

MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP UNTAPPED

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MENTOR'S PERSPECTIVE - JUDGE ELIZABETH ROBB

"You don't learn anything from talking to sameness" said Robert Menschel, senior director at Goldman Sachs Group Inc. describing why he has been a member of the Wednesday 10, a group of New York businessmen who have been meeting for breakfast and dinner for the past 52 years.

In a November 25, 2009 article in the Wall Street Journal, I read the history of the Wednesday 10. Most of the group were the sons of immigrants, not wealthy initially, but became presidents of television networks, partners at bank and editors. "We were all young kids starting out, and it is easy when you are so involved in building your career to lose touch with other people who are outside your field. It helped me to understand why other people do what they do—which is important in life and in business," said Mr. Menschel.

As I read this article, I immediately thought of the MultiCultural Leadership Program

and the similarities between it and the Wednesday 10 group. The Wednesday 10 group was formed by a group of young businessmen in order to network and increase business opportunities. Each of the men recognized the advantage to cultivating relationships with those in different businesses.

The MultiCultural Leadership program has a similar, yet broader premise---to enable those in the program to be enriched by the opportunity to interact with persons from diverse backgrounds. In addition to developing each participant's leadership and talent, the program encourages its participants to share their talents, skills and time with our community. So not only does the participant benefit but also others who live in McLean County. My admiration for the participants' energetic and dedicated contributions to the program grows each time I attend one of the MCLP sessions.

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I HAVE A CONFESSION - KAREN KAPELA

I joined MCLP without much thought to what it really entailed. I mean, I knew it was a leadership program, with diversity aspects. I just didn't consider everything that went into it. And I don't think I fully grasped all that I would get out of it. It was only recently, that with a little perspective, I've been able to fully appreciate this experience.

From the time I found out about the program to the time I applied, interviewed and was accepted, it was about four weeks. I thought to myself: Great; a leadership program that will offer me some training, some self-evaluative tools, and networking opportunities!

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MENTOR'S PERSPECTIVE *CONTINUED*

As a mentor, one of the most rewarding aspects of the program has been interacting with men and women who are working in very different working environments from my own. My position as a judge is fairly isolating because I am prohibited from discussing cases and my decision making process with others (except for other judges). So I am truly relishing learning from so many talented and interesting individuals. And while I have mentored before, it has always been a young lawyer or new judge. The focus of our mentoring has always been on the practice of law or how to adapt from practicing law to judging.

As a mentor to a participant working in the technology field, I have a very different role. From my mentee, I am learning an area about which I know very little. I hope that I am imparting some wisdom and guidance to my mentee.

I am grateful that I was asked to mentor and be

involved in this program. I believe very strongly that the program participants will contribute much to our community in the years to come. My "investment" of time is very small, but I know I will reap a huge investment in developing long lasting relationships with my mentee and other participants. I am confident that each participant and mentor will have a similar experience.

Judge Elizabeth Robb participated in the panel discussion during MCLP's "Leadership in Politics and Social Justice" panel session.



"I BELIEVE VERY STRONGLY THAT THE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WILL CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO OUR COMMUNITY IN THE YEARS TO COME.."
-JUDGE ROBB

I HAVE A CONFESSION *CONTINUED*



Like, I said, I didn't really give much thought to it all! I have learned so much more than that. I have learned more than I thought possible. And, to be honest most of what I have learned has come from the other participants, not so much from the formal sessions. Don't get me wrong – I take home a lot of knowledge from the formal sessions – the fact that all of these leaders from through Mclean County have taken the time to come and talk to us? That's pretty heady. But what I've learned from the other participants is even more than that. We are all so diverse; from experience, to background, to our physical characteristics, to our opinions. It's amazing to calmly sit

around a table and discuss thought-provoking ideas and possible solutions.

We have become champions for each other and our ideas. We build off each others questions and help others find answers. We've reached that point of gelling as a group that we can give each other a look and know what the other is thinking. That's what I mean about what I've been able to take away so far.

To be a part of a group like this: I don't know if anyone could really know ahead of time what it really entailed.

