

ShopTalk

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Treating Educators Like Stars *Distinguished Educational Leadership Awards*

If people's salaries were commensurate with the importance of the work that they do, it'd be star educators who would be wined, dined and signing the million dollar contracts. For the last 20 years, The Post has done its part in recalibrat-

Educational Leadership Awards seminar.

The Post rolls out the red carpet for twenty local area principals that are selected by their communities to be flown to St. Thomas for a two-day media seminar. Beyond organizing and executing the trip,

the Public Relations Team works behind-the-scenes and takes care of every detail from designing the seminar curriculum to securing corporate sponsorship that helps offset

the cost (US Airways donated the tickets for all the principals) to even getting the flight attendants to congratulate the principals on the loud-speaker during the takeoff and landing.

DELA winner Principal

whose dedication, talent and long hours are too often overlooked. **Our society does not do nearly enough to recognize the contributions of those who educate our children.**

Although staying at the posh Ritz Carlton St. Thomas resort (at a bargain price negotiated by DELA program manager **Carrie Morse**) for some much deserved R&R is an important



Assistant Managing Editor **Bob McCartney**, Metro, leads a session on effective ways of working with print media. McCartney encouraged principals to control the message or at least give their version when an incident affects their school.

Dottie Truslow, Margaret Brent Elementary School (Stafford County, Va.) says, "Frequently, as the building leaders, we are the ones recognizing and appreciating others. DELA is unique because it recognizes the principals."

Assistant Managing Editor **Bob McCartney**, Metro, who led a substantive discussion during the media seminar portion of the trip, says, "It's such an important honor and reward for the Washington region's school principals,



The Public Relations team (from left), **David Jones**, **Aurora Gonzalez**, **Darrick Hansen** and **Tito Tolentino** await for the arrival of the principals at Reagan National Airport. Not pