108
Raising the Stakes
Largest Year So Far

PHILMONT OR BUST
SUMMIT OR BUST
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TRAINING IS SPREADING
The walks to the Dining Hall at Camp William B. Snyder, the camp where the Leadership Academy course was held this year and will continue to be held in the years ahead, as well as Camp Beaumont at St. Louis, Missouri, were filled with songs, cheers, and no silent pauses. After sharing a prayer before each daily meal, there was not a period of time where someone was not being darted (frozen by blowing a “poison dart”), moosed (signaling someone to get into a pushup position and shout “moose” as loud as he or she could), or offered a duck; and that was the Participating Staff.

During one of the most important nights of the week-long course, the Leadership Academy Staph was attacked by a stampede of these same Participating Staffers. The Leadership Academy Staphers received hugs from more people than they could count, giving them a bigger sense of gratitude for the Participating Staffers and sense of accomplishment than they could ever ask for. The day after, each Patrol Mentor witnessed presentations from the Participating Staff that few words could describe.

As Week One concluded and the Leadership Academy had just shared their farewells with the largest group of participants they had ever given a course to, they were more than ready for Week Two to begin.

With Week One having given each Leadership Academy Staph member an even stronger skill set, since they are individuals willing to always learn and improve, whether it was a Youth Stapher or an Adult Stapher, each was ready to give a course that would be as fantastic as the one they had just given.

Having greeted the new course with blow-up Spongebob dolls, wigs of every color, plungers, and a giraffe named “Thundah,” the Staph aimed to have a Registration that was just as exciting as the first, even if it meant a smaller group of Participating Staffers.

After a successful round of Registration, the days began passing quickly... but the energy and enthusiasm grew twice as fast. The Leadership Academy became filled with new songs, from the Burrito Song to the Rooster song, to songs that were a “kinda-repeat-after-me songs,” and also sounded songs that were traditionally sung each year.

Hike day was a fast-paced day, as the NYLT Leadership Academy members, staffing or participating, spread their energy throughout the entire National Mall. Tourists and regular visitors of the National Mall could only stand in awe and see the quality of the presentations given, the bravery of the presenters, and the spark each of them carried with them.

The week ended with a group of Participant Staffers who had witnessed an all-out battle of the Morning Assembly characters, who had gone through marriages, made Mac and Cheese, learned a few crucial lessons in Self-Defence (brought to them by the NBA [Never Been Attacked]), and gave a very excited man in a banana costume “a little more cowbell.”
Even more importantly, the Participating Staffers, from not only the second week but the first, as well, learned more about NYLT content and themselves as leaders, and are now enabled to bring all their knowledge back to their home courses and change more lives than ever.

So, having received 108 participants in total, and having possibly given the best course the NYLT Leadership Academy has given so far, the anticipation for what will be happening for next year’s Leadership Academy course is growing; and barely a month has passed since what was the 2014 course happened.

As the Leadership Academy moves on and prepares for another action-packed year, it is still in its hope, although it is quite reassured, that the Participating Staff of 2014, all 108 of them, share the new skills they have learned and inspire others to grow and develop as they have. The world now has 108 enabled Scouts and Venturers capable of things one would have to see to believe.

Looking toward 2015, the Leadership Academy will be more ready than ever to receive as much Participating Youth Staff as old and new councils send. Whether they live closest to St. Louis or Washington, D.C., or as far away as California or Puerto Rico... Be our guest, Staffers. Be our guest.

"The experience that I had at NYLT Academy for very beneficial. Since I have attended NYLT Academy I have been able to return to my own NYLT course and use the skills and knowledge that I have learned and apply them to my own NYLT. To be specific I use PPF’s to help individualize and personalize presentations to make it more interesting for the attendees. So I have used some of the games that I had never seen before and had played for the first time at NYLT Academy my own NYLT and I’ve got nothing but great reviews from it and the purchase pens absolutely loved it after all the course is all about the participants."

– Samuel S., Abraham Lincoln Council, 2014 Week One

Philmont or Bust

Patricia Hernandez – Copy Editor

CIMARRON, NM – As week two of Leadership Academy was wrapping up, Logan Echard (Pennsylvania Dutch Council), Brenna Leary (Baltimore Area Council), Keenan Shields (Seneca Waterways Council), and Mr. Doug Cunningham (Seneca Waterways Council) had to say their goodbyes and travel to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Echard, Leary, Shields, and Cunningham arrived there to lead a conference titled “Building Youth-Led Units.” The main vision of this conference was to teach a group of adults how to help youth gain new skills by developing a stronger sense of youth leadership, and enabling the learning process of the youth as they are encouraged to lead. “Empowering youth is important in allowing them [the youth] to fully learn and grow. Youth learn by actually doing, as well as teaching others,” states Echard on the importance of Youth-Led units.

