

Cultivating Leadership Capital for the West Valley

Message from the Executive Director

Welcome to a transitional edition of the Leadership West Newsletter. Please bear with us as we determine the best platform with which to communicate with our alumni. Keep your updates coming, and we'll keep passing them along. We want to know what you are doing, who you are bumping into and how you are impacting the future of the West Valley. Send your news and information to Kathy@leadershipwest.org.



Graduation for Class XV

Leadership West graduated Class XV Thursday evening June 4th during a ceremony held at the West Valley Art Museum in Surprise. We welcome these outstanding community leaders to the corps of Leadership West Alumni that is now nearly 400 strong!

Spencer Anderson	West Valley National Bank
Jennifer Campbell	City of Goodyear
Tamara Caraway	Adolfson & Peterson Construction
Sophia Combs	SRP
Kenneth Lynch	City of Surprise
Stephanie Kegley-Scott	The New Foundation
Erik Miller	For Those Without a Voice
Bernadette Mills	West Valley Arts Council
Othell Newbill	City of Goodyear
Garrett Olexa	Jennings, Strouss & Salmon Law
Thomas Payton	Architectural Dimensions, LLC
Deanna Rada	Bade Companies
John Rowan	City of Goodyear
Melinda Sanchez	Liberty One Real Estate
Jessie Singer	Marley Park, of DMB
Susan Stout	US Air Force
Jenni Thomas	Arizona State University
Kevin Turner	Waste Management, Inc.
Larry Woods	Sun City West PORA

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Synthesis Day Highlights Outstanding

Community Projects

Members of Leadership West, Class 15, presented their group projects to community members and stakeholders at “Synthesis Day,” on Thursday, June 4th at Avondale City Hall.

This year’s projects included:

Team Kamikaze:

Tamara Caraway, Jessie Singer, Deanna Rada, Erik Miller, John Rowan & Larry Woods - Following the motto “People helping people”, the group partnered with Nadaburg School District to develop an instructional unit on Africa, including climate, animals, and water conservation curriculum. The project culminated in a field trip to Out of Africa Wildlife Park where students could see firsthand the animals and desert conditions similar to those of Africa.

The Basics- Sophia Combs, Ken Lynch, Bernadette Mills, Othell Newbill & Tom Payton - Created Centennial Outdoor Classroom Garden on the grounds of Liberty Elementary School. The outdoor classroom will occupy over 7500 square feet of undeveloped area on the grounds of one of the West Valley's most historic schools. Students from the entire Liberty School District will be able to participate in an ongoing, interactive learning experience centered on plants, the environment, and climate change.

Shake & Bake- Spencer Anderson, Jennifer Campbell, Susan Stout, Jenni Thomas & Kevin Turner - Worked with the Goodyear Branch Library to recruit and establish a volunteer base for the new branch, supported the grand opening held in March, and coordinated a year-long art display at the library featuring local high school artists.

Ignite – Stephanie Kegley Scott, Garrett Olexa, & Melinda Sanchez – Aided HandsOn Greater Phoenix to bridge the gap between organizations and entities in the West Valley that are in need of volunteers and people looking to volunteers their time. The group led an effort by researching and compiling contact information for over 500 potential partner organizations to explain the benefits and to facilitate the start of a relationship with HandsOn.



The presentations were judged by a panel of prominent West Valley leaders consisting of Sharolyn Hohman, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce and LW Founder (r); Scott Phillips, Carefree Partners (c); and Mike Whiting, Recreation Centers of Sun City West (l).

Congratulations to Team Kamikaze!!



Their winning project received a grant to sustain the project, and a trophy which will be prominently featured at Leadership West events throughout the next year.

Kudos to all the teams for their outstanding and important projects!

Shown is Team Kamikaze: Erik Miller, Tamara Caraway, John Rowan, Deanna Rada, Jessie Singer and Larry Woods.

Mayor Lyn Truitt, Class 9, Named 2009 Leadership West Alumnus of the Year.

On June 4, 2004, Leadership West honored Mayor Lyn Truitt (shown here with his friend, Maritza Etienne) as the Leadership West Alumnus of the Year for 2009. To meet the criteria, Lyn had to be an alumnus of Leadership West, must not be currently serving on the board of directors, must be a member in good standing, (That means that he has paid his dues.) He must be significantly contributing to the success of Leadership West, and visibly leading in the West Valley.

Once a grass roots community leader, Now Lyn is the Mayor of Surprise, deeply engaged and notably influential in the West Valley. He stands as one of the finest examples of a Leadership West alumnus, and one of its most vocal supporters.

As a West Valley Leader, Lyn has continued to build his real estate business, L.E. Truitt & Associates Real Estate Consulting. He remains active with the Salvation Army Board, organizes an annual drive for St. Mary's Westside Food Bank, and serves on the Board of West Valley Art

Museum. Lyn has served the local public school district in multiple ways, and he continually looks for ways to improve the lives of the citizens of Surprise.

As a LW Alumnus, Lyn articulates the mission of our organization passionately and frequently. He consistently attends Alumni and Community events, and as the first featured alumnus of the "I am Leadership West" Campaign, Lyn espoused the ideology that we should be thinking regionally in our missions to improve our communities, and work together towards raising the image of the West Valley on the regional, state and national levels.

Recognizing that the future of the West Valley depends on high-quality leadership, Lyn assists in Recruitment, recently serving as a highlighted speaker at the Leadership West Orientation Breakfast.

In his "I am Leadership West" profile, Lyn said that character and integrity are defined by what we're doing when no one is handing out accolades. He's learned that a person's defining



New Life Connection



New Life Center, a Refuge for Women and Children escaping domestic violence in the West Valley is served by Board President, **Susan Ramsey, LW Class 13** (right); Executive Director, **Paul Denial, Class 12** (center); and Board Secretary, **Kathy Knecht, Class 4** (left). Also serving on the New Life board is **Laura McBride, Class 3** and **David Schwake, Class 9**.

To learn more about New Life and the many ways you can help them help those in desperate need, please visit www.newlife.org.

What are your Leadership West connections? Where and when do you have opportunities to work and collaborate with fellow LW alumni? At what events do you bump into friends from your class and others? Please share your experiences. Help us illustrate just how active, engaged, impactful and truly connected Leadership West truly is. Send your stories to Kathy at Kathy@leadershipwest.org.

New Beginnings for Leadership West

July 1, 2009 marks the beginning of a new year for Leadership West:

New Class: XVI!

New Business Plan

New Board

New Executive Director, Kathy Knecht

New Administrative Assistant, Jessica Hovland

Watch for this newsletter for updates and further details.

Never underestimate how vital your individual engagement and support means to Leadership West. The volunteer culture of our organization remains the cornerstone of our success and the envy of similar programs. Leadership West relies on your participation and your financial support to cultivate leadership capital for the West Valley. Leadership West Matters because the West Valley matters—to ourselves, our companies, our neighbors and our children.

(Truitt Continued from Page 3)

moments are not when they're in front of the crowd, receiving the awards, but rather, when they're rolling up their shirt sleeves, grabbing a shovel, rake or paint brush, and standing side-by-side with a neighbor to help someone out.

Well, we agree with Lyn that those are indeed the qualities that define a true leader. But we gave him a snazzy plaque anyway.