

MAY, 2007	
Time	2
InterLead	2
SLY	3
Thank you	3
What teachers know	3
What's available	4
7 last words	4
OTS	4
From where I sit	5
Fist to Five	6
Grants	7
Atmosphere	7
Fit to be tied	8
Acceptance	9
Who should	9
The mail	10
The Future	10
Tips	11
Why	12

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

The DifferenceMaker

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 8 THE DIFFERENCEMAKER—AN ADVISER NEWSLETTER

Firestarting 101 by Jim Fitzgerald

It was my first and only Boy Scout camping trip. Each patrol was responsible for building its own fire. We had a problem. We were short one key person—Joey.

Joey knew how to do everything, and mostly we let him. He knew how to tie all the knots. He knew how to pitch the tent. He knew it all. We were good at watching.

Within what seemed like seconds, the other patrols had their campfires blazing. We had already gone through several books of matches.

It was pretty cold out there that night. And while I did not know it then, I had learned three important lessons that served me well as an adviser.

- *Lesson number one—*

Joey's not coming!
 Every adviser is expected to be the fire starter. There is no sense waiting around for someone else to get the job done. We are expected to build the warm cozy place where the kids can gather.

- *Lesson number two—start small*

Back then we could not see that we had the same resources that everyone else did. We took our wood from the same wood pile. Only we tried to do it all at once.

We used huge pieces and constructed a huge pile of wood. Many student activities try to copy their programming from huge successful programs. The advisers return from inspiring conferences and begin piling huge programming logs onto their "fire." The secret as Joey could tell you is to start

small and build up.

- *Lesson number three—ask for help*

Back at the fire no one thought of walking across the camp to the scoutmaster's tent to ask for some fire coaching help. We were too busy complaining about the weather, about Joey, about everything.

Too many advisers assume their only option is to lick their wounds and accept failure.

we don't need a Joey to do it for us. But we do need to ask for help every now and then. Advisership is filled with veterans who've lit plenty of fires. Don't sit in the cold.

Continued on page 3

No Easy Button



I have dealt with the request a lot. As I travel coast to coast working in this school and that—

principals frequently back me into a corner and seek guidance. Among the most frequent requests "can I help them to find a superstar activity director or adviser?"

I take a breath, and quickly and courteously decline

to get involved. There is always an awkward pause, and then I get to explain that there is no "easy button." The superstar silver bullet search is a waste of time.

Short term sizzle rarely develops into long term sustainable success. Easy Button shortcuts do not work for the long haul of a school year.

hmmm, they also don't work in life, they don't work in relationships, and they certainly

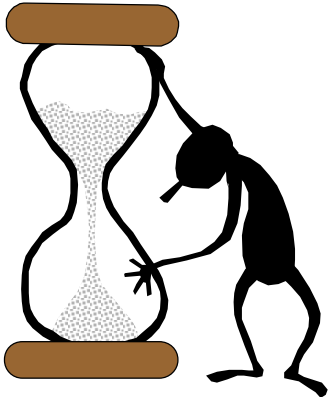
don't work in any student activities.

If you are an adviser/activities director at an easy button obsessed school, do not expect the ride to be an easy one. Here are some things you can do to cope in that environment:

- ◇ **Adjust your expectations:** your first six months in the job are not likely to rival that of the adviser down the street who has a program with a 10 year track record.

Continued on page 6

Time is slipping away!



I hate seeing anyone left out. My worst nightmare is that someone who should be attending SLTP will not be doing so. 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.

PLEASE, don't let your students left out! You know the results we deliver. You know WHY student leadership is needed. Send in their applications now.

The applications are starting to roll in, and very soon choices may be limited.

