

True Points

a newsletter for the parents of student leaders

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From where I sit By Dr. Jim Fitzgerald, SLTP Director



Being thankful

Being thankful is most difficult during difficult times. Yet it is exactly when we have the strongest need to be thankful. A thankful list is easy to visit when times are good, and if that is all we use it for then it is most underused.

Each of us have had plenty of people, plenty of events, plenty of things to be thankful for. When times get tough, when life throws us a curve, we need to maximize all of the valuable contributions that have helped us to be who we are.

Visiting a thankful list does not require a ceremony, or candles, or chanting, or sitting in a weird position, all you need is your memory. I visit my list often. And I think that is important. It is important that we make it a habit. Wish lists and second guessing are the ultimate mind traps, and

thankful lists are like a 'get out of jail free card' for your mind.

The lists we all have share a lot of commonalities – they are certainly populated with lots of extraordinary people. Many of whom are family, many are friends, and every now and then, there are some perfect strangers. All of these people left footprints on our minds and spirits. All contributed. Revisiting your thankful list is a way of saying thank you all over again.

When I find myself especially troubled, I will extend my visit to my thankful list to go beyond the people who have shaped my life. I will visit the things and events. Typically it goes something like this:

I am thankful for the difficulties I experienced as a teen; for the tragic illness my father faced with courage and dignity. These experiences became lessons I learned in becoming a

man. Lessons my father was skilled enough to de-brief.

I am thankful for the painful need for acceptance I had as a teen. The need gave me an understanding and empathy for others. The experience shaped my ability to give myself away and to demonstrate caring through attentiveness and listening.

I am thankful for all of the feelings of inadequacy that I have felt and do feel all too regularly. Having felt the pain of failure, I know that the fear of failure is the worst of all human fears – and that knowledge makes me a more understanding teacher.

I am thankful for all of the self doubt that rages within me, as it presses me to prove myself to myself and it allows me to really empathize with student leaders.

I am thankful for

Continued on page 2

What is a White Paper?

What is a White Paper?

The term *white paper* is an offshoot of the term *white book*, which is an official publication of a national government. A famous white paper example is the *Winston Churchill White Paper of 1922*, which addressed political conflict in

Palestine.

A white paper typically argues a specific position or solution to a problem. Although white papers take their roots in governmental policy, they have become a common tool used in business to introduce technology innovations and prod-

ucts.

White papers are powerful tools used to help key decision-makers and influencers justify implementing solutions.

Ours is not a research

Continued on page 7

Taking our stand by Helen Fitzgerald, CASA Director

Violence against women: we can stop it!

There is an epidemic of violence against young women occurring in our schools. The statistics make the case to call it an epidemic. NBC recently reported that one in five high school women are in an abusive relationship. According to the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, approximately one out of every three high school women who are in a relationship, are in an abusive relationship.

Student and community leaders play an important role in our nation's efforts to stop violence against young women. We have the opportunity to serve as role models for other women, girls, men and boys in regard to the treatment of women and girls. Silence is complicity. Boys need to be taught at a young age that using violence against women is wrong and will not be tolerated. Leaders are in a unique position to communicate this message in a strong, compassionate, and meaningful way. Working in partnership, student leaders and community leaders together can make enormous strides toward changing attitudes and perceptions surrounding relationship abuse, dating violence,

sexual assault, and stalking.

◆ **The first step is awareness.**

Promoting awareness will require persistence. Many simply do not want to believe the reality. Many want to fall back on the excuse that it is the victims fault. Assemblies and training programs are a necessity. Included among the recommendations of almost all of the groups are awareness outreach ideas which vary from presenting "The Yellow Dress" to Public Service Announcements.

◆ **The second step is the acceptance of responsibility.**

This is not about finding fault. This is not about shifting blame. Leaders must accept the responsibility to act. This is not a school problem, it is not a community problem, it is not a problem for the police – it is an epidemic.

