



REPORT

From the office of the...

CLAY Coordinator

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Natasha Sandhu
SUBJECT: CLAY, Report #5
DATE: June 30, 2014

UPDATE

On May 16 to 18, the MSU and McMaster University hosted 93 students from across the GTHA and 58 McMaster undergraduate volunteers for the 22nd annual CLAY conference.

Recruitment:

- This year, 101 students registered for the conference and 93 attended.
- Recruitment found it difficult to contact schools without specific information about who they should be directing information to.
- It has become evident that the contact changes from school to school. Oftentimes, the Vice Principle is helpful, but there are also instances when connecting with a guidance counsellor or various teachers in the school has proven helpful.

Events

- Blake Fly spoke to the conference on Saturday, May 17. The delegates greatly enjoyed his talk and felt energized for a long day of programming.

Sessions

- A new session, Empowerment, was included in this year's programming. It urged students to recognize their own positive characteristics, achievements, and goals.
- A returning delegate said that she greatly enjoyed this session and that it was refreshing to have a new session since she attended CLAY 2013 as well.
- Returning staff indicated that this session was useful because it helped remind delegates that even though they are attending the conference to develop their leadership skills, they are also already leaders in different shapes and forms.

Spirit

- This year, the rotational activity took place on Friday, and CLAY Connector (similar to Mac Connector) took place on Saturday. Students suggested switching these items in the schedule to foster more connections between delegates.
- In the future, including the CLAY dance at the conference should be reconsidered

SERVICE USAGE

A survey was circulated for two weeks to all 93 delegates, and 31 students responded. The survey included both quantitative and qualitative items, providing students an opportunity to provide comments as preferences. Notable results have been included below.

<i>How did you hear about CLAY? (Allowed to select all that apply)</i>	
Teacher	17
Another student	6
Another student who attended in the past	2
Family members	4
Past CLAY staff member	1
Principle	1

<i>How was your delegate fee paid?</i>	
My parent/guardian	19
My school	12

<i>After attending this conference, I am interested in attending McMaster University?</i>	
Yes	21
No	7
Maybe	2

<i>Would you be interested in attending CLAY 2015?</i>	
Yes	18
No	1
Maybe	11

Comments from delegates:

I admit, at first I was terrified to go. A teacher on my student council asked if there was anyone interested in doing a leadership conference, and since I always want to improve my leadership skills I signed up. When I first arrived at CLAY and was put into a group, I was scared because I didn't know anybody and that I would be the youngest although I soon learned there was nothing to fear. Even though I only knew the people in my group for less than 3 days by the end of the conference I felt like I had known them forever. It was an amazing experience and I am so happy I decided to go.

Overall great conference but rather than focusing on building a team, it might be better to inspire leadership and show HOW to be a great leader!

I loved the whole conference! I just completely loved the experience, and the fact that I have made so many new friends. I love how close you can get to people in just three days.

It was just so eye-opening and I learned so much about myself. It was so motivational, and really built my confidence and my self esteem. It truly was life changing. Thank you CLAY!

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

LDL Staff training – Friday, May 9

Full staff training – Saturday, May 10 and Thursday, May 15

Conference weekend – Friday, May 16 to Sunday, May 18

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

I am currently working on a report for HWDSB that includes feedback from students that they sponsored this year, which include what they enjoyed about the conference, the workshops and activities they attended, and the relationships they built with other students and staff members. This is intended to help foster a positive relationship between the board contact, who has sponsored at least 20 students each year for the last two years, and the CLAY conference as a whole.

BUDGET

The only outstanding payment is to Housing and Conference Services. Based on the estimated cost of hospitality, it does not appear that the conference will go over budget.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Continuing the Sponsor a Delegate program has proven difficult so far. Suggestions of contacts within HWDSB and HWCDSB that may be helpful are welcome.

SUCSESSES

After reviewing over 130 applications for our staff team, we selected a great group of 45 student volunteers. For the first time, Anti-Oppression training was included in staff training on the Thursday before the conference. Ayesha Musleh and Catherine Oakleaf of HRES were great at facilitating this training.

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