



Leadership Visions

American University
Leadership Program Newsletter

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A Note from Dr. Sarah Stiles, Director

This has been a very important semester for the program. Student Director Amy Quemore has been instrumental in re-organizing the committee structure to ensure greater "ownership" of the program by the students in it. The committee chairs have taken their responsibilities seriously with awesome results -- as you will read in this newsletter. The spirit of unity and camaraderie has never been stronger among the classes, and this foreshadows a vibrant and connected alumni network for the future.

For the first time we have a Leadership alumna as a graduate assistant. Lenora Stiles has worked closely with me to incorporate improvements into the curriculum based on the needs and desires of the students. For the third year in a row, 3 of the 4 Truman Scholarship nominees are Leadership students. We are all rooting for Jackie Ingber, Lacey Rosenbaum, and Janice Smith as they embark on this grueling competition.

I don't know how I could be more proud of my students. I hope you enjoy reading about their accomplishments.

Working Together Brings Fall 2004 Semester Success

By Amy Quemore, Student Director

As Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." I cannot think of more fitting words to describe our accomplishments as a program this past semester. In August we came together to develop a structure that would enable the program to learn new lessons in practical leadership.

We have stayed together in order to achieve our goals, and we have succeeded because we have worked as a team. I could not be more proud of the Steering Committee in how they have handled themselves and their committees. They have empowered the students of the program to come together to work on common goals and have laid the foundation for fantastic things to come. The students of the program have also impressed me this semester. With all the work that they have done, for both their class projects and the program, everyone deserves enormous congratulations. Their hard work and dedication has certainly paid off and will continue to do so over the coming semester.

As everyone knows, I will be stepping down from my position as Assistant Director of the Program; however, I am thrilled with the quality of applicants who have applied to take over the position. I know that a talented, dedicated, and ambitious person will be leading the charge next semester, and with the teamwork I have seen these past few months I can only imagine what will be accomplished. Thank you for a fantastic semester and I look forward to seeing you all in the fall of 2005! Good Luck!

Freshman class kicks year off with annual retreat

By Amy Teachout, '08

Thirty-five fabulous freshmen. Five Sophomore TAs. Three faithful side kicks to help chauffeur. And of course, Professor Stiles. With high spirits in the face of menacing weather, the 4th Annual Freshmen Leadership Retreat was held at Shepard's Spring, MD during the third weekend of September.

A visit to the historical Antietam battleground was the center piece of the trip and aptly scheduled on 142nd anniversary of the battle of Antietam, the bloodiest battle in the Civil War. Freshmen visit this site every year as a complement to reading Donald T Phillip's *Lincoln on Leadership*. Students enjoyed the historical aspects of the visit. Freshman Adi Vecchio remarks, "When we walked onto the battleground, everyone was silent and respectful. It was almost like hallowed ground... made holy by the men whose courage defended and reformed our country."

Team building and leadership activities filled the remainder of the trip. Student Kate Willcox describes her favorite exercise in which students had to build Professor Stiles and the TA's out of objects that could fit into a pillowcase (pictured right). "Not only was it an incredibly funny project," Kate Willcox recalled, "but it really helped me to get to know people in the class and work effectively with them." Freshmen also received personality assessment results previously taken in class and then took part in activities to illuminate how their personality traits translate into different communication methods, leadership styles, and even career paths.

Stacia Young says, "It was great just to get to know everyone better...sitting by the fire every night and interacting with people that I really didn't know before was awesome!" The efforts of the TAs, as well as Professor Stiles, Jen Arver, Alonit Cohen, and TD Smyers are appreciated by the Freshmen class.

An unofficial highlight of the trip included the class of 2008 and the TA's intense game of charades featuring words such as *primogeniture* and *thermodynamics*. The entirety of the retreat was an opportunity for the freshmen to break the ice - both among each other and as first-years in a four-year program.



(Top) The freshman students pose in accordance with their discovered leadership styles – from the commanding lion to the meditative owl.
 (Bottom) The sophomore TA's Heather Botter, Anthon Tellish, Paul Perry, Jen Smyers and Brian Brown and freshman Will McGahan pose with a creatively constructed Professor Stiles.

