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Thank you for joining us at the ReE. It was a day filled with SLTP smiles and seriousness!

student leadership

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

The DifferenceMaker

Volume 5 issue 3

The DifferenceMaker—an Adviser Newsletter

Emerging adulthood, part 1 by Dr. Jim Fitzgerald SLTP Founder & Director

There is a new and important stage in life in American culture, and it is not entirely clear that we understand or particularly know what to do with it. I am talking about what scholars call "emerging adulthood." This is the time of life between ages 18 and 30, roughly, a phase which in recent decades has morphed into quite a new experience for many. Researchers in sociology, psychology, and human development have been investigating the contours of this new life stage and have recently published some fascinating books on the subject, whose findings are well worth pondering for their implications.

To grasp the significance of emerging adulthood, it is necessary first to

realize that life stages are not naturally given as immutable phases of existence. Rather, they are cultural constructions that interact with biology and material production, and are profoundly shaped by the social and institutional conditions that generate and sustain them.

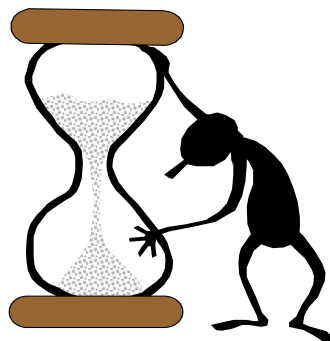
So, "teenager" and "adolescence" as representing a distinct stage of life are very much 20th-century inventions, brought into being by changes in mass education, child labor laws, urbanization, suburbanization, mass consumerism, and the media. Similarly, a new, distinct, and important stage in life, situated between the teenage years and full-fledged adulthood, has emerged in our culture in recent decades—reshaping the meaning of

self, youth, relationships, and life commitments as well as a variety of behaviors and dispositions among the young.

What are the social forces that have given rise to this emerging adulthood? Four are particularly important. First is the growth of higher education. The GI Bill, changes in the American economy, and government subsidizing of community colleges and state universities led in the second half of the last century to a dramatic rise in the number of high school graduates going on to college and university. More recently it has become necessary to add years of graduate school education on top of their bachelor's degree in order to earn

Continued on page 3

The Early Birds Expire on January 10



Have your students register today

You can "book" places for your students at this rate without applications

Call: 1.800.600.7223

You can succeed by listening by Helen Fitzgerald

A new adviser recently asked me for advice.

"How," he asked, "do I do an initial assessment to determine where I need to start working with this student council?"

He is asking the right question. It touches all who care about student activities. The single most vulnerable time in the life of any student activity is the "start-up" period of a new adviser, when lasting impressions are formed, mistakes are made and a adviser's tenure can be launched successfully or declared "dead on arrival."

Since the average tenure of an adviser is around three years -- thanks, in part, to poor start-up periods -- this vulnerable moment happens frequently. Many veteran teachers refuse to advise anything because of their first experiences.

In mulling my response, I thought of my own experiences. In part, the following advice expresses what I wish I had done better.

As an incoming adviser, your initial tasks are to present yourself to the students, to help them to know you and your vision for the group, and to discern their expectations.

That means a variety of teacher

to student initiatives to increase relationality. For the most part these initiatives are small-group conversations where you mainly listen and gather data; e-mail dialogue; and greeting-and-listening in the informal spaces between meetings.

I suggest starting a member-tracking system, in which you keep notes on what people tell you. Don't trust your memory; it's too selective. Share your observations with your officers for feedback. You will learn a lot by bouncing ideas off the officers. You will discern stories they haven't heard, outcomes they haven't wanted to see, as well as your own blind spots.

Soon you will identify two key areas of focus. One is "low-hanging fruit" -- things you can do immediately to address obvious needs. For example, if your predecessor lost the student's trust by never attending council events, you can start a well-publicized process of being there.

The second focus will be primary needs -- those frustrations, failures and opportunities that require immediate action. You need to know what will make the biggest difference, be it improved meeting attendance or staging a successful fundraiser.

Reducing anxiety about fi-

nances will make a bigger difference than composing a mission statement.

The challenge is to verify that primary needs are real and not just the unresolved noise of a few. To verify validity of need, you will want to make sure you are listening to many, not just a few; that your door is always open; that you won't get anxious and defensive when people talk; and that you are wise and in charge, not easily swayed.

