

MAY / JUNE,  
2005

## student leadership

The Student Leadership Training Program  
A Newsletter for the Advisers of Student Activities

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# The DifferenceMaker

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 6

THE DIFFERENCEMAKER—AN ADVISER NEWSLETTER

## Building—if you fail to plan, plan to fail

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 work-

ers, 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

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## 2005 SLTP Conferences

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

- **Officer Training Seminar**  
July 1 - 2

- **Leadership Training Conferences (4)**  
July 5 - 9; July 12 - 16;  
July 26 - 30; Aug 2 - 6

- **Advanced Leadership Conferences (3)**  
July 13 - 16; July 27 - 30; Aug 3 - 6

- **The Leadership Center**  
July 6 - 9

- **Adviser Certification**

Aug 3-6

- **The ReEnergizer Conference**  
November 26

## Building Continued from page 1

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 or-

ganization — 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 you will find the know how.

Step Four: get as many of your younger members to enroll at LTC as you can. Grow your future.

## Conference Profile: Officer Training Seminar

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

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

Separate practical workshops will be held for each of the cardinal offices—president; vice president; secretary and treasurer. Other officerholders or team captains will attend either specific job

related workshops or tutorials to be determined by the enrollment.

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

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

viser.

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

Applications for OTS can be found on our website  
[www.sltp.info](http://www.sltp.info)

## An new opportunity for SLTP Alumni

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

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

CASA will sponsor the Leadership Action Grant Program. In a nutshell, this program is de-

signed 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 will be available on line as soon

as they are finalized. The goal is to have information about the grant program included in the camper manuals and Parent Orientation Packets this summer.

## Leadership Action Grant Program

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

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

Proposals should be submitted on the forms provided and must be submitted by September 30. The CASA Administrative Board will select

proposals based on the feasibility and community impact. CASA will offer support, advice and various levels of funding to help implement the action plan.

### Grant Requirements

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

## Agree to Agree

If you want to create an environment that promotes new ideas, allows for honest feedback and promotes and preserves the unity of your leadership team, follow the strategies offered in the Presidents Session of our OTS.

- ◆ Avoid voting ~ anytime you vote, you create a winning side and a losing side. Reach

a place with no division

- ◆ Avoid compromise ~ compromise satisfies no one and leaves everyone to be blamed
- ◆ Avoid agreeing to disagree ~ disagreement sets the tone for disunity. In the end, every person should leave prepared to support the final decision

- ◆ Avoid unilateral decisions ~ On every matter of consequence the entire team should be involved in the decision making.

## Truth and lies about teens

For 40 years lifestyle writers and news magazines have written volumes about "the generation gap" a term coined in the 60's. Hmm, today we seem to be suffering from a "reality gap." Adults and the media have a definitive perception of young people and that perception is quite different from reality.

- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*The number of teens who commit violent crimes is increasing. (over 60% in 3 national surveys)*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
Crimes committed by teens are at their lowest levels in 25 years.
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*The majority of teens are apathetic and uninvolved in their schools and communities.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
Student involvement in schools and in communities is as high as budgets allow. Most schools have not added significantly to their roster of clubs and activities since the 1960's and many have seriously cut the roster back. Church Youth Groups are larger and more active than ever.

Where activities abound – so does involvement.

- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*Teen birth rates are increasing.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
The birth rate for teens has decreased constantly and substantially every year since 1991.
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*Teens are smoking in ever increasing numbers.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
The number of teens who smoke has dropped to its lowest rate since researchers began collecting the data in 1975.
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*Teens lack commitment and do not contribute to their community.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
Teens contributed over 10 Million hours of service last year in New England alone!
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*Requiring community service for graduation or even car*

*licenses is a good idea.*

- ◆ **The Reality**  
Although no funded study has yet been completed, no increase in service has been measured as a result of the requirement.
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*Teen drunk driving laws are lax, which results in more teens driving drunk.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
Teen drunk driving standards are rigid, and the percentage of teens receiving punishment for DUI is triple the percentage for adults. Further the number of teen deaths via alcohol related car accidents remains relatively constant and is much lower than adults.
- ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**  
*4 out of 10 kids live in one parent households and the number is increasing.*
- ◆ **The Reality**  
Only 25% of all children live in one parent household and that number has been flat since 1995.

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Mark your calendar. Join us this August. You pour your life into the kids. Let us pour some life back into you.

Come together, learn, connect, celebrate, refine and retool your skills.

## Adviser Certification Conference—August 3-6

## Tech talk with Adam by Adam Travis, SLTP Conference Director

### Article 4: A better browser.

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

The hot new browser on the scene is Firefox from the Mozilla Foundation. Firefox is easy to use and displays web pages very quickly. It is a small download and easy to install and expand. It includes great built-in features, like tabbed browsing, an easy way to search popular search engines, and pop-up blocking. Firefox is an "open source" project, which means that anyone can look at the programming code and is free to use

and modify it to create their own custom browser. To download or find out more, visit <http://www.mozilla.org/>.

