



Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute

A Message From the Bridge Center for Racial Harmony



Perhaps today there is no more important subject to address than the subject of leadership. Leadership is very often the difference between success and failure.

Leadership has several indispensable ingredients that go into making it up. The first of these is courage. Courage has been defined as knowing what the right thing is...and doing it even when no one is around to see it.

To have courage means acting not in the absence of fear... but rather in spite of fear. To act in spite of fear includes a willingness to risk failure.

A second ingredient of leadership is integrity. Webster's Dictionary defines integrity as "a firm adherence to a code of moral values." In other words a standard of behavior that one does not waiver from...and is known by.

Guard your integrity at all times because if you lose it you may never get it back. Hold yourself to a higher standard than anyone else might hold you to. In order to adhere to this higher standard you must value



the good in others and in yourself.

As a leader your integrity is priceless, and sometimes it will be all that you have. You should not expect everyone to appreciate nor agree with the things that you do. In fact, you should expect opposition.

There will be attacks on your character, and questioning of your motives. During these attacks your integrity will be the shield that protects you from false accusations.

A third ingredient of leadership is an attitude of servant-hood. You must be willing to be a servant. At its very core, leadership is about serving others.



You must be willing to serve others in order to lead others. Once again...you must be willing to serve others in order to lead others.

If you don't feel that way about others, then you should rethink your concept of yourself as a leader. If you don't feel a real need to serve others, that doesn't make you a bad person...but it does make you a bad leader!

To sum up...three indispensable ingredients for true leadership are courage, integrity, and an attitude of servant-hood. These ingredients will go a long way towards making you an effective leader.

If you're an organizer...organize. If

you're an analyzer...analyze. If you're a motivator...motivate. Whatever it is you do...do it. Whatever it is you don't do...don't do it. It's that simple.

As a leader you won't always be able to dictate the ultimate outcome of anything you are involved in. No matter what the challenge is you must never give up hope.

The funny thing about hope is that it can be contagious. It can be the one thing that no one can describe yet we cling to it with all our might. In any given situation you can be with hope or without it. Hope then...is a matter of choice.

No matter what situation you face, if you face it without hope, then you've already lost the battle. Never give out. Never give in to despair. And never give up hope. Never give out. Never give in. Never give up. That is the attitude of every true leader.

The Honorable Judge Darnell Jackson
Bridge Center for Racial Harmony



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Diversity Circles



Esther Letven, Consultant
Diversity Circles

- Jewish Americans are stingy
- Asian Americans are computer savvy
- African Americans are criminals
- Arab Americans are terrorists
- Native Americans are drunks
- Hispanic Americans are poor
- European Americans are uptight

People of all races, ethnicities, and religions are free to live in America. However, stereotypes like those above affect the way we treat each other in our pluralistic society. Participants in the Diversity Training Workshop on January 27th explored these stereotypes and began a dialogue about how it feels to be treated disrespectfully because of your race, culture, or religion.

Esther Letven, a Jewish American and Sahar Al Masri, an Arab American led the workshop by sharing their own stories of diversity circle work. Both are trained facilitators through the University of Wisconsin-Parkside's Diversity Circle Program. Before becoming facilitators, they were participants in several different circles. Learning how to dialogue rather than debate was the keystone of their experience in a Jewish-Muslim dialogue group in Wisconsin. While most Diversity Circles last for five weeks, their dialogue groups lasted for over two years. Through this experience, Esther and Sahar became close friends and colleagues. They learned to value each other's points of view, even though they disagreed on many issues related to the causes and solutions of Mideast peace.

The success of Diversity Circles is rooted in the belief that true dialogue is a means of dispelling familiar stereotypes about one another. By understanding our differences, we develop respect for our differing points of view. Face-to-face dialogue leads to trust and deeper relationships. Participants in the January workshop learned the difference between dialogue and debate. Dialogue requires openness to new and different points of view while debate is based on convincing others of your own firm point of view. Debate is about winning, dialogue is about understanding.

To practice dialogue, participants were asked to think of the first time they realized they were being treated differently because of their race, ethnicity, or religion. If unable to think of a time when they were treated differently, they were asked to think of an experience when they observed someone else being treated differently. In small groups they shared their stories and talked about how it felt at the time. Stories went back to childhood for some. For some the experience evoked painful memories. Listening to the hurt and realizing the wounds inflicted by being treated disrespectfully, participants opened their hearts and experienced the power of dialogue. On January



27th staff and students had a taste of the power of Diversity Circles which embody the democratic principles of equity, inclusiveness, and collaboration.

Esther and Sahar left both groups with the awareness that when people discover different points of view on a complex issue, they can discover common ground and find better solutions. By modeling respect for one another, the workshop leaders encouraged participants to embrace the diversity around them and learn to be inclusive.



Sahar Al Masri
Consultant, Diversity Circles

"It was a great opportunity for my friend and me to facilitate the program in January. Every time I participate in a Diversity Circle, whether as a volunteer participant or facilitator, I learn something new. It allows me to share my opinions in a respectful and honest dialogue and discuss my feelings in a safe environment. It was eye opening to listen to others who shared their experiences with everyone.

In a typical Diversity Circle, participants meet together over a period of five weeks to look at an issue from many points of view, but in this case, the January session gave the participants a taste of a Diversity Circle, yet the different exercises that were used resulted in stirring a lot of feelings. I always remember what one of the participants had to say, 'Diversity Circles allows people to admit their honest perceptions in a way that they may not in other situations. If many more people would take part in a Diversity Circle, maybe that would be one step towards a better world.'"

Sahar Al Masri



Diversity Circle Participants Speak Out



"I think that the Diversity Circles Seminar went very well. It has changed my attitude on stereotyping and the way I want to present myself to others."

"The Diversity Circles were great! They opened my eyes to all the perspectives and points of view others could have."

"The Diversity Circles Seminar has been a positive experience as it promoted open communication on stereotypical issues that are usually left untouched."

"My experience in the seminar was interesting and educational. There are many different stereotypes and racist sentiments in the country, and they were discussed effectively."

"The Diversity Circles seminar was a good, positive experience. Learning about diversity and how to utilize different skills was very helpful. The stereotype activity was a great component of the program."

"I believe the Diversity Circles seminar was positive because it showed that not everyone is the same and gave people a look at how others think. Not everyone is the same."

"I thought the Diversity Circles experience was a positive one. Even though we all had different stories, we could all relate that it has somehow affected us."

"The Diversity Circle Seminar helped me to realize that even though I don't think I have racial prejudices, it shows and brought to my attention that maybe I do, and was an aid to help me rid of those."

"This seminar has opened my eyes to many

different feelings and stereotypes. I am very pleased and inspired to help my community with what I have learned today."

"The Diversity Circles Seminar was an interesting, sometimes sad but ultimately hopeful experience. Listening to the stereotypes lists being read was both interesting and upsetting. Knowing so many people were hurt, disturbed and affronted by the words gives a message of hope and change."

"I felt that my experience with the Diversity Circles Seminar was very good. It was definitely a positive thing. I learned that many people have been through discomfort and want to change the stereotypes about their races."



"The Diversity Circles seminar was a positive experience with good discussions about stereotypes and diversity. It was a good to discuss such important issues in a large group along with a diverse group."

"The Diversity Circles seminar has been very positive. I think it is very beneficial because it gives other races a chance to experience what others go through that they might not know about."

"Discussing race gives a chance to educate those ignorant to other races and give them an open mind about things they may not know about or assume."

"I'm not terribly concerned with appealing to others when it comes to the discussion of race or being politically correct. I think it is more important to be truthful and honest than to be fake about your feelings."

"I think it is very important to discuss race and all differences so we can learn about them. It is very eye opening because the different races were all here in the flesh, so it gave me a person to tie my experiences to. Having them at the seminar made my experience more personal."

