

THE BEACON

The monthly newsletter of Leadership Cattaraugus

It's All in the Name

A message from ...

Pete D'Andrea



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For those of you who are currently attending, or are graduates of Leadership Cattaraugus, you know about the Name Game. This activity is part of the opening retreat and is designed to help people get to know each other.

More importantly the Name Game helps break the ice while encouraging participants to be creative in how they refer to themselves. For those of you who haven't been a part of Leadership Cattaraugus yet, you will have to attend to learn how this works.

The point is this. Games can play a very powerful part in helping us learn. When constructed properly they help teach a point in a fun and thought-provoking way. And that's what this program is all about.

Learning about Cattaraugus

County, in teams, while developing leadership skills is only part of the focus. Having fun while learning is just as important. It is clear that what you enjoy, participate in, and help create is much more memorable than sitting listening to a lecture.

Graduates from the past three years have continued to praise the program and speak highly of their experience. Samples of their testimonials were published in a previous edition of *the Beacon*.

We must be doing something right.

Another popular game on TV today is *Deal or No Deal*. It isn't about leadership, but it is about people making difficult decisions while deciding how much risk they are comfortable with.

Participants in Leadership Cattaraugus learn the same kind of things. Unfortunately they aren't

eligible for a large cash prize. But the experience of putting presentations together, on topics they are interested in, but may have limited knowledge of, is difficult.

Decisions are made on who will speak at each session. And there is the element of risk as participants wonder how successful their team presentation will be. In the TV

show *The Apprentice*, you can be fired if you don't measure up. In Leadership Cattaraugus, you are praised for being creative as you try something new.

No, this program isn't a game. It is a

serious approach to learning, growing and developing leadership skills. The best part about it might be the network of friends participants make. These are friendships that we believe may last a lifetime, even if it does begin by playing the Name Game.

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Profile in leadership: Len Riker

Len Riker clearly has a passion for leadership. Len agreed to an interview for an article in *The Beacon* during a very busy week with the understanding that it could be completed in a half hour. Nearly 90 minutes later, the manager of Cytec's Olean site had very graciously given enough material for an entire edition.



Len Riker

As a relatively recent transplant to Olean seven years ago – after stints in locales as diverse as Philadelphia, Wisconsin, West Virginia and Atlanta – Len said that Leadership Cattaraugus offered two distinct elements he found especially valuable.

“I had only been here for four years at the time,” said the Class of 2004 alum. “I didn’t know much about the area. I now have a much greater appreciation for the area’s services, challenges, and opportunities. It was also interesting to see Cattaraugus County through the eyes of lifelong residents. We were looking at the same picture, but I was seeing different things.”

The other element was the opportunity for networking, the value of which was crystallized with Len while attending The ReHabilitation Center’s Foundation Dinner Dance.

“I tell the story at the Leadership Cattaraugus opening retreat about attending the Dinner Dance. People who had lived here forever came up to me and said, ‘Thank goodness you’re here. We hardly know anybody,’” Len said. “I looked around and I knew somebody at almost every table, thanks to Leadership Cattaraugus. I didn’t think it was anything special, but that experience opened my eyes to what I had just gained.”

Len said he thinks local civic and business leaders should continue to emphasize the positive things Cattaraugus County has to offer.

“What can we offer? What makes us attractive? What are we good at?” he said. “And I think sometimes we focus too locally on who the competition is. For short day trips and retail opportunities, it is local – but for business, the focus should be national and international.”

Len said he is busy with the Cattaraugus County United Way board of directors, recently becoming its chief volunteer officer. He said other leadership opportunities have presented themselves, but he doesn’t take those offers lightly.

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Len had plenty of wisdom to offer young or new leaders – things that have helped him. Among them:

* “A leader can’t be afraid of failure. If you’re not failing, you’re probably not trying hard enough.”

* “A leader helps people feel safe. If employees try something and fail, they know you’ll stand behind them. We always think of the leader as the person in front, but the leader can be the person behind the group, supporting them even if they fail and encouraging them.”

* “Part of leadership is knowing that sometimes there is no right answer for everybody involved in a situation. Part of leadership is still being able to act knowing that you’re not going to make everybody happy.”

* “Focus on the issue, not on the person.”

* “Be willing to challenge the status quo – leadership takes a certain amount of risk. A leader has to recognize that you have to step into the unknown.”

