California Association of Directors of Activities


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Calendar your year
January - June 2018

Thank you
The role of a leader is not to come up with all the great ideas. The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen. 

Simon Sinek

CADA is that environment. During a recent CADA Board Meeting, the board spent some time talking about why CADA and why CADA is the best environment for student leaders across the state and nation. Board members were given 3-5 minutes to explain why CADA means so much to them. Here are some of the responses:

- CADA believes in giving students a voice.
- CADA teaches students and adults to reach out to those who need help and guidance.
- CADA believes what I believe...every student is capable of finding their why, passion and voice and has the power to take action to impact their school and community in a positive way.
- CADA helps create memories. One event or club or team or activity can make a difference in a student’s life.
- CADA helps students find the best version of themselves.
- CADA is trying to change the world one student at a time.
- CADA shows adults and students that activities is the only place where every student has an equal opportunity.

After hearing all these wonderful things about CADA and activities from Board Members, I thought I would take this question one step forward. I decided to contact former ASB/Leadership students. I was able to get feedback from all types of past ASB/Leadership students from college students to working adults. Here is what they had to say about the value of middle and high school activities and leadership:

- ASB was not anything I expected. It taught me a bunch of valuable lessons that didn’t just help me while I was in high school, but those lessons still help me to this day.
- ASB was a group of leaders put together to make the school a better place.
- Everyone in college is always complaining how busy they are except for students who were in leadership in middle school and high school.
- I work at sporting events at my university and recently I showed up early to work (as I was trained in ASB) and my boss was there. When the rest of my fellow student employees showed up late my boss fired them all. Therefore, ASB saved my job.
- Although I was only in ASB for one year, I learned more that year than I did in all my 4 years of high school.

As you can see... WHAT WE DO MATTERS! So when you are the last one to leave campus at night, remember WHAT WE DO MATTERS! When your alarm goes off early Saturday morning for a school event, remember WHAT WE DO MATTERS! When you wake up at 3am thinking about the pep rally that day, remember WHAT WE DO MATTERS!

Thank you for all you do for middle and high school students... what YOU do matters!
What is the fastest, easiest way to add a pop of color on your campus without using tape? Tinted stretch wrap (a.k.a. saran wrap), dye tinted corn starch, or insulation foam board are what you need!

TINTED STRETCH WRAP
There are many uses of the stretch wrap, including wrapping around poles to cover an area from pole to pole, the back of the stadium bleachers, or to keep posters up when the wind comes whipping down the plains.

The best thing about this stretch wrap is that there is no need to use tape to keep it together and the use of a letter opener can zip it off within seconds for disposal. Laura Saldana of Westmont High School recently used spray paint on the clear wrap for a quickly made, huge poster.

To paint classroom windows for holidays or advertising, try using the static cling. Roll the static cling wrap down the window with a bit of overlap at the top and then slice the wrap with a box cutter or letter opener for a tight clean window fit. Once the wrap is in place you will be able to use various brushes and tempera paint for your desired effect. No more staff members complaining about paint tears under their window because the students didn’t clean the squeegee or forgot to clean off the ad weeks after the event is over. Clean up is as easy as peeling a corner, yanking down, wadding into a ball and shooting for 2 points!

Where can you find stretch or cling wrap? We stumbled upon it by accident while looking for 900 paper bags for Prom when our local grocery store wasn’t willing to donate that many to us. We found the company Uline, which sells bulk items, offers 2-day shipping and sells 4 rolls per box of the same color of the stretch wrap.
DYE TINTED CORN STARCH

An MHS art teacher suggested mixing cornstarch, water, and fondant food coloring to create a nice mix of colors to paint on the asphalt with brushes rather than chalk. GENIUS! WOW, this idea changed my students’ lives. No more bits of chalk floating around in random drawers in the classroom. “But chalk is sold at the dollar store and easy to use.” Yep, it is. It might even be funny to see the students return from using chalk with dust all over their clothes, hands, and face to then search for band aids because they tried to get that nub of a piece of chalk to work until their fingers bled, because of the tight budget. If this sounds familiar, put the chalk down and head to the grocery store instead.
CORN STARCH INSTRUCTIONS
BY MHS STUDENT VAL

1. General rule is 1:1 ratio of cornstarch to water but it’s okay to have more water (more cornstarch makes it very thick and hard, water makes it more transparent but easy to paint).
2. Suggest starting with some water, then slowly pouring in corn starch as you stir (works better with 2 people; if you’re by yourself, then pour, stir, and repeat).
3. Small increments of cornstarch at a time works best but if you’re rushing, then no worries. Pour all the cornstarch and stir quickly so it doesn’t get too hard and stuck.
4. Don’t start with too much water because you can always add more to your batch if you think you need it to be thinner or you need more dye.
5. Add dye and mix; add about 3 drops per small corn starch container used (if you use tempera paint, make sure that it is washable or it will take A LOT longer for the words/picture to fade/wash away).

INSULATION FOAM BOARD

Activities Directors are often well known at their local hardware store. When I walk in, Ruben sees me and asks, “Rally time again? What’s the challenge?” I think he likes the challenge of helping repurpose items for an activities program or fix structural faults. This process helped us discover insulation foam boards (4 ft. x 8 ft. Polyisocyanurate Rigid Foam Insulation Board or rigid sheathing). And we have now given up dumpster diving for cardboard boxes! The use of these boards is easy. First, peel off the silver coating, then trace or freehand an outline on the foam, next paint it with tempera paint and finally use a hot knife to slice through the foam like butter. But caution! Don’t use spray paint as it eats away at that foam.

“Rally time again? What’s the challenge?” I think he likes the challenge of helping repurpose items for an activities program or fix structural faults.
Are you ready to attend the Oh, The Places You’ll Go With CADA Convention? What places have you and your students gone with CADA?

You may have started the school year attending an Advisor Conference or an Area Student Leadership Conference. Attending these events prepares you and your students with the tools to enhance and improve the culture and climate on campus.

So, who should attend the CADA Convention with you? Bring your team! That means your Administrators, Activities Director, Athletic Director, Class Advisors, Finance Clerk and support staff.

Who should attend a Pre-Con Session? This is a great opportunity to get some in-depth learning. The pre-cons take place on Wednesday, February 28 from 9am-12pm and you can choose one of these three:

- **School Culture** – Phil Boyte will lead this interactive session full of possibilities on what drives your culture and how to get your staff on board to create a school that feels so good that no one wants to leave.

- **FCMAT** – Focus on information necessary for today’s school leaders in maintaining fiscal accountability, legal compliance, and accuracy within student body accounts.

- **Technology** – Dedicated to tech whether you are looking for grading tools, managing social media or looking to increase student engagement through social media and other online tools. Also, members of Facebook will be sharing their work on how to empower student voice on social media.

Start your course of study to earn the Master Activity Advisor (MAA) certificate. Enroll in the MAA 101: Foundation for Student Activities course Wednesday afternoon. If you’ve already completed the Foundations course, a number of additional courses are also available. Plus, MAA participants can add-on MAA credit in conjunction with the School Culture or FCMAT Pre-Con Session. Pre-registration is required for MAA courses. Check out cada1.org/certification for more information.

Networking with other CADA Members will start Wednesday night when all areas will meet in the Lex Nightclub. Dinner will be served in the Ballroom before the event. Thursday night our members will converge at the Vendor Hall to check out products and services available from over 140 vendors as well as get a bite to eat, followed by the traditional Reno bowling party. Who can pass up going bowling, dancing and networking?

It’s GOT a NEW Name – The CADA Scholarship Run will be a 5K run or a 1K walk/run for our members. Thanks to a new sponsorship, all proceeds from the event will go into the CADA Scholarship Fund which supports sending our students to CADA/CASL leadership training events.

**YOU’LL FIND US AT THE INTERSECTION OF ACHIEVEMENT AND INSPIRATION.**

In class rings, yearbooks, graduation and more, Herff Jones is the trusted leader in student achievement and we are here to help you celebrate your success.