If you know someone who would benefit from participating in this program next year please consider filling out a nomination form. To request a nomination form email us at: contactus@bn-mclp.org

LEADING STRONG TEAMS - DALE CARNEGIE & ASSOCIATES, INC.

"If only I had a stronger team!" There are few leaders who have not thought this at one time or another. Yet, successful leaders seem to develop strong teams wherever they go, whatever task the team is assigned. The key factors in leading strong teams are:

Establish continuous improvement by building on the characteristics of strong teams. Key characteristics of strong teams are:

Cooperation: In a strong team, individuals rely on each other to make processes and interactions function as planned. Strong teams root out uncooperative members and either replace them with people who will move the team process forward, or coach them to more cooperative behavior.

Mutual Respect: In a strong team, individuals avoid arrogance, condescension, and criticism. Successful teamwork is achieved as a result of respecting the talents, opinions, and efforts of teammates.

Democratic: In a strong team, every team member's voice is heard. Each member of the team has a right to question the process, add input, and evaluate the progress of the team.

Capitalize on individual strengths to take teams to higher levels of performance. In a strong team, the leader knows how to capitalize on each member's individual strengths. Not everyone on the team has to be a great people person, but some have to be. Not everyone has to be meticulous, but certain members of the team must be. To capitalize on individual strengths, we must be able to:

Recognize strengths: Many leaders have a hard time seeing the strengths in their team members. In a business climate where appreciation is often in short supply, many of us get out of the habit of looking for the strengths in others. It takes a change in our mindset to start seeing individuals in terms of what we admire and appreciate in them.

Combine strengths to make a team: Combining strengths in a strong team is a little bit like combining ingredients in a great recipe. Just dumping the ingredients into a pan doesn't make a great dish, no matter how excellent each individual ingredient may be. It isn't unusual to see talented, capable individuals who under-perform as a team.

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WORKING TOWARDS THE NEXT STEP - TOM MOY



I will admit that I was initially skeptical about participating in the MCLP since I've had the privilege of being involved with leadership programs of a similar nature. The initial sessions' topics didn't really offer any new insights and were mostly focused on development or training exercises that I had previously taken. As I began to approach the next few sessions, something unusual was occurring. Instead of

experiencing the normal anxiety (dread?) over having to prepare for the next meeting, I was actually excitedly anticipating my next class. Relationships began to emerge and the topics became much more meaningful. I found myself not just attending, but engaging to a much deeper degree. In fact, I often began sharing the lessons and insights with others which I believe was an underlying, but subtle benefit of the program.

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"I FOUND MYSELF
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-TOM MOY

LEADING STRONG TEAMS *CONTINUED*

Facilitate the interaction of diverse personalities on strong teams. Even well-meaning leaders are sometimes guilty of wanting their team members to do things the way they do them, or act the way they act. Working in a team with diverse personalities requires flexibility, patience, and open-mindedness. As you embrace your differences, you enable your team to reach its fullest potential.

Celebrate diversity: If you stop and think about it, most of us would be bored by having to work with a team whose members all had the same personalities. Team interaction is much more stimulating and interesting when the team has a variety of personal styles and characteristics. When you celebrate your differences, you acknowledge that all of us are enriched by our opportunity to work together.

Open lines of communication: There is a tendency for team members to avoid those on the team who are much different in temperament, and to form informal alliances with those who feel similar. If allowed to go on indefinitely, these team sub-groupings become cliques with insiders and outsiders, and the lines of communication within the team are blocked.

Building bridges, not walls: Leaders of strong teams learn to facilitate connections between diverse styles on their team. You look for ways to make it easier for team members to form alliances, increase mutual understanding, and break down perceived barriers in the way you approach your work.

Manage results, not tasks: Ultimately, what matters is each team member's contribution to the team's goals and mission. Leaders who are adept at facilitating strong teams with diverse personalities have learned to focus on the results each team member achieves, rather than trying to make them achieve the results in a certain way. This allows the individuals to express their personalities through their work, and still contribute significantly to the team effort.