* “Help people try something they never thought was possible.”

Class / Alumni news

Each month in *The Beacon*, this section will highlight an achievement or milestone for a current or past participant in Leadership Cattaraugus. If you have some news or information you’d like to share with your Leadership Cattaraugus colleagues in *The Beacon*, please use the contact information on the bottom of page one.





Members of the class of 2007 participate in an exercise at the opening retreat, held at the JCC – Olean Depot.

Thoughts on opening weekend

The Class of 2007 dove into their Leadership Cattaraugus experience during the annual opening weekend retreat. Below are some observations from class members reflecting on the weekend.

“It’s been a great experience so far. I feel like I’m becoming a part of something big, and as a network or large single cohort I really do believe that we truly can make a difference for Cattaraugus. She’s been good to us, but now she’s suffering. We’ve got to try to do what we can to make her better. Hokey? Perhaps. But that’s how I look at it.”

Tinker Toys are perfectly legitimate tools for developing leadership skills.



“I had such an amazing time, I really look forward to this year and am truly honored to be part of such a great team. It was a great weekend and I enjoyed it from start to finish. This class will no doubt be beneficial in building my leadership skills. I look to gain so much from this course.”

“I am looking forward to the year ahead in Leadership Cattaraugus our initial weekend experience reaffirmed everything I was told from others that have gone through the program.”

Class of 2007

Timothy Coady
Cytec Olean Inc.

Rob DiFazio
St. Bonaventure University

Paul Eade
Cutco Cutlery

Eric Garvin
Community Bank, NA

Lee Giardini
Buffamante, Whipple Buttafaro

Jessica Golley
Salamanca Area Chamber of Commerce

Cindy Hinz
Jamestown Community College

Donald Jones
Dresser-Rand

Oliver Klice
Advanced Monolythic Ceramics

Kathleen McGoldrick
Catt Co Dept of Social Services

Mark Moser
Greater Olean Chamber of Commerce

William O'Dell
Cooper Power Systems

Roxanne Padlo
The ReHAbilitation Center

Candace Plants
United Way of Cattaraugus County

Linda Riggs
Center for Family Unity, Inc.

Dawn Rowland
Cattaraugus Community Action

Peter Sunderland
Five Star Bank

Corey Wiktor
Catt County Industrial Development

Ryan Wilcox
Cattaraugus Region Community Fdtn.

Good News for Leadership Cattaraugus

Organization wins community development award

Leadership Cattaraugus has been recognized with a Good News Award from the Greater Olean Area Chamber of Commerce.

The award was given to recognize the organization's contributions to community development. The award was accepted on behalf of Leadership Cattaraugus by board of directors president John Stevens and program director Kathy Welch at the Good News Award dinner, held at the Premier Banquet Center on May 10th.

"Winning the Good News Award on behalf of Leadership Cattaraugus is a thrill. Many have worked extremely hard to build this organization with a focus on quality and continuous improvement, and this has paid off," Kathy said.

"We won't rest on our laurels, however. We will continue to strive for excellence in program delivery and outcome achievement as we continue to grow leaders for a better community!"

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Leadership Cattaraugus board of directors

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John Stevens	
John Sayegh	<i>GOACC</i>
Larry Sorokes	<i>Jamestown Community College</i>
Kimberly Young	<i>St. Bonaventure University</i>
Craig Maguire	<i>Dresser-Rand Company</i>
Timothy O'Keefe	<i>Cutco Cutlery Corporation</i>
Joseph Sorokes	<i>Cooper Power Systems</i>
James Stitt, Jr.	<i>Cutco Cutlery Corporation</i>
Peter Dandrea	<i>Mazza Sheet Metal</i>
Bonnie Welch	<i>Olean General Hospital</i>
Tina Zerbian	<i>Cattaraugus Community Action</i>

Leadership Cattaraugus Staff

Director *Kathryn Welch*

Our Mission

The mission of Leadership Cattaraugus is to grow a network of informed, active leaders who work collaboratively to build a better community.

Our Vision

Our vision is that Leadership Cattaraugus will be recognized as the resource for agencies and organizations to access emerging leaders and as a developmental resource for future leaders.

Leadership Cattaraugus
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Olean, NY 14760

bulk mail
information from
post office