If you have students who have joined us before and if they are considering ALC – please keep in mind that there were 175 kids who attended LTC last summer and we do not have space for everyone (we are offering only 6 crews of ALC this year)

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

The InterLead rocked! by Sarah Bourbeau



The InterLead rocked. Jim refers to the conference as one of the "milestone moments" for SLTP. How big was it, well he went on to say that the conference proves that SLTP walks its talk. We had nearly 200 students, parents, administrators and their teachers who were joined by community leaders from MA, CT and RI. We experienced "a place at the table" and that experience gave us a level of awareness from where we could all enter into discussions about

solutions. We broke into small groups called forums. In those forums, we each struggled with answers to the problem of hatred (racism, homophobia, classism, etc.) in our schools. We looked for REAL solutions -- for today and for tomorrow. We began with what should each of us DO and SAY when we see instances of hatred. All of the forums created a consensus of their best solutions and reported to the general assembly. The SLTP Administrative Board is going to compile these into a "white paper" to distribute to our member schools. And will be available through a link from our website upon its completion. Look for it later this month in a special bulletin newsletter.

The community leaders, administrators, teachers and parents participated in the program side by side with the students. Their attendance made a big difference. We are very proud of what we did. We know we did not solve the problem, but we all feel better having worked on it. I cannot wait to see the "white pa-

per."

It's is not possible to say enough about "a place at the table" either. The presentation is riveting. The content is eye opening, the play is amazing. It is so real. But make no mistake it is NOT about the drama. The real substance of the play is in the processing of the play, and as usual with an SLTP crowd, the debriefing went pretty deep.

And that is when the fun began, Jim split us into 11 small random groups. And we experienced our the forums. A forum is an open yet pointed discussion, it's purpose it to find the best answers to questions that a group can extract from its talent and experience—and then to report those answers to a decision making body.

All of the group reports were gathered and will find their way into a cumulative report that will answer:

Continued on page 10

The Student Leaders of the Year—2007

Each year we endeavor to celebrate and honor the achievements and involvement of SLTP graduates through the prestigious Student Leader of the Year Awards.

The accomplishments and involvement level of the graduates of SLTP is well known across the country. SLTP Alumni continue to make their mark in their high schools, in their communities and especially at the colleges they choose to attend. This year we had 15 students nominated for the award. Each clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of student leadership and the evidence of that effect was plain to see in their accompanying resumes and testimonial letters.

All were feted at the Inter-Lead Conference in front of their

parents, teachers and peers. All received SLTP scholarships and camperships for deserving students back at their school.

We celebrated the nominees:

Sarah Groh—Warwick Vets HS, senior

Danielle Desrosiers—Warwick Vets HS, senior

Jared Katz—St John's Prep, junior

Michaela Tracy—Coventry HS, sophomore

Micaela Relihan—Belchertown HS, senior

Brittany Perro—Northbridge HS, senior

Mary Hogan—Farmington HS, sophomore

Yunna Leshchinskiy—Beaver Country Day, senior

Gena Ricciardi—Tahanto HS, sen-

ior

Sam Pellerin—Burrillville HS—senior

Chris Sullivan—Nipmuc HS, Senior

Liz Clapp—Norwell HS, senior

Alex Schaller—East Greenwich, senior

Doug Williams—Belchertown HS, senior

Farrar Cooper—Beaver Country Day—senior

The finalists were:

Sarah Groh; Danielle Desrosiers; Brittany Perro and Michaela Tracy.

The 2007 Student leader of the Year is: Sarah Groh

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

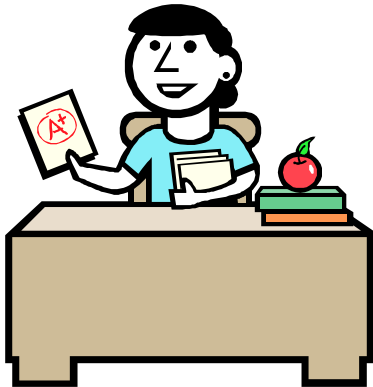
our effort in the next two months on preparation for the summer conferences.

Just a reminder that contributions, suggestions for the SLTP newsletter are quite welcome.

Send them to: jim@sltp.info

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

What teachers know by Dr. Earl Reum



Each human being (especially each young one) needs:

- ◆ To belong -- To be meaningfully

involved in a greater cause than self.

