



REPORT

From the office of the...

CLAY Coordinator

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Jonathan Davis
SUBJECT: CLAY Report #5
DATE: Thursday June 30th, 2016

UPDATE

Between the dates of May 17th-19th 2016, 158 young student leaders joined 56 McMaster volunteers at Camp Muskoka for the 25th annual CLAY Conference, and I truthfully couldn't be more happy or proud of how everything went. Details follow below:

SERVICE USAGE

Outreach:

- Highest number of delegate registrations in the history of conference (sorry Ryan...) with 158 total registrants.
- Partnered with the Crown Ward program in Hamilton to bring 45 Crown Ward Students to CLAY at no cost to students.
- Only 51/158 (32%) students paid in full for CLAY this year - 107 students (67% of attendees) were paid for via partnerships with community organizations, partnerships with schools, or offered bursary by the service.
- 90/158 (57%) of attendees came from the Hamilton area, similar to last year.
- 23/158 delegates were CLAY returners this year, compared to 6/152 last year (YAY, good job Ryan!).
- Shoutout to Nicole Falzone and Rabeena Obaidullah (Outreach Coordinators) who worked tirelessly to bring so many students to CLAY, and to afford opportunities to so many students who otherwise would not have them.

Events:

- Removed traditional CLAY Connector from the weekend's programming - despite tradition, poor feedback from previous years led to this decision. I would further emphasize that this time was better spent used for sessions.
- Created the first conference SET manual.
- Brought two great speakers Joel Hilchey and Alexandra Orlando (CLAY's first female speaker) to Muskoka - they were great!
- Detailed Events feedback from both staff and delegates can be found below.

- Super proud of Megan O'Brien and Sarah Freeman for creating some of the best conference events I have ever seen, and for creating a super positive experience for SET team members throughout the weekend.

Sessions:

- Took on a total revamp of sessions this year: merging of two sessions and redefining of scope to create a Group Dynamics session, creation of a Social Awareness session (focusing on topics of intersectionality, power, and privilege, amongst others), created new activities for the Support & Wellness and Trust & Risk Sessions, and redefined the scope and programming for the Empowerment Session.
- Generally redefined session programming to treat students more as adults. Results were very positive (as seen in the feedback below) - I am very proud of all the hard work Taylor Bridgens and Rachel Persaud put in as Sessions Coordinators to bring such a big, positive change to CLAY. With the number of students returning to CLAY increasing year-to-year, these kinds of changes between years can make the returning experience so much more special for students.

Sponsorship & Fundraising:

- Total S&F funds raised total \$5,611.79!
- This equates to about 39 camp fees.
- Raised money through numerous novel and traditional fundraising and sponsorship initiatives (CLAY Coffeehouse, 1280 hot dog sales, GoFundMe campaign.....tattoos.....)
- Faculties and faculty societies were very gracious donors - I believe contacting them very early in the 2016 fiscal period was very helpful.
- Huge shout-out to Haley Greene and Arshia Javidan for the late nights spent selling hot dogs outside of 1280 and counting dimes in the committee room. Raising money for CLAY really helps afford this kind of opportunity to so many students, which is such an integral part of this service.

Media & Design:

- Redefined CLAY's online branding through a 6-month series of cohesive promotional plans/materials, including personalized promotions, and a comprehensive video promotional concept.
- Developed the first ever Media SET manual for conference.
- Our Media & Design Coordinator Adam Merlo took on so much work essentially creating every advertisement and published material for the conference - alot of thankless work that makes the weekend so special for delegates.

Volunteer & Logistics:

- Being at a camp (vs. campus) makes everything about the logistical aspects of CLAY that much easier - its so great to be able to focus on the little details of an event like this while logistics run smoothly.
- Would suggest using Two-Way-Radio-Rentals in the future - cheaper than any option I've EVER seen with the best quality radios.

- Couldn't be happier with how smoothly logistics ran at conference - having a super prepared plan, a well-trained staff team, and facilitating an environment of support made this happen. Gotta give some love to Ryan Threndyle for making sure every aspect of conference ran so smoothly for every single person involved.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

CLAY happened! It was PERFECT! You can check out our Facebook page to see all the photos of the glorious weekend, and check out our gorgeous recap video for some feels.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

CLAY is officially done for the year!

Here are some recommendations that I will be making to the future coordinator in my transition report:

1. Include more down-time in the weekend schedule.

CLAY is a LONG weekend, especially the second day. My only regret is not including a 1-1.5 hour planned break in the middle of the day on Saturday for students to have a 'free camp hour'. I think delegates would have loved the opportunity to chill out and perhaps socialize with delegates they hadn't met yet (plus staff would definitely have appreciated the break).

2. Consider number of speakers and demographic of audience.

In retrospect, having two speakers at the conference was not necessary. While I was so excited to have such a broad range of lived experiences represented in our speakers, having two speakers was a lot to listen to for most delegates. Focusing on one great speaker closer in age to the delegates I think would be very beneficial moving forward.

