



Above and Beyond

CANADIAN STUDENT LEADERSHIP NEWS AND VIEWS

A CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS PUBLICATION

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CSLC 2013

The Canadian Student Leadership Conference is the premiere student leadership conference in Canada. Join the top leaders and advisors from across Canada for an unforgettable and exhilarating learning experience.

Dates: September 17th to 21st, 2013

Location: Montague Regional High,
Montague, Prince Edward Island

Co-chairs for 2013 are:

Bethany MacLeod
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Sandra Hicken
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Visit the CASAA website for updates on the pre-conference, advisor accommodations and the Dept. of Canadian Heritage travel grant.

Light the Way CSLC 2013

Montague Regional High School would love to welcome you to our beautiful province, the birthplace of Canada! We may be small, but we are mighty. Our miles of sandy beaches are some of the best in the world. Our rich culture and heritage offer much to be seen and explored, and our warm hospitality sets us apart.

As host of the 29th annual Canadian Student Leadership conference from September 17th – 21st, 2013, our school is planning a conference featuring inspirational speakers, engaging leadership workshops, and fun-filled activities to celebrate our Island culture. Montague Regional High School is located in the small rural town of Montague, Prince Edward Island. Your student delegates will be billeted with our Island families, so they will experience Island hospitality first-hand. CSLC 2013 will be the town's first national conference and our community cannot wait to meet you all!

Our conference theme is "Light the Way", as we believe that leadership is best exemplified by example. Most people will follow someone who possesses a strong sense of direction and creates a vision that inspires. Our youth are our future. The main goal of CSLC 2013 is to prepare them to be effective, motivated and competent leaders.

Pre-conference highlights will include a scenic coastal tour, visit to Anne of Green Gables, lobster supper and kitchen party, musical theatre or Ceilidh, opportunities for whale watching and digging for clams, getting lost in a corn maze, or perhaps a visit to a potato farm or a windmill energy farm. You will be amazed by our Island's unique, red sandstone cliffs and picturesque beauty.

Prince Edward Island is a special and unforgettable place to visit. Come discover our friendly Island, and be prepared to be amazed, awed and inspired as we "Light the Way" to leadership in 2013.

Is Everyone Entitled to Their Opinion?

“If I had thought about it, I wouldn’t have done the experiment. The literature was full of examples that said you can’t do this.”

Spencer Silver, invented the Post It note

One thing that drives the future success or failure of events is the *opinion* of the students in your building. This prevailing “opinion” can be determined by a negative group, or it can be set by the positive group in your school. There are people within the staff and students who permanently camp in either of these two groups, and your job is to make sure that the large group of people in the middle are swayed to the positive opinion side.

The most powerful excuse for this negative opinion group is, “Well, that’s my opinion and you can’t tell me that I’m wrong, because it’s my opinion.” This may be true, but this doesn’t mean that we have to pay any attention to this negative opinion.

Seth Godin, author and blogger, points out that there are two things that disqualify someone from being listened to:

1. Lack of Standing

If you are not a customer, a stakeholder or someone with significant leverage in spreading the word, we should ignore you. If you have never attended a dance or participated in school sports, we can ignore your opinion that “School spirit sucks!”

If we’re going to do great work and enhance the positive atmosphere of a school, it means that some people aren’t going to like it. And if the people who don’t like it don’t have an impact on what happens to the work after it’s complete, the only recourse of someone doing great work is to ignore their opinion.

2. No Credibility

A valid opinion needs to be based on experience and expertise. We know you don’t like cilantro, but whether or not you like it is not extensible to the population at large. On the other hand, if you have a track record of matching the taste sensibility of our target market, then we very much want to hear what you think.

People with a history of bad judgment, people who are quick to jump to conclusions or believe in unicorns or who have limited experience in the world—these people are entitled to opinions, but it’s not clear that the creator of the work needs to hear them. They’ve disqualified themselves because the method they use for forming opinions about how the school market will respond is suspect. The scientific method works, and if you’re willing to suspend it at will and just go with your angry gut, we don’t need to hear from you.