Leverage competitive spirit to gain cooperation. Friendly competition generates results. Leaders of strong teams keep the competition between the team and its own past results, not between individual team members. Make competition exciting. Who would you rather have working at your side, a competitive spirit or one who is easily satisfied with mediocre results?

CREDIBILITY: MANAGING YOUR MESSAGE – PAULA MITCHELL

The notion of credibility conjures up a variety of thoughts; image, reputation, appearance, authority, trustworthiness or believability to name a few. No matter how diverse the responses are to the notion of credibility, one thing we all agree on; credibility matters...and is critical in order to effectively lead.

How can we enhance credibility? By managing our message!

Recognize that people communicate three ways (3 V's):

Verbally – the words chosen

Vocally – the rate, tone, volume, pitch and inflection used when speaking

Visually – the behaviors observed

According to Dr. Albert Mehrabian's extensive communication research, the verbal message accounts for 7% of the credibility of our overall message, the vocal for 38% and the visual a whopping 55%! Therefore, it's impossible to be in the presence of others and *not communicate something!* What are you saying, verbally, vocally and visually to your

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CREDIBILITY: MANAGING YOUR MESSAGE *CONTINUED*

coworkers colleagues and customers? Develop a positive, powerful, professional image by ensuring that every aspect of your message aligns with the others; that what you say, how you say it and what you do are consistent.

For example, credible leaders are both confident and approachable. In order to project both, manage your message verbally by sharing facts and feelings clearly from an "I" perspective ("I know that...and so feel it best that we..."). Then be sure to show interest and reciprocate conversationally! Invite input by asking others how they see it. This will reassure that you are open to the ideas of others.

Manage your vocal message by lowering the voice inflection at the end of a statement in order to sound sure of what you are saying as

opposed to sounding as if asking a question. Be concise so that others will feel free to interject a differing opinion.

A confident and yet approachable leader is accessible to others; both physically (with, for example, an open door policy) and conversationally (a willingness to engage in open dialogue).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, remember: credibility is earned over time... and can be lost in an instant. Manage your message intentionally in order to enhance your credibility!

Paula Mitchell presented to the MCLP class about Emotional Intelligence during the retreat session.

WORKING TOWARDS THE NEXT STEP *CONTINUED*

Although the predominant theme is diversity, I began to realize that the focus is actually broader and encompass so much more, including politics, poverty, education, to name just a few. In particular, the poverty simulation was a very interesting experience. Rather than a strict role play exercise, it actually personalized and highlighted the pressures (and the inequities that they face) that a large percentage of people experience on a regular basis. Besides the poverty simulation, I recall another session which has left me with a new perspective.

Dr. Sheahon Zenger had a tough act to follow. He was preceded by an education forum with a panel that included the distinguished presidents from the local universities which was particularly engaging. In addition, Dr. Zenger would be the last speaker for the night after a very long work day. Since he is the Athletic Director for Illinois State University, I assumed that he would be sharing a topic with a sports theme. While he did parallel much of his leadership perspective with sports refer-

ences, his topic was actually much more thought provoking. He left such a positive impression with me that I still leverage some of his key points in my conversations with others. I especially enjoyed his retelling of Paul Harvey's message to his grandson, particularly the comment about "tough times and disappointment, hard work and happiness" for a fulfilling life. Dr. Zenger's suggestion to consider who you associate with, and whether you deem them successful still resonates vividly with me, and can appreciate how much influence others have been to me and my career.

At this juncture, I am happily surprised that the program has exceeded my expectation in many ways, and eager to learn how we can further leverage our talents and experiences to contribute to the welfare of others. My goal has always been to change the world in some meaningful way, and I believe that the MCLP has offered another opportunity to do just that.

"THE MCLP'S VERY EXTENSIVE PROGRAM STRUCTURE, SUPPORT FROM PEER LEADERS, DAILY CONTACT WITH MY GROUP LEADERS AND EXPOSURE TO A MENTOR WHO IS A PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE MANAGEMENT COACH HAVE INCREASED MY AWARENESS OF HOW TO NOT ONLY CREATE AN EFFECTIVE TEAM, BUT ALSO HOW TO MANAGE AND SERVE IN A FOLLOWERSHIP ROLE AMONGST INDIVIDUALS IN A HIGH PERFORMING TEAM AND LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENT."