As you can see, this isn't a scientific process.

As a new adviser, you aren't a consultant who is preparing charts and documenting hard truths; you are establishing yourself as a good listener, a caring person and someone who is developing a vision.

Through it all, I would recommend maximum transparency.

Tell the students and the faculty what you are doing and why, what you are learning and think it means, and where you recommend going next.

My third space by Dr. Jim Fitzgerald



First space refers to your home. Second space refers to where you work. Third space is where you prefer to go when you're not at home or work. For an ever increasing number of adults, their 2nd and 3rd

space are the same... a coffee shop. For the last ten years or so, I've tended to write a lot of my lesson plans, articles, speeches, and books in a coffee shop. My friends tease me that I can spot one in a new city, better than anyone. One of my friends hates coffee but owns Starbucks stock, believing I'll drive up the profits. But honestly Starbucks is not my favorite.

While I like the Starbucks coffee taste, I'm not a fan of their charge for WiFi since I'm not a HotSpot subscriber. I really like Panera Bread, a growing franchise that has good pastries (unlike Starbucks) and

is more reasonably priced, plus they don't charge for WiFi. Being from Massachusetts, one would expect me to love Dunkin Donuts, and again while I am a fan of the coffee, the workspace is not the best.

I have a couple local favorite coffee shops as well, Ma and Pa vendors with a less corporate feel and more ambiance.

When I am on the road, I find that I can do about 50% more work than back in my hotel room, where I tend to be distracted by e-mail, the phone, the television and other interruptions. Still, I'm finding that my work with SLTP doesn't allow for as much 2nd-3rd "free" space time as I'd prefer.

So where do you work best? What is your 3rd space and do you combine 2nd and 3rd spaces?

Emerging adults continued from page 1

enough to get the house, the car, the toys and to pay off the loans. As a result, a huge proportion of American youth are no longer stopping school and beginning stable careers at age 18 but are extending their formal schooling well into their twenties. And those who are aiming to join America's professional and knowledge classes—those who most powerfully shape our culture and society—are continuing in graduate and professional school programs often up until their thirties.

A second and related social change crucial to the rise of emerging adulthood is the delay of marriage by American youth over the last decades. Between 1950 and 2000, the median age of first marriage for women rose from 20 to 25 years old. For men during that same time the median age rose from 22 to 27 years old. The sharpest increase for both took place after 1970. Half a century ago, many young people were anxious to get out of high school, marry, settle down, have children, and start a long-term career. But many youth today, especially but not exclusively men, face almost a decade between high school graduation and marriage to spend exploring life's many options in unprecedented freedom.

A third major social transformation contributing to the rise of emerging adulthood as a distinct life phase concerns changes in the American and global economy that undermine stable, lifelong careers and replace them instead with careers of lower security, more frequent job changes, and an ongoing need for new training and education. Most young people today know they need to approach their careers with a variety of skills, maximal flexibility, and readiness to re-tool as needed. That itself pushes youth toward extended schooling, delay of marriage, and, arguably, a general psychological

orientation of maximizing options and postponing commitments. Far from being happy to graduate from high school and take the factory job their father or uncle arranged for them (which probably doesn't exist in any case), many youth today spend five to ten years experimenting with different job and career options before finally deciding on a long-term career direction.

Finally, and in part as a response to all of the above, parents of today's youth, aware of the resources often required to succeed, seem increasingly willing to extend financial and other support to their children, well into their twenties and even into their early thirties. These resources help to subsidize the freedom that emerging adults enjoy to take a good, long time before settling down into full adulthood, as culturally defined by the end of schooling, financial independence, and new family formation.

These four social transformations together have helped dramatically to alter the experience of American life between the ages of 18 and 30. Studies agree that the transition to adulthood today is more complex, disjointed, and confusing than it was in past decades. The steps through and to schooling, first real job, marriage, and parenthood are simply less well organized and coherent today than they were in generations past. What has emerged from this new situation has been variously labeled "extended adolescence," "youthhood," "adulthood," "young adulthood," the "twenty-somethings," and "emerging adulthood." I like Arnett's argument that, of all of these labels, "emerging adulthood" (from his book of the same title) is the most appropriate—because rather than viewing these years as simply the last hurrah of adolescence or an early stage of real adulthood, it recognizes the

unique characteristics of this phase of life. According to Arnett this stage as one of intense (1) identity exploration, (2) instability, (3) focus on self, (4) feeling in limbo, in transition, in-between, and (5) sense of possibilities, opportunities, and unparalleled hope. These, of course, are also often accompanied by big doses of transience, confusion, anxiety, self-obsession, melodrama, conflict, and disappointment. Many popular television shows of the last two decades—*Beverly Hills 90210*, *Dawson's Creek*, *Seinfeld*, and *Friends*, for example—have taken as their point of departure the character and challenges of this new, in-between stage of life.

