



Developing Culturally Diverse Leaders

Strength Through Diversity: Multicultural Leadership Program (MCLP)

By Phani Aytam, MCLP Board Member

What does diversity of thought mean to you? A new wave of emerging leaders in the inaugural Multicultural Leadership Program (MCLP) embarked on a journey of self-discovery and leadership development to find an answer to this very question.

On July 30th 2009, MCLP class of 2010 met for the very first time on the orientation day. Some of the class participants knew each other and for the most part they met their fellow participants for the first time. The class was welcomed by the MCLP board, advisors and other community leaders. They had an opportunity to listen to the opening remarks from MCLP advisors, Deanna Frautschi and Willie Brown.

As our advisors so eloquently put it in their inaugural speech on the orientation

day, this program is not just a professional leadership program, it also inherently promotes the notion of "Paying it forward". The fundamental question that the program participants are asked is "How can you make a difference"? Our hope is that the leadership competencies that they get to learn through this process would help in building well-rounded organiza-

tions and stronger communities.

The orientation day was followed by a weekend retreat filled with an introspective journey of self evaluation and team building based on shared experiences. To get to know these amazing 25 participants, check out our website www.bn-mclp.org.

Continued on Page 4



Multicultural Leadership Class of 2010

Musings of a Perspective Junkie

By Don Paul, MCLP Participant



Yes, I admit it. I am a junkie – a junkie for perspective. Let

me elaborate. I have an advanced degree, work in a specialized role, and interact mostly with people who are similarly specialized. I have also married someone with

an advanced degree and who also works in a specialized role. It's fair to say that I am a specialist surrounded by specialists. My outlook on life, my perspective, has been shaped by my life experiences, the people I interact with, and by those who have had somewhat similar backgrounds as I.

Continued on page 3.

Inside this issue:

An Exercise in Teamwork	2
A New World Awaits	2
From Confusion to Inclusion	3
Interactive Activity	4
Community Development	5
Coordinator's Corner	5
Who Benefits	6
Upcoming Sessions	6

I'm Puzzled: An Exercise in Teamwork

By Christine Holmes, MCLP Coordinator



What happens when you work together to complete a puzzle? As participants in the new Multicultural Leadership Program can tell you, there may be multiple outcomes. Nothing works better to build teamwork than a healthy dose of competition.

One assumption the participants made when competing against each other and the clock was they all had the same challenge: putting together a puzzle. Several groups quickly became frustrated when they realized they were trying to put together pieces from several different puzzles or their puzzle didn't match the picture they had received. Only one team was able to assemble most of their puzzle together. This team had all the advantages: the correct picture and all the pieces of a single puzzle. Through this simple activity the participants were reminded that even if people or groups have the same vision, not everyone has access to all the necessary components

to achieve their vision. The responsibility of community leaders is to recognize the 'missing pieces' and still find a way to finish the puzzle, though it won't necessarily resemble the original picture.

This activity was facilitated by Rick Owens, from State Farm Insurance® Companies. Owens' session 'The ECHO Principle of Leadership' challenged the participants' ideas on leadership. After a discussion of the difference between "managing" and "leading", Rick presented his ECHO Principle. He asked and attempted to answer the question, "Why are some people able to get others to follow them while many seem to do the "right things" but no one follows?"

"They are people dedicated to learning and growing and working together to make a better tomorrow."

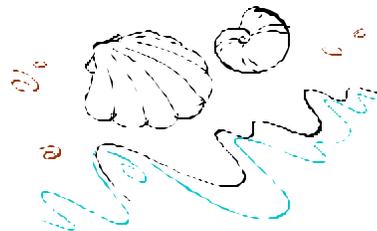
-Loretta Thirtyacre

Recently, I had the opportunity to take my 5 year old granddaughter on her first vacation to Florida. It was her first plane ride and her first time at the beach. One beautiful, cool, crisp morning as we sauntered "sea-shelling" (or sea-shelving as she called it) and we talked about everything from "Why is the water blue" to "How do fish breathe, grandma?"

As we walked and talked, she was intrigued by the myriad of shells that spread in front of us as far as the eye could see. There were small ones ... colorful ones ... ones of different shapes and sizes ... all in this time and place on this gorgeous sandy beach. Each shell had its own uniqueness ... each had a story of what brought them here.

A New World Awaits

By Loretta Thirtyacre, MCLP Board Member



Much of the same could be said of the 2009 Inaugural Class of the Multicultural Leadership Program.

- They are people brought together from various walks of life.
- They are people with unique skills and talents.
- They are people dedicated to learning and growing and working together to make a better tomorrow.

Although each participant's life ebbs and flow quite differently

from one another, all are brought together in this time and space to play their unique part in shifting the sands of the communities in which they live.

It's the differences that make us strong. It's that strength that will help us navigate any leadership storms that come our way.

Loretta Thirtyacre works at COUNTRY® Financial and is not only a MCLP Board member but was one of the first presenters during the 2-day retreat in August. Loretta's session provided a broad overview of the participants' personal Leadership 360° results .

