

True Points

a newsletter for the parents of student leaders

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



Our role models create us. They are our vision of what we wish to do and to become. They provide a clear picture of the measures to be undertaken to get there. Helping someone find an empowering role model will make a major difference in his life.

Will Rogers (the famous American Humorist, author and actor) had a habit of asking each person he met, "Who is your role model?" He noted that he found a pattern in the answers. Those who were most successful quickly and almost immediately listed their role models. Those who were less successful either didn't have one or

would say, "I admire a lot of people. But I could never be that good."

There was a time when schools taught about heroes. There was a time when movies were dominated by heroic tales. No, don't worry I am not going to rush off into an ole fart rant, about how it used to be in the olden days back when I had to walk to school ten miles uphill each way. I am only citing historic references.

Today we don't do that. Even the so called character education programs don't, instead of stories and people, they focus on the abstract. Today we say we have a more realistic view of things. We have "reality TV," that list among

their credits a slew of writers and script developers. We have adopted a dark and distrustful view of life. We see through a glass darkly.

Charles Barkley, the TV Sportscaster and former NBA player, was once asked what kind of role model he thought he was for young people. He replied, "I ain't no f-ing role model." Yet he was and still is. It simply was not a positive role model. The headlines remind us every day that sports figures are carrying guns and getting involved in shootouts with gangs at strip clubs.

In schools, the rules say one thing and the authorities turn a blind eye to the goings on. Unfortu-

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The START Conference

On the first weekend of June in 2007, SLTP and Nichols College will launch **the START Conference**.

We will stage a two day overnight conference where we have invited one student from every high school in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island and then to provide those students with a guided interactive experience with leaders from the collegiate, business and political worlds while providing those

students with an introduction to leadership. We are targeting freshmen so as to provide the maximum benefit to schools.

Think about that ... one student from EVERY high school in those three states! That's about 650 students if they all come!

The conference which will include room and board will be nearly free of charge (the registration fee is only \$25). The fee will cover some of Nichols ex-

penses and will provide a minor investment by the parents or the school which may insure better attendance.

So what's going on? Right now, we are finishing the curriculum, determining what we need and don't need, and we just sent the mailing packet to every guidance office. The invitation packets included advice as to how to

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This Summer—what's available?

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 24 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 5-6

LTC

There are four sessions. And there are just over 120 slots available at this point.

July 10-14; July 17-21;

July 31– August 4

and Aug 7-11

ALC

There are four sessions and approximately 38 slots available.

July 11-14; July 18-21;

August 1-4; and Aug 8-11

TLC

There is only one session and there are 6 slots left.

July 11-14

Adviser Certification

There is only one session which is open to all teachers, coaches and collegians and there are 10 slots left.

July 26-27

Leadership in Athletics

There is only one session which is open to secondary and collegiate athletes and their coaches and there are 24 slots left.

July 26-27

Authors wanted!

We are looking to expand our publications. We are seeking new authors, new book ideas, new products for SLTP and CASA to publish.

Are you interested in writing a resource or inspirational text for student leaders?

If the answer is “yes,” boy, do we have a deal for you! How would this work?

It would begin with an email to Jim. Jim works with our authors to solidify their concepts for the book.

This has worked nicely with Carolyn, Laura, Sarah, Erin, Pam, Ashley, Greg, Adam and all of our playwrights as all those collaborative ef-

forts resulted in fine additions to our library of resources.

Once the idea is solidified, the exchanges continue via email with lots of editing and amending. While the author is working on the content, Jim works on developing the design for the publication.

Then once completed, it is time for proofreading, corrections, changes and editing.

So is there something you'd like to write?

Or perhaps you'd be interested in illustrating a book for us.

Last year we began “the little big books series” which are leadership

lessons written in a children's book style. We have several new books planned for this series—the latest concerning eating disorders with another in the works about bullying.

The illustrations would need to be specific for each text—be “copy-ready” or electronically reproducible.

Think about it. Then tap to Jim.

The Jester & Pharley Phund

The Jester has lost his jingle by David Saltzman is among our favorite stories. Reading it at camp after the differencemakers 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

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

From where I sit *continued from page 2*

nately truthiness is thriving.

All of the politicians know the air should be cleaned up and that big oil has been cheating – but nothing is done. Education presidents and governors are elected, but again nothing improves.