“I think this [the youth-led concept] is important because youth-led units are strong and fun and help the BSA grow, which is sorely needed,” shares Mr. Cunningham. “Our vision was to enable adults to step back and let the youth run their own units. That doesn’t mean [the adults] do nothing, but it does mean to mentor the youth to accomplish what they want, not what the adults want.”

Echard, Leary and Shields taught a group of 18 adults who ranged from being Assistant Scoutmasters to Council Training Chairs. Echard states how the diversity of their team and their “different skill sets helped in their learning process and in the development of the program and their knowledge throughout the week.”

“Topics included living the patrol method, and how adults can best partner with youth to create successful youth-led units,” shares Leary. The class given involved a mix of teaching and problem solving, encouraging the participation of the attendees and meeting the needs they expressed. “We reevaluated the needs of the group each night and...
changed what we taught the next day to meet their needs, which is why I think the course was a huge success,” Echard shared. “They [the adults] were all very intelligent and invested in the content,” says Leary. “We decided to go in depth in all the sessions. They had a good idea about all the topics in a general sense, so we pushed them to think about the new content in new ways and form new perspectives.”

As with any course given, challenges are faced. As part of teaching how to build youth-led units, Echard, Leary and Shields, all of them being youth, were the ones to give this class and model to the adults why having youth-led units would be beneficial to their troops, councils, and other groups of youth they were leading within the BSA. “The main challenge was for the adults to buy into being taught by youth. Most thought they were coming to be taught by other adults, but they quickly realized the youth [Echard, Leary and Shields] would be teaching the course,” shares Echard.

“I don’t think that the BSA training teaches adults how to let youth lead,” shares Mr. Cunningham. “Scoutmaster Specific and Wood Badge [trainings] don’t. I have been floating this idea with many national people in my head for almost a decade, so when Gary Schroeder (Week 7 - Conference Chair) had to run a week at the PTC (Philmont Training Center), he let us try and fill the gap.”

As Echard and Leary had shared, though, the course was molded to meet the needs of the adults constantly. This resulted in the success of the program, leaving the adults with the enthusiasm to continue to learn about what they had just been taught. “We closed the week by having the attendees create a commitment ceremony and had the commitment at the now closed Rocky Mountain Scout Camp, the former location for the National Junior Leader Instructor Course (NJLIC). The ‘Building Youth-Led Units’ attendees are now ready to change lives,” shares Echard.

The NJLIC was the predecessor course to the NYLT Leadership Academy course, which is held at Camp William B. Snyder in Haymarket, Virginia. The course will also be held at Camp Beaumont in St. Louis, Missouri for the first time in 2015.

Hopefully, more youth and adults will be inspired by the great work Logan Echard, Brenna Leary, and Keenan Shields have put in to help these adults gain greater skills within youth-led content. We also hope Mr. Schroeder and Mr. Cunningham’s beliefs in this method of youth development will spread and help to empower the leaders of tomorrow, as well as the new beliefs of the adults that have been impacted by this course.

Our youth are changing the world, and now that the adults will be there to help and encourage them, the world will be a better place.
HAYMARKET, VA - This year, the NYLT Leadership Academy welcomed two troops during the first week of course. The Salad Troop, led by Catie McEntee, and the Soup Troop, led by Andrew King. McEntee and King worked as the Leadership Academy's two Senior Patrol Leaders for the first week. Although these troops were separate during some activities, which included the first part of the Morning Assembly, the Realistic First Aid (RFA) activity, and the Geocaching challenge; both worked together to create one big family composed of energetic and knowledgeable leaders by the end of Week One.

The week was full of constant activities, all meant for the development of the Participating Staffers. “It [the NYLT Leadership Academy course] was an intense, fun, and exciting experience. There wasn’t a time when something wasn’t going on,” shares Joseph C. (Chief Seattle Council) from the Soup Troop. “I learned tons of new skills, like hooks, RFA tips and tricks, evaluations, new games, [and] how to speak in front of someone that you have never met.”

The course offered learning opportunities for the Participating Staff, many of which involved how to improve their home NYLT courses by including new activities and improving the activities they already carry out. Many of these new ideas and skills were brought to them not only from the Leadership Academy Staff, but from other Participating Staffers as well.

Jason S. (New Birth of Freedom Council) of the Salad Troop shares what he learned during his time at the Leadership Academy, and his plans for improving his home course. “It [the NYLT Leadership Academy] was an amazing, life-changing experience. Of course, I improved as a presenter and learned how to give critical feedback, both to myself and to others. Not only did I learn these and other helpful strategies to use for an NYLT course, but I also learned more about myself as a leader, why I lead, and how I can incorporate my personality and who I am into my presentations and leadership style,” he writes during an online interview.