"Racism still exists in America. It might not be explicitly visible, but this seminar showed it."

"The True Colors video helped me to realize how hypocritical America is. I was disgusted with the expressions and comments that our 'fellow Americans' made. I also feel that if we are fighting for equality, our actions should justify that."

"I think Diversity Circles are wonderful. It is good as an icebreaker to build trust and meet new people. I learned a lot about stereotypes and myself."

"The Diversity Circle Seminar was an enriching experience. I think that many individuals are naive to the fact that racism still exists, and more stereotypes are being formulated by the ignorant and judgmental everyday. By attending this seminar, I was inspired to lead by example, and campaign against the cruel injustices of racism. I hope that everyone else who attended this program feels as strongly as I do. If we all band together against racism, we can make a difference."

"The Diversity Circles Seminar was a good experience. It allowed me to examine my character and judgment and the feelings of others."



Service Project



The service project is the culmination of the Youth Leadership Institute program. It is an opportunity for students to apply the leadership skills acquired during the year and to give back to the community. It is important that all Institute students participate in this project. It is your way to demonstrate your commitment to the goals and objectives of the Institute.

As you know, the project will take place at the Boys & Girls Club. The mission of this national organization is "to inspire and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens."

The members of the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute will be involved in a Service Project on April 6, 2006, focused on teaching

children ages 6-13 topics such as health, conflict resolution, and leadership.

Each leadership group will be visiting a different local elementary school to lead and mentor the children in attendance. Below are the schools in which our mentors and mentees will be attending.

Leadership Group A (Groups 1, 4, 7)

Stone Elementary
Director: Theresa Castillo-Gomez
1006 State Street
Saginaw, MI 48602
Phone: 399-5100

Service Project Topic: Health
Time: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Age group: 6-13

Leadership Group B (Groups 2, 5, 8)

Nelle Haley Elementary
Director: Diane Keenan
3420 Livingston Drive
Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone: 399-4200

Service Project Topic: Conflict Resolution
Time: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Age group: 8-12

Leadership Group C (Groups 3, 6, 9, 10)

Longfellow Elementary
Director: Megan Holik
1314 Brown Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone: 399-4650

Service Project Topic: Conflict Resolution/
Leadership
Time: 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Age group: 8-13



Group Assignments

Leadership Group A (Groups 1,4,7)

Mentors:

Emily Hammerbacher
Nick Frees
Tara Barancik
Reggie Blockett
Jason Wolverton
Jennifer Pancost
Carly Toyzan
Evard-Peter Rwelamira
Elizabeth Schultz
Shonta Price

Mentees:

Regina Nerio
Trinae Fairris
Joel Gagne
Kija Stephens
Rebecca Alger
Angelica Herrera
Patrick Graham
Ashley Stephen
Allan Trevino
Shawnyse Harris
Amber Uribe
Kellie LeRoy
Elizabeth Dewey
Theo Keith
Jennifer Fuller
Astrid Imperial
Katelyn White

Leadership Group B (Groups 2,5,8)

Mentors:

Andrew Suszek
Lim Moh Tan
Jessica Gibson
Kami Gibbs
Tacarra Ford
Andy Hoag
Minjung Kim
Christine Macey
Ali Goodhall
Kenny Williams
Tori Oxley

Mentees:

Latoya Ifeobu
Bryan Morrison
Nicole Wandzel
Prakash Nallani
Kadie Urbain
Chelsea Satkowiak
Breannah Alexander
Hannah Thom
Jacob Zoller
Zach Podojak
Fred Gewirtz
Tara Leddy
Curtiss Coleman
Adam Larson
Tara Vaughn

Leadership Group C (Groups 3,6,9,10)

Mentors:

Beth Schafer
Suzanne Edmonds
Geron Johnson
Michelle Herbon
Danny Luce
Karvika Thapa
Yuka Nakauchi
Anderson Bearden
Kelly Stewart
Keara Artis
Janelle Wozniak
Tami Snyder
Justin Findlay
Mark Kraemer