We have all read the bizarre, negative postings on YouTube videos that we have personally enjoyed and shared. Many people seem to revel in their anonymous negative postings and only get more vitriolic when they are challenged with reality. Don’t let these types of negative people become the driving force of opinion in your school. Positive change will always be challenged because it is a change from the existing state of behaviour at your school. You don’t have to pay attention to the opinions of people who don’t have a right to impose their opinions on others.

This article is excerpted and adapted from a post by Seth Godin
Seth Godin is an author and blogger, and advisors should subscribe to his postings at www.thedominoproject.com



NO OVERNIGHT SUCCESS

After eight years and almost going bankrupt, Finnish game maker, Rovio, created their 52nd game. The product was something that even the seasoned game programmers could not stop playing on their spare time. It was the world-wide sensation *Angry Birds*. If the creators had listened to the experts, they would have believed that Rovio was a company that was going nowhere and the programmers should look for work at a more successful company.

There is a distorted perception that successful companies or events happen overnight. Your Activity Program needs to put some hard work into having some small failures before you learn how to create successes. The focus should not be on what has gone wrong, but what can we change to make it successful. Small steps forward are successes and big success will not happen overnight.

Balloon Bash

Pool noodles are a cheap and flexible tool for creating some great games for your leadership group. This energizer exercise is from the book “50 Ways to Use Your Noodle” and games like this will leave your group foaming at the mouth for more.

Group size: 6 to 16 players

Time: 10 to 20 minutes a game, split into quarters or halves

Props: one noodle per player

Preparation: choose a center line and two end lines equally distant from the center line (a basketball court is ideal)

Objective: teams try to move a balloon across their opponent’s back line for points.

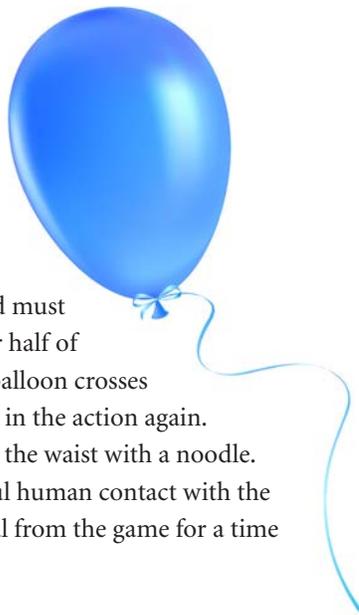
Instructions: Creatively divide the team in half. Give each player a noodle. It is helpful for team members to have like-coloured noodles. Teams line up on the end line they plan to defend. One player from each team starts at the center line for the drop-off. After the two center players slap their noodles on the ground three times together, the referee drops the balloon down between them to start play. Once the balloon is in play all players are free to move around the playing field.

Teams play to knock the balloon past the end line of their opposing team. The balloon must also make contact with the floor behind the line in order to count as a point. When the point is scored, the balloon comes back to the center for another drop-off.

Only the noodle may come in contact with the balloon. Any other incidental contact with the balloon will result in a half-court foul. The player who is fouled must proceed immediately across the center line to the other half of the playing area. This player must stay there until the balloon crosses back over the center line. Then he/she can get involved in the action again.

At no time may a player strike another player above the waist with a noodle. If this occurs, a half-court foul is called. Any purposeful human contact with the noodles (eg. grabbing or stealing) will result in removal from the game for a time to be determined by the referee.

50 Ways to Use your Noodle is available along with other team-building resources online at the CASAA store: casaa.myshopify.com



“Here is the test to find whether your mission on earth is finished: If you’re alive, it isn’t.”

Richard Bach

VALENTINE CONNECTIONS

Do you remember when everyone got Valentines in Kindergarten? The Sr. Leadership Class at St. Patrick’s High School in Quebec City realized that no one really wants to admit that they want to get a Valentine, but it’s a great connection builder. So they created their Valentine’s Day Project.

