Relay for Life Displays the Character of WPI’s Community

It is Sunday evening and I’m still thinking about the tremendously successful Relay for Life held on the Quadrangle this past weekend. Over thirty-five student organizations and 475 people participated in the second annual Relay for Life designed to raise awareness and funds to fight cancer. Students, faculty, and staff participated in this event.

There was a great feeling of community at this program initiated and planned by WPI student leaders. Nick Pelletier and Liza Tuttle in particular deserve our applause and recognition for providing the effective leadership to plan and implement this program successfully. Although the final fundraising amount has not yet been completely tallied, it appears over fifty eight thousand dollars was raised through the program.

Janet Richardson, Vice President of Student Affairs delivered opening remarks officially beginning the Relay for Life shortly after 6:00 p.m. Friday night. There was a tremendous feeling of community spirit present throughout the entire event. Our students should feel great pride in organizing this event that I expect will become a new WPI tradition. Everyone is impacted by cancer. Our students’ leadership and commitment to help fundraising for cancer research provides hope for a cure.

Congratulations to all of the individual students, faculty, staff, and student organizations that participated in Relay for Life. Your efforts as student leaders, individually and collectively give hope for a cure.

~Jim McLaughlin, Director of the Campus Center and Student Activities

ACKNOWLEDGING LEADERS

Leadership is a term that is hard for most to describe or explain, for there are many elements that expose leadership and one of them is action. Students at WPI are well known leaders both inside and outside the classroom for their involvement and the change that they help create. The Campus Center and Student Activities Office acknowledged several students on April 7th for their achievement and leadership in the last academic year. The department is pleased to announce the following students were recipients of the Crimson and Gray Award for 2008.

Ceren Altin
Andrew Anderson
Belin Beyoglu
Morgan Carpenter
Matthew Doherty
Arly Dungca
Sara Duran
Charles Gammal
Penny Gikas
Khondkar Faiaz Hasan
Miguel Herrera
Andrea Hevey
Anita Minakyan
Stacey Mohr
Russell Morin
Michael Richard
Damien Rigden
Luis Rodriguez
Shikhar Saxena
Matthew Schulze
Mary Kate Toomey
Sally Trabucco
Erin Vozzola

Additionally, the distinguished Edwin B. Coghlin ’23 Award was presented to Lambda Chi Alpha for their North American Food Drive Project which benefited Friendly House and James Roumeliotis for his “Bounce to a Cure” benefit for the Scleroderma Foundation.

The Campus Center and Student Activities Office joins the campus community in congratulating these students and organization for their great accomplishments this year and thanks them for the leadership that they bring to Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

GET INVOLVED IN LEADERSHIP

The Leadership Development Committee, composed of staff and student participants, continue to support and develop leadership opportunities for students. The committee is also a leadership development opportunity for the students who serve on the committee who are exposed to leadership theories and the strategic planning that is used when developing leadership curriculum. These students also assist in presenting workshops with staff members for the Leading Edge Series. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact Christine Girouard in the Student Activities Office or at cgirouard@wpi.edu.
HOW TO MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR GROUP

By: Mike Hamilton
Complex Coordinator-Residential Services

So we are coming to the end of another academic year. This is usually the time for transitioning new officers and planning for what is to come next year, but how do you effectively do this. Does your group follow the same process every year, or are you a new group and don’t know where to go at this point? Maybe it is time that your group truly evaluates what you have done this past year. Looking at what has gone well and gone badly in an unbiased and open manner is one of the best ways to help your group grow for the future. Here are some tips for assessing how well your group is doing, and finding out what areas your group can improve in:

What do you want to know? When beginning your assessment process sit down with the members of your group and ask them what you would to come from your evaluation process? By doing this you will be able to shape the questions that you ask and the types of evaluation that you do to produce the best results to help you.

Surveys are a great way to get a quantitative analysis of how your group is performing. Often however they become a lot of work and the numbers on the survey end up not really telling you anything because everyone looks at the scale on a survey differently. Try instead to ask for feedback and comments on your evaluation tool. Make sure that your questions are very specific to what you want answered about your organization. These can be given out to members, people that attend your programs, and/or any other groups or people that you work or interact with. These surveys can happen all year long after every program or event, and they will help you to benchmark which areas you had the most success.

