

Urban Leadership Academy

2004 Grant Report

For the Albert W. Cherne Foundation
January 28, 2005

"The ULA was one of the most amazing experiences I've had. It has really gotten me motivated to be myself and to stand up for what I believe in."

*– Katie Kaszynski,
2003-4 Academy Student*

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Overview

2004 has been a good year for the ULA. Forty-Six new students attended the 10-day academy in June and August. Students, mentors, and teachers have continued to highly recommend the program. The ULA also accomplished most of its desired outcomes for 2004. Plans for new and ongoing outreach efforts promise even stronger leaders and students in 2005. The Cherne Foundation's support is helping the ULA become a better organization.

2004 Snapshot

- 70 students completed the 10-month mentoring program
- 50 of 70 students completed Service Learning projects that served about 1,000 community members per month
- 46 students completed academy training in June and August 2004
- Held first-ever Alumni Event and tracking survey
- New Service-A-Thon served urban community charities, and raised \$ [REDACTED]
- Increased community support and parent contact
- Began new marketing campaign

2004 Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives as stated in last year's Cherne proposal were:

Goals

The ULA has four goals centered on the needs it serves:

1. Develop a new generation of 21st century servant leaders who serve and reflect the growing diversity of Twin Cities urban communities
2. Help youths with leadership potential to understand their unique motivation, talent, and capacity to lead
3. Identify and serve Twin Cities urban communities' unmet service needs
4. Improve the connection of religious institutions to multicultural and urban youths

Outcomes/Objectives

Students will:

- Understand their unique motivation, talent, and capacity to lead
- Improve their leadership skills
- Improve connections to people of races, cultures, and income classes other than their own
- Learn how to serve their communities
- Pursue seminary and Christian ministry opportunities

Why Participate in the ULA?

"It gives you the opportunity to be a leader and step up."

*— Brynn Bannach
2004 Academy
Student*

"There isn't a program offered anywhere like this; it addresses critical needs, such as racial reconciliation and learning who you are."

*— Karen McKinney,
2004 Academy Lead
Teacher*

"It was fun. I just kept coming back for more."

*— Johnny Diggins
2004 Academy
Student*

Urban communities will:

- Gain talented and diverse new leaders
- Build new relationships across racial, cultural, and socio-economic lines
- Benefit from service projects that target their explicit needs

Mentoring will help students:

- Become better leaders
- Implement well-tailored service projects for their communities

Progress Towards Goals and Outcomes

The ULA created an outcome-based work plan for 2004 that quantified goals and outcomes into readily measurable results based largely on student, mentor, parent, and community surveys. A copy of the work plan appears as an attachment to this document. 2004 results appear below.

Surveys

Most results from students, mentors, and staff surveys matched or nearly matched expectations; several exceeded expectations. Everyone agreed that the ULA helped each student “become a better leader.” Parent and community member surveys are still being collected. Results should be complete later in 2005.

Constituent (Student) Outcomes

Ninety-Four percent of all respondents believed the program helped students become better leaders and that Service Learning projects taught students how to serve their communities better. Responses varied from an average of 3.3-3.5 on a 4-point scale. A similar percentage also believed the ULA experience helped students understand their unique motivation, talent, and capacity to lead: 91% of all students, 85% of mentors and staff.

Eighty-Five percent of students, mentors, and staff agreed that the ULA improved students’ leadership skills and their connection to people of races, cultures, and income classes other than their own. This result exceeded expectations for mentors and staff, but was slightly lower than the 90% for students predicted by the outcome-based plan. This was the only area where student responses fell short of predictions.

Constituent (Communities) Outcomes

Although results from community and parent surveys are not yet complete, the responses from student, mentor and staff surveys indicate success achieving community outcomes. Over 90% of these responses affirmed that communities are gaining talented and diverse new leaders; improving connections across

“I believe that it definitely helped the community and helped the students put their lives in perspective.”

—*Jocelyn Broyles*
Mentor to Two
2003-4 Students

“The reward was spending time with the girls and building the relationship.”

Kianna’s service project formed a dance group for 5th-9th grade girls.

—*Kianna Boatswain*
2003-4 Mentoring
Student

racial, cultural, and socio-economic lines; and benefiting from Service Learning projects. The average response was 3.3 on a 4-point scale.

Service Learning Projects

Fifty of 70 students who participated in the 10-month mentoring period during 2003-4 completed their Service Learning projects, which served about 1,000 community members monthly. These results met the outcome-based plan's predictions.