Yet flying right in the face of that in community after community there are champions at work. We heard their stories at the ReE, and we know hundreds if not thousands more. There are youth league coaches and referees and umpires and scout masters and den mothers and mentors and big brothers/sisters and volunteers of all sorts. There are tons of self sacrificing adults out there. And this does not include the zillions of hard working teachers, doctors, or health care givers.

When we allow ourselves to consider it, we can see that positive role models abound. As teachers we must enable and empower our students to connect with role models. We must open their eyes to the positivity that surrounds them. The negative is easier to see. It is simply louder. As teachers we must give voice to the positivity. In part that is a function of SLTP's Champions for Youth Awards and the Lifetime of Difference Award.

Yet what I am speaking of is not a once a year connection. As parents and leadership staffers, we must use our place to empower our student leaders to see that they are not alone. We earn that place by creating such a magical transformational event in their lives. The week we provide at camp allows us that place.

We are all role models. We are all watched by someone. We contribute positively or negatively to the discourse of the society in which we live. As I have said recently to the SLTP staffers, "as eachers we must take that up a notch." During the week of camp, we are saying "hey look at me." Not to boast ... not to crow ... not to demand admiration nor affection. We say "hey look at me – I am just as confused as you

are but I have learned some things – let me share them with you."

So how do we help our children find the role models in their lives or for that matter how do we find the role models in our lives? Like any exercise in critical thinking, it begins with questions.

Some questions you can ask are:

- "Who do you admire and respect?"
- "What specifically do you admire and respect about that person?"
- "If you could be like any specific individual, who would you choose?"
- "If there were a few people who could teach you to be like them, who would you want to teach you?"
- "Who have you met or read about that you would like to emulate?"
- "Do you have a secret wish to be like any great person?" If the response is "no," you might ask, "If you would have a secret wish, what would it be?"

Back in high school, if your history teacher did not already get you hooked on this, let me suggest that you read biographies of great people. They expand your mental vision as to what is possible for you. After reading a biography, think about other people you know who would gain from reading it. You can have a powerful influence by telling someone, "I can see you being like this person in the future."

If someone confides in you and says, "I see myself eventually being like this great person," take heed how you respond. Don't belittle or ridicule him if you feel that this picture is too unrealistic. It's almost a certainty that this person's having a role model will enable him to accomplish much more than he would if he didn't have this role model.

Recently a teacher I know responded rather poorly to one of his students who said that her role model was Krista McAuliffe (one of the astronauts who was killed in the Chal-

lenger disaster, she was a teacher from New England). He said, "having role models is not a good thing, you always find out that they were flawed and not perfect." I chirped in that the flaws are what help them to be better role models!

This event reminded me the importance of influencing young people to find role models and of getting people to see that even if they won't exactly reach the level of their role models, or even if their role models are flawed (and if they are human won't they be?) that following their role models will get them further than if they didn't have that picture in mind.

Let's not worry about the negative role models. Let's focus on the larger group. And while we are at it, let's focus on ourselves.

We're on the
Web!
www.sltp.info
**Information
for Parents,
Teachers, Stu-
dents,
Administra-
tors
Applications *
Photos**

The START Conference Continued from page 1

make the selection and of course include the official registration form.

We are going to need a very large staff to pull this off. We are hoping for large participation from Nichols college students and staff. Some of whom will be involved purely in the planning. Some of who will be involved in inviting business and community leaders to present workshops. Some of who will be members of the teaching staff.

Needless to say, this is a HUGE undertaking. It is unique and without precedent anywhere in the country. 3 States ... Free ... a collaboration between a non-profit and a college — STUDENT led. WOW!

Help us to make this happen. Cer-

tainly you could volunteer, but even without that extraordinary effort, we can use help. We need help insuring that schools advantage the opportunity. Don't let your school be left out. We need to see that this application goes to the people who will act on it.

Are you interested in serving as a member of the START teaching team?

We are expecting over 200 delegates to this conference, which means we will need around 30 staff. We'd like the majority to have had SLTP in their background.

It is still not too late to join us. Tap to Jessa Loomis or George Briggs to pick up a staff application.

The first training day is scheduled for January 20. We are planning three full days of training (over 20 hours) to prepare our staff to meet the challenges of this new and very large residential program.

For more information email either of the conference co-chairs: Jessa Loomis or George Briggs
jessa@sltp.info
george@sltp.info

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 pro-

- ductions.
8. Apply to join our staff.