He also talks about his plans to “revamp” the Realistic First Aid, an activity in which the participants of an NYLT course are presented with a realistic-looking, intense, and fake emergency scenario created by NYLT Staff. More so, he plans to incorporate the “shenanigans” used during the Leadership Academy, as well as his new ability to evaluate concisely and offer presentation tools to his peers. Not only will this improve an already great home course, but his new skills will allow others to learn a lot from him.

The Leadership Academy gave Participating Staffers new ideas and skills to enhance their home courses, as well as affecting them in a more personal level. These personal improvements will help them in their NYLT courses as well as in their daily lives. Riley P. (New Birth of Freedom Council) from the Salad Troop shares his own personal take on the course and how it affected him personally. “I could easily describe the [NYLT Leadership] Academy as a defining moment in the content of my character,” says Riley. “It’s so much more than just learning material, especially on the last two days. I believe those last two days forced me to understand myself and changed me a lot. Anyone who goes through the program will come out a better person.” He later explains how his ability to reflect on his own actions and goals and his new skills in presenting helped improve his confidence. The more skills the Participating Staffers gain during course, whether it be knowledge, new skill sets in communication, or personal improvement, the better they will be able to give successful courses and improve the way they lead themselves.

The Participating Staffers of Week One were largest group the NYLT Leadership Academy ever had, and interaction was a fundamental part of the development of the Participating Staff. Guest speakers spoke to them on a daily basis, sharing their own personal stories of leadership roles, and giving the Participating Staff examples of how leadership can be taken from Boy Scouts of America programs and implemented in real life. “The public speakers were a fantastic way for us to see how we will be using these same skills in the future,” Tyler T. (Potawatomi Area Council) from the Soup Troop said.

Tyler spoke more of his interactions with the rest of the
The Participating Staff were full of knowledge and experiences that were invaluable. I learned a lot of small things from them, but the big lesson was about understanding why we do what we do. I realized there is more than two ways to do something and that I shouldn’t be satisfied with anything but the best program possible, meaning ‘this is the way we do this’ is not a good defense to do something subpar. There are always different ways to do things and we should take a deep look at what we are trying to accomplish and direct our theories along those lines, even if that means doing something different."

The development of the Participating Staff is the reason the Leadership Academy exists. After such a successful week, proven by the amount of knowledge these enabled Participating Staffers gained, and by how they plan to pay it forward to those they lead, the NYLT Leadership Academy is more eager than ever to continue to change the lives of others, thus spreading the new skills and enthusiasm these individuals now possess.

In his interview, Jason S. seized the chance to encourage other NYLT staffers to attend the NYLT Leadership Academy. “This is an opportunity of a lifetime that you simply cannot pass over because of the amazing impact it will have on you -- do not be afraid to go to the Academy because it is something new and different,” said Jason. “Seize this opportunity and make it the best experience that you can!”

Summit or Bust

Patricia Hernandez – Copy Editor

BECKLEY, WV - Following the conclusion of the 2014 Leadership Academy courses, Leadership Academy staph members, Jim Anthony (Pennsylvania Dutch Council), Tim Cece (Northern New Jersey Council), Andrew King (Nashua Valley Council), Catie McEntee (Chester County Council) and Dante Rodondi (San Francisco Bay Area Council) departed for the Paul R. Christen National High Adventure Base at the Summit Bechtel Reserve for an entire week. For Leadership Academy staff member Tim Cece, this is a second trip back to the Summit with the team. Cece was part of a team chosen by Gary Schroeder, who is the head of High Adventure for the Summit. His first team, consisting of Jim Anthony, Tim Cece, Logan Echard (Pennsylvania Dutch Council), Andrew King, Christine Luzcka (Chester County Council), Matt McGovern (Cradle of Liberty Council) and Christina Vogt (St. Louis Area Council) arrived at the Summit to give feedback on the new high adventure program “from an unbiased point of view,” shares Cece. This first visit was meant to create and establish an environment of high adventure that would be constructive to the development of an individual.

During the first visit, Anthony, Cece, Echard, King, Luzcka, McGovern, and Vogt discussed the reason a setting, such as the Summit is important to catalyzing the growth and development of an individual by putting them out of their comfort zone. "It was very similar to ‘Special Place’ – we called it ‘tgauchsins’, which means kindness, good nature, in Lenni Lenape,” Cece explains. A ‘Special Place’ is an ideal that is encouraged by the NYLT Leadership Academy which ensures that individuals will be learning in an environment where they can try new things without the fear of failing. “Our first visit also included giving a short training on comfort zones, behavioral risk management, and how to create moments to catalyze change in the future rather than to create a ‘mountaintop experience.”

Cece further explained what a “mountaintop experience” was. “A ‘mountaintop experience’ is something like reaching the top of the Tooth of
Time at Philmont. It’s something you’ve been working towards with your whole team for a week to accomplish. It’s kind of a crowning moment in your Scouting career.” Cece explains, then why the Summit is not the “crowning moment” in someone’s Scouting career. It is “supposed to be one of the first things he or she [one involved in Scouting] does that acts like a hook to [joining] their Scouting program. They’ll have an incredible time and see that it is possible for them to do something they never thought they would be able to do.”

“The development comes from their ability to set a goal and then achieve it over the course of the week through practice and support from their team.” Cece describes that it is the Summit staff’s responsibility to push these individuals going through the program out of their comfort zones, who will be keen in identifying the participants’ accomplishments and encouraging them to try newer and harder things.

During their second visit, Cece describes the changes in the camp as too subtle. He states it felt more like a summer camp than a high adventure base.

For this reason, he and his team are offering two packets of information this year. The first packet to be sent will provide options to fix problems they experienced this year, so they have a basis as to where to improve on and how.

Since the Summit’s vision is to attract people to join the Scouting program, the second packet will include “the writing of three or four programs that we think will help them achieve the Summit’s vision,” states Cece. “We hope these programs will find their way into the Summit programs in the future.” The new programs will involve options that Scouts have seen before, as well as options that will be new experiences for participants and Scouts alike.

Cece then described how his newer team experienced the Summit, while giving them encouragement, and insight on how to develop their participants. “Dante loved BMX, Catie had a great time mountain biking, Jim made friends with literally everyone,” he describes, “and I beat Andrew in a race down the zip line.”

Cece concludes by stating that “We are optimistic for the future at the Summit and are hoping we will have a part in the development of the new centerpiece of Scouting for the next century.”

Cece plans on returning with his team to not only help in the development of new programs, but to also help train the Summit’s staff as Staph members, which means that he and his crew plan to infect them with the new skills to keep an incredible course going.

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Northeast Region NYLT Course Directors Conference

Doug Cunningham – Conference Coordinator
Keenan Shields – Contributor

ALPINE, NJ - The Alpine Conference brings youth and adult NYLT staff together to learn and share best practices with the vision of enabling participants to run the best NYLT courses possible.

Who can attend?
All youth and adult staff members (Senior Patrol Leaders, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, Instructors, Troop Guides, Course Directors, Back-up Course Directors, Council Course Staff Advisers, Assistant Scoutmasters and Quartermasters) who want to learn how to better their courses and themselves.

What is it?
The Alpine Conference gathers together youth and adult staff from across the Northeast Region to share and discuss ways to deliver the most successful NYLT programs.

What does it cost?
The conference cost is $120 per person, which includes lodging, meals, program supplies, and the fun you will have during the conference.

Where is it?
Camp Alpine, NJ.

When is it?
The conference begins on Friday, October 24, 2014, at 7:00 PM and will conclude with our closing ceremony on Sunday, October 26, 2014 at noon.

I’m sold, how does it work?
The Conference emphasizes practical application of theory. Attendees will have the option to attend an array of sessions from promotions to program features, grub to gamesmanship, finance to fun, staff development to sustaining enrollment, camperships to campfires. Youth and adults pursue different learning tracks for most of the conference, each with their own sessions specifically targeted at relevant issues. Through discussions, presentations, and other activities carried out by an experienced and knowledgeable staff, we will address the numerous responsibilities that Course Directors, youth and adult staff undertake. Furthermore, the conference offers attendees the opportunity to network with other
passionate staff members to share and receive different ideas and concepts that you will be able to bring back to improve your home course.

This year, we are using Facebook as our main mode of communication. See https://www.facebook.com/TrainNYLTLeaders for information about the Alpine Course. You do not have to have a Facebook account to view this page, but if you do have a Facebook account and "like" the page, information updates will be directed to you. Please post your comments and questions and we will get back to you quickly.

For questions at a reasonable speed, please contact the:

Conference Coordinator
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Cell: 585-764-3925

/TrainNYLTLeaders

NYLT Leadership Academy is truly a special place. From my first moments in camp, I was immediately welcomed with open arms from everyone. The environment there is perfect for learning and growing YOUR presentation and leadership skills. I would absolutely do it all over again.

- Eric B., Cradle of Liberty Council, 2014 Week Two

We want to hear from you!

The next issue, and the issues after that will feature articles from council NYLT courses. In order for that to happen, we want to hear what your council is doing. Send us what your council is doing, or has done, and you could be featured in our newsletter.

Email us at:
newsletter@NYLT-LeadershipAcademy.org

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