The Following Leadership Students will be Abroad Next Semester

Rome: Mark Pavlick, Craig Swiecki

Australia: Matt Bailly, Holly Phillips

Prague: Jackie Ingber, Amy Quemore

Beijing: Lacey Rosenbaum

Brussels: Danny Guarnera



Dr. Sarah Stiles appears on the Kojo Nnamdi Show

By James Misner, '07

SPA Leadership Program Director, Dr. Sarah Stiles appeared as a guest on the Kojo Nnamdi Show on 88.5 WAMU on Thursday, October 14th. She appeared alongside guests Barbra Kellerman of Harvard University author of "Bad Leadership: What it is, How it Happens, Why it Matters" and Carnes Lord, Professor of Strategy at the Naval War College, and author of "The Modern Prince: What Leaders Need to Know Now." As the director of the SPA leadership program Stiles used the curtain of the 2004 presidential election to discuss the qualities of a leader. She discussed the differences between skills and abilities and how abilities are inherent at birth while skills, however, can be taught. This is one of the main tenets of the leadership program. Each member has many abilities, but the Leadership Program takes those abilities and adds to them skills that are necessary for effective leadership. In the course of the interview Stiles mentioned other characteristics necessary for effective leadership: honesty, honor, self-awareness and most importantly, according to Stiles, humility. It is her vision as the director of this program to instill these traits into her students so that they can add them to their abilities and lead in their respective ways. The radio forum proved to be an interesting discussion of what makes an effective leader within the political realm.



Professor Stiles speaks to Kojo Nnamdi on the tenets of effective leadership (provided by *the American Weekly*).

Freshman Homelessness Group Raises \$1250 in Walkathon

By Ashley Mushnick '07



Freshman class members walk against homelessness around the National Mall. (picture provided by Paul Perry)

The Homelessness Group, one of the five community service groups that make up the freshman class, recently raised \$1250 as part of the "Help the Homeless Walkathon," organized by the National Coalition for the Homeless as well as other metro area groups that confront the homelessness problem in Washington, DC. The group walked the 5k around the National Mall in this unique chance to speak out their community service issue. The event was sponsored by the Fannie Mae Corporation, however, other participants had friends and family sponsor them with money as well. Heather Botter, the TA of the group, stated, "the students have proven once again that the desire to help truly motivates this class. As a TA, I am very proud of them." The Homelessness Group's success in this event is surely just a preview of what is to come within the remainder of the year.

**Juniors Wet their Feet
in Internships**

Gordon Fletcher	Senator John Kerry's Office
VJ Thompson	NAACP
Will Mount	US Department of Justice, International Prisoner Transfer Unit
Nima Fazeli	Williams and Connely LLP
Lauren Walls	NASA
Josh Hart	DC Pretrial/Supreme Court
Mark Pavlic	US Attys Office
Ashely Futrell	US Department of Justice
Graham Gawrysiak	Freedom Works
Jessica Armijo	The White House
Jacquelin Ingber	Title II Community AIDS National Network
Fari Fouladi	Academy for Educational Development
Lacey Rosenbaum	US Dept of Education
Holly Phillips	Office of Presidential Correspondence
Amy Quemore	Levick Strategic Communications
Anthony Valdez	Office of James Carville
Craig Swiecki	Socas for Congress 2004
Brad Bradbury	PodestaMattoon

Internship Leadership Lessons

By Richard Bradbury '06

My Junior year Leadership internship has found me in an unlikely place; a lobbying firm. Having come into Washington and Political Science with aspirations of being a Hill-dweller, I was unsure as to what I would learn from my private-sector colleagues. Although I did not expect it, I soon found a number of unintended lessons being taught about Washington as a whole, but also about how leaders function therein.

One of my many conversations with the intern coordinator recently revolved around the personnel aspect of the Firm; who the major players are, how they got there, and so forth. Interestingly enough, I learned that Professor Stiles' adage of how "leadership is relationship" rings true in the workplace. Particularly in a lobbying firm where relationships are essential and good relationships are worth their weight in gold, I realized that if one is unable to relate to (in this case) a Member of Congress in some way, then their effectiveness and ability falls dramatically, irrespective of their intellectual prowess or strategic savvy. Further, the leaders in the Firm are those whose relationships – with individuals, with issues, with political parties – stretch back decades, and have been carefully well-maintained and refined.

Similar to this first lesson, I soon found another to be true. Just as political felicity is second to relationship; it is also an ancillary component to simple hard work. Although conventional wisdom tell us of the value and strength of having hard workers in charge, being at my internship has given me a first-hand example of the validity of this concept in action. Recently, a new Partner came to the firm with excellent credentials but who was an unknown quantity. Thus, while not necessarily skeptical, other members of the Firm were unsure as to how she would be able to perform. Now, six months later she is one of the most prolific Partners, and has attracted several promising new clients. Was this the result of credentials? Hardly – it was the appropriate result of working hard, getting her message out, and being known as a dedicated member of the Firm.



Junior Anthony Valdez stands with James Carville. This internship marked Anthony's year and a half stay at the office of James Carville.

SPA Leadership Hosts Navy Captain Michael Abrashoff

By Daniel Greeley, '08

On October 4th, 2004, the School of Public Affairs' Leadership Program hosted its first event of the year in the SIS Lounge. Captain Abrashoff, the author of *It's Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy*, came to speak to the American University student body, but especially for the sophomores in the Leadership Program. Part of the curriculum for the sophomores this year was to read his renowned book about leadership. Captain Abrashoff talked about the leadership skills he used to turn the USS Benfold around. The ship went from being almost the worst ship in the Navy— one failing most of the Navy's maintenance tests—to the best ship in the Navy— one able to outscore the admiral's ship in the gunnery tests. With over seventy people in attendance, the event had impressive turnout. As the Leadership Program's motto goes "Leadership is Relationship," this central theme was discussed throughout Captain Abrashoff's talk. When he was appointed to command the USS Benfold, the ship was failing tremendously. Unlike many corporate employers, Captain Abrashoff could not hire or fire his subordinates.



Captain Abrashoff spoke to a full house in the SIS Lounge.

After targeting the troubled spots, Captain Abrashoff built trust between his crewmembers and himself. Upon talking to the crewmembers, he learned that they did not feel respected, and that they did not feel like they were making a difference. Captain Abrashoff had to motivate his crew, with an average age of about 24, by allowing them to provide ideas on ways to run the ship better, noting that sometimes

the people under you are smarter and more creative than you. He also had to explain to the crew that "their own personal security was at stake." If the USS Benfold was not battle ready for an emergency situation in the Persian Gulf, then a loss of human life might occur, therefore, teamwork was crucial. Abrashoff explained how if all you have to motivate people is money, then you, as a leader, are doing something wrong. "Communication is a great part of becoming a leader," said Captain Abrashoff. Captain Abrashoff shared an interesting perspective on how the manner in which you treat and communicate with your subordinates can affect your leadership. Professor Sarah Stiles, the Director of the Leadership Program, said "Captain Abrashoff gave us lessons that we could take away and use...These lessons have to do with empowerment."



Pictured above: Programming Chair Brian Brown, Dr. Sarah Stiles, Captain Abrashoff, Republican Congressional Candidate Michael Degrosso, and Justin Meyer, campaign manager for Degrosso.

Justin Meyer, the class of 2005, who invited him to come speak at American University. The Programming

Committee also arranged a wonderful event that certainly made the Captain feel welcomed. "It feels pretty darn good to be here," he remarked. He also announced that in January of 2005, a follow-up book called *Get Your Ship Together* will be released. For more information about Captain Abrashoff, and his works, please visit the Washington Speaker's Bureau website at www.washingtonspeakers.com

Sophomore Mentor Program Kicks off with Reception

by Charlie Biscotto, '08

On Thursday, September 23rd, the School of Public Affairs Leadership Program hosted a reception to kick off its first ever Mentorship Program for its sophomore students. This program pairs up students in the sophomore class with DC professionals that work for a variety of organizations, law firms, and political offices. The program brought mentors to campus such as Shin Inouye, a legislative media liason for the American Civil Liberties Union, Bradford Cheney, the assistant to the chief of staff in Senator Clinton's office, and David Cleveland, an immigration lawyer for Catholic Charities. Both the DC professionals and the students in attendance praised the well-planned event. The event was truly a team effort for for freshmen Leadership students served food and played piano to entertain the guests.

Students Leslie Colwell and Amy Quemore planned reception and the mentor program itself. Quemore saw an opportunity for Leadership to expand into the community and knew this would be a particularly effective way to do it. She remarked, "The Mentor Program was designed to help our students start networking with professionals in the DC area. It is exciting to see these new relationships start to form."

The Mentor Program is very emblematic of one of SPA Leadership's mottoes, "Leadership is relationship." It creates a relationship between our undergraduate students and distinguished leaders in the professional community. This will give the sophomores involved a chance to meet with their mentor 2-3 times per semester and learn about the potential career opportunities that greet them at the end of their stay at American University.

Sophomore Leslie Colwell, director of the Mentor Program, said that she felt the reception was "very effective at establishing a positive relationship between the students and their mentors." The Leadership Program saw the reception was a tremendous success and the start of a partnership with the DC community that will last for years to come. The mentors walked away with a very positive view of the Mentor Program, and an even more positive view of the caliber of the students involved with the SPA Leadership Program and American University.



Jenna Briggs sits with her mentor, Richard Wells, of the organization America's Promise.

Students Attend Forensics Presentation at Walter Reed Medical Center

By Jen Smyers '07 and Tai Spargo '08

The first official, issue-based outing of the freshman leadership took place at the Walter Reed Medical Center's Museum of Health and Medicine. On October 30th, National Forensic's Day, a group of freshmen and sophomore leadership students attended a presentation and simulation on forensics. Students participated in mock experiments based from where forensic science is used, such as in murder cases, unknown deaths, and prosthetics.

The outing was extremely insightful. The morning sessions included presentations on how to identify a murder victim and then an opportunity to put those tools into use and identify a victim through the skills that had been learned in the previous sessions. These

included identifying the gender via hip structure, identifying the age by bone analysis, and using other tools to identify the victim. Students also had the opportunity to browse the museum in the morning, which included an exhibit on the different prosthetic technologies that have developed since the Civil War. Wax molds of Abraham Lincoln's hands and face were on display, as well as descriptions of Lincoln's assassination and soldiers' injuries from civil war. In the afternoon the various speakers further discussed the techniques used in the forensics field, especially when identifying and studying bones that are found.

The outing was a definite educational success as it allowed students to about a field many justice and political science majors pursue and study. Walter Reed is an amazing medical source for military men and women, and doctors there are pioneers in prosthetics, post-war psychology, and bringing medical necessities and hospital equipment to the battlefield.

The 2004 Election Season and How Leadership Students took a Stand

By Stella Roque, '07

On campuses across America, including American University, students showed their own support for their candidates of choice during the intense 2004 election season. Signs posted on dormitory windows made it clear that students knew who they wanted to take the White House in 2004. At AU, Students of the SPA Leadership Program proved to be some of the most involved students on campus, as they participated in campaign work and voiced strong opinions.

Greg Wasserstrom, a sophomore in the SPA Leadership Program, serves as President of the AU College Democrats. Many have opined that his slick hairstyle is reminiscent of John Kerry's own back in college. During this year's Presidential race, Greg helped send AU students on campaign trips across America in order to support presidential candidate John Kerry. When asked about his greatest accomplishment during the election season he said, "It would most likely have to be the election night party. Dozens of people worked all night for several days to assemble decorations, a live electoral map, homemade as well as store-bought catered food, and two enormous balloon drops. Even though we lost we still threw a killer party." He also explained that the experience taught him a lot about leadership. "I feel that this is an experience I will remember for the rest of my life because I got to play a key organizational role on the AU campus during what I'm confident will be remembered as the most pivotal election in modern American history," he said. Ashley Mushnick, another sophomore, spent this past semester working as Director of Communications for Students for Kerry. "I learned a lot about visionary leadership," she said. "The club was all about getting the campus mobilized enthusiastically behind the vision of electing John Kerry for President."

On the other side of the political spectrum, Justin Meyer, an AU College Republican was also on the scene this Election Season. During the 2004 Primary Season he managed a U.S. Congressional Campaign in the 9th District of Pennsylvania for Republican Michael DelGrosso, an AU alum. When asked what his greatest accomplishment during his involvement was Justin replied, "Being the second youngest U.S. Congressional campaign manager was not only one of the biggest leadership challenges that I faced, but it was a huge accomplishment, because we beat every expectation laid before us," Unfortunately, though Justin did not win his race, he certainly impressed many. "Simply being young entitled me to more doubters that supporters, and proving to people who were two to three times my age that I was capable, was a huge accomplishment," he said, "I often times drew upon what I learned in the Leadership Program to help resolve conflicts among staff, volunteers, and donors... But the most valuable things I learned about leadership were from my candidate, Michael DelGrosso, who really exemplified the qualities of leadership that I've studied for the past four years." During the election season, Justin worked as an associate consultant with Carlyle-Gregory to secure Republican victories in Congress.

Dave Levine, also one of Leadership's sophomores, volunteered work for Congressional campaigns over the summer and landed a paid position for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee that outlasts the election. Several other leadership students, such as Leah Fulner, Alonit Cohen, and Leslie Colwell, participated in campaign activities by traveling to Florida to canvass.

Student involvement was crucial this year in helping to rally voters to the poles, and youth voting had record turnout this year. Students in the SPA Leadership Program definitely proved to be some of the most involved and motivated young people out there during the 2004 election season.



Ben Murray, Paul Perry, Leslie Colwell, and Dan Guarnera attend a Kerry fundraiser at the Hawk and Dove. (Photo provided by Ben Murray)

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