-MCLP
PARTICIPANT
EMPLOYED BY
STATE FARM

STEPPING INTO A DIFFERENT REALITY - MACARIA LOPEZ



Do you find yourself at times only living in your own little perfect world? I believe all of us may fall into this quite often. We know

if things go our way for our team, our family, ourselves, we take some time to celebrate. Things seem just right. If we have had a bad day, we have time to talk about it with others. We have many opportunities and know what resources to use to help us reflect on how we can strive to do things better or differently for tomorrow.

On October 10, 2009, the MCLP was allowed the opportunity to attend a poverty simulation that was facilitated by Sandy McGhee from University of Illinois Extension Office and many excellent volunteers. This simulation addressed the real world obstacles that many families face today in our community.

As I moved through this simulation, I found myself constantly wondering where did the

time go? Frantically going through bills during my wait in the human services line I had to think about what is a 'must have' versus what is a 'nice to have.' What could I pawn for some quick cash to feed my family for the week? In my role as a grandmother with a disability in this simulation, my 'celebration' was keeping the utilities on and coming back to our home without an eviction sign. I didn't receive my medications for a week or two, didn't have time to have meaningful conversation with my granddaughter, but the lights were on, we had the opportunity to make a partial mortgage payment, and we were able to eat this week. That was my celebration.

On October 10th, I believe we all celebrated that we were able to increase our awareness about poverty and that we will continue to develop sensitivity to others' needs. This simulation personally inspired me and I will never forget the various feelings and emotions that came about. It's the awareness that will continue to make us strong as individuals and the awareness that is needed for our community!

"IN ADDITION TO THE STRENGTH FINDER AND MYER-BRIGGS PROFILE ASSESSMENT, THE 360 FEEDBACK ACTIVITY PROVIDED VALUABLE INSIGHT REGARDING HOW PERCEPTION IMPACTS OUR LIVES. I HAVE USED THE RESULTS TO REFRAME AND REPACKAGE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF MY DAILY ACTIVITIES."

-MCLP PARTICIPANT EMPLOYED BY STATE FARM

POLITICS, POWER, AND MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES - DR. GEORGE J. GORDON

The significance of politics, broadly defined, to multi-cultural communities cannot be overstated. It would be impossible to discuss all of the numerous dimensions of the relationships between politics and multi-cultural communities, but I will try to address a few essential elements.

First is the matter of just what "politics" entails. For many of us the term brings to mind lawmaking, political parties, interest groups, campaigning, elections, and government policies, among other things. Other dimensions might include (we hope!) enlightened leadership, statesmanship, vision,

intelligence, honesty, and public integrity. But politics has other meanings beyond the here-and-now. In a deeper sense, "politics" refers to competition and conflict, to the pursuit and exercise of power, to coalition building, and to the question of "who gets what, when, how." (again, among other things). While we may not often think about these broader meanings, they should not be overlooked. Understanding them – and acquiring the skills and experience to "play the game" – can enhance efforts to expand the political influence of those whose influence is only now on the rise – including, notably, multi-cultural communities.

POLITICS *CONTINUED*

Those communities, too many times, have been kept away from positions of political influence and the benefits that come with holding such positions. Multi-cultural populations very often have started out at a competitive disadvantage in the politics of the larger community; that phenomenon itself can be attributed, in myriad ways, to the “politics” of that larger community. The challenges confronting multi-cultural populations – while not as daunting as they were a century ago – still remain profound.

So, how to deal with those challenges? When communities have been steeped throughout their histories in social patterns which heavily discourage their taking part – even their being able to take part – in public affairs, how do we reverse that “macro”-trend? Clearly there are some answers to those questions – and I say “clearly” because that trend has, at long last, begun to be reversed!