[WWW.HERFFJONES.COM](http://www.herffjones.com)
The highlights of our Conventions have always been our Keynote Speakers and the lineup this year is no different. Chad Hymas, Jason Kotecki and Pat Quinn will amaze us with their stories. Check out your conference brochure for more information on these speakers visit: cada1.org/stateconvention.

The workshops will help you plan and execute activities on your campus, learn leadership qualities that will enhance your students’ character, develop activities that promote a positive campus culture and climate and find lessons to take back to teach. There will be workshops designed to meet your needs. In addition, there will be Featured Speakers, CADA Slam and Meet the Pros/Leadership Lessons.

Are you new to the CADA Convention? If so, we will have the perfect session that we encourage all our New to Convention to attend. You will be connected with CADA members from your area who have a passion to mentor and will give you ideas to make the best of your Convention experience; plus you will be able to visit the Vendor Hall before other members.

We encourage our students to make a difference in our communities and at CADA you will have that chance with our Children’s Book Drive. We are asking each member to bring a children’s book to Convention. At your area registration table you will receive a book label to personalize with a message to place in your book. The books will be donated to various places within each area. Let your Area Coordinator know if you have a suggestion of where to donate.

So many reasons to attend the CADA Convention and bring your team. Have you registered and made your hotel and travel arrangements? If not, today is the day. Visit cada1.org/stateconvention to register and find additional information.

CONVENTION DEADLINES:

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<td>Lodging Group Rate (GSR)</td>
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<td>Regular Registration Closes</td>
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The workshops will help you plan and execute activities on your campus, learn leadership qualities that will enhance your students’ character, develop activities that promote a positive campus culture and climate and find lessons to take back to teach.
AREA EVENTS

**AREA A**

**ALLISON GADEKE**  
AREA A COORDINATOR  
Sierra Middle School  
areaA@cada1.org

**Counties:** Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Modoc, Trinity, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Lassen, Colusa, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter, Nevada, Yuba, Butte, Yolo, Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Mono, Contra Costa, Tuolumne, Amador, Alpine & Calaveras.

**May 1, 2018 Student Conference**  
Held annually at the Modesto Centre Plaza, this end-of-year student conference is the perfect place to bring your new officers to get them ready for the upcoming school year.  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaA*

**Leadership Development Days:**  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/LDD*  
- **December 11, 2017**  
  East Union High School (HS delegates)  
- **December 12, 2017**  
  Bethany Elementary School (MS delegates)  
- **January 24, 2018**  
  Summerville High School (MS/HS delegates)  
- **January 25, 2018**  
  Sutter Union High School (8th-12th grade delegates)  
- **February 1, 2018**  
  Ygnacio Valley High School (MS delegates)  
- **March 7, 2018**  
  Arden Middle School (MS delegates)

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**AREA B**

**LARRY LOPEZ**  
AREA B COORDINATOR  
Del Mar High School  
areaB@cada1.org

**Counties:** Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda & Santa Clara.

**November 20, 2017 Student Conference**  
James Logan High School  
8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Featuring keynotes from Scott Backovich, Kevin Laue, and Keith Hawkins, leadership workshops, activity ideas, continental breakfast and lunch included.  
*Registration deadline: November 6, 2017*  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaB*

**Leadership Development Days:**  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/LDD*  
- **January 19, 2018**  
  Miller Middle School (MS delegates)

Interested in hosting an LDD at your school site?  
Visit cada1.org/LDD and click on “Host an LDD” in the left menu for all the details.

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**AREA C**

**LESLIE LOEWEN**  
AREA C COORDINATOR  
Fresno Unified School District  
areaC@cada1.org

**Counties:** Mariposa, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern & Inyo.

**December 5, 2017 Advisor Conference**  
Fresno Elks Lodge  
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Featuring a full day of workshops and presenters with lunch included.  
MAA 205-Personal Leadership Development is available as an add-on to this conference. Participants in the MAA course will continue with their training from 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.  
*Registration deadline: November 28, 2017*  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaC*

**Leadership Development Days:**  
*Info & registration: cada1.org/LDD*  
- **April 11, 2018**  
  Hanford West High School (HS delegates)

Interested in hosting an LDD at your school site?  
Visit cada1.org/LDD and click on “Host an LDD” in the left menu for all the details.
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT DAYS