The question is what does all this mean for schools? Well, I for one believe it must become the starting point for educational reform. We cannot deny the reality of the world we are sending our students into any longer. It is time that we structured our schools to reflect the needs of society — that is afterall what Dewey intended. It is time to return to Dewey.

Service Portfolio Awards

Service portfolios are a collection of artifacts and personal reflections that document your commitment to community service and personal development. Portfolios are an excellent conversation piece for college or graduate school interviews. They can also bring your resume to life for scholarship selection committees and other award programs. So with all of those benefits in mind, here are some tips for making an award winning service portfolio:

- Organize your portfolio in a binder with a table of contents, page protectors and dividers
- Include letters of recommendation, certificates and notes of appreciation from organizations with whom you have worked
- Write a brief summary of skills and lessons that you gained from each

service experience

- Fill your portfolio with pictures (this means remembering to take photos during service projects)
- Copy and insert news clippings that highlight your achievements or a project that you were involved in
- Describe the leadership roles you held during particular projects
- Document the time commitment involved in each service event, including the number of hours and duration (ie three hours a week from November to January)
- For a personal touch incorporate creativity and self-expression
- Remember to be sincere and brief-- you want the portfolio to honestly speak for itself and spur additional questions
- Cap off the documentation with a list

of your short and long term goals for service and leadership
SLTP will award its next service and personal development portfolio awards at the InterLead Conference at Nichols College during a special ceremony on April 27, 2008:

There are three levels of Awards based on time and level of commitment:

Bronze
Silver
Gold

To be eligible submit a copy of your service or personal development portfolio by **February 15, 2008** to Jim Fitzgerald 108 Observatory Way Marshfield, MA 02050.

Newsletter Submissions

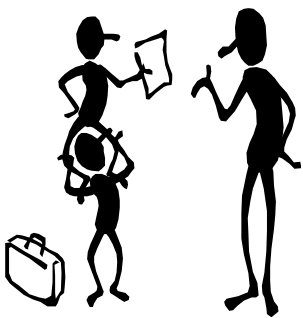
SLTP welcomes and needs contributions to our newsletters from our alumni and friends. Articles should be no longer than 200 words. Each article submitted for

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; position. Opinions must

be clearly identified 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

Leading SLTP



The Conference Coordinator and the Conference Director comprise the C-Team, together they administer every session of our program.

The Conference Coordinator (CC) is the student leader of our student leadership program. Together with the Director the CC shares both the authority and the responsibility to administer and facilitate our program.

Ideally the CC and Director demonstrate an equal partnership guiding the program.

Serving as Staff manager, the Director must enable all of the members of our teaching staff to optimize their contributions.

Serving as facilitator of the entire program, the CC must guide our staff and students through the array of learning experiences, smoothing out the rough spots, enabling both to relate to each other and then connecting all of the lessons and setting the expectations of involvement and attitude.

Chiefly, the C-Team must set the standard for the staff. They must be equally excited about learning and teaching, and part of the role is to transfer this excitement to the staff. To enable this transfer, they must have a

demonstrable knowledge of the depth of the program combined with a clear appreciation of the incredible contributions of the staff.

Since 1990 there have been only 19 CC's and 6 Directors. Each one has played a pivotal role in the only role that matters - - that is optimizing the learning experience for our campers.

Serving as Conference Coordinators for 2008 are: Laura Murphy and Sarah Bourbeau.

Serving as Conference Directors for 2008 are: Krissy Butler, Liz Agosto, George Briggs and Adam Travis.

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 START Conference*—must be freshmen and must be selected by the school to represent the school at the conference.
- ◆ *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.
- ◆ *Delegates to the Leadership in Athletics Conference*—must be members of a varsity sport or coaches.

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*

The START Conference

The second annual *START* (Students Taking Active Responsibility Today) Conference will be held early in June in 2008. SLTP and Nichols College will continue the successful collaboration which touched so many lives last year.