◆ **The third step is to arrange a conversation about solutions.**

The conversation should include ALL of the community leaders. Representatives of every community group should partake in the discussion from elected officials to clergy and including student leaders. The task is the same as we assigned the groups at the

InterLead, namely to determine what can be SAID and what can be DONE.

◆ **The final step is putting the plans in motion.**

This means doing whatever it takes. There are lives at stake. Not just the lives of the women in danger, but all the lives of those whom they touch. As the plans are created, they must be implemented. Since training will be necessary for teachers, students and administrators – begin there. Get the training. Make the plans. Save the lives.

From where I sit continued from page 1

the love given me by my parents. The impossible loss of my father taught me by example of my mother's equal loss and how strong a person can be in the face of the unthinkable. Her dignity, compassion and strength were beyond my comprehension and yet, through her example, I grew.

I am thankful for all of the curiosity I have and for the drive to

learn.

I am thankful for all the willing and wanting students who I have had contact with over the past 30 plus years.

I am thankful for the courage to continue our program, when the only logical thing to do was to bail out 12 years ago.

I am thankful for all the love I have been given, for all the love I

have shared, and for all the love yet to be shared.

And most importantly of all, I am thankful that I learned that love is the answer to all the questions, fears and desires.

Safety Alert! - The choking game

It's also called Fainting, the Pass-Out Game, Knockout, Black-out, or Space Monkey—but it's no game.

A growing number of pre-teens are teaching each other how to get high by asphyxiation.

Here are some facts about the Choking Game:

- Kids use ropes, belts, or their hands to choke each other until they pass out, getting a euphoric buzz for a few seconds before regaining consciousness.
 - Death most likely occurs when someone tries it alone and loses consciousness before he or she can release the stranglehold.
- It's estimated that between 400 and 500 kids die from this game each year.
- Brain damage and death can occur as quickly as three minutes after lack of oxygen to the brain.
 - Kids who participate are often smart and well-behaved. They try asphyxiation as an alternative to alcohol or drugs because they think it's safer.
 - Some signs of this behavior include: marks or bruises on the throat; headaches; blood-shot eyes; belts, leashes, ropes, or shoelaces tied in strange knots or found in un-
- usual locations; disorientation after spending time alone; or locked bedroom doors.

Idea share—Graduation Party Ideas

Not sure what to do for your senior's graduation party? Here are some fun and simple ideas:

- Create rolled up, diploma-style invitations with parchment paper, written with a calligraphy pen.
- Make a time capsule and ask party-goers to bring something memorable from their high school years to contribute.
- Play Pin the Mustache on the Teacher with construction-paper mustaches and a picture of one of your graduate's favorite teachers.
- Attach pictures of graduates to a piece of poster board and ask partygoers to use a permanent marker to sign the board.
- Give each graduate a box and ask everyone to write notes of advice or encouragement, or contribute a fun memory.
- Remember not to load your party with too many activities; teenagers love to spend social time together.

Get involved.—Join us !

Join us. Help SLTP to grow and thrive. Become part of the action. We need help getting the word out . What can you do? Here are some direct action suggestions:

1. Join the Presentation Teams at SLTP information tables at various conferences
2. Join the Welcome Wagon team for our summer conferences to meet and greet the parents dropping off their kids.
3. Join the Facilitation Teams for one or all of the Parent Orientation Programs at the closing of this summer's conferences.
4. Join the Fundraising Teams to seek out in-kind donations from local businesses.
5. Join the Phone Calling Teams to call schools and secure information.
6. Join the Recruiting Teams to present to parent groups.
7. Join the Connections theatrical troupe to present or help stage on of our traveling productions.
8. Apply to join our staff.

What's still available for the summer?

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 15 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 6-7

LTC

There are four sessions. Although there are just over 90 slots available at this point.

July 11-15;
July 18-22;
August 1-5
and Aug 8-12

ALC

There are four sessions and approximately 15 slots available.