- ◆ (Something that really counts personally.)
- ◆ To be recognized -- To feel needed, respected and appreciated by at least one other human being considered to be significant.
- ◆ To feel compassion, freedom, discovery, fulfillment.
- ◆ To cope positively with threats against personal identity.
- ◆ To feel confident of skills and personal contributions -- which

empowers us to be willing to take risks.

- ◆ To know success (as personally/individually defined.)
- ◆ To live comfortably in the face of devastating anxiety.
- ◆ To have a significant other who believes in, nourishes, supports and listens to "the real person".
- ◆ To recognize and appreciate our own uniqueness and the uniqueness of others.

Continued on page 11

This Summer—what's available?

Registrations for all our summer conferences are underway in earnest! There are just over 10 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 90 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 26 slots available.

July 11-14; July 18-21;

August 1-4; and Aug 8-11

TLC

There is only one session and there are 2 slots left.

July 11-14

Adviser Certification

There is only one session which is open to all teachers, coaches and collegians and there are 7 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 21 slots left.

July 26-27

The seven LAST words

Imagine that schools as we know it and student activities as we know them no longer exist. Every school, everywhere—gone.

The seven last words, the seven very last words spoken would be “we’ve never done it that way before.”

That idea killing phrase send so many would be great student activities and their schools back to square one, it is like the Monopoly card that sends you to jail.

One of the core lessons for student activities is positive risk taking. PRT is the hardest form of risk. It involves initiative, it involves trust and as we have explored many time on these pages it is essential to the health of schools and school organizations.

Student take a huge personal risk to get involved in student activities in the first place. Students continue to extend that risk the longer they stay involved.

Therefore student activities owe them a positive risk taking environment. They can do NOTHING anywhere. They can do the “same ole same ole” without having to take the personal risk of involvement.

Being involved must be worth the risk. That means student activities cannot and should not be tepid.

As advisers, we must help our students to take the risks they should take. We must show our students the way around the 7 last words.

Conference Profile: The 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 adviser.

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

From where I sit -WHY SLTP? By Jim Fitzgerald, SLTP Founder



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

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

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

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

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

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

just like the last guy.”

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

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

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

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

Whether it is the Drama Club, the Student Council, Key Club, Yearbook, National Honor Society, or any other student organization — ALL need to be operating according to a plan. Creating that plan requires the leadership team (adviser plus officers) and the membership to agree as to the purpose and mission of the or-

ganization. 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.

Leadership Lessoning: Conflict proactivity— the SLTP way—fist to 5



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 concept 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.*

ise 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.

No Easy Button continued from page 1

- ◇ **Declare war on excuses and blaming:** don’t make excuse or find fault when you are criticized unfairly (and you will be). Focusing on the negativity of your critics will not move your program forward.
- ◇ **Kids first:** keep the kids first, look to what they need, what they want.
- ◇ **Know what is going on:** knowing what is going on politically in your school and community is essential. Do not become a player, but know what is going on.
- ◇ **Be a farmer:** get as many kids into outside training programs as you can. Develop an inside training system too.
- ◇ **Be collegial:** find ways to nurture and support every teacher and especially those who support your kids.
- ◇ **Sharpen your axe:** go to every training opportunity you can. Steal every idea you can. These experiences will help you to build the associations and the necessary safety net

There are no shortcuts to building an effective student activity, nor are there shortcuts to building an entire program. It takes hard work, that will from time to time have some dazzling sizzle. But what will

really make the sizzle dazzling, is the purpose behind it.

An 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 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

Building the atmosphere—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.

Fit to be tied—A Communication Exercise A Lesson for Leadership Class

Reprinted with permission from **Confluence II**

Leadership lesson



Summary

Communication - this cooperative exercise in one way communication is loaded with laughs and lessons.

Possible Focal Points

- ◇ Cooperation
- ◇ Goal Setting
- ◇ One way communication
- ◇ Icebreaker / tension reducer

Materials and Situation

Facilitation requires the facilitator to be wearing shoes with laces

Pens / pencils; paper

Timing

10 - 20 minutes

Procedure

1. Divide the group into pairs. Distribute paper and pens to each pair.
2. Task the pairs to determine the precise directions to tie a shoe.
3. Allow enough time to complete the directions then ask a pair to state their directions to you and explain that you will attempt to complete the task.
4. Interpret the directions as literally and liberally as possible.
5. Allow other pairs to join in with suggestions.
6. Debrief and process the exercise according to your intent.