SLTP, the leader in leadership education, is joining forces with Nichols, one of the leading business schools in the United States. Our collaborative effort has one goal, to improve leadership development in the high schools in New England.

We will stage a two day overnight conference where we intend to invite 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 expenses 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 assembling the curriculum, determining what we need and don't need, and we just sent the mailing packet to every guidance office. The invitation packets include advice as to how to make the selection and of course include the official registration form.

We are going to need a very large staff to pull this off. 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. Certainly 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.

Watch this newsletter and watch the website for more details. Registration forms were mailed to every school in early January.

Staffing the *START* Conference



Are you interested in joining the SLTP teaching team, but you cannot af-

ford to give up an entire week of your summer?

Perhaps the *START* Conference is exactly the opportunity you need.

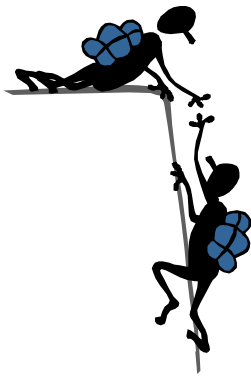
We are expecting over 200 delegates to this conference, which means we will need around 50 staff.

Visit our table at the ReE. Discuss the possibilities and then pick up an application.

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: Liz Agosto or George Briggs
lizagosto@sltp.info
george@sltp.info

How can you help *START*



How can you help?

Over the Christmas break, the mailing from Nichols College will go to every high school in MA, CT, and RI, but you can get your school started by helping us get the information out.

Our collaboration with Nichols makes this introductory leadership conference possible, and we know it will be an extraordinary experience for the freshmen selected to attend.

Help us to get the word out—talk to your principal and guidance

counselors.

Volunteer to serve on the selection committee.

Spread the word to the freshmen to apply for consideration.

The 2008 SLTP Conference Schedule

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

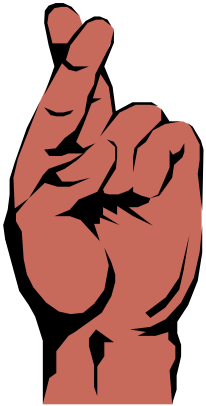
- **The Core Adviser Conference**
March 26
 - **The InterLead**
April 27
 - **The Start Conference**
June 8 & 9
 - **Officer Training Seminar**
July 1 - 2
- **Leadership Training Conferences (4)**
July 8 - 12; July 15 - 19;
July 22 - 26; July 29 - Aug 2
- **Advanced Leadership Conferences (4)**
July 9 - 12; July 16 - 19;
July 23 - 26; July 30 - Aug 2
- **The Adviser Training Seminar**
July 12-13
- **The Leadership Center**
July 9 - 12

We're on the Web!

www.sltp.info

Information for Parents, Teachers, Students, Administrators
 Applications *
 Photos

Bullying and violence cannot be wished away!



Recently there has been a lot of talk in education circles, in the media and certainly from our politicians regarding harassment issues in schools.

To hear the talk one would think that the only harass-

ment issue that exists in schools deals with sexual identity.

While I applaud the new found awareness, I am appalled that this awareness is wearing blinders.

SLTP will remain focused on bullying and harassment of ALL students and staff. We see this as an issue of exclusion vs. inclusion. At the ReE we examined the students who are left out and left behind through our play “if not you who?” We believe that inclusion is the number one priority for ALL student leaders.

The US Department of Education reports that in 2001, 12 percent of students ages 12-

18 reported someone at school used hate-related words against them. Further, the Department of Education reported that the nature of this hate speech varied—from words related to race, religion, political view, disability to sexual identity or orientation. 12 per cent reported it — clearly a sign of a very broad problem.

One of the best anti-bullying sites www.bullypolice.org, reports that 90 percent of students felt being bullied caused social, emotional, or academic problems and that both bullies and their victims have problems later in life.

The facts about bullying and violence are staggering.

Each month, 250,000 plus students are physically attacked in schools! The American Association of School Psychologists estimates that over 1,000,000 high school students suffer through hate-related verbal abuse at school. Further 69 percent of high school students report that school officials including guidance counselors and administrators respond poorly or not at all to reports of bullying.

Our schools must teach students and teachers to interact with civility and respect among and toward all persons regardless of status, or condition. Schools should and must model those expectation and teach guidelines which equip students with the skills to become positive citizens in the school.