3. Continue background checks.

No other volunteer service in Ontario would allow volunteers to work with minors without a background check - I am very happy that I implemented these checks this year and would recommend doing them again moving forward.

4. Location, location, location

It would be a no-brainer to move this conference to Camp Trillium - cheaper camp fee, better weather, less travel time, cheaper busses. Let's make this happen for next year!

5. Consider on-call representatives from community organizations

I was so excited to bring so many students from the Crown Ward to CLAY, but ran into a LOT of trouble when I needed to contact emergency contacts. I would HIGHLY recommend that if this partnership is continued moving forward, an on-call representative from this organization should be ready to go for the whole weekend to respond to emergencies if need be.

BUDGET

CLAY 2016 BREAKDOWN			
CLAY REVENUE			
ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Delegate Fees (Including Tax)	138	\$146.02	\$20150.44
MSU Budget	1	\$16,000.00	\$16000.00
Staff Fees	47	\$10.00	\$470.00
Sponsors	1	\$5,611.79	\$5611.79
TOTAL REVENUE			\$42,232.23
CLAY EXPENSES			
ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Camp Fee	194	\$140.00	\$27,160.00
Bussing	2	\$3,955.00	\$7,910.00
Printing	1	\$517.32	\$517.32
Lanyards	250	\$1.42	\$355.00
Events	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Conference Gift	210	\$1.40	\$294.00
Training	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
Sessions	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Radios	1	\$599.00	\$599.00
Food	163	\$4.52	\$700.00
Special Projects	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$42,035.32
CLAY TOTALS			
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$42,035.32
TOTAL REVENUE			\$42,232.23
TOTAL NUMBER OF DELEGATES			156
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF (PAYING)			47
TOTAL NUMBER OF PLANNING TEAM (LD'S)			7
TOTAL NUMBER OF PRINCIPLE PLANNING			4
TOTAL (REVENUE - EXPENSES)			\$196.91

SUCSESSES

DELEGATE FEEDBACK

CLAY 2016 DELEGATE FEEDBACK		
Question	Number Of Responses	Response
Please rate your overall experience at CLAY (1 being 'terrible' and 10 being 'the best experience of your life')	45	Mean Response: 8.85
Based on your experience at CLAY 2016, would you be interested in attending CLAY 2017?	35	Yes
	8	Maybe
	2	No
Please rate your enjoyment of each session on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating that you did not enjoy the session, and 5 indicating that you loved the session.		
Session	Mean Response Value	
Session 1: Welcome	4.11	
Session 2: Group Dynamics	4.45	
Session 3: Social Awareness	4.42	
Session 4: Trust and Risk	4.37	
Session #5: Support & Wellness	4.25	
Session #6: Empowerment	4.42	
Session #7: Self Awareness	4.54	
Session #8: Closing	4.51	
Please rate your enjoyment of each event on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating that you did not enjoy the event, and 5 indicating that you loved the event.		
Event	Mean Response Value	
CLAY Theme Night (Day #1)	4.37	
CLAY Theater (Day #2)	4.48	
CLAY Campfire (Day #2)	3.88	
Speaker1: Joel Hilchey	4.8	
Speaker 2: Alexandra Orlando	3.6	

In a few sentences, please describe your experience at CLAY:

"It was S-U-P-E-R!! Super super!! I had such an amazing time. Everyone was so friendly and everything that was said during sessions made the experience even better. The LD's were some of the most friendly and kind people I have met and I hope that I can become an LD next year as I will be attending McMaster University in the fall!!!!!"

"My experience with clay was very positive. I loved being around positive energy 24/7 with high levels of enthusiasm. singing camp songs as well as learning new leadership skills made the experience worthwhile."

"For me it's a way to find myself and to rethink how I can personally be a leader. As well I'm able to meet like minded individuals who I can generate a bond with."

"Incredible! I broke out of my shell more in two and a half days than I think I have in 3 years of high school. The LD's are incredible, their energy and enthusiasm is inspiring! hands down, they are the reason I enjoyed it so much. They made me feel so comfortable and it made it really easy to open up during sessions"

"CLAY was such an amazing opportunity to learn not only about the backgrounds and experiences of the amazing people around me, but also about myself and what I want to be. CLAY really helped my love for conferences grow and I can't wait for CLAY 2017!"

I loved the sessions, they were extremely well thought out and planned! Everything was well conducted, and the staff was super friendly and nice! I loved the opportunity to make new friends, and the diverse people I was able to interact with. Everything was absolutely amazing!

"It made me think about things that I don't normally think about on a daily basis. It was really nice to escape from my usual busy and stressful life and just reflect on the things I value most. I liked how everyone got a chance to share their view on issues and situations."

"It was amazing to meet so many new people and to hear so many new stories of everyone's experience. To hear what was important to everyone was a real eye opener because it properly showed me how everyone's perspectives differ in such big and meaningful ways. CLAY is definitely a weekend I can never forget."

"It was remarkably life changing, it allowed me to reflect and grow upon myself and I'm absolutely grateful I was given the opportunity to attend. I will definitely sign up next year even if I have to pay!"

"I value clay because it makes you feel like you have a second family. The sticky life activity was a great way to become closer with each other and I will never forget my clay experience."

STAFF FEEDBACK

CLAY 2016 STAFF FEEDBACK		
Question	Number Of Responses	Response
Please rate your overall experience at CLAY (1 being 'terrible' and 10 being 'the best experience of your life')	16	Mean Response: 8.86
Based on your experience at CLAY 2016, would you be interested in attending CLAY 2017?	15	Yes
	0	Maybe
	1	No
<i>Please rate your enjoyment of each session on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating that you did not enjoy the session, and 5 indicating that you loved the session.</i>		
Session	Mean Response Value	
Session 1: Welcome	4.14	
Session 2: Group Dynamics	4.21	
Session 3: Social Awareness	3.86	
Session 4: Trust and Risk	3.08	
Session #5: Support & Wellness	3.85	
Session #6: Empowerment	3.91	
Session #7: Self Awareness	4.93	
Session #8: Closing	4.86	
<i>Please rate your enjoyment of each event on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating that you did not enjoy the event, and 5 indicating that you loved the event.</i>		
Event	Mean Response Value	
CLAY Theme Night (Day #1)	4.25	
CLAY Theater (Day #2)	4.13	
CLAY Campfire (Day #2)	3.93	
Speaker1: Joel Hilchey	4.62	
Speaker 2: Alexandra Orlando	1.87	

In a few sentences, please describe your experience at CLAY:

"My experience at CLAY was challenging, exhausting, and terrifying, but even more so, it was rewarding, eye-opening and means more to me than I could put into words"

"Tiring, but honestly one of the best experiences of my life. Everyone was so supportive of other staff members and delegates and I felt like I could be myself and be a role model for the delegates without having a group."

"My entire weekend was enjoyable on a surface level. Digging deeper, I was upset that I didn't believe I made any impact on my delegate's lives. I felt that I was falling at my only job. To keep this brief, a bit of reflection, reassurance, reality checks, and messages from my delegates proved to me the efforts I gave meant something to somebody. That has been the most amazing moment of my life."

"Clay changed my perspective on a lot of things. It brought new perspectives to me and it really helped me so much. I value clay because it gave me the opportunity to invest in people who haven't ever had anyone do that for them before."

"I was surprised by how much the delegates could take out of CLAY in only three short days. I was even more surprised by how much I took out of CLAY. I couldn't believe that even without weeks and weeks of staff training and bonding, the staff team was still very closely bonded and worked perfectly together."

"It's such an emotionally moving experience to be a part of, it is much more in depth in this sense than other leadership experiences at Mac."

"My experience at CLAY was truly life-changing. I went in thinking about how I could impact the delegates, but came out with them making more of an impact on me than I could ever imagine. It helped me start to find who I really am and what I really value and it has truly been one of the best experiences of my life."

"It is the best way to realize that you have meaningful relationships in your life and that there are others that care for you and your well-being. It is all about instilling positive values in each other to grow and become the best version of you there is to be."

"It is truly an eye opening experience to learn so much about others, but also yourself. The environment is like none other, and truly makes me comfortable to be myself."

"My experience with CLAY was extremely positive. If I'm being honest, I wasn't that excited for CLAY in the weeks prior to the conference. I was a little disappointed that I had to give up so many weekends of my summer for one conference, and was honestly starting to regret my decision to join a little bit. Everyone on the staff team seemed incredible but I just really wasn't sure if it was going to be for me after all. Turns out I was very wrong. CLAY was an amazing experience and I learned so much from the other staff members and the delegates, not just about leadership, but about friendship, about strength and perseverance, and about being a good human being. It was an exhausting weekend and a sweaty weekend, but such a fun and valuable weekend. It's incredible how close you can become to a group of people in 3 days, and how much you can grow in 3 days. Leaving the conference knowing that my actions, no matter how small and insignificant they seemed to me, positively impacted someone else, is invaluable, and is a lesson that I will carry with me for the rest of my life."

IN CONCLUSION

I would like to thank each and every person who contributed to making this conference a success. Running CLAY every year requires support from so many people: the BOD, full-time staff, a dedicated planning team, 50+ amazing volunteer staff members, and 150+ young leaders who are brave enough to step out into an unfamiliar environment and be themselves. The contributions of all of these people have made my dream into a reality, and for that I will be forever grateful.

Being the CLAY Coordinator has been the most rewarding experience I have ever had - thank you for allowing me the opportunity to create something so special for so many people. I will never forget this.

Thank you,

Jonathan Davis
CLAY 2016 Conference Coordinator

PS. Never forget: You can do it if you can kazoo it!