Each member adopted a home-room and sent them all the themed Valentines from their youth. Class lists were provided along with the teaching and support staff list. On the morning of Valentines Day, it was a flurry of Scooby Doo, Star Wars and Barbie Valentines and it was a HUGE hit.

You know it was a big connection because many Valentines were still taped inside lockers at the end of June.



Canada Cares

Living in Canada, we often become so immersed in our own busy lives that we sometimes forget to take a step back and look at our world through a different perspective. Our fast-paced lifestyle and career-oriented society have limited our field of vision to only satisfying our daily wants and needs.



However, in 2009, a student at Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School named David Zhang set out to turn his school and local community's attention to the global issue of child poverty. David was only 12 years old when he visited a poverty-stricken rural village in the mountains of southern China. Seeing the poverty firsthand was truly a shell-shocking experience for him. After returning from China, the stark contrast between the two worlds inspired him to take action and in Grade 9 with his piano scholarships, David founded Canada Cares, a non-profit organization which raises funds for underprivileged children.



Today, Canada Cares is currently helping the dilapidated Hua Yuan Third Middle School located in Hunan Province, China. Their mission statement is "Students helping students to eliminate child poverty through education, one dollar at a time." Canada Cares itself first started out small with David visiting classrooms, presenting on the issue of child poverty and collecting donations. Being a pianist, he soon decided to donate his musical skills and organized a fundraising concert. Gradually the annual concert has expanded to feature musicians, dancers, rappers and singers from across the region. David has also organized fundraising BBQs and Canada Cares wristband awareness campaigns to get more people in the Waterloo Region involved and connected with the cause.



Over three years, Canada Cares has aided the poverty-stricken school and their students through raising \$10,000 towards purchasing hundreds of sets of new tables and chairs, school supplies, library books, sports equipment, and a new heavy-duty photocopying machine. Canada Cares has received strong support from the Kitchener-Waterloo community with over 1000 participants and donors, including that of local dignitaries such as MP Peter Braid, MPP Elizabeth Witmer, and Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran. Canada Cares' outreach is growing from a local initiative into a global action. This year, several high schools in China started fundraising and supporting Canada Cares as well. Canada Cares also opened David's eyes to the stark reality that poverty is a prominent issue in Waterloo Region as well. Since then, David has organized a food drive and incorporated fundraising into his Co-Prime Minister election campaign, raising over 5000 food items and over \$350 for SJAM's Nutrition for Learning Program. Starting in 2012, Canada Cares will begin to support local underprivileged students through the Nutrition for Learning Program.

Throughout the fundraising process, David has been asked why Canada Cares is starting out by helping China, a nation with one of the fastest growing economies in the world and his response was that, “Yes, China’s newfound wealth is apparent. However, despite the growth, the overall development across the country is not even, resulting in over 150 million people still living in poverty today. That’s nearly 5 times the population of Canada.”

Looking back, Canada Cares has had long-lasting impacts both in China and Canada. It not only provided the Chinese students tables to sit at and books to read, but also raised awareness of the global issue of child poverty. Canada Cares brought the issue to the attention of the local Chinese government and they have promised to renovate the school. Since then, ground has already been broken and construction of the new school is expected to be completed by 2012. Mr. Zheng Qing Wu, the principal of Hua Yuan Third Middle School in a thank-you letter wrote that “We will teach our students to be kind and caring like you, and we will encourage our teachers and staff to be kind and caring to our students.” In Canada, Canada Cares has nurtured a heightened sense of social responsibility, and inspired kids of all ages to believe in themselves that they can make a difference in the world. Over the years, Canada Cares has brought the community together towards a common goal of eliminating child poverty.



After reminiscing on his childhood and upbringing, David firmly believes that “our parents, family, and community are our greatest influences in life.” Throughout this journey, David’s community has encouraged and supported him every step of the way. “I wouldn’t be who I am today without their encouragement and inspiration. I am just so blessed and fortunate to live in this great community and country,” said David.