How do we know that? The new patterns are indicated by a number of “yardsticks.” One is the phenomenon of increasingly effective community organization processes and activities, which were in very short supply as recently as 50 years ago. Organized citizens are not *guaranteed* success in pursuit of shared objectives – but unorganized citizens are virtually assured of failure. Another is the very existence of the MCLP effort here in Bloomington-Normal, and others like it. Yet another “yardstick” is the marked increase in the numbers of racial, religious, ethnic, cultural, and nationality minorities not only in the workplace, but also in positions of responsibility there. (The highest possible levels of responsibility? No, but that too is slowly beginning to change.) Still another can be found in the realm of electoral politics, where the old “litmus tests” of “is *he* the ‘right’ gender/race/religion/etc. for me to vote for?” are steadily falling by the wayside. People of color increasingly are mounting serious campaigns for public office – and more

important, campaigns that are taken seriously – across the country. Many more people of color, women, religious minorities, etc. have won election in recent years to local, state, and national legislatures. (And if I recall correctly, a man of color now occupies the White House!)

Of even greater importance, in my view, people of color have advanced into positions of responsibility and authority in the business world, in education, in the arts, and a host of other endeavors. Federal and state legislation helped to pave the way, surely (as well as imperfectly) – but individuals had to be ready and willing to “walk the walk” along those paths. And the fact is now that people of color, by the thousands, are exercising significant responsibilities and decision-making authority in a very diverse array of job settings.

Are we there yet? No way! Are we moving in the right direction? Yes! Does the ascendancy of people of color stand as a positive and meaningful example for other people of color, giving them hope and inspiration? Surely it does! But in my view, the growing successes of people of color stand as an important example for another large population grouping: those of us who are white! It has taken time, and undoubtedly will take more time – but we who are white will get the hang of it, sooner or later!

Dr. George Gordon is a mentor to an MCLP participant and also participated in the “Leadership in Politics and Social Justice” panel discussion on November 7th.

MCLP partners community leaders with class participants to further enrich the professional development process. If you are interested in becoming a mentor to one of the program participants next year, please send an email to: contactus@bn-mclp.org

“POLITICS” REFERS TO COMPETITION AND CONFLICT, TO THE PURSUIT AND EXERCISE OF POWER, TO COALITION BUILDING, AND TO THE QUESTION OF “WHO GETS WHAT, WHEN, HOW.”
-DR. GORDON

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP: BEING AN INFLUENCER AND BEING INFLUENCED- THE BALANCING ACT

-DON PAUL



I believe the ability to influence is a very critical leadership attribute. In fact, John Maxwell sums it up very succinctly,

“Leadership is influence.” Because one of the areas of focus for the Multicultural Leadership Program is influence, I want to take this opportunity to provide my personal perspectives on this topic.

I define influence as the act of producing some desirable effect on the behaviors, perspectives, or opinions of others. I believe that the ability to influence is not bestowed on someone based on their affluence, position, power, or privilege. Scott Adams very eloquently stated, “You don’t have to be a ‘person of influence’ to be influential. In fact, the most influential people in my life are probably not even aware of the things they have taught me.” I agree, and this has been true in my life as well. The bottom line is that anyone has the power to influence.

Influence plays a pivotal role in a business context. This is because effective leadership involves, among other things, the ability to achieve results, and influence is a critical “tool” in a leader’s tool box for accomplishing this. While achieving results is critical (the end), how the leader accomplishes this (the means) is equally if not more important. Influential leaders not only focus on the end but also on the means. Based on my earlier definition, leaders who focus on the end but ignore the means are not influential at all. This is because their actions often bring about undesirable effects such as lowered engagement levels.

They achieve results but these results come at a very hefty price.