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

So maybe you are wondering, if 90% of the world uses Internet Explorer, why should I switch? Better features and better security are the simple answer. Because IE is so closely integrated with the operating system, a security flaw in the browser puts your entire computer at risk. This past summer, the Department of Homeland Security, issued a

memo suggesting that using an alternate browser is one step that will increase computer security. There are a few sites on the web that only work with IE, so you can't ditch it completely, but you can use something better most of the time.

## Truth and lies continued from page 4

### ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**

*Drug abuse among teens is on the rise.*

### ◆ **The Reality**

Drug abuse among teens has been on the decline for the past several years -- this is not a dismissal of the problem - if there were only 1 teen, it would be a problem - it is only to point out that the statistics indicate something contrary to what is perceived.

### ◆ **What adults perceive and the media portrays**

*Teens have little or no values and are not family oriented.*

### ◆ **The Reality**

According to the latest survey by the Horatio Alger Association (who do an annual survey called "the State of our Nation's Youth") - the greatest majority of teens get along with their parents extremely well; would rather spend extra time with their families; put family members at the top of their list of role models over athletes and celebrities.

## Who should attend SLTP?

So, who should attend a program like SLTP ?

Our answer is based on just one qualification.

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

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

The willingness to learn is vital. So is the understanding that

leadership is about DOING. Leaders are defined by what they do - not by the titles they hold or by the organizations they belong to.

The only program requirements that exist are based on experience.

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

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

**What each participant should**

**"bring"**

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

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

## Conference Profile - Adviser Leadership Studies

Everyone involved in student activities understands the value of co-curricular programs to both school and community. That value has been acclaimed in virtually every national study of our system of education. Yet very little training has been offered for the advisers, sponsors or coaches who are charged with those activities.

Essentially this program provides the opportunity to learn and master the techniques and methodology of advisership. It is a comprehensive program quite unlike most hour long workshops and even day long seminars that merely skim the surface by offering only idea sharing. To begin with, our program reviews the

basic skill areas that are essential to successful advisership - *organization, group process, structure, project planning, involvement, motivation and leadership training*, then we approach the step by step progression through all the aspects of activity programming as teacher preparation.

Fundamentally we hold that successful advisership is the result of actively teaching and preparing students to lead themselves. So the intent of the program is to enable and prepare advisers to teach leadership skills to their students. As a result, our program is experiential in nature.

The registration fee covers program materials and meals for the four days. The dorm and classrooms are air-conditioned. The program materials include: a leadership manual, an adviser's manual, a book of ideas, an adviser's "toolbox", a program shirt, and a group photo.

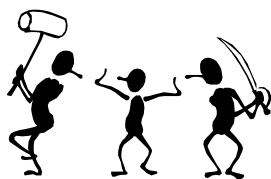
Registration is limited. Professional Development Points will be awarded.

Applications and more information can be found on line.

Join us—August 3-6!

## Lessons for the leadership class (reprinted with permission from [Step it up!](#), a CASA publication)

### Spring and the conflicts it brings



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

- What should we be doing?
- How should we be doing it?
- Who should do it?

Should it be done at all?  
Why can't we do it MY way?  
Who says?

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

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

or at least impaired.

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

### Conflict resolution: Fist To Five



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

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

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

Incorporated into this con-



cept is the time saving idea that allows groups to address the issues and concerns of the minority without rehashing or arguing the majority opinion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Fist** *I completely disagree with this idea and I will try to block it if you try to accomplish it.*

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

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

## Thank you—webbie to webbie



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

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

conferences.

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

[jim@sltp.info](mailto:jim@sltp.info)

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

## A peek at what's ahead for SLTP

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

- ◆ On June 4th, the SLTP Connections Theatrical Troupe will present "stop, look and listen" our nationally acclaimed play on bullying to the delegates at the MassSTAR Citizenship Conference at Bridgewater State College.
- ◆ Later in June, we will be filming "stop, look and listen" to produce a DVD that will be distributed nationally.
- ◆ In the next six months, the Alumni Association will be sponsoring state wide service events in Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts

— details will appear on our website and via email.

- ◆ This summer, SLTP will sponsor nine conferences beginning with OTS.
- ◆ This summer, SLTP will debut a new play, "Silence is NOT an option." The play centers on what leaders can do about violence against women.
- ◆ Applications to join the 2006 SLTP staff are available on line and are due the second week of August.
- ◆ The Leadership Action Grant Program will sponsor several community service projects initiated by SLTP alumni this Fall.
- ◆ This Fall, SLTP will be

sponsoring a day long leadership conference in New York City.

- ◆ The Core Adviser Seminar will be held this Fall for advisers and coaches across New England.

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