New class explores effective leadership

Participants selected for Health Leadership Program Class V met for the first time Oct. 4–7 at Grizzly Creek Ranch and Conference Center in Portola, Calif. The four-day residential retreat setting was a perfect backdrop for exercises in team building and exploring effective leadership.

Sierra Health Foundation began the Health Leadership Program in 2001 to further develop leaders working in health-related nonprofit and government sectors, and to reduce turnover. Participants gather five times over a seven-month period for multiple-day sessions. The program is facilitated by faculty and consultants of the University of Southern California's State Capital Center and the Marshall School of Business in Los Angeles. Between sessions, class members continue learning via online assignments and conversation, and through small-group projects (see related story on page 2).
Leaders in action

Sierra Health Leadership alums help Katrina victims

Two HLP alums joined the American Red Cross and took their passion and skills to Mississippi after the hurricane. Mickey Taylor (Class II) traveled to Jackson, Miss., to open and operate shelter sites serving evacuees from the New Orleans area and the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

For Mickey, witnessing such loss put things in perspective. "This experience with Katrina clearly helped me better understand the meaning of 'noble cause,'" Mickey says. "Working toward maintaining a 'life's great' attitude as opposed to 'life stinks' in a situation such as this was indeed a major challenge. For many, life did stink, but the noble cause of the workers made life a little more bearable. In the midst of coordinating logistics and managing staff, listening to peoples' stories brought hope, to some, that somewhere down the line, life might be great again."

Susan Slover (Class IV) recently spent 16 days in Biloxi, Miss., with the Red Cross helping victims deal with the emotional side of this tragedy. "Listening to the stories of the survivors—their fears, losses, frustrations with the system of aid, and loss of hope—was exhausting and often overwhelming," Susan reports. "I was touched by the resilience and courage of the survivors and each became a hero and an inspiration for me. I was struck by the need for leaders to 'go to the balcony' to see the larger picture and analyze what's working and what's not so changes could be made on the run."

"There are hard leadership lessons to be learned from this disaster. The hardest lesson may be that each of us must take a look at how we will sustain our families and ourselves if we are caught in a disaster. I left a piece of my heart in Mississippi, where I found that by following my 'noble cause' of caring, it was enough."

Class V teams tackle important health issues

Part of being a good leader is identifying problems, and organizing a team to develop and implement a plan of action. In each Health Leadership class, participants form teams to address health-related problems in Northern California. With assistance from a coach, Eileen Jacobowitz, this year's class will tackle:

• Improving rural health care access: The team will develop a plan to increase physician recruitment, evaluate electronic paperwork efficiency, and create an economically viable reimbursement model for providers.
• Creating experiential opportunities for youth: Participants will coordinate a youth-based program on the American River Parkway in Sacramento.
• Improving access to substance-abuse treatment in the Sacramento region: This team will develop strategies to coordinate treatment and support services that will increase program effectiveness through integration.
• Connecting youth with their communities: This team will document the challenges and opportunities to engage youth, and test best-practice methods for youth involvement in the Sacramento area.
• Creating a model program for seniors: To help seniors live in their homes longer, a team will develop a plan to increase seniors' knowledge of available services and improve coordination among senior service providers in Sacramento, Placer and Nevada counties.
• Examining managed care for rural communities: This team will examine obstacles and opportunities to improve access to affordable health care coverage.

In our next issue we will share the teams' accomplishments and lessons learned.
Here are six leadership reminders for '06—
the beginning of a New Year!

1. Always keep the goal in mind. Share it with those you lead. It is the reason you and your team are together.

2. Be passionate. Show your energy and commitment enthusiastically. Look in the mirror and see the role model you are offering others. Be the best leader you can be, starting with the leading of yourself.

3. Use both push and pull methods. Sometimes you will need to direct (push) others to get them trained and focused on what needs to be done. You will also need to help encourage (pull) the gifts of those on your team. Be effective when you push and pull to encourage others (and yourself).

4. Share in the joy. Make work fun, make it joyful. Show your personal delight when being with each and every one on your team. (Leaders who are moaners cultivate groaners.)

5. Mine your business! Be constantly digging to find the gifts and talents of those you serve, help polish them up, show them off, and display them for others to see. Mine the opportunity in every challenge faced by your team.

6. Share the good news! Let others know the good things ahead. Be thankful for the opportunity you have to be the best you can be.
Health Leadership class roster

Amelia Adams  
Director, CLIFF Family Resource Center  
Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin  
Stockton

Joe Ayer  
Chief Operating Officer, American Red Cross, Sacramento  
Sierra Chapter, Sacramento

Amejit Bhattacharyya  
Director of Public Health Nursing, Sutter County Human Services — Health Division, Yuba City

Marianne Bird  
4-H Youth Development Advisor, University of California Cooperative Extension, Sacramento

Karen Brockopp  
Program Coordinator, Transitional Living and Community Support, Sacramento

Kevin Duggan  
Executive Director, Society for the Blind, Sacramento

Rosalind Garner, MSW  
Human Services Program Planner, Sacramento County Department of Health & Human Services — Senior and Adult Services Division, Sacramento

Shawn Harrison  
Director, Soil Born Farm Urban Agriculture Project, Sacramento

Bill Hazelwood  
Program Director, Yok Wayfarer Center Christian Mission, Woodland

Robert Herne  
Program Director, Sierra Adoption Services, Sacramento

Robert Irvine  
Executive Director, California Vocations, Inc., Paradise

Lynn J. Jefferson  
Executive Director, Lutz Center Adult Day Services, Nevada City

Ann Knickelbein  
School Nurse and Health Promotion Educator, Folsom Cordova Unified School District, Folsom

Cathy L. Larsen  
Executive Director, Southern Trinity Health Services, Inc., Mad River

Bina Lefkowitz  
Director of Youth Development, Linking Education and Economic Development, Sacramento

Laura Leonelli  
Executive Director, Southeast Asian Assistance Center, Sacramento

Mark Lundberg, MD  
Health Officer, Sutter County Department of Public Health, Orville

Peggy Merical  
Program Director, Quinn Cottages, Sacramento Cottage Housing, Inc., Sacramento

Gregory Miller  
Shelter Director, St. John’s Shelter for Women and Children, Sacramento

Deborah Nagle  
Executive Director, Footprint Volunteer Center, Auburn

Valerie Peterson  
Deputy Director, The Effort, Inc., Sacramento

Lynda Saicido  
Public Health Director, Mono County Health Department, Mammoth Lakes

Steven Shetzline  
Manager, Health Education & Community Outreach, Community Medical Centers, Inc., Stockton

Ranjit Singh  
Chief Operations Officer, Del Norte Clinics, Inc., Yuba City

Leslie Snoke  
Senior Program Manager, American Lung Association of Sacramento/Emergent Trails, Sacramento

Bill Such  
Executive Director, Juvens Center, Chico

Randall Tryon  
Director of Substance Abuse Treatment, Community Health Centers, Woodland

Annemarie Vincent  
Executive Director, American River Parkway Foundation, Carmichael

Upcoming Health Leadership Program events

Alumni trainings
March 9 and 10, 2006, Sierra Health Foundation  
May 17-19, 2006 (tentative), Grizzly Creek Ranch, Portola, Calif.

Health Leadership Class V graduation
March 31, 2006, 3 p.m.-5 p.m. at Sierra Health Foundation.

Know someone who'd benefit from the Health Leadership Program?
Applications available in April.  
Class VI begins in October 2006.