So what is the “means” for effectively influencing people and bringing about results without paying an unreasonable price? The answer is – maintain a balance between influencing and being influenced. Such a leader is one who:

- Is willing to listen to perspectives that may differ from his/her own
- Is willing to change his/her original perspective in light of new information
- Takes into account objective data and facts in decision making
- Has an open mind and views an issue from multiple perspectives
- Is able to divorce the message from the messenger
- Is aware that some issues have many shades of gray versus being black and white
- Disagrees but does it respectfully and provides a cogent argument for disagreeing
- Is humble enough to admit mistakes

To summarize, effective leadership is a balance between influencing and being influenced. A leader who “influences” by telling people what to do without taking into account others’ perspectives will have limited success. At the other extreme, a leader who is always influenced by others’ perspectives is like the tree that sways with the wind. This leader lacks personal conviction and this will also limit his/her ability to achieve results. Being an influencer by being influenced – that’s the balancing act required for effective leadership. And that’s my perspective.

“UPON FIRST HEARING ABOUT THE MCLP, I WAS A LITTLE APPREHENSIVE AND SKEPTICAL CONCERNING THE AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT THE PROGRAM COULD OFFER ABOVE AND BEYOND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT I’VE EXPERIENCED IN MY CAREER ALREADY. I WAS FLAT OUT WRONG. AFTER 4 MONTHS, I AM THANKFUL, EVER GRATEFUL, AND HUMBLLED THAT THE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES THE DEVELOPMENT OFFERINGS, AND THE AMAZING STAFF AND GUEST SPEAKERS WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE.”

- MCLP PARTICIPANT
EMPLOYED BY
COUNTRY FINANCIAL

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2010:

WWW.BN-MCLP.ORG

SAFETY LESSONS IN DIALOGUE - ROBIN ORR



When people don't feel safe, they don't use dialogue. There is no such thing as risky subjects when it is safe at work and at home. People avoid dialogue when they believe it is unsafe. Since our objective is dialogue, safety is

something to assure happens in your workplace, community and home.

As you watch both the content and the process of an interaction, pay special attention to one condition that fosters dialogue--watch for safety. To do so, try asking yourself, "is it safe for others to express their views, even if they differ from popular opinion? Are people pulling back or feeling the need to attack? Are individuals breaking into camps with winners and losers?"

Anything that prevents opinions, facts, theories, and feelings from flowing into the Pool of Shared Meaning is a threat to dialogue. And nothing hinders the flow more than an unsafe environment.

The two conditions of Safety are *Mutual Purpose* and *Mutual Respect*. When you see people moving to silence and violence, the challenge is to determine whether Mutual Purpose or Mutual Respect is at risk, then take steps to strengthen it.

There are some simple steps to assuring safety is honored. Remember if you violate mutual respect, you will only talk about respect and never get to the content of the dialogue.

To achieve mutual purpose you can start with a genuine apology if you have erred, then you can contrast, "I don't want you to think I'm saying you aren't a good team player or that you aren't pulling your weight. That's not what I think at all. I think you do great work. I do, however, have some concerns about your letter writing skills." After that you can use CRIB - Commit to seek

Mutual Purpose Recognize the purpose behind the strategy; Invent a Mutual Purpose (you can always raise the purpose to something everyone can agree on like safe, secure, healthy children); and Brainstorm new strategies. Brainstorming brings stimulates thinking and this is great for dialogue. Remember the goal is to be able to get to the content of the dialogue and with safety you can get there.

Safety is important always. . So here's some good advice: Don't engage in socially risky activity. It's that simple. Don't tell blonde jokes. Don't tell jokes that marginalize any group. You might get the occasional laugh, and there's a good chance that you'll offend someone too. Don't start a sentence with, "You know the trouble with women . . ." or "You know the trouble with men. . ." You may think that women or men have certain characteristics in common. However, throwing all of them into one big gender bundle (and a negative one at that) is bound to offend people who prefer to be viewed as individuals. Same things hold true with racial and religious groups. If you start a discussion with, "I know this might offend someone, but . . ." you're in dangerous unsafe territory.

Another part of safety is to speak up when you hear anything that marginalizes others. Only 23% speak up when they witness religious bigotry. Remember, you can only change you and it is worthwhile to be as Tony Dungy says, "... an interesting individual!"

Keep it safe!