Musings of a Perspective Junkie cont.

To me, perspectives are like filters through which we view the world. Our perspectives help us make sense of what we experience. Given my “specialized” background, I tend to be very analytical, and I have often been accused of analyzing things to death. And you know what? I love the intellectual challenge of doing it. But frequently I wonder what I am missing. What other perspectives exist?

Through the Multicultural Leadership Program (MCLP), I’ve been provided the opportunity and the privilege to interact with future community/corporate leaders who have widely varying backgrounds in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, gender, and organizational affiliation (i.e., both for- and not-

for profit). As a group, we possess many different viewpoints which are a function of our unique life experiences and backgrounds. I get a thrill from listening to some of the stories expressed by the participants and how this has influenced the way they view the world around them. By being immersed with this great group of individuals, interacting with them, candidly exchanging viewpoints, and through several exercises, I’ve come to better appreciate different perspectives on an issue even if they may not always align with the way I see things.

I think our MCLP group is a microcosm that mirrors the demographic changes that are taking place in the US as well as in our workforce. I believe an

important leadership characteristic to be effective in a diverse environment is the ability to deal with different perspectives and to take an inclusive approach. As I become aware of other perspectives through my participation in MCLP, I find myself escaping from the filters imposed by my unique life experiences. I guess that is why I am, and will always continue to be, a junkie – a junkie for perspective!



A New Perspective

“ I think our MCLP group is a microcosm that mirrors the demographic changes that are taking place in the US as well as in our workforce. ”

-Don Paul

Have you ever found yourself surrounded by people who don’t speak the same language as you and who seem strangely offended by your ‘natural’ gestures? The Multicultural Leadership Program participants found themselves in this very position and for some this wasn’t the first time. MCLP participants are diverse ethnically, as well as by gender, age and sexual orientation. The third session, in a fifteen session program, was about diversity, a subject not unfamiliar to this group. However, facilitator Heather Bulter Taylor was going to give us all a new perspective on diversity.

Her lesson plans were taken from Ecotonos, a simulation game for working across the cultural divide created by Diane Hofner Saphiere and Nipporica Associates and tweaked by Taylor to fit the expectations of this

From Confusion to Inclusion

By Christine Holmes

group. The name Ecotonos taken from the Latin words eco- meaning environment, and tonos- meaning tension. To simulate a tension-filled environment Taylor broke the class into three groups, each group representing a different culture. The groups were provided with a list of their culture’s dos and don’ts. After much laughter, hand clapping, finger snapping and other gestures, two people from each group were asked to relocate to a different group. The people in transition were to retain their culture and interact accordingly. The groups were supposed to continue to work on the task at hand, which was to plan an event. Suddenly you could see the frustration on people’s faces.

Several minutes later the group reconvened as a whole to discuss the purpose of the activity, which they determined was to

create an environment comprised of different cultures, focus on behaviors that occur between individuals and/or groups, and identify behaviors that support or hinder a creative, innovative and productive environment.

Taylor is the President and CEO of H. B. Taylor Associates, a management consulting practice she founded in 2003. “*By engaging all levels in the change process, my clients experience success measurable in such terms as increased retention, improved productivity, enhanced employee morale and customer satisfaction as well as bottom line profitability,*” she says. “*Change occurs more positively when those impacted are in some way involved in the change process.*”

Strength Through Diversity Cont.

MCLP is run by a partnership between University of Illinois Extension Office and Heartland Community College. The program is where it is today due to the passion, support and guidance that we received from our partners, MCLP advisors and other community leaders. We would like to thank our visionary sponsors COUNTRY® Financial, State Farm® and State Farm Bank® for providing us the seed money to launch the program. A special thanks to our speakers, in-kind donors and financial contributors for rallying behind us. We will strive to



Passing the baton to a new group of community leaders.

suit of identifying and developing intelligent, diverse (in thought) and creative people who can question conventional wisdom, create exciting opportunities and help reshape the communities that we live in.

If you are passionate about self-improvement, leadership development and community service, we invite you to consider applying for the program next year.

New applications will be available on the website soon.

www.bn-mclp.org

uphold and sustain the same rigor and quality in all our future sessions and look forward to partnering with other organizations and community leaders. MCLP's success lies in the pur-

“Worth found anywhere should be nurtured and appreciated”
– Anonymous

An Interactive Activity to Complete at Home

Here's an activity you can do at home, courtesy of the Multicultural Leadership Program and Heather Butler Taylor, a MCLP presenter. First, draw a circle and then create twelve equal pieces. Each of these pieces will have a label. Here are a few to get you started: language, social class at birth, gender, age, ability,

national origin, race, religion, education, and sexual orientation. You'll notice that you have two pieces without a label, go ahead and come up with something, for example, marital status. Once you have all the pieces labeled you will start shading in the pieces if you hold a power position in relation to

the label. For instance, if you are native English speaker, fill in the piece labeled Language. Use the following chart to help you:



Men	Gender
Heterosexual	Sexual Orientation
White	Race
Wealthy	Social Class
Christian	Religion
40 - 55	Age
United States	National Origin
College Degree and above	Education
Able-bodied	Ability

You have just made a diversity wheel; it can also be called a power wheel. Now, think about which group identities have had the most impact on who you are and why? For the pieces you have shaded in, can you think of ways to be inclusive to those who were not able to shade those same pieces in? If you find yourself in a situation where

someone without power is being treated unfairly, what will you do? Our identities, based on these categories, do not alone define us; what we do is just as or more important than the categories we fall into.