VISIT CADA1.ORG/LDD
OR CONTACT SANDRA KURLAND
LEADERSHIP@CADA1.ORG

$25 PER STUDENT

LEAD BY EDUCATORS WITH MORE THAN 10,000 HOURS IN LEADERSHIP TRAINING EXPERIENCE, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT DAYS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BECOME INSPIRED TO CHANGE THE WORLD AND LEARN THE PRACTICAL SKILLS NEEDED TO MAKE THOSE CHANGES

BE SURE TO CHECK THE RESOURCE LIBRARY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL OF THESE GREAT RESOURCES THAT ARE JUST CLICKS AWAY!

www.cada1.org/resourcelibrary
José Duenas, Area D Coordinator
Balboa Middle School
areaD@cada1.org

Counties: Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara & Ventura.

November 7, 2017
Middle School & High School Student Conference
Ventura Fairgrounds
8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Featuring a keynote from Harriet Turk, two workshop sessions, SWAPS with CASL State Board members, and lunch.
Registration deadline: November 1, 2017
Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaD

Leadership Development Days:
Info & registration: cada1.org/LDD
- December 6, 2017
Pioneer Valley High School (MS delegates)
- January 23, 2018
Pajaro Valley High School (MS delegates)

Interested in hosting an LDD at your school site? Visit cada1.org/LDD and click on “Host an LDD” in the left menu for all the details.

Geniel Moon, Area F Coordinator
Murrieta Valley High School
areaF@cada1.org

Counties: San Bernardino, Riverside & Orange.

November 14, 2017
High School Student Conference
Disneyland Hotel
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Featuring a keynote from Tyler Durman, three sessions per student, advisor session, continental breakfast and boxed lunch.
Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaF

May 2, 2017
High School Student Conference
Coto Valley Country Club
This end-of-year student conference is the perfect place to bring your new officers to get them ready for the upcoming school year.
Info & registration: cada1.org/AreaF
Bruce Woods
19938 N. 94th Way
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
(480) 349-4305

Raising Student Voice and Participation (R.S.V.P) is a student engagement program for leadership class-talking about what they want to see happen at school and how they can make that happen. Contact Sandra Kurland with the California Association of Student Leaders at 619-957-9107 or Leaderships@calsal.org to get your school RSVP-ready.
Counts: San Diego & Imperial.

Leadership Development Days:

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<td>Cesar Chavez Middle School (MS delegates)</td>
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<td>Vista Innovation and Design (MS delegates)</td>
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<td>• April 24, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Marcos High School (HS delegates)</td>
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Partner Organizations:

- California School Boards Association
  November 30 - December 2, 2017
  San Diego, CA
  If you have a student board member on your local school board, look into sending them to the CSBA Annual Education Conference, along with your school board members. CADA’s Sandra Kurland oversees the student strand of this event. And tell your school board members to stop by the CADA booth, say hi to our representatives and learn all about how CADA/CASL supports a positive school culture & climate on your campus.

- California State Athletic Directors’ Association
  April 18-22, 2018
  Hyatt Regency, SF Airport, Burlingame, CA
  CADA will be present at this annual conference. Have your Athletic Director stop by the CADA booth, say hi to our representatives and learn how athletics and activities working together can support a positive school culture & climate on your campus.

- National Conference on Student Activities (sponsored by the National Association of Workshop Directors) CADA Board members Kevin Fairman, Debi Weiss, Denise Van Doorn, and Jeff Culver will be in attendance at this year’s national conference in Spokane, Washington. Area H members, see you there!

- NatStuCo (formerly National Association of Student Councils-NASC) National Conference
  June 25-27, 2018
  Wayzata High School, Plymouth, Minnesota
  Students can apply to join the California delegation at this summer’s national conference. For information and application, visit cada1.org/NASC.

December 1-3, 2017

The National Student Council Conference is a unique opportunity for student council members and advisers to meet with their peers and enhance their leadership skills. National Student Council (NatStuCo) member schools receive special discounts to attend.

