

Leadership Link

FALL 2007

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Celebration of Leadership on Dec. 5
- Check out what your fellow alums are doing
- Volunteering
- Nominations for Class of 2008
- Awards

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A Leader We Admire

Leadership classes are asked to interview leaders they admire. Aileen Arsenault LS 07 chose to interview a classmate. Here is her poignant portrayal of Daowd Salih LS 07, who is from Darfur, Sudan.

He has endured more hardships in his lifetime than most of us can imagine. And yet he is not bitter. He has been forced into exile from his homeland. And yet he is not angry. His mother died when he was very young, and he does not know if his father is alive or dead. And yet he does not immerse himself in self pity. He is, as he has been his whole life, focused on helping those that cannot help themselves. He asks for nothing in return except for the opportunity to get the message of his people out to the world.



Daowd Salih

He came from nothing, and yet he is selfless and giving. He

grew up very poor, without electricity, running water, and even without shoes, and yet he focuses not on what he did not have, but on the opportunities that he did have as a child. After his mother died and his father remarried, his father placed him with other relatives to ensure that his son would get what he needed to grow and prosper. His greatest teachers were the elders in his village, where he learned the importance of community, compassion, and the resolution of issues affecting the people in the community.

Although he is Muslim, his father allowed him to attend a Christian school to ensure that he got the formal education that he needed. After spending twenty-four years completing his high school education, he was forced to leave without a diploma. And yet, he may be one of the most insightful, intelligent and articulate people I have met. Education is of the utmost importance to him. He believes that to be most effective, one must first gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them. He is of the

opinion that a person can best educate others once they have been educated themselves. He is fluent in five languages and continues his education today in International Studies.

He has served his people continuously, while in Sudan, in Egypt, and in the United States. He has worked with the German Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, International Catholic Charities and other international organizations. He is true to his culture and strives to ensure it's endurance.

I was humbled and inspired by this man who has done so much with so little. He speaks his truth quietly, clearly, and patiently, and with a passion that comes from the heart. He is a patient man. He has to be. He is the voice for those that are not allowed to speak. He is the hope from outside for those that are still on the inside, living the atrocities that we can never truly imagine and, hopefully, will never personally experience. He is a man of his community, no matter where he is in the world. His true north is in his unwavering commitment to his people, his community, and to a better world.

Oct. 3rd Alumni Breakfast Seminar - Gang Awareness

Like many other states, New Jersey has seen an increase in gang related activity. Somerset County is no exception. Gangs are involved with criminal and often violent behavior. The target age for gang members is 14 – 26, although members have been found as young as 8.

The next Leadership Somerset alumni breakfast will feature Officer Ahmed Mackey from the

Somerset County Sheriff's Department. Officer Mackey is a School Resource Officer whose work includes working with young people to influence their choices, and educating the community about gangs and gang activities.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about one of the serious challenges facing our communities.

DATE: **October 3, 2007**

PLACE: **Hilton Garden Inn**
Promenade Boulevard, Bridgewater

COST: \$ 20.00

To register, contact Ginny McCall at 908-231-7040 or email her at :

LeadershipSomerset
@co.somerset.nj.us

The Art of Leadership

Gaining Cooperation from Others

Motivating others is one of the many leadership skills needed to be successful. The Leaders Institute offers the following seven tips when seeking cooperation from others:

- * **Acknowledge the importance of other people.**
- * **Show enthusiasm and energy.**
- * **Encourage and facilitate two-way conversation.**
- * **Ask other people's opinions.**
- * **Ask questions instead of giving orders.**
- * **Show sincere gratitude.**
- * **Give strength-centered compliments.**

More information can be found at:

www.leadersinstitute.com

The life of many a person could probably be changed if someone would only make him feel important.