But at the end of the day, David still attributes his actions and initiative to his community: “My community gave me so much. Now, it’s time for me to give back. Like Leo Tolstoy once said, ‘Life is a place of service. Joy can be real only if people look upon their life as a service and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness.’”

A teacher’s perspective
Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School, Waterloo, Ontario

You can contact David on Facebook at Canada Cares



“The liar’s punishment is not in the least that he is not believed, but that he cannot believe anyone else.”

George Bernard Shaw

GOAL SETTING TUNE-UP

Goals are the big things in life that you want to achieve. The things that you *have* to do, such as dentist appointments or completing a major assignment are part of the everyday requirements of your life: they are not goals. Delete things that you have to do daily from your goal list.

Review your goals at least every six months. You should question whether you are making steps towards these goals or are they becoming irrelevant. Don’t be afraid to change your goals, because life changes and you must adapt with it.

Make sure your goals are clearly written with specific and measurable language. Don’t be afraid to refocus your goals because of new information or skills that you have achieved.

Goals should be the things you really want and not things that someone else has told you to have. These are your dreams, so make the steps towards these goals achievable by you.

GPS Leadership

People don’t follow leaders by accident. Even when a group is totally lost, they won’t follow someone who is weaker than them even though this person claims to be the leader. John C. Maxell states that “people who are an 8 in leadership don’t look for a 6 to follow—they naturally follow a 9 or 10. The less skilled follow the more highly skilled and gifted.” You can be the gifted leader by mapping these leadership skills into your travels.



How to be the GPS student leader:

Setting out: Have a vision or goal that makes sense and requires your leadership to attain it. Clearly communicate this goal to your followers: lay out the map of where you are and where you want to get to. This goal must be within reach of the skills of the group and it should not be something the group can achieve without you. If it is too far beyond their ability to see, the group will abandon the project along the way. They do this by not showing up for meetings and not completing the assigned tasks.

Clearing the way: “Bravely go where no student leader has gone before.” Followers have hope when you show courage and approach difficult tasks with bravery. Student leaders approach the administration with their plans and clear the way for others to follow. They make the route to the goal easier because of their courage and organization.

Treats for the crew: Understand that respect given is respect earned. When you respect the time and commitment of others in your group, you will receive this respect back. Followers will stay in the trail you have broken when you recognize their efforts. This must be done during the journey to the goal, or upon arrival, many leaders have turned around to compliment their followers to find that nobody followed them.

Stow the gear: The GPS leader is there to the very end. They are not off on another adventure while their followers put away the chairs or sweep the floor. When you have your next destination in mind, followers remember that they were left holding the garbage bag while the leader went home to something “more important.” Loyalty to the group is the most visible aspect of respect. The leader demonstrates his or her loyalty to the cause by sticking with the team until the whole job is done.

Success breeds belief: When you have successfully taken your group to a challenging destination, they will believe that they can achieve it again. Your followers will convince others to join and travel with you because they want to be part of success. Many people did not follow you the first time and stood on the sidelines, but don’t be afraid to approach them the next time. Everyone wants to travel with a winner.

Don’t be a man: Some men do not ask for directions. They are unwilling to admit that someone might be able to help them out of their predicament. This is where your advisor comes in: don’t be afraid to ask for directions before you get totally lost.

Many promising events don’t happen because the leader expected the followers to know the way. You are called a leader because it is your job to map out the path and lead your team to the final destination. There may be obstacles in your way, but a good leader helps the group through or around those detours and is the reliable GPS that will be counted upon next time.

We Can Change

Young Canadians between the ages of 18 and 24 want to engage politically. As a group, they often eagerly get involved in environmental issues and other challenges that affect them directly. Certainly, when world or local events interest them, they can become deeply engaged. And yet voter turnout of this same demographic is the lowest in the country. What's going on?

One issue is agency. Young people turn towards institutions that reflect their concerns – and are likely to ignore or abandon those that don't. Conventional political parties can be too large to use their input or participation. Yet grass roots organizations can fail them as well, leaving them feeling insulated and marginalized.