This year’s National Student Council Conference will be hosted by Wayzata High School in Plymouth, MN, and plans to bring together over a thousand student leaders and advisers from across the country for an inspirational three-day event.

June 25-28, 2018

Applications and a $450 deposit are due March 1, 2018
Remaining balance of $450 due May 1, 2018
Apply online at www.cada1.org

For more information, contact Sandra Kurland
NatStuCo California
leadership@cada1.org
CADA gratefully acknowledges the contributions of our Medallion Sponsors. Their generosity is essential in helping the CADA organization provide useful, high quality services to CADA Members and all the students of California. Please show your support by using their products and services.

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- Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament
- My Name My Story
- Six Flags
- Street Talk
- Tyler Durman

### Bronze Level Sponsors

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- Joe Beckman
- Keith Hawkins
- Kevin Laue
- Scott Backovich
- Six Flags
- Street Talk
- Tyler Durman

- Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament
- My Name My Story
- T-Graphics West
- The Event Group
- WOW! Events
Grading one’s leadership class is always a struggle. Much of what we see is subjective, and it is hard to quantify that. However, there are lessons, reflections, projects, and writing assignments that you can assign students to help them assess their own growth as leaders, and Google Classroom is a great platform to help you organize those assignments. Google Classroom is not an LMS (learning management system) or CMS (course management system). It’s really more of a Google Drive management system.

By adding students into a Google Classroom period, you can assign them short questions they can respond to at the start of class. A good way to use the “Create Question” feature is to have students reflect on a leadership quote, an issue that the class might be facing, or to post an idea for a new event on campus. You can also utilize the “Create Assignment” option and then assign students a document you would like them to fill out. You are given the option to create copies of the document for each student so that they can fill out their own copy. Or, if there is a message you need to send out you can post using the “Create Announcement” feature. All of these types of posts are then organized into the classroom stream.

All of the assignments are then organized and grouped in your Google Classroom.

BY LINDSEY CHARRON
CADA PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR
HORACE ENSIGN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
pic@cada1.org
All of the assignments are then organized and grouped in your Google Classroom period for easy access. The great thing about using this platform is that students can post in your classroom as well.

If students download the Google Classroom app, they will even receive notifications on their phones when new items are posted. It truly is a great management piece for your leadership class, and it helps give the students more ownership of their events. If you’re interested, there are many tutorial videos on YouTube that you can search which go over many of the functions in Google Classroom. Give it a try if your school has access to Google Apps for Education!
An attitude of gratitude is one of the most contagious impacts that our student leaders can have in our schools. With the holiday season coming up and service as a focus, now is the perfect time to create some activities that inspire gratitude and teach simple lessons like how to write a thank you note. Gratitude is a practice that we need to teach and model daily to our student leaders and require of them when working with others. A sometimes odd item on my syllabus is a pack of thank you notes, I make an effort to point this out to my students and their parents at Back to School Night. I was raised writing thank you notes and I am still surprised how many students in high school have never written a formal thank you note. We usually teach a lesson early in the year about what should and shouldn’t be in a thank you note: timeliness guidelines, and most importantly, how to make your note genuine and authentic.

We’ve worked to add gratitude into our daily practices and activities so that thank you notes follow each activity that we do. We make an effort to thank our secretaries who schedule our facilities for us, our teachers who chaperone, guest speakers who visit, and our custodians who work with us to clean up after our events. We’ve made an extra effort to make our bookkeeper and athletic secretary feel appreciated and know how much of a critical role they play to help us in all that we do. A simple thank you note can go a long way in securing that teacher, administrator or support staff’s help in the future. If you are still not sure that gratitude is a key pillar for your leadership program, did you know that research shows that gratitude can have profound and positive effects on our health, can reduce anxiety and envy? Plus, let’s be honest, if Oprah does it daily, we must be onto something!

Here are some ideas to help you up your gratitude game:

**Book: A Simple Act of Gratitude by John Kralik** - This book is about a man who sets out on a quest to write a thank you note each day for a year and he starts from a place of challenge and struggle. This is a rare memoir that is touching, has an immediately accessible message and is a simple storytelling of an ordinary man. Kralik sets a believable, doable example of how to live a miraculously good life and teaches the power of gratitude along the way.