Organization Outcomes

The ULA also met most of its desired organizational outcomes:

- Doubled the amount of contributors from outside the Eli Lilly Foundation, from 64 in 2003 to more than 120 through September 2004. Significant support has come from seven community sponsors, including Cherne.
- Provided contact opportunities with Christian educational institutions and ministry organizations, devoting a mentoring meeting in January and reserving time during the June and August academies
- Sent evaluations to all community participants and parents (responses will not be complete until later in 2005)
- Held the first-ever Alumni Event in May 2004
- Contacted and tracked alumni, researching contact information for all 226 alumni and reaching 50. These results are less than predicted, but are respectable for first-year tracking activities.

New Activities and Milestones

2004 presented many new opportunities for the ULA to grow.

Alumni Event

The first-ever Alumni Event in May was an important first step towards tracking students beyond the program's conclusion and uncovering long-term results. The ULA wants to provide additional benefits to alumni, such as professional mentors, student support networks, and post-secondary educational assistance. More than 20 alumni attended the event. Surveys revealed their favorite memories to be the academy's simulations games, arts performances, and meeting new diverse people from across the metro area. Almost all alumni have kept in touch with their mentors beyond the 10-month mentoring period.

Alumni are demonstrating strong leadership. For instance, Katherine Reynolds, a 2003 alumnus, is a member of the National Honor Society and participates on the Link Crew, a high school club that offers senior mentors for freshmen. "I feel renewed confidence in myself since completing the ULA," she said.

The ULA will repeat the event in 2005 and plans to double attendance. Alumni interns will continue tracking past students through 2005.

"We met twice: Once to make Valentines and once to distribute them and to sing songs for the residents of a nursing home. We really made some connections."

*—Carl Nyloft, 2003-4
Mentoring Student*

"The ULA made me think of what I am here to do and really changed me for the better."

*—Mao Vang, 2003
Alumnus*

Service-A-Thon

The Service-A-Thon was a new event in 2004. Its goal was to increase community involvement in the ULA. Students spent four hours on the second Wednesday of the June and August academies working for community service interests. Some students cleaned streets. Others helped seniors at nursing homes or cared for small children at daycare centers. Family, friends, church members, and businesses contributed pledges for students' work. The event introduced over 200 new supporters and raised over \$█████ towards the cost of leadership training.

Increased Community Participation

The ULA improved its relationship to the community this year. Nine new community organizations sent students to the 2004 academy as a result of more personal recruitment efforts that included phone calls and site visits. Parents and over 60 participating community organizations had more opportunity for input through new surveys measuring program outcomes (described above in "Progress Towards Goals and Outcomes"). Two organizations are pursuing partnerships with the ULA that will increase student applications and operational efficiency (see the 2005 proposal narrative for more).

Vendor In-Kind Contributions

The ULA arranged several vendor discounts on items and services for the program in 2004. Providers of academy materials offered discounts of up to 40% below market prices on items such as t-shirts and texts. Hamline University donated space for the site of the August academy. The vendor discounts will continue in 2005.

Unanticipated Results: Outcome Plan

The ULA learned that its outcome-based plan was too detailed to measure without difficulty. Students were sometimes reluctant to complete surveys that were three pages long. The plan's increased size caused staff to lose track of desired outcomes as they interacted with students. Staff also had difficulty collecting and analyzing the greater amount of data the plan required. The ULA has simplified its outcome and evaluation plan for next year (see 2005 proposal narrative).

Sharing Results

The ULA shares evaluation results through staff presentations and student/mentor testimonies on several occasions during the year:

- Annual Banquet
- Alumni Event
- Academy Launching Ceremonies (June and August)
- Mentor Meetings (held monthly throughout the school year)

"I believe my son is getting more comfortable with being a leader and understanding roles leaders can play."

*—Parent of a
2004 Student*

"Students realized and learned how to do things differently when they don't turn out as planned; that is, the numbers weren't as high as they wanted, but they didn't give up."

*—Melissa Odegard
Mentor to Two
2003-4 Students*

Financials

A copy of the 2003 audited report, the original 2003 budget, and an unaudited 2004 balance and income-and-expense statement through September serve as the ULA's budget and financial statement for this grant period.

Conclusion

The Cherne Foundation's \$█████ grant has helped 70 students complete their mentorship in 2004 and another 46 students gain leadership training in the June and August academies. The work of these up-and-coming leaders is meeting urban communities' unmet needs for service as well as society's need for multicultural and multi-socio-economic class diversity.

The ULA thanks the Cherne Foundation for its support.

“She definitely made an impact on people’s lives!”

—Becky Gonzalez, Mentor to a 2003-4 Student