Distributing your surveys can be done a couple of different ways. You can have a sheet that people fill out, an email that they respond to, or it could be done online if your budget permits your purchasing an account to one of the online survey sites. If you do decide to go with the online option please remember to do your research on these sites first, especially on the ability to get reports.

Dedicate a meeting to have a very open and candid discussion about how your year went. If the environment is set with the right tone and you truly make people feel like they can share their opinions then you will get some great feedback from your members. Remembers these are the people that lived it all year and know the inner workings of your group the best.

Use the feedback that you get from a survey or the meetings that you have with your members to truly look at change. You do not need to change everything that is commented on, but you should look at the question you want set at the beginning of your assessment period and ask if any of the feedback you have received can help you to make change.

You are not alone. For almost any type of student group you have, there is a counterpart out there at another institution. Seek these groups out, ask them question about their success and struggles, and you will see that you are not alone. You can find these groups online or at conferences, and people are always willing to talk about themselves and offer help.

Remember that change is a good thing, but not everything can be changed by you and your group right now. If you are continually asking the question, “How can we be better?”, you are on the right track to evaluating your success. Also please remember that success is not measured by how many people attend and event or how big your group is. Rather measure it by how much people that came to your events took away from them, and how much the members of your group participate and feel a part of it. If you need any help getting started on your evaluation process please feel free to contact me at mjham@wpi.edu.

STAYING ORGANIZED IN THE SUMMER

By: Luis Rodriguez 08’
Leadership Development Committee Member

As the end of the year approaches, your organization should meet to discuss how effectively goals set in A term were achieved, what worked and what did not, in addition to plans for the next year. It is important to share ideas about how to make improvements once you get back or even while you are away. The reality is that over long periods of separation, it can be tricky for leaders to maintain communication with each other and “keep the ball rolling”. Although it is not always necessary or relevant for a campus organization to develop new programs or initiatives for its members while school is not in session, much progress can be accomplished over these inactive months.

Steps that can be taken to make this task more manageable are:

1. Hold an end of the year meeting—compare your initial expectations of the year with the actual outcomes while developing a set of short and long-term tasks and goals. Discuss what worked and what did not, and identify explicit areas that need attention.
2. Clear out pending items—create a list of all the items, initiatives, or ideas that were not undertaken this year, but could still be applied next year. Focus especially on clearing out small tasks that may create roadblocks to starting smoothly in A term (Officer update forms, transferring aliases, etc.)
3. Create a to-do list—Establish a set of tasks and goals that you would like to see accomplished by the time you regroup at the beginning of the school year. For every item on the list, make sure that you define, as clearly as possible, the steps needed to realize the task.
4. Establish regular check-ins—Establish a couple of official dates on which the team will exchange reports on the status of each member’s progress. This can be done either through a physical meeting, a conference call, or a series of emails.
5. Hold a pre-school year retreat—Agree upon a date on which the leaders of the group can meet and dedicate themselves wholly to the cause of the organization. Compare how well you were able to fulfill your expectations for the summer and incorporate any loose ends at the top of the new year’s agenda.

Then, all you will have to do is congratulate yourself and your peers, stand back and admire how much more you were able to accomplish this summer!
**Leadership Lunch Series**

Leadership Lunches are one hour programs held once a term that bring a featured speaker on campus to talk about their personal experiences and leadership. This is a time where we can bring the leader to you, so that they may share valuable insight on how you can use leadership in your daily life. This program is free and lunch is provided.

The next leadership lunch will be held on Thursday, April 24th at noon in Higgins House. The featured speaker will be Bill Grogan. Bill began his WPI career as a student during World War II. He graduated as part of the Navy V-12 program and joined the faculty in 1946. He is known as an outstanding professor and man who has influenced and changed many lives.

To register for this free event go to [http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO](http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO)

**“Snack” on Leadership Series**

Come snack on leadership with the Student Activities Office!! The SAO invites you to learn about various topics regarding leadership and involvement on a college campus. This series is for everyone spanning from advanced student leaders to students who just want to learn more about getting involved. Snacks will be provided!

**April 30th**

**Collaboration—Motivation—Delegation**

3pm, Hagglund Room

Come to an interactive discussion regarding collaboration, motivation and delegation in any organization!

To register for this event go to [http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO](http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO) or sign up in the Student Activities Office.