**Thank-O’-Lantern** - Hard to remember to write that thank you note? We take a bright neon Jack-O’-Lantern, usually a dollar or two and in a glowing shade of orange turn it into our Thank-O’-Lantern and have it visible with thank you notes in it as a friendly reminder and easy access to thank you notes.

**Personalized ASB Thank You Note** - Take a group picture of your ASB team, send it off to Costco or a printing company and give special personalized thank you notes with a picture on it to those who really went above and beyond to help you out.

**Thank you Thursday** - Making a committed day, or time, and a routine of gratitude helps to instill gratitude as an everyday practice. We also start most classes with positive shout outs that often reflect our gratitude and also helps me as the teacher to take a moment, slow down and see all that we do in a positive way instead of jumping into my To Do list or the fast pace tempo of an ASB class.

**Soul Pancake Video - An Experiment in Gratitude | The Science of Happiness** - An awesome video where people write genuine, in-depth thank you notes and then call them up and share their letter. Watch the profound impact that this exercise has and then write your own! Find it on YouTube and share it with your class.

**Friendsgiving** - I’ve saved one of my most cherished activities for last. A tradition I started at my previous school (and is still in place) has carried over to my new school. A week or two before Thanksgiving my ASB students and I all divide up all our favorite Thanksgiving dishes. I recruit a parent or two to help with the turkey and ham, we set out long tables Harry Potter style in the cafeteria, make some decorations, put on a nice outfit and come into school one evening and have a proper Thanksgiving feast with our ASB family that includes cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, green bean casserole and of course, a whole lot of gratitude!

**Gratitude, Essential for Every Great Leader**

By Vanessa Tharp
CADA Area H Member
Skyline High School
tharpv@issaquah.wednet.edu
In June, the newly elected CASL State Board convened for the very first time in San Diego, California and ever since then, has been working unquestionably hard on all things CASL! Comprised of a group of dedicated and passionate student leaders, this year’s board contains an undeniable capacity to effect widespread change and promote social good and we can not wait for you and your students to see what we have in store!

The CASL State Conference is undoubtedly the largest responsibility of the board, with conference planning already underway. After months of research, idea-sharing, brainstorming, and careful deliberation, we have curated a conference message which we see as fundamental to the life of any student leader.

A commonality discernable amongst student leaders is the unfettered drive we contain to effectuate social good. Yet, when performing acts of goodness, even the most motivated individuals can lose sight of what’s truly important — doing the most good we can do. Effective altruism is a movement that embodies the groundbreaking revelation that doing good is simply not enough, and we as architects of change should harness our efforts toward doing good, but better. It is based upon the concept of leading with the heart and the mind by pairing our indubitable passion for helping others with careful reasoning and analytical thinking. Effective altruism refers to social good enacted in regards to the quality of our impact, not the quantity. By adopting the mindset and virtues of an effective altruist, we are able to generate better outcomes than ever before when it comes to aiding and serving others with the betterment of society in mind.

Reaching a consensus on effective altruism was seemingly innate for the CASL State Board, and we are employing our transparent enthusiasm for an inherent belief in effective altruism to plan and facilitate CASL’s most awe-inspiring conference yet! We, just like the thousands of student leaders scattered all throughout California, believe passionately in our formidable ability to effect and generate societal-oriented goodness, and practicing effective altruism allows us to maximize the overall impact we are able to create for others.

We now begin the journey to incorporate this message through our conference curriculum in Area Meetings, Intrastates, Workshops, Meet the Pros and our Service Learning Opportunity. We can not wait to see you in April at the 2018 CASL State Conference in Ontario as we aspire to Do Good Better at The CASL Startup.
I WISH MY TEACHER KNEW

by Kyle Schwartz


BY ALLISON GADEKE
CADA AREA A COORDINATOR
SIERRA MIDDLE SCHOOL
AreaA@cada1.org

On a recent outing to Vroman’s Bookstore in Pasadena, I happened to spot a brightly covered book decorated in images of pastel colored note cards. My curiosity was piqued when I read the title, “I wish my teacher knew: How One Question Can Change Everything For Our Kids.”