Dale Carnegie

“I am committed to make this dream a reality”

Daowd Salih

For more information,

go to

www.damanga.org

Leadership Class Member Testifies Before Congress on Rebuilding Darfur

Here are excerpts from Daowd Salih's testimony before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus earlier this year:

... we must also look ahead to the rebuilding of Darfur. Out of chaos and destruction, we will need to recreate communities where peace and justice will flourish. ... My vision begins with the training of teachers. I seek scholarship funds to send students out of Darfur and Chad to learn the essential skills of reading, writing, mathematics, science – and to learn how to teach what they have learned. These teachers will then return to the refugee camps of Chad, where they will help a new generation learn and build leadership within their communities.

I would like to see the first priority given to reading and writing, and the preservation of native languages. Many major tribes dwell together in the camps, including Zwara, Daju, Massaleit, Fur, Tama, Borgo tribes, as well as many others. By learning each others' languages, we can build understanding and inclusiveness. By writing these languages, we can ensure that they will be preserved. And we can preserve the heritage that each tribe brings, history and culture which have been decimated by death and displacement.

This beginning step would enable Darfur survivors to tell their stories, and to start to heal. Ideally, these stories would be recorded as an Oral History project; also the languages, culture, and history of Darfur should be recorded and documented. America is a country of people bringing their stories, seeking a better life. As education has been a key to success in this country, so can it be for the people of Darfur.

Teaching in the refugee camps is just a first step. With the basic skills mastered, Darfurian youth can then go to universities in the West to learn to be engineers, economists, lawyers, doctors, professions needed to rebuild our country.

They can learn principles of land reclamation and irrigation, so that the land can once again be habitable. As education spreads, schools can move beyond the refugee camps and into Darfur itself. Eventually, a university can be created to teach our youth at home; we look to draw on the knowledge and experience of existing institutions to help us achieve this goal...

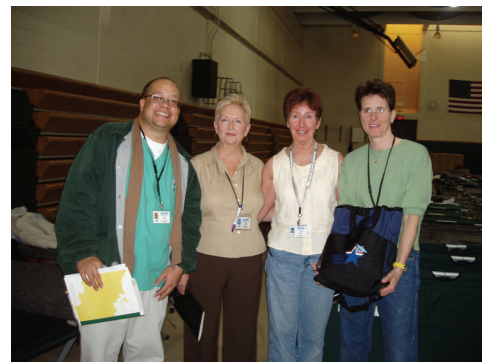
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Volunteering in the Community

John Chang LS 2005, volunteers his time as a member of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) of Somerset County. MRC units are based locally and direct programs comprised of medical, public health, and other civilian volunteers using their specialized skills and training to provide additional surge capacity and response support in their communities during emergencies. Throughout the year, MRC volunteers offer education and prevention services to improve the public health infrastructure of their neighborhoods and communities.

Somerset County MRC volunteers were deployed under the auspices of the county Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to assist at the flood shelters in Bound Brook, offering assistance ranging from translations to nursing and clinical services. They later provided services at the shelter at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) in Branchburg.

For more information about how you can participate, contact Lucille Y-Talbot at the Somerset County Health Department at 908-231-7155.



Acupuncturist John Chang LS 2005, left, attends a recent MRC training session with fellow volunteers.

Do you know....



... someone who would be a good candidate for the next Leadership class? Your encouragement to apply can make all the difference. We are currently accepting applications for the **Class of 2008**.

The deadline for applying is October 15. Applications are available online at www.leadershipsomerset.org

... a Leadership alumni you think should be recognized for leadership contributions to the community? *The 2007 Distinguished Alumni Awards* will be presented at our *Celebration of Community Leadership on December 5*.

Please contact Pat Clark at clark@co.somerset.nj.us by November 1 with award nominations.

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Let me review the goals of educating our people:

- Create hope
- Unite our people through educational opportunity
- Build for our future
- Help tribes communicate with each other
- Preserve languages and culture
- Promote English as a common language
- Help people tell their stories
- Enable participation in the government

As members of this caucus, you well understand that protecting human rights goes beyond ending atrocities, and must include restoring dignity and a stable, meaningful life. The great scholar Moses Maimonides noted that the highest form of charity is to help people to help themselves. Please help us to ask the world to open its educational doors, so that we can do just that.