Commentary

As in every exercise of the limitations of one way communication, the attempt are doomed from the start.

The unique team aspect of this exercise allows for a broader connective base. Explore the limitations of communication within the group and the difficulties of communicating with those outside the group. (shared understandings and commonalities within often limit communication outside the group)

There are many connections and applications to this exercise from the obvious such as rumors and distortions to the limitations of school announcements and publicity. Do not omit the obvious - "the only message that counts is the one that is received."

We have posted the final mailing on line:

- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/SchoolMailing07.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/Generalflyer.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/LTC07.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/OTSo7.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/ALCo7.pdf>
- <http://staff.sltp.info/forms/Adviserso7.pdf>

**Check
it out**

**Summer
mailing**

The magic of SLTP—acceptance

In a way part of SLTP's success is due to typecasting—it's an actor's worst nightmare. It's the thought of being associated with a role so strongly that it keeps you from acting in any other role or being thought of in any other way. It happened to Christopher Reeve after he played Superman. It happened to Robert Reed (Mike Brady), a trained Shakespearean actor who feuded with producers on almost every episode of *The Brady Bunch*. And it happened to the cast of *Gilligan's Island*.

Yes, those castaways never escaped from that island. The show's three seasons left the passengers and crew of the Minnow stranded on the

island never to escape, and neither did many of their acting careers, which is too bad considering the talent of the cast.

Often the kids who come to us at camp feel typecast at school. They've been labeled and pegged to play a role they can never seem to escape. To a degree, they feel like Bob Denver: when people look at them, they see Gilligan; and they can't get past that notion, no matter what they do. The roles they play vary from positive to negative. They may be pegged as the clown, or the ditz, or the brain – but all of them feel trapped. In every school I see kids struggling to break free from their assigned label —or worse, per-

petuating it by living it.

The magic of SLTP is the unconditional acceptance. It is hard to maintain, as the kids are well ingrained in the roles. We provide alternatives, we provide the opportunity for them to be themselves.

So, 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 commu-

nity. 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*

In your mailbox



The third and final Mailing of SLTP's entire Application Packets arrived at your school in the past few days.

Please direct this packet to the students and advisers who are interested in learning how to make a difference.

Applications for all of our summer conferences are rolling in at this point. We are expecting our highest enrollment to date. (Check the article above for the available openings as of the publication of this newsletter.) One very important note—because of staffing limitations this year, we may have to restrict the size of some of the sessions -- so if a particular session is the only one you can attend -- register soon. Applications

are readily available on line as pdf files.

Do not be left out.

What's in the future for SLTP?



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

- ◆ In the coming weeks, the majority of state legislators in CT, MA, ME and RI will receive copies of the White Paper ~ which will also be distributed to all of our member schools

through an on line posting

- ◆ The play “a place at the table” will be available once each month throughout the coming school year to member schools. The fees collected for the presentations will be used to fund SLTPs camperships
- ◆ In a few short weeks, SLTP will jointly sponsor with Nichols College the START Conference—which is a tuition free conference for freshmen student leaders
- ◆ This summer, SLTP will sponsor TWELVE conferences beginning with OTS.
- ◆ Applications to join the 2007 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.
- ◆ Soon, SLTP will be sponsoring a day long leadership conference in Northern California.
- ◆ 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.

The InterLead continued from page 2

- ◆ what should we Do and SAY as individuals and as leaders about the problem of hatred in our schools and communities

The responses went from the general to the specific — as in what to say and do when you SEE and HEAR the hatred.

Following the forums we had a PICNIC — Spring Conferences are the best! After the picnic we attended two workshops specific to the skillsets necessary to effect the

solutions we discussed. The topics were Problem Solving and Consensus building.

InterLead - short for Interstate Student Leadership Forum - our goal when we established this conference was to attempt to be a forum for the expression of student ideas and opinions on the real issues. And in joining the student voices with the voices of community leadership, we hoped to create a real spirit of activism. It works.