Mentees:

Javon Bland
Cameron Tindall
John Seno

Aneisha McDole
Lauren Weiss
Dominique Debenham
Cohen Sangster
Dana Preuss
Krystal Buckler
Devin Pettyplace
Shane Aguilar
Chelena Eli
Britney Morris
Joe Flattery
Margaret Curtiss
Dominique Porter
Matt Holden
Ashley Staffney
Cecelia Munoz
Nicole Anegon



The Mentor's Perspective



"I still remember my nervousness when I first came to SVSU for my Masters Degree all the way from Nepal. There was a big challenge in front of me to understand and adapt to a whole new culture. I have always searched for the opportunity to learn about other cultures. I participated in this program to help high school students. When I got involved in the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute, I met people from

various backgrounds, learned about other cultures, introduced towards new ideas and ended up learning more about myself. I am confident that this experience will help me in my future endeavors. Being a mentor has not only given me a chance to meet people from diverse backgrounds, it has also given me a chance to increase awareness of cultural differences around me. I am glad to play a part in guiding young students toward the right direction. This institute has touched each participant in a way that will ultimately have a great impact in our society. It has provided an opportunity for participants to work together to improve their community. In order to be a productive citizen, we are in need of various activities related to diversity and Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute has given us a chance to broaden our minds and do some-

thing for our community. This institute has given me a chance to develop trust in relationships, understand each other, and work in groups to do something good in our community."

Karvika Thapa
Graduate Student



For me, the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute is all about people. While the activities and exercises certainly provide a great learning opportunity, the truly rewarding experience is just spending time with student leaders from area high schools.

I have been amazed, thus far, at the spirit these student leaders exude. Most of them are dealing with typical teenage pressures—homework, extracurricular activities, the ever ominous task of picking colleges, majors, and careers—and yet, they are taking time from their own worlds to help improve another's.

What has also impressed me about these students is their unique ability to adapt and feel comfortable in unfamiliar surroundings. We have asked them to come to a university campus and sit as equals alongside college students, a daunting task to say the least. Still, these students have fit in, contributed ideas, and had fun while doing so, seeming to carry out the Institute's goals from the very beginning.

I enjoy my involvement with SCYLI because it allows me the opportunity to meet and work alongside these wonderful people in the name of community service. The students'

knowledge and hard work will no doubt make our community service projects a success; their enthusiasm and contagious smiles, though, will ensure we all have fun while doing so.

Jason Wolverton
SCYLI Mentor



With some trepidation I accepted the invitation to be a Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute mentor. As a mature student (43 years) I was unsure as to how I would relate with mentees and other mentors who were on average 24 years younger. Now, many months later I am not sure what men-

tees have gained from me in my role as mentor but I have learned much from my association with them.

This has been a unique opportunity for me, as an international student, to learn about American culture in a forum that had a focus on diversity. I take this opportunity to thank all participants for their openness in sharing their life experiences, ideas, thoughts and beliefs which has allowed me to expand my understanding of other cultures.

Age does not have a monopoly on experiences of any kind or an understanding of life. For me this realization has truly been fostered and developed through discussions and participation in activities with mentees. I have been blown away by the difficult and intense experi-

ences that so many of the young people involved in the SCYLI have dealt with in these early years of their life. Yet they continue to display strength, courage, resiliency, openness, belief in themselves and most importantly have not lost the ability to dream. I know that the "ripples" in the pond of life they create will extend further than they could credit.