Bullying is not just the issue of the month. Being the issue of the month is why it is a problem that continues to go unsolved.

It is time to stop talking a talk. It is time to walk the talk we have started with our plays—“if not you who?” and “stop, look and listen.”

When schools take action to include, things get better. When schools take action to disavow words that hurt, things get better.

There are too many kids who are left out and left behind. There are too many kids who are victimized at school. There is too much exclusion.

Another Difference we made— Mix it Up Successes!



Last month more than 1,000,000 students accepted the challenge to begin bridging social boundaries in their schools. On *Mix It Up at Lunch* Day 2007 schools all over the country helped students to step out of their comfort zones and sit somewhere new, with someone new. More than 40 of SLTP’s member

schools participated this year.

To read specific stories related to this National Event, visit their website. There you will find lots of information about the struggles and triumphs that students faced to pull this off.

www.tolerance.org

Lessons for the leadership

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

The Joy of Six

Summary

Inclusion, a guided experience and demonstration of the satisfaction of being included and the uneasiness of being left out.

Possible Focal Points

- Group process
- Mixing
- Self awareness
- High vs. low risk
- Teambuilding

Inclusion

Materials and Situation

Anywhere.

Timing

20 - 30 minutes.

Group size

20 - 100

Procedure

1. Prepare index cards making two complete sets of six identical cards (12 cards) per group of 25. Each set

- should have the same phrase on them – i.e., “Leaders walk their talk.” Or “Respect must be given away.” The other cards should have phrases in sets of 1 to 4. See page two for suggested phrases.
2. Place the cards in envelopes and distribute one to each group member.
3. Instruct the participants to read their messages and circulate around the room introducing themselves while softly speaking their phrase.
4. When an individual finds someone who has the same phrase, they are to team up and continue the search together.
5. Instruct the group to continue the search and introductory process until they are all in groups of SIX.
6. When everyone has finished, and all but the “loners” are in groups of six, act surprised and then process the lesson.

Commentary

Leadership lesson

Consider the following questions to prompt a thorough processing: How did it feel to be accepted into a group of six? How did it feel to not be accepted into a group or team? How did it feel when you found someone with the same message? Why didn't the people already in a group reach out to those who were not? How do school policies, practices or procedures prevent inclusion? What can be done to include more kids in schools? What lessons does this have for team building?

Suggestions for the Joy of Six cards are below

The Joy of Six suggested phrases

Place the following phrases on index cards. Be sure that you only create one group of six per 30 participants.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ◇ <i>Leaders walk their talk.</i> | ◇ <i>Whatever? Exactly!</i> | ◇ <i>is about what you know about who.</i> |
| ◇ <i>Respect must be given away.</i> | ◇ <i>Stand up for what is right, even if you are standing alone.</i> | ◇ <i>Silence is complicity.</i> |
| ◇ <i>Organization is knowledge in motion.</i> | ◇ <i>Whatever it takes!</i> | ◇ <i>If not you, who?</i> |
| ◇ <i>The only message that counts is the one that is received.</i> | ◇ <i>Goals are dreams in working clothes.</i> | ◇ <i>If not now, when?</i> |
| ◇ <i>Whether you think you can or think you can't, you are right.</i> | ◇ <i>To be enthusiastic, you must act enthusiastic.</i> | |
| ◇ <i>Two thirds of success is believ-</i> | ◇ <i>To act enthusiastic, you must be enthusiastic.</i> | |
| | ◇ <i>If it is to be, it is up to WE.</i> | |
| | ◇ <i>It is not about who you know. It</i> | |

Professional Advisership

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.

We do.

The two "Core" conferences (fall and spring) provide easy access nuts and bolts training in a day conference format. The training is practical in nature and refreshing in presentation. The day is filled with both camaraderie and idea. The next Core Conference will be held March 28 at the Taunton Holiday Inn, see next month's newsletter for details and registration forms.

And over the summer, we provide a residential experience for advisers. The increased time allows for a greater sense of purpose. Our intent with the Adviser Certification Program

is to increase the professionalism in the direction of student 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—July 12-13

Involvement ideas

Mix It Up Day, Teacher Appreciation Day, Secretary's Day, Principal's Day, Custodians Day, Café Staff Days . . . All very traditional, all fun—but is that all there is to school service?

The obvious answer is no. But seriously what else is there? Okay, let's throw in tutoring. Is that it? The days of clapping erasers, washing blackboards or sweeping the floors are long past.

A look around at most high schools, and it would appear that service is limited to the above suggestions.

The challenge is to expand this envelope. A school just like any community desperately needs voluntary efforts to grow and to thrive. Isn't that what good citizenship is all about?

The possibilities include but are not limited to:

- Peer mediation—to respond to

school safety issues;

- Wall murals—to create more ownership and improve the atmosphere;
- Welcome wagon service—for new and transfer students;
- Survival kits for teachers—with special kits for new teachers;
- Garden development — to improve the atmosphere and add more green to the environment;
- Painting girls rooms and boys rooms;
- Parking lot line painting;
- General clean-ups, scrub downs or painting days . . .

There is a lot you can do! AND the more you do, the more people you can involve!

In Massachusetts alone there are approximately 280,000 students in high school.

Of those students, less than 2,000 participated in ANY form of leadership training (.007 %).

In those schools there are approximately 50,000 student leadership positions available, which were filled by approximately 18,000 students (.06 %)

The ReEnergizer—400 raise the roof!



On Saturday, November 24, the eleventh annual ReEnergizer Conference was held at Nichols College. Delegates from over 100 schools joined us to make it one of the largest conferences, as well as the *loudest*, the *funnest* and the *learningest* conferences held in New England this fall.

We had a seriously large crowd. Even with the big crowd, registration and Confluence went very smoothly. It seemed like

everyone brought lots of friends and everyone was in the mood to have some fun.

We celebrated the region's Champions for Youth, and were featured with a special presentation of our new version of the play "if not you, who?"

Again this year we offered separate workshop sessions for all our groups—students, collegians, parents and advisers.

There were 100 plus colleges, middle and high schools represented, with attendees traveling from as far away as NY to be with us.

Attendees left with the coveted Early Bird Applications as well as lots of specific information regarding the new START Conference and all of our residential conferences.

The skillshops focused on Ethics and Communication within groups and during projects and how

those skills impact on student activities. Naturally the activities involved were pretty active, with lots of incredible conversations

"if not you, who?" focuses on the left behind, left out, ignored and excluded. It is about everyday exclusion in schools. It raised awareness about the everyday and ordinary things that happen in schools that are often very painful. The discussion and processing of the play seemed to involve nearly everyone in the audience.

The next two big events on the SLTP Calendar are the Spring Adviser Conference (the Core) and the InterLead Conference, which is a student leadership forum on current issues and community service. The Core will be March 26 in Taunton and the InterLead is scheduled for April 27 at Nichols.

SLTP presents "why me?" by Helen Fitzgerald

The newest theatrical presentation coming from SLTP is titled, "why me?" We are planning to premier one or two scenes at the SLTP Staff Family Luncheon. It is our hope to involve our families in the intentionality. We hope to foster an awareness of the seriousness of purpose in our curriculum. We are more than energizers and "polar bears."

At the Administrative Board Retreat we fleshed out a framework and recently Laura Murphy and Jim have been playing with all of the suggestions and ideas. The focus of this play is violence in schools.

Given all of the shootings that have happened over the past years—specifically the most recent in Virginia Tech, it is our response-ability to make a difference in our lives and our campuses by writing and presenting this play.

Laura and Jim applied the framework created by the AB to the

story line created in "bang, bang, you're dead", the nationally acclaimed play by William Mastrogiacono, which SLTP first brought to the east coast back in 1999.

For a while we considered offering that play again, but even with the considerable rewriting we did for it back in 2004, it is a muddled production. We do not want anything getting in the way of our message.

Violence and exclusion go hand in hand, and unlike the common response that there is nothing that can be done — we feel there is a great deal that can be done to prevent violence.

We want to make it personal and the feelings to be real. When we think of these situations we must think of confusion, we must think of loneliness, we must think of frustration. We see lots of victims and we see that the victims are upset because they cannot fathom exactly what has happened.

They just don't know.

But we've got to try. We owe it to our communities to make this difference.

This theatrical effort is being designed to maximize the participation of the audience — up to and including dialogue with the characters during the production—one of the student leaders will ask the audience what to do.

While Laura and Jim have provided a solid beginning — to be real, this play will require a lot of real dialogue and that is going to require a lot of effort from the student members of our staff.

The plan is to debut the play at the InterLead.