This was a conference that made a statement. It raised awareness as to the seriousness of today's student leaders.

We closed out the InterLead in our traditional closing for the Spring Conference honoring the Student Leaders of the Year and the Lifetime Differencemaker.

Like I said, this conference rocked!

What teachers know continued from page 3

- ◆ To own personal feelings, actions, beliefs, behaviors, discoveries in our lives.
- ◆ To be learning /growing /moving / becoming /living -- all the time.
- ◆ To feel lovable and capable and believable.
- ◆ To accept responsibility for personal behavior as well as the consequences of it.
- ◆ To feel creative and free to exercise that creativity.
- ◆ To continually possess an experience/ event/ happening -- held in significant anticipation.
- ◆ To continually anticipate future experiences/ events/ happenings with a positive and enthusiastic attitude.
- ◆ To live in uplifting surroundings with positive ideas/events/ relationships and acceptance.
- ◆ To own a positive place in each group/ setting/ class/ time/ happening.
- ◆ To feel control over personal destiny.
- ◆ To be able to use my life to make a difference in the world -- to touch the future in a quality way.
- ◆ To embrace hard work and responsibility as part of a daily code of ethics.
- ◆ To own a self concept which is real, relevant, appropriate and respected.
- ◆ To be aware of the process of becoming.
- ◆ To be aware of the power of choice -- which provides a number of opportunities to become a better person.
- ◆ To have the freedom to choose to become a personal best self.
- ◆ To develop the capacity for sharing strong feelings of affection.
- ◆ To be open to change and personal growth -- to become an agent of constructive change in the world.
- ◆ To possess ideologies which are valued and shared.
- ◆ To search for truth, meaning, relevance and commitment -- with the genuine opportunity for finding it.
- ◆ To have a chance to learn about what is true in the universe.
- ◆ To have the courage, the will, the motivation and the reasons to continue to try on a daily -- minute -by-minute time-line of opportunity.

Tips for my fellow advisers by Danielle LaChance

As a new middle school social studies teacher in Central Falls, RI, I recently attended a conference about Service Learning organized by the National Youth Leadership Council. I left the conference so inspired that I just couldn't wait to share my lessons learned with everyone connected with SLTP. The conference contained much of the same commitment to student-focused learning, teaching to all three modalities, and civic responsibility that is at the core of SLTP. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of what I have learned in hopes that other teachers may benefit as I have.

Service learning differs from community service in that it combines community service with standards-based curriculum. According to KIDS Consortium (see below), effective service learning projects contain three components. Those three components are academic integrity, student ownership, and apprentice citizenship. To achieve academic integrity, the project must align with the curriculum and include multiple forms of assessment that show new knowledge and skills gained. To achieve

student ownership, the project must be student driven to as great an extent as is possible, and build student dedication to the well being of the community. Lastly, to achieve apprentice citizenship, students must work directly with and for the surrounding community.

The best part of service learning is watching my students' motivation to work hard in class. They are still somewhat reluctant because at this beginning stage of the project, they do not believe that they could have such an important role in the community. (Although I'm sure that if I told them that they would protest!) Yet they are writing longer paragraphs, asking each other questions, and striving for higher standards than ever before. I keep hearing the words "Miss! We should?". Those words are exciting because they show critical and proactive thinking, a sense of responsibility, and confidence all at once.

Some projects that I heard about while at the conference include city/park/river clean ups, student run email/internet workshops for elderly groups, awareness campaigns on various topics, and

much more.

Many resources exist to build further knowledge about service learning. A few starting places that I have found extremely helpful include the following:

◁ KIDS Consortium:

www.kidsconsortium.org

A Maine based organization that provides professional development, helpful texts, free printable planning tools, and consulting services.

◁ NYLC: (mentioned above)

www.nycl.org

A national organization that provides professional development, free downloadable toolkits for teachers, and a thorough service learning bookstore.

◁ The National Service Learning Exchange: www.nslexchange.org

A free consulting organization that offers free peer mentors for teachers new to service learning, individual consulting, and downloadable tip sheets.

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