Suzanne Edmonds
Mentor, SCYLI



SCYLI School Representatives

Arthur Hill High School

Krystal Buckler
Astrid Imperial
Adam Larson

Frankenmuth High School

Lauren Weiss
Jacob Zoller

Saginaw Art and Science Academy

Breannah Alexander
Cameron Tindall
Allan Trevino

Birch Run High School

Devin Pettyplace
Tara Vaughn
Katelyn White

Freeland High School

Dominique Debenham
Chelsea Satkowiak
Ashley Stephen

Saginaw High School

Curtis Coleman
Britney Morris
Ashley Staffney

Bridgeport High School

Angelica Herrera
Zach Podojak
Amber Uribe

Hemlock High School

Jennifer Fuller
Dana Preuss
Hannah Thom

St. Charles High School

Joe Flattery
Cecelia Munoz
Kadie Urbain

Buena Vista High School

Javon Bland
Trinae Fairris
Latoya Ifeobu

Heritage High School

Rebecca Alger
Aneisha McDole
Prakash Nalani

Swan Valley High School

Theo Keith
Tara Leddy
Cohen Sangster

Carrollton High School

Shawnyse Harris
John Seno
Nicole Wandzel

Merrill High School

Joel Gagne
Bryan Morrison
Dominique Porter

Valley Lutheran High School

Chelena Eli
Matt Holden
Kija Stephens

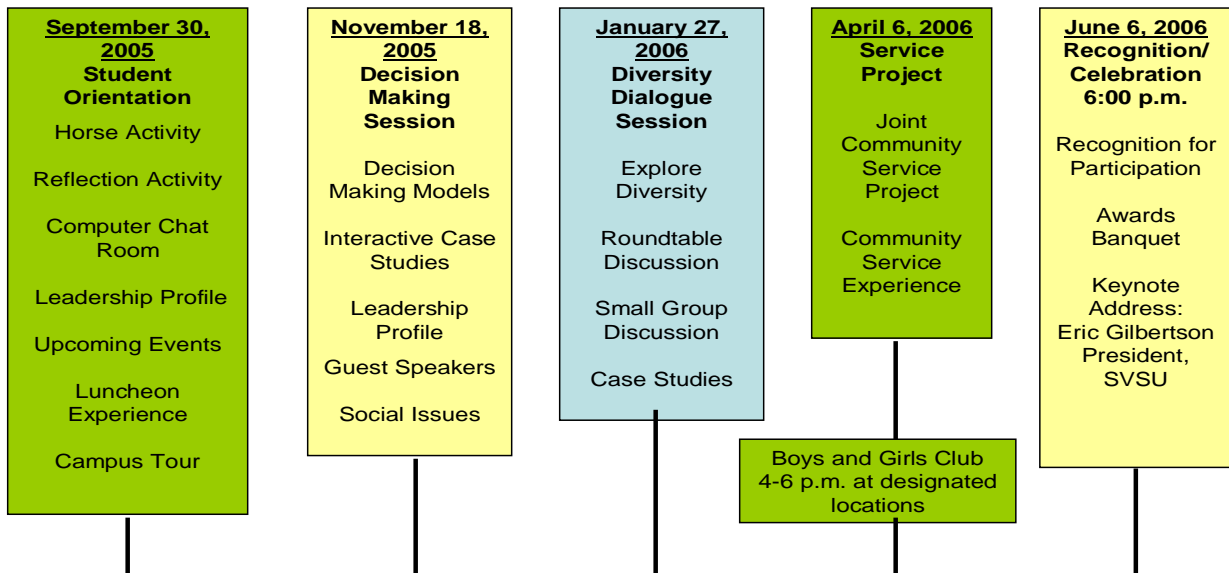
Chesaning High School

Shane Aguilar
Elizabeth Dewey
Fred Gewirtz

Nouvel Catholic Central High School

Nicole Anegon
Margaret Curtiss
Patrick Graham
Kellie LeRoy

Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute Time Line Saginaw Valley State University In collaboration with The Bridge Center for Racial Harmony



Testimonies from School Leaders



I love the look on the faces of my students when they return to school from the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute at SVSU. They tell me that they have been challenged to think about the actions of a leader and to see themselves as leaders. They are also excited by the opportunity to participate in such a diverse group. They have become more culturally receptive and have created many new friendships. The institute is fun and meaningful. Great job SVSU!!!

