

PRESS RELEASE—For immediate release

Utah Students Taught Personal Persistence Creates Strong Leadership

Record attendance at UVSC's Annual Leadership Conference

OREM, Utah — October 6, 2004 — The Center for the Advancement of Leadership (CAL) hosted its Annual Leadership Conference yesterday at Utah Valley State College (UVSC), with attendance of more than 2,500 junior high and high school students and 700 college students, making it one of the largest student leadership conferences in the United States.

Prominent keynote speakers such as Jon Huntsman Jr., Thurl Bailey, Jack Christianson and Sharlene Hawkes helped to draw the record crowds to UVSC's campus, including students from 47 high schools, seven junior high schools and seven colleges.

Even in the height of a political race, governor-candidate Jon Huntsman Jr. addressed the students from his heart, leaving politics aside. He instead offered the following ideals to focus on to have a fulfilling life: First, live as you'd like to be remembered. Second, dream your biggest dreams and make them happen. Third, fulfilling dreams takes risk and attitude. And, fourth, choose a hero to emulate.

"Sad is the nation that is in need of heroes," said Huntsman. "When people ask me what makes the United States great, I tell them it's not the military or economy, it's the people who are still willing to take risks with an optimistic, never-say-die attitude."

Thurl Bailey, former Utah Jazz player, spoke to students about how to overcome adversity to reach their full potential. Bailey shared principles that helped him fulfill his dreams. He told the students to have persistence, unity, focus and pursue every opportunity possible. He said his determination and persistence has helped him be a strong leader for his peers on and off the court.

Jack Christianson, Director of the Orem Institute of Religion at UVSC and author of several LDS books, spoke about "Unity Amid Diversity." He emphasized that a good leader must be able to maintain strong working relationships and create a cohesive team for maximum success.

"Learn to agree to disagree, without being disagreeable," Christianson said. "It is better to be unified around an inferior decision than divided on a superior one. Use that inferior plan, that everyone is assembled around, and it will sky-rocket."

Sharlene Hawkes, ESPN correspondent and former Miss America, offered her success story in fulfilling her dreams. She related the most important decision of her life to the audience. At the age of 14, Hawkes determined to make every decision with courage and never let fear hold her back.

In addition, students chose from more than 65 breakout sessions, including:

"The Six Secrets of Personal Leadership that Make All the Difference" by Merrie Hudson

"The Language of Teams" by Travis Anderson

"Starting Your Own Business" by Shauna Theobald

"Secrets of Leadership for Women Only" by Susan Madsen and Rebe Keele

"Authentic Happiness" by Grant Richards

The Center for the Advancement of Leadership is the first of its kind, and administrators hope to launch it as a nationwide program as a cornerstone to every student's education. Dr. Bruce Jackson, director of the CAL, has studied many leadership-oriented programs in his career, including those at West Point,

University of California at Santa Barbara and the Institute of Applied Human Excellence, to synthesize the best characteristics of each into the strongest possible program.

"This conference was phenomenal," said Jackson. "Our speakers were dynamic and hit on topics close to the students' hearts. UVSC's strong student body, their drive for success and their entrepreneurial spirit will help launch this program into every college in America."

The ultimate goal of the Center for the Advancement of Leadership is to perfect the leadership programs and make them transferable to other schools, so all college students have the same opportunities for growth as the students at UVSC currently have.

About the Center for the Advancement of Leadership

The Center for the Advancement of Leadership serves more than 50,000 students per year, promoting leadership, character and life-skill education to students of all ages.

Through assessments, feedback, coaching, academic coursework, skill and competency development, leadership experiences, and self-reflection, The Center for the Advancement of Leadership leads the way in offering a multi-dimensional approach for the development of leaders in both academic and professional settings—setting a new standard of academic, professional and personal development.

The Center for the Advancement of Leadership places particular value on the holistic development of students of all ages, the quest for personal and interpersonal excellence in the student's personal and professional life, gratitude and humility in the service of others, continuous improvement and lifelong learning and finding a balance between theory and practice.

In the pursuit of developing leadership within all age groups, the center offers many programs including:

- A comprehensive Leadership Certificate program
- Integrated Studies program with an emphasis on leadership
- High School Concurrent Enrollment program
- “Why Try” program for junior high school students
- “No Greater Heroes” program for grade school students
- Annual Leadership Conference for high school and college students
- Professional Leader Development Series for local organizations
- Leadership and management consulting services for local organizations
- Research and development opportunities for faculty and students

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