July 12-15;
July 19-22;
August 2-5;
and Aug 9-12

TLC

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

July 12-15

Adviser Certification

There is only one session which is open to all teachers, coaches and collegians and there are 8 slots left.

July 27-28

Leadership in Athletics

There is only one session which is open to secondary and collegiate athletes and their coaches and there are 22 slots left.

July 27-28

SLTP Brochures on line

Currently we have the following brochures posted on line:

- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/athleticsflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/otsflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/LTCflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/ALCflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/Adviserflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/interleadflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/Generalflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/brochures/whysltp.pdf>

A letter to an English Teacher by Mina Makarious, SLTP Staff

The following is a letter one of our staff has sent to his high school English teacher – it answers the question about where SLTP fits in the lives of our alumni and it is re-printed here to celebrate his graduation from college.

Dear Mrs. Creighton,

It recently hit me that I have finished my third year of college here at Harvard and as such, my brain has been in heavy reflecting mode. My experiences here have been amazing, challenging, and fulfilling. I have learned more than I may ever need to know about some areas of the world

and am aware of just how much more learning I need to do.

I have also been thinking a great deal about my path in life up to this point.

As you might guess, doing that leads my brain into the halls of Uxbridge Hall again and again. There are the teachers, including of course yourself, who I remember believed in me, challenged me to grow, and supported me both academically and personally. There are my classmates, teammates, and friends, the main characters in the stories and times I remember. Finally, there are also the various settings in which my high school life was carried out: Mr. McCourt's room, the tennis courts, and of course a certain well

painted English classroom, But the reason I really chose to write to you today is because of one of the key things that links my successful paths in the high school as well as the enjoyable ones I have wandered unto here, my involvement with the Student Leadership Training Program (SLTP). The summer before my sophomore year of high school (which feels like it was in 1893), I went to SLTP, as did the Lewis twins and Jessa Loomis. Since then, we have remained involved as staff for the program. For me the Student Leadership Training Program has

What is a White Paper? Continued from page 1

driven paper. We offer no statistics. We offer no charts. We present no graphs. We are not presenting the case to prove that violence against women exists. **We are stating that it exists** and presenting the solutions recommended by a group of leaders.

Ours is more in line with a government style approach. We will be offering educated opinions. This opinion paper is different and unique in that it is a col-

laborative opinion of student leaders and community leaders.

It is a leaders opinion paper on what to do and say regarding violence against women.

It does not offer ONE solution -- it offers many.

Kudos go out to Ashley Robshaw for collating and typing the reports from each of the Forum Groups, to the 16 Forum Facilitators, to the

alumni and staff who recruited the legislators and to the AB and staff for editing the White Paper.

As an organization, we should be very proud of this position paper.

"Writing this white paper and presenting to school and community leaders is a milestone for SLTP."
Jim Fitzgerald

Where is the White Paper?

You will find SLTP's White Paper, **Violence against young women**, posted on line as a PDF file.

<http://www.sltp.info/publications/ViolenceWhitePaper.pdf>

2006 SLTP Conferences

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

- **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
- The ReEnergizer Conference**
November 25, 2006

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

A new opportunity for SLTP Alumni

At a recent meeting of the Administrative Board (the governing committee for SLTP), a proposal to continue to expand the outreach of SLTP through our Grant program.

This summer the students attending SLTP will be given information about one of our most exciting efforts to exercise STUDENT leadership back in their schools and communities.

CASA will once again 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 projects this coming Fall..

Details about the program and the grant application process are available on line.

We will have informa-

tion about the grant program included in the camper manuals and Parent Orientation Packets this summer.

The Leadership in Action Grants

Money for activities



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 community

- 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

College Prep—Financial Aid

As soon as your teenager is ready to apply to college, it's time to start financial aid planning. But this isn't simply a matter of filling out forms and hoping you get a good response from financial aid officers. These tips may help you to get your future scholar a better deal:

- Make an appointment. Arrange a time for you and your teenager to discuss your application with a financial aid officer, either in person or by phone.
- Do your homework. Make sure

you and your teenager have solid needs-based or merit-based evidence to support your case for a more generous award.

- Review the forms. Keep financial aid officers aware of updates or omissions in your family's finances.
- Cooperate. If your teenager has offers from competing colleges, make this known, without demanding that one college match another.
- Find other decision-makers.

Communicate with the admissions office—they often can negotiate merits-based deals or keep track of openings when other applicants turn down offers.

- Negotiate, the college has made you an offer. Before you accept the offer, ask for more. This is especially true if your teen has an outstanding resume of involvement and personal development.

Parent Orientation Teams

One of the most important services we can provide for our campers is setting the tone for understanding with their parents.

Our Parent Orientation Program which culminates in the SLTP Celebration every Saturday of camp is vital to our campers success. You know

how important it is for a parental support system to be in place.

Each Saturday we endeavor to explain SLTP to the parents. Explaining the happenings of a week of camp in 30 minutes is more than a challenge, but it is also more than a little fun and more than

a little fulfilling.

The most effective presentations have included staffers, alumni and staffer/camper parents.

Join the team and help us to continue this success.

The Parent Orientation Programs

- ⇒ **Session One POP Saturday**
July 15 9:05-10:15 Nichols Dining Hall
- ⇒ **Session Two POP Saturday**
July 22 9:05-10:15 Nichols Dining Hall
- ⇒ **Session Three POP Saturday**
August 5 9:05-10:15 Nichols Dining Hall

- ⇒ **Session Four POP Saturday**
August 12 9:05-10:15 Nichols Dining Hall

*Join us, sign up by emailing Jim Fitzgerald (jim@sltp.info)
Indicate which week you are committing to attend.*

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

Who should attend SLTP? 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

Praise seems to happen when it is too late to enjoy it! The common practice at SLTP, "catching people doing things right" is **revolutionary**. I was looking for quotes on praise (part of my preparation for Tranquillity introductions) and I came across these. Anyway, the quotes 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 HOBY and MassSTAR delegates. Those parents are at a loss about the whole college admission "thing." It is different from years ago when the parents 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 we 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 each campers life way beyond the college admission process.

Please 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 and that will help pay the cell phone bill BUT that won't help them get into college, nor will it put one cent in their scholarship account.

Recently I attended a conference for Peer Mediators in Massachusetts. One parent came to me with a question - it seems her school participates in both the MA HOBY & MassSTAR (both host conferences for high school sophomores, each asks that the school send one representative-- MassSTAR is free; HOBY costs 170 dollars). There are 200 students in the sophomore class at her town's school -- and the principal choose to recognize and reward only ONE of them to attend both HOBY and MassSTAR.. The woman asked me how many I thought should go to SLTP -- I answered 150. She then asked me if I thought her daughter should go to SLTP.

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 63 kids in the junior class -- probably 59 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:

- 1) *would they benefit?; and*
- 2) *are they going to college?*

Help us give a whole bunch of kids the best week of their entire lives! Help us to spread the word.

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

Time is running out—DO NOT BE LEFT 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!
The sessions are filling up.
If your teen is coming, please get the application in the mail.

Reach out to your friends about their kids. Send in the 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 175 kids who attended LTC last summer, and there are only 14 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 in the last week. Visit our website for more information or for more applications.

www.sltp.info

A letter to an English teacher continued from page 4

been the place where I learned how to learn. While I cannot deny that I was taught well in high school, I know that my academic success came from the aggressive learning style I picked up at SLTP. Furthermore, this program taught me virtually every leadership skill I know, every organizational skill I know, and was probably the only way that I could have been as active as I was in high school, and still gives me the skills to be an active student leader on a campus where I had assumed I would be the smallest of fishes.

As you can see, and as you might remember, I believe strongly in this program. However, I have hit the frightening realization that I do not know every teenager in Uxbridge anymore. This is where I need your help. For a long time students in Uxbridge have been incorrectly told by some they could not go to elite universities and that they would not be prepared when they got there. I know that you know this is not true. For me, SLTP gave me the confidence to believe this was not true, and other students need to have this confidence too. Unfortunately, less than .5% of all New England high school students attend any

sort of leadership or personal development program at all. While this certainly puts them at an advantage, it deprives other students of the same wonderful opportunity to learn and grow that they have received.

As someone who is in direct contact with students everyday, you have the power to get UHS students to this program. There are virtually no students who cannot benefit from this program. I have had friends on bands, football teams, hockey teams, writing clubs, student councils, political activism clubs, and church groups attend. I have also seen many friends who were completely uninvolved attend and benefit a great deal. I guarantee that if you encourage students to attend this summer, you will see a marked change not just in them, but also in the atmosphere of the school next year.

I am enclosing applications for all of our summer programs with this letter. Also, there's a description of each of the programs available and reminder cards that you can pass out to students and parents. In the past the Student Council and the Police Department (thanks to Chief Creighton actually), have subsidized some of the costs of the program and I would be willing to help lobby them

to do so again if necessary. I would love to talk to you more about the program in person, and suggest you talk to Phil Loomis or Lauren Nutter who are both part of the staff as well.

Finally, I wanted to thank you for being someone I went to for support and encouragement in the past, and hope that you can do the same for the students at the high school now by supporting SLTP.

Sincerely,
Mina Makarious
Uxbridge High School, '02
Harvard University, '06

PS: Instances of poor grammar in this letter do not reflect any inadequacies in my high school English curriculum. These inadequacies are much more likely to have developed in my undergraduate life.

Think about it.

What are the biggest lessons you've learned in life? Did you learn by reading a book? By your favorite lecture? Or by doing something? We suspect it was through something you did, or something that happened to you.

It's the same with growth as a leader. When students directly help someone in need (*putting their words into action*), they grow as an individual and as a leader.

Act now to take a leap into effective leadership. Encourage student leaders to join us at one of the 10 summer conferences in 2006. And besides all the different weeks, there are four different levels of the experience...*all designed to boost individual student's skills and knowledges:*

Be sure to visit <http://www.sltip.info> frequently for updates.

We teach . . .

Leadership **ideals**

Leadership **skills**

Leadership **practices**

For more information or to download applications visit:

[http://
www.sltip.info](http://www.sltip.info)

Our Conferences

Officer Training Seminar

July 6,7

Leadership Training Conferences

July 11-15; 18-22; Aug. 1-5; 8-12

Advanced Leadership Conference

July 12-15; 19-22; Aug. 2-5; 9-12

Leadership in Athletics

July 27-28

Adviser Certification Conference

July 27-28

The Leadership Center

July 12-15

The ReEnergizer

November 25, 2006

Interested in learning how to make a difference?

Want to get more organized?

Need to revitalize your leadership skills?

Join us **this summer** at The Student Leadership Training Program's

student leadership
The **Student Leadership Training Program**

Leaders walk their talk.

Leadership Training Conferences



where? Nichols College – Dudley, Mass.

when? July 11-15; 18-22; Aug 1-5; 8-12

what? leadership skills, ideals and practices, fun, practical and applicable lessons, peer networking

Tuition: only \$350!

For applications or more information Visit: <http://sltp.info>

Conference Highlights:

*Idea sharing ~ Skill building ~ Critical concerns
Essential Skill training ~ Special Theatrical Program ~ Eventology ~ Proactivity ~ Intentionality
DifferenceMakers ~ college scholarship information ~ Portfolio Construction
Staff from all over the country ~ Keynote speaker ~ Comprehensive manual
Three to one student to staff ratio
and much, much more ...*