Upon randomly opening the book, I found three ideas that I could implement into my classroom immediately. I decided the book was worth a read and headed to the cashier. The next afternoon on my flight home, I decided to take another look inside the cover. I was immediately hooked. At the end of the flight, I found myself wanting to read more and more. Schwartz’s book is filled with personal stories of interactions with students that noted their unique situations and needs for teachers who cared. The author goes into detail with suggestions and solutions for how to improve school culture and climate. Perhaps what resonated with me most, though, was her classroom where opportunities exist for a quality education for all students. Every student leaves each day with a feeling they are valued and respected.

In her book, Kyle Schwartz addresses a number of situations all too familiar in our classrooms. She speaks about a variety of issues that affect our students and, thus, become important topics for us to address with insight and compassion. For example, she discusses the impact of immigration status, poverty, family dynamics, abuse, grief, and more upon our students’ ability to learn. She also applies Carol Dweck’s research and understanding about mindset into a section about building self-efficacy into the classroom.

Throughout the book, Schwartz offers practical and easy solutions to continue to encourage learning and promote our students’ self confidence despite the often unpredictable challenges they face. For example, she relates the tale of having her students answer the following writing prompt, “I wish my teacher knew …” Upon reading this, I applied the idea to my own classes. The feedback I received from my kids was enlightening and extremely informative. I learned about a variety of student needs – including glasses, a hug, and a pencil, to fears about public speaking, homelessness, and feeling irrelevant. Applying that simple idea has transformed the relationship I have with my kids this year.

Another idea the author employs is creating Welcome Kits for her classroom. Again, we adopted the idea at our school. My Leadership students now make simple “Welcome to Sierra” bags that contain a t-shirt, planner, highlighter, pencil, and a handwritten note saying “you belong here and we are happy to have you as part of the Sierra Spartan Family.” The smiles on the faces of the recipients have made every effort worthwhile.

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My only regret in reading this book is I did not discover it 26 years ago when I started my teaching career. It is packed with digestible research, practical ideas, and incredible conversation starters to use with students and parents. I highly recommend it as a resource and hope you find it as helpful and informational as I do!
Here is the third in our series of fun days to infuse into your school calendar. For more great ideas (multiple choices for each day), check out daysoftheyear.com, checkiday.com and nationaldaycalendar.com. These sites include a brief explanation of each special day. See Issues 116.4 and 117.1 in the CADA Newsletter archives at www.cada1.org under Advisor Resources for Calendaring ideas for August through December.
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CADA PROGRAMS:
Advisor Trainings, Student Conferences, Leadership Camps, Resources, Curriculum, State Convention & more visit:

CADA Central
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Soquel, CA 95073

FOR UPDATES & CONFERENCE INFORMATION VISIT US AT: WWW.CADA1.ORG

2017-2018 Calendar of Events

2017
NOV 7 AREA D – SOUTHERN STUDENT CONFERENCE VENTURA FAIRGROUNDS
NOV 14 AREA F – HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CONFERENCE DISNEYLAND HOTEL – ANAHEIM
NOV 20 AREA B – MS & HS STUDENT CONFERENCE JAMES LOGAN HIGH SCHOOL
DEC 5 AREA C – ADVISOR CONFERENCE FRESNO ELKS Lodge

2018
JAN 20 CADA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE DAVE & BUSTER’S – HOLLYWOOD & HIGHLAND
FEB 6 AREA E S.T.A.R.S. CONFERENCE KELLOGG WEST – CAL POLY POMONA
FEB 28 – MAR 3 CADA STATE CONVENTION GRAND SIERRA RESORT – RENO
APRIL 5 – 7 CASL STATE CONFERENCE – MIDDLE SCHOOL DOUBLETREE – ONTARIO, CA
APRIL 7 – 9 CASL STATE CONFERENCE – HIGH SCHOOL DOUBLETREE – ONTARIO, CA
MAY 1 AREA A – MS & HS STUDENT CONFERENCE MODESTO CENTRE PLAZA
MAY 2 AREA F – HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE COTO VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB