



Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar

www.minnesotastudentleaders.org

Over 100 students and faculty members from 20 Minnesota high schools participated in the 8th annual Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar on November 6th, 2015.

The Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar is a one day seminar that seeks to introduce a small portion of West Point's intensive four year leadership development program to high school students in the state of Minnesota.

Leaders of Character: "actively develop a coherent and principled world view that frames their most fundamental values and beliefs."

This includes:

- Identifying their core values and beliefs
- Understanding the origins of their core values and beliefs
- Assessing the adequacy and validity of their values and beliefs
- Understanding how their core values and beliefs influence their perceptions, attitudes, and behavior
- Integrating and de-conflicting their values and beliefs to achieve coherence

Excerpted from The Cadet Leader Development System (CLDS)



Participating Schools:

Academy of Holy Angels • Anoka • Benilde-St. Margaret's • Blaine • Burnsville • Chanhasen • Chaska • Como Park • Cretin-Derham Hall • Christo Rey • Dassel-Cokato • Edina • Fridley • General Colin Powell Leadership Academy • Harding • Kerkhoven Murdock Sundburg • Providence Academy • School of Environmental Studies • Totino-Grace • Watertown-Mayer



MNSLS is unique in that the ethics guidance comes from peers. Cadets are relatable because of their age but have the credibility to lead thoughtful and thought provoking discussions about ethics, values, and leadership.



Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar

www.minnesotastudentleaders.org

Keynote Speaker Clarence Bethea, CEO of Upsie

Clarence Bethea shared the story of how his values changed from growing up on the streets of Atlanta to leading his own start-up company in Minnesota. Mr. Bethea explained the importance of a mentor in learning to believe in himself. His keynote speech was gripping, thought-provoking, and inspirational. He set up the rest of the seminar by explaining how important his values are to his leadership style. Mr. Bethea fielded questions from the students following his prepared remarks, openly sharing his personal challenges and future goals.



His story about his life was very valuable to me and inspires me to be great everyday.
– Student 2015

[The Values Exercise] really helped me to reflect on who I am, and it will really help to shape future decisions - Student 2015



Values Exercise

As in past years, before breaking into small groups, the large group was guided through a values exercise. Given 50 cards, each with a different value, participants went through a process to narrow the values to those which they viewed as most important. Participants could reference these values when called to make difficult decisions in their small groups.



Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar

www.minnesotastudentleaders.org

Student Small Group Sessions

The real work of the day happened when students broke into small groups, and in four 45 minute sessions, tackled difficult real-world ethical decisions. Cadets from Minnesota ROTC programs challenged the students to think critically about the facts of various situations, their stated values, and devise solutions. The groups delved into how their values form the basis of their leadership style.



Being able to go in depth and branch out to different topics was phenomenal. - Student 2015

It gave me ideas of what leadership qualities I have and which I don't. – Student 2015



I didn't realize how much my personal values contributed to my leadership.– Student 2015

Faculty Sessions

Faculty participated in their own small group sessions. In the morning, Todd Williams of Target's Corporate Social Responsibility Group spoke to the faculty about how diversity is considered in hiring, building a team, and in relation to Target's customers. In the afternoon, Special Agent Wilson of the FBI spoke to faculty about the history and current state of the Bureau as well as a career in law enforcement. Finally, two cadets guided the faculty in a discussion about a vignette used in the student small groups earlier in the day.





Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar

www.minnesotastudentleaders.org

Thanks so much! This was my first year, and I definitely would love to come again. [The Seminar was] very valuable for students!— Faculty Member 2015



Closing Session

The day culminated with a representative from each small group sharing what they had learned with the larger group through a panel discussion.

The Minnesota Student Leadership Seminar is provided at no cost to participating schools, students, and faculty. The seminar, which is hosted by the West Point Society of Minnesota, is fully funded by private donations from individuals and organizations who want to support the development of students of today into the leaders of tomorrow.



MNSLS Committee Members

Gus Zenker '62
Doug Baden '88
Toni Olson
Alex Plechash '75 (USNA)

Roger Baldwin '64
Lexa Hoffner '93
Elsa Bullard '00
Charlie Nelson '96 (USAFA)

Jeff Olson '79
Alan Clinard '98
Anita Caskey '00