Community Development in Action

By Christine Holmes

Henry Moore, who worked in government and community building for more than 30 years before passing away in 2006, related these words of wisdom from a woman he worked with in a congregation, *"You know, all of us have working gifts. These are gifts that we develop and strengthen throughout our lives. But we also have waiting gifts, gifts waiting to be called and developed. We don't often know what our waiting gifts are until we're pressed into service."*

The desire of the Community Projects subcommittee of the Multicultural Leadership Program was to find community organizations with both the need for the working gifts of the MCLP participants and the enthusiasm and capability to help the MCLP participants develop their waiting gifts. Four community organizations were

selected to work with MCLP participants based on their community project proposals: Boys & Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal, Community Cancer Center, McLean County Juvenile Court Services, and Mid-Central Community Action.

The groups have been meeting over the past couple of weeks with their respective sponsors, liaisons, and mentors to create a project proposal. Each proposal needs to address the scope of the project, the timeline and the sustainability of the project.

The projects should conclude by the end of March, however, it is our desire that the MCLP participants will want to continue their involvement with the organizations

after graduating from the program.

If you are involved with a community organization that would be enthusiastic about working with emerging community leaders please email us at: contactus@bn-mclp.org. We will be accepting community project proposals for next year in a couple of months.



Based on a number of criterion including the participants strengths as identified through an exercise in the 'Strength Finder' curriculum and the participants' interest in certain community issues, the participants were split into four groups. Each group has a project sponsor, project liaison, and group mentor.

Find us on Facebook!

Program Coordinator's Corner

Before meeting the inaugural Multicultural Leadership Program Class of 2010 face to face I asked them to complete an assignment: write a short biography without mentioning your place of employment or your credentials. Why? Because community is not just about one's position in life, it is about one's attitude towards life.

Your career and your education can say volumes about who you are as a person; however, we do not all go through life with the same opportunities and support

systems. What we all have is a story worth sharing. The 25 participants of the Class of 2010 have wonderful stories to share. To read their biographies go to our website: www.bn-mclp.org Linda Garbe, who is pursuing her passion in assisting others by emphasizing the value of storytelling within leadership, was a presenter during our "Inspirational Leadership" session. She gave the participants another assignment: present a ten minute story to the rest of the group on a topic related to

leadership. Six participants have shared their stories so far and they have ranged in topic from teamwork to mentorship to the language of love. Each story provided a better definition of the topic than Merriam-Webster could have ever imagined. It is amazing what we can learn from each other when we provide one another with the opportunity to teach.

The End

Who Benefits

Multicultural Leadership Program

402 N. Hershey Road
Bloomington, IL 61704

Phone: 309-663-8308 ext. 215
Fax: 309-663-8270
E-mail: contactus@bn-mclp.org



*Inaugural Program to Produce
New Wave of Diverse Leaders*

Participants:

- The program makes professional leadership instruction available to everyone, allowing participants to further advance their leadership skills.
- Because MCLP values diversity and constructs class groups with this focus, participants broaden their perspectives by interacting with people from widely diverse backgrounds.
- Participants have the opportunity to not only receive leadership instruction, but also to demonstrate their developing skills and deepen their connection with the neighborhood by working on a community project.
- Each participant is paired with a mentor who will provide specific instruction and guide the individual's development.

Employers:

- After completion of the program, employers will have leaders with a better understanding of their community and how it works.
- Program participants will develop a greater diversity of thought and core leadership skills that are effective both inside and outside their place of work.

Community:

- By building stronger, well-rounded community members, the neighborhood as a whole is strengthened.
- In the era of budget cuts, MCLP will provide low-cost solutions, in the form of community projects, to some key issues that affect our community.
- By emphasizing diversity, MCLP produces leaders who can help build stronger community that more accurately reflect the people living in it.
- Other neighborhood organizations will have a larger pool of leaders to recruit and strengthen their membership ranks.

Upcoming Sessions

Dates	Time	Activity
October 10, 2009	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Communication
October 22, 2009	5:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Mentoring and Etiquette
November 7, 2009	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Leadership in Politics & Reform
November 19, 2009	5:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Leadership in Education
December 19, 2009	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Business Development
January 9, 2010	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Leadership in Business
January 21, 2010	5:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Work-Life Balance
February 6, 2010	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Leadership in Health Care
February 18, 2010	5:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Executive Leadership
March 6, 2010	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Leadership in Action
March 18, 2010	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Make – up session (if needed)
April 3, 2010	8:00 AM – 11:30 PM	Graduation day