Cliff Davis, Principal
Saginaw High School



It is easy to write on behalf of the leadership program at SVSU. I see the opportunity for Carrollton students in the program to grow in ways that are new and exciting, bringing resources back to their school experience we could not access. The organization and leadership provided by SVSU is invaluable, and the likelihood that students will continue their education after high school at SVSU is much greater as a result. What a perfect fit for Carrollton and surrounding high schools!

Craig Douglas, Superintendent
Carrollton Public Schools



"The students that were fortunate enough to be part of this program have returned with positive comments and an anticipation of future meetings. As educators we need to try to do more to get the students throughout the county, especially those in leadership positions, together as a group. Their unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives make for invaluable discussions. We appreciate the fact that Saginaw Valley State University has made this program available to our students."

Mat McRae
Principal, SVHS

The Mentee's Perspective



The Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute has changed me a lot. I've become

more aware of the issues regarding race and cultures, which helps me be able to reach out to more people. The Diversity Circles program helped me become much more aware of the differences each race experiences. It has also made me realize that each of us has been discriminated against in different ways, which makes the color of our skin a non-existing issue. I've enjoyed meeting new people in this program and having enriching, fun experiences with the mentors and mentees. I hope that each individual involved in this program

takes something they've learned with them throughout the rest of their lives. Many of the concepts we've learned in this institute will help build and maintain long-lasting relationships and memorable experiences. I've truly enjoyed the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute so far, and I can't wait for our next event!

Ashley Staffney
Saginaw High School

End of the Year Celebration

On June 6, 2006, the Youth Leadership Institute team will recognize the participants of the Institute with a celebration banquet. It will be a time to reflect on the accomplishments during the year, particularly the community service project. Eric Gilbertson, President of Saginaw Valley State University, will be the keynote speaker. Parents and school administrators will be invited to attend this special event. Mark your calendars now.



Recognition Banquet
Tuesday, June 6, 2006
6:00 p.m.
Banquet Room A-C
Curtiss Hall
Saginaw Valley State University

Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute Mission

The Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute will exist to provide an opportunity for high school leaders from diverse racial, cultural, and socioeconomic communities in Saginaw County to gain valuable leadership training and acquire new skills that will help them lead in any community improvement projects.

Objectives

- Provide opportunities for students to network with other student leaders and professionals.
- Partner with the SVSU Student Association and leaders from other student organizations.
- Provide learning experiences for students, to reflect on their own leadership style
- Promote the importance of diversity, citizenship and stewardship
- Discuss areas for personal leadership

S.C.Y.L.I Committee Members

Dr. Eric Gilbertson , President	Saginaw Valley State University
Dr. Marna Beard , Associate Professor Educational Leadership & Services	Saginaw Valley State University
Mrs. Merry Jo Brandimore , Assistant Vice President Student Services & Enrollment Management	Saginaw Valley State University
Mr. Ryan Fewins , Assistant Director Student Life Center	Saginaw Valley State University
Ms. Emily Hammerbacher , President Student Association	Saginaw Valley State University
Dr. Nancy Lewis , Consultant Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute	Saginaw Valley State University
Dr. Joseph Ofori-Dankwa , Professor Management & Marketing	Saginaw Valley State University
Mr. Robert O'Hara , Executive Director Boys and Girls Club	Bridge Center for Racial Harmony
Mr. Michael Simon , Assistant Vice President Student Services & Enrollment Management	Saginaw Valley State University
Ms. Tami Snyder Office of Diversity Programs	Saginaw Valley State University
Dr. Mamie T. Thorns , Special Assistant to the President Diversity Programs	Saginaw Valley State University
Dr. Tracy Weber , Facilitator Equine Assisted Learning	Kaleidoscope Learning Circle

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**Created and Edited By:
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Dr. Mamie T. Thorns**

Reminder: If you will not be able to attend any of our scheduled events, please call Dr. Thorns, Special Assistant to the President for Diversity Programs at 964-4068