Time is running out!



The START Conference (see details inside) deadline is January 27.

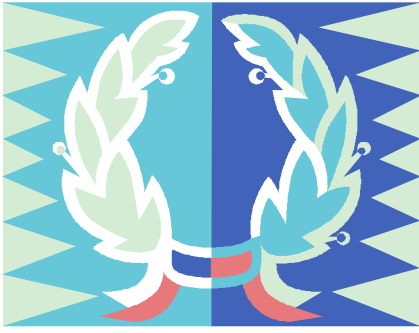
IF your school has not registered a delegate by that date, you may find you will have to wait until next year, and that student will never have the opportunity to attend.

Visit our website—www.sltp.info—click on the link to Conferences—click on the link to START—there you will find information as well

as links to the pdf files for the school information packet and the official registration form.

Please don't let your school be left out!

The 2007 Student Leader of the Year Award Nominees



Each year the Student Leadership Training Program seeks to recognize the accomplishments and differencemaking of an extraordinary group of STUDENT leaders - - namely the graduates of SLTP. As a means of doing so, the Administrative Board of the SLTP created the **Student Leader of the Year Award**.

The fundamental basis for this award is differencemaking. We are seeking to recognize STUDENT leaders who “walk their talk.”

This year we received 29

incredible nominations. All with glowing recommendations. All of the nominees and all of the finalists for the SLY will be recognized at the InterLead Conference in April. All of the nominees will receive award certificates, and all will receive guest passes for a parent and a teacher to attend the ceremonies. The finalists will receive Award plaques, and camperships in their name to be presented to students from their school.

All of the finalists receive leadership scholarships.

The nominees for the 2007 Student Leader of the Year Award are:

Gabby Anglolillo
Danielle Bamberg
Sarah Bashein
Jake Brenkiewicz
Liz Clapp
Farrar Cooper
Becky Damon
Danielle Desrosiers
Veronica Flaherty

Caitlin Feitas
Sarah Groh
Mary Hogan
Amber Jackson
Jared Katz
Christine Lydon
Julia Muzzy
Mike Palmisano
Sam Pellerin
Brittany Perro
Gena Ricciardi
Alex Shaller
Derrick Spotts
Chris Sullivan
Michaela Tracy
Doug Williams
Eliza Stopa
Robyn Slezak
Yunna Leshchinskiy
Micaela Relihan

Congratulations and Good Luck!

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

Teens and change

Adolescence is ALL about change— wholesale change.

BIOLOGICAL CHANGES

- Their bodies are making the final transition from child to adult. Boys who mature late and girls who mature early often experience negative social and self esteem consequences.
- Their bodies grow in spurts— hands, feet, nose growing first and that helps make them feel unattractive and clumsy.
- They reach sexual maturity sooner than in past generations—as young as 9. Their heart, lungs and muscles are growing fast providing strength and endurance.

COGNITIVE CHANGES

- A teenager’s prefrontal cortex is rapidly developing producing a higher-level adult-thinking capability. Adolescents can now think in more categories, more abstractly, less egocentrically, more idealistically and with more organization to their thoughts.

They are growing adept at using inference and logic—yet this new cognitive skill fuels the emotional /social side as it helps them to see and hear things that are not there.

- Their cognitive development makes them more adept forming arguments which helps to stir debates with their parents. Since they are also better at reasoning, they are more likely to question parental authority and rules because they can conceive of other possibilities.
- A teenager’s limbic system where raw emotions are rooted is in overdrive. The levels for neurotransmitters such as serotonin drop, making teens more likely to act impulsively. They naturally crave greater and greater sensations in order to raise their serotonin levels and thus make them selves feel good.
- Adolescents can selectively attend to stimuli (often mistakenly called multitasking), which means they can divide

their attention between several stimuli. That is why they enjoy studying while listening to music or watching TV.

- They have better short and long term memory capabilities, they are faster at processing information and they can implement organizational strategies or plans of action. This often exacerbates the conflict with parents or other adults as teens see these changes as evidence they are smarter than the adults.
- Teenagers hold to their own personal fables seeing their experience as totally unique. They move through their day performing for an imaginary audience that is watching them and knows their thoughts. The result is that teens are highly self conscious. I call the condition being “self conspicuous.”
- There is a deep sense of invulnerability.
- Teens are forming their own

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Parent power

A high profile ad campaign that is aimed at curtailing drug use among teens proclaims parents as the “anti-drug.” Those ads are very striking — the little girl calling “look at me Dad—look at me” through various aspects of show-off behaviors and culminating with a young teen lighting a joint.