The good news is that social media is revolutionizing politics – and campaigns in particular. Once they depended on ads run in traditional media such as newspapers or television. Today, anyone can create an effective campaign using popular online resources such as NationBuilder, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, blogs and Mailchimp. These devices help get the word out, drawing people to rallies or to sign online petitions and encouraging them to share their views. Creating a resource kit and online training manual for using these strategies is on the horizon for CASAA. No other organization can deploy this kind of campaign toolkit as effectively as CASAA.

More to the point, however, is that these practices will be rolled out through a new prototype of community engagement called We Can Change, which is an outgrowth of the student council model. Student council, where students vote for representatives to plan events and engage students on high school issues, is a practice ground for political engagement in the larger world. While We Can Change retains the overall structure of student council, its objective is to create a dialogue between members of the community at large and the student body on issues that concern them both. The idea is to prompt full-fledged campaigns run and led by council members in collaboration with community leaders. These campaigns could range from a fund drive for local projects to raising awareness over a global uprising or catastrophe.

At CASAA, we believe the future is coming sooner than we think . . . and we need to be ready. That calls for innovative institutions and forms of engagement. What's more, these institutions need to work across generations, since today's youth will ultimately 'take the reins.' We can make that happen by building opportunities for students to connect with citizens of every political stripe through campaigns that matter.

CASAA has decades of contact with student advisers and councils across Canada and we are already implementing these changes in 14 pilot projects. But we've only just begun. Won't you join us in this exciting enterprise?



“Don't be afraid to take a big step. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps.”

David Lloyd George

CASAA MEMBERSHIP

A CASAA membership keeps your school connected to a full network of active advisors throughout the country as well as providing you discounts for resources and activity supplies. CASAA also provides year-long support for the member advisors through regular electronic e-bulletins. Your school membership supports CASAA's leadership initiatives for students and advisors across Canada.

As a member you can also participate in the advisor certification process. In the Level 1 workshop, basic elements of running a leadership/activity program will be covered as well as an overview of the resources available to advisors. This is the beginning of the 3-level certification process hosted by CASAA at leadership conferences. Advisors will be able to enhance their present leadership skills and learn about new ideas and resources that will improve their school programs.

Membership information is available on the CASAA website under the *Join* tab and in the new *Advisor Resource Inventory* section under the *Advisor* tab. Visit www.casaaleadership.ca to learn more and register as a member.

“There is no exception to the rule that every rule has an exception.”

James Thurber

Above and Beyond

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To learn more about membership, go to www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html

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Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors

Resources

Be sure to visit the CASAA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas and a complete list of resources.
casaaleadership.ca



Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors

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www.friesens.com/yearbook

Passionate about Politics?

The *Forum for Young Canadians* is Canada's premier civic education learning opportunity for high school students from across Canada who spend a week in Ottawa learning about decision-making from power brokers on Parliament Hill and other dynamic young leaders.

Each year, dynamic young leaders from across Canada come to Ottawa to spend a week with their peers on Parliament Hill to discuss the pressing issues of the day and learn about the decision-making process from the people that make them: Senators, Members of Parliament, Senior Public Servants and others.

Young leaders who have distinguished themselves by their curiosity, interest in politics and desire to help others are great candidates for this program. About 120 young leaders gather for each session with simulations, discussions and outstanding speakers.

Applications are being accepted now; ensure that students from your school have the opportunity to:

- gain a better understanding of the national decision-making process in Canada;
- acquire tools for community engagement when they return home;
- enhance their leadership and second official language skills;
- network with other youth from across the country;
- travel to Ottawa and experience the richness of Parliament Hill;
- live a rewarding, exceptional and memorable learning experience.

The cost of participation is \$895 and includes:

- travel to and from Ottawa;
- accommodation and meals walking distance from Parliament Hill;
- attendance at the MP Dinner, Senate's Breakfast and all other events;
- all session materials and program support.

Bursaries are available on the Forum website.

Visit the Forum Website (www.forum.ca) for program dates and information.

