer, but don't count on it. In general, when buying computers you get what you pay for. I always find that a cheap computer quickly reveals why it was cheap. You don't always have to buy the most expensive, but you should be looking at the higher end models. If buying a PC, look for a fast processor (not a Celeron), at least 512 MB of RAM, at

least a 40 GB hard drive, a CD-RW drive, and wireless networking (Wi-Fi). If buying a Mac, go for a PowerBook—don't even look at an iBook—and get as much RAM as you can.

When friends ask me for a personal recommendation, I always tell them to buy a Dell or Gateway. In my personal experience, those two brands stand above all others. But doing your own research

and shopping around is always useful, just be weary of any advice that comes from a salesperson at a store. In the next installment, I'll discuss what software you need for your computer.

2006 SLTP Conferences

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

- **InterLead—the Inter-State Student Leadership Forum**
April 2
- **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
- **The ReEnergizer Conference**
November 25, 2006
- **Officer Training Seminar**
July 6 - 7

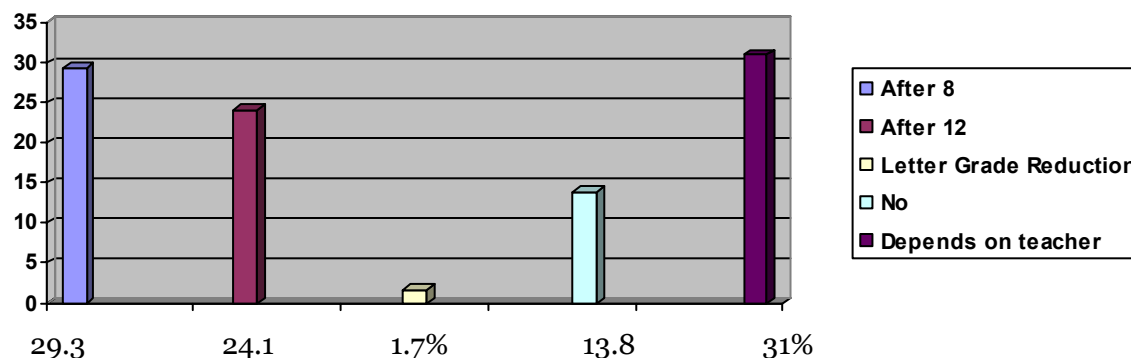
Online Filters

Next time your teenager thinks your family is the only one that filters its Internet use, toss around these findings:

- 54% of parents with teenagers use filters (65% increase from 2000).
- 64% of parents have set rules for their teenagers who go online.
- 81% of parents say that teenagers aren't careful enough when giving out information about themselves online.
- 79% of online teens agree.

And the survey says . . .

This month's on-line survey asked: **Does your school punish excessive absences with aca-**



Yes, but I wish it didn't by Helen Fitzgerald, CASA Executive Director

Age old wisdom says that the punishment should fit the crime. If a student enjoys academic success in a class but has poor attendance, why punish him academically.

If we view attendance as important, and we should, we should address the issue of absence without compromising

our integrity. That is what we do when we punish a student using grades. Grades are supposed to measure academics and academics alone.

If we follow the logic of grade punishment, then we can take points off for not eating lunch, or running in the corridors, or throwing a spitball, or

any one of hundreds of other offenses not related to academics.

Academic punishment is absurd. Yes, there is a nation wide problem with absenteeism. And solving it will take hard work. Academic punishment is the cowards way out to a very complex issue.

No, but I wish it did. by Vinnie Compton, HS Geometry Teacher

Every day I am faced with the dilemma of multiple absences in every class. Luckily I do not work in the inner city where the number of absences is outrageous.

Students take off for vacation. They take off for col-

lege visits. They take mental health days. When they leave our schools for the real world, they will find that this is not tolerated.

We need to make a stand. Grades are the only message the students care

about.

I am envious of schools that have a hard line approach to attendance. I read recently about the Boston schools that lock students out who are tardy. That sends exactly the right message.