Robin Orr was a presenter for the MCLP Communication session. She presented, Crucial Conversations, in which she discussed the art of dialogue and how to improve the health of your organization, your community and your family.

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"ANYTHING THAT PREVENTS OPINIONS, FACTS, THEORIES, AND FEELINGS FROM FLOWING INTO THE POOL OF SHARED MEANING IS A THREAT TO DIALOGUE."
-ROBIN ORR

BOARD MEMBER'S CORNER - PHANI AYTAM

We are at the halfway point of the program. It's a good time to reflect back on what we have accomplished over the past few months. Apart from making professional leadership instruction available to a broad spectrum of emerging leaders in the community, the inaugural class had the unique opportunity to network and dialogue with the tenured leaders in our community. From a mentoring session by Susan Waring to a leadership crash course by Sheahon Zenger, we touched a wide variety of leadership topics leading up to John Maxwell's maxim "Leadership is influence".

The camaraderie and the excitement amidst the participants truly motivate us to do this all over again next year. We have an amazing group of board members, both current and new, who have graciously volunteered to assist with the program next year. Several community leaders have agreed to be a part of our advisory group to guide us in making this program sustainable for years to come.

One of our MCLP advisors recently asked a question which really speaks to the core of our mission. Can *anyone* become a good leader? That got me thinking. What does it take to become a great leader? Would a leadership program that helps one develop core leadership competencies suffice? What if a coach and a mentor can guide them along the way through this leadership journey? What if a real

time project in a non-threatening environment is provided to practice the acquired skills? Will that help? What this individual helped me realize was that self actualization is an arduous process. Leadership development is a journey that takes time, commitment and patience to truly understand one's mettle and what one can offer as a leader.

I would like to add something that my father shared with me as a kid. Yes, I now find wisdom in his words, which I adamantly refused to follow when I was young. "Worth and talent can be found in the strangest of places and where you least expect." Here's a modified version of a dialogue from the movie *Ratatouille* that I truly believe in - "**Not everyone can be a great leader, but great leaders can come from anywhere.**" One can aspire, be and become the leader one wants to be. Everything starts with the intent and the commitment to change. Start with something small and see where the road takes you. If the intent is pure and the commitment is strong, one will be rewarded in more ways than one can imagine.

On behalf of the MCLP board and advisors, I wish you Happy Holidays and a Happy, Healthy & Prosperous 2010.

"We must be silent before we can listen. We must listen before we can learn. We must learn before we can prepare. We must prepare before we can serve. We must serve before we can lead."

William Arthur Ward
On Servant Leadership

WHAT'S AHEAD

December 19th will mark the 9th session of the inaugural MCLP program. During this session participants will present how their community group projects are progressing. The groups have spent countless hours working with their community partners and this session will celebrate both their successes and challenges.

December 19th also marks the deadline for

mid-term reflection writing assignment. With eight sessions worth of material to draw from and 500 words to sum it up in, the class has their work cut out for them!

There are only six sessions left for the class of 2010! Wish them luck as they edge their way to graduation and completing their community projects.

MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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HOW TO SUPPORT MCLP

MCLP is operated by a partnership between the University of Illinois Extension Office® and Heartland Community College®. Initial funding for the program was provided by State Farm®, State Farm Bank®, and COUNTRY Financial.® Many other partners in the community have also assisted to initiate MCLP and make the program possible.

MCLP continues to search for organizations which can contribute financially.

A Multicultural Leadership Institute Fund was established at the **Illinois Prairie Community Foundation**, a 501 (c)(3), which serves as the fiscal agent for MCLP. All contributions made to the program are tax exempt. If you are interested in making a monetary donation, please make the check payable to "Illinois Prairie Community Foundation" and cite "Multicultural Leadership Institute" as the beneficiary. Their mailing address is as follows.

Illinois Prairie Community Foundation
202 N. Prospect Rd, Suite 205
Bloomington, IL 61704
Phone: (309) 662-4477

In kind donations are also greatly appreciated.

Please contact the program coordinator, Christine Holmes for further information:
contactus@bn-mclp.org