A new study on fathers’ impact on their daughter goes even further stating that fathers exert profound influence in every area of their daughters lives.

In the study Penn State human development professor Susan McHale found that fathers

have serious influence on their daughters’ free time activities. When fathers express interest in those activities—those girls tend to stay involved an them and even become more involved.

McHale and her colleagues studied a wide variety of influencing factors—including pop culture and peers—and found that the one of the most important variables was their parents interest in their activities. Their findings are that parents, particularly fathers on middle adolescents, greatly impact and influence their daughters.

The more the parents are

aware of the nuances of the happenings within the activities, the more committed the teens become to those activities.

The ideal is to become engaged and connected to what is going on, the key is sincerity. We’ve all seen the parents who are living vicariously through the exploits of their children — a quick visit to a little league game or a soccer pitch is enough to see parents who go over the top.

The Spring Adviser Conference

The Core!

It is already filling up. The Spring Adviser Conference is scheduled for March 28th. Helping student activity advisers is one of the most vital elements of our programming.

We have called our day adviser seminars “The Core” because that aptly describes its purpose and intent. The curriculum for this day conference will be the core elements of success for student activities.

Naturally this conference will be interactive and experiential and centered on practical skill training. The skillshops on March

28th will include:

- Beginnings and endings
- Finances
- Setting Expectations
- Empowerment
- Conflict Resolution
- Cliques, queen bees and wannabees
- The 5 p’s—programs, policies, procedures, people and places

A regional general mailing that will include flyers and registration forms will be snail mailed shortly. More information is available at our website—click Advisers or Conferences.

Help us to get the word out. Help your advisers. You know what it is like to spend time with incredibly positive people—allow your adviser that experience. Spread the word.

See page 16 for a registration form.

Directions and guidelines will be emailed directly to the delegation.

Teens and change *continued from page 6*

sense of identity which includes their own set of STRONGLY held opinions.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL CHANGES

Teens experience a change in status as they are recognized by society as adults. The inconsistency and arbitrary nature of the age at which teens acquire the adult privileges (work permit, dating, driving, voting, etc) affixes a muting of the status. The age for each privilege varies from state to state and community to community. Schools do little or nothing to improve the confusion. Responsibility is a word most used as a bludgeon and the role of student activities is rarely credentialed.

In general the Social / Emotional Changes can be divide into 5 cate-

gories:

- **EMOTIONAL CHANGES**
Includes the upheaval in their closest relationships—friends, family and especially parents. Childhood friendships often come crashing to an end during 6th, 7th or 8th grades and again in 11th and 12 grade. Parental relationships become dramatically different—sometimes worse, sometimes better.
- **BEHAVIORAL CHANGES**
They want to decide things on their own—little things and big things. And when they are not involved in the decision—look out! They can accept and choose to accept the responsibility for their actions. They want credit for doing things

right.

- **VALUES** Teens develop the principles and standards to guide their actions—taking pride in what they achieve.
- **IDENTITY** They strive to find their place. They want to belong to something. They want to find who they are.
- **SPIRITUAL** Teens spiritual beliefs mirror their cognitive development. They become more abstract, principles and independent. They are very much interested and fascinated by spiritual and ideological issues.

**Interested in learning how to kick start your student activities?
Want some help and some fresh ideas?
Need to revitalize your students' leadership skills?**

Join us on **March 28th** as
The Coalition for the Advancement of Student Activities presents

The CORE

An adviser toolbox
seminar



where? Holiday Inn Conference Center – Taunton, Mass.
when? March 28, 9am-2:30pm
what? Adviser and leadership skillshops, keynote speaker, practical and applicable lessons, idea sharing, peer networking

Registration: only \$27!*

(includes materials)

PDP's will be awarded.

*For schools registering four or more advisers
who register before January 30,
the fee is \$18 per person.

For more information

Visit: www.sltp.info

Seminar Highlights:

*Idea sharing ~ Skill building ~ Critical concerns ~ Essential Skill training ~ Special Program ~
Awards and Recognition Information ~ DifferenceMaker ~ Student Leaders Scholarship drawings
Keynote speaker ~ and much much more ...*