**Online Leadership Resource Center**

The Student Activities Office has a new Online Leadership Resource Center. This tool is available to every member of the WPI community and is a great spot to grab a quick ice breaker or teambuilder for any club, team or class. Take a look at this new resource online at [http://www.wpi.edu/Admin/SAO/resource.html](http://www.wpi.edu/Admin/SAO/resource.html) as you begin to prepare for the 2008-2009 Academic Year!

The Leadership Resource Center will be growing over the summer, so be sure to keep checking for the new leadership tools that will be able to assist any organization to grow and develop. If you think something is missing or would like particular information, contact Christine Girouard at cgirouard@wpi.edu.

**Leader of the Term**

Sally Trabucco ‘10

Sally Trabucco the President of the Residence Hall Council (RHC) was named Regional President of the Year at the recent NEACURH (North East Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls) conference. Sally has worked hard all year helping RHC to grow as an organization, and has been elected to serve as RHC Chairperson for next year as well. Sally will be 1 of 8 finalists for this year’s National President of the Year award in May.
As an International Student, I arrived at WPI three days earlier than most of the other freshman to participate in International Pre-Orientation. It was my first time in the United States and I was deeply intimidated by the idea of going to college in a country I’ve never even been to before. The International Pre-Orientation is led by International Student Council leadership to assist incoming students adjust to a new culture, before NSO prepares them to launch an exciting four years of their lives. ISC is a very active organization on campus that strives to create a “home away from home” environment for international students. Our biggest goal is to promote active communication between international and domestic students, and help international students blend with their new environment.

That program helped me feel welcome and adjust to WPI. I observed how much the leaders of the organization were having so much fun, while offering a helping hand to new members of the community. I got involved with ISC as an Interim Activities Chair during my freshman year, and served in many positions such as Treasurer and Co-Chair since. Acting as a leader in the international community was something that took me out of my comfort zone. Realizing that my actions mattered to the people around me was a motivation to reach out to new people and focus on different problems that international students experience. It’s been one of my goals through my term as Co-Chair to inspire younger members to take on challenges and to emerge as leaders. I encourage all the members of our community to get involved and develop networking skills, since I believe it was one of the most important things I learned here.

In addition to being an active member of the International Community, I’m also elected to the Student Government Association and I serve as a Resident Advisor. WPI teaches you all the skills necessary for a successful career. Classes train you to be a professional in your field, while you develop networking skills through project work and organizations on campus. I tried to make the most of what was offered to me, and each thing I did brought me experiences and skill sets that I will bring with me to my professional work after WPI.

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

Have you read the entire XCel Newsletter? Fill out this quiz and answer the questions that cover everything from topics in this publication to recent pop culture knowledge and return it to the Office of Student Activities located on the 3rd floor of the Campus Center by May 1st! People who answer all the questions correctly or the most correctly, will be entered into a drawing for a prize!

1. Which country was the first to use postcards?
2. What are two steps that you can take to make staying organized in the summer manageable?
3. How many of the fifty states were named after an actual person?
4. What is a male kangaroo called?
5. Who is the leader of the term?
6. What was the first bike called?
7. Where were the first sailing boars built?
8. What are some ways that your organization can evaluate success?
9. How many hours do you have to play ping pong to lose one pound?
10. What was the first penny’s motto?

**LOOKING AHEAD...**

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>4/7</td>
<td>Crimson and Gray Awards, 4pm, Odeum,</td>
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<td>4/7-9</td>
<td>White Ribbon Campaign, All day, CC Lobby</td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td>Worcester City Clean-Up, 8-10am</td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td>Comedian Stephen Lynch, 8pm, Hanover Theatre</td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Worcester Sharks Game, 3pm, DCU Center</td>
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<td>4/13-4/20</td>
<td>Quadfest: Pirates</td>
<td>4/20 Worcester City Clean-Up, 1-4pm</td>
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<td>GAC Awards</td>
<td>4/28-30 When you move out, don’t throw out, Various Locations</td>
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<td>4/16</td>
<td>Snack on Leadership, 3pm, Hagglund</td>
<td>4/30 Snack on Leadership, 3pm, Hagglund Room</td>
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Questions? Contact the Student Activities Office for more information! 3rd Floor of the Campus Center  http://www.wpi.edu/~SAO Phone: 508-831-5291  E-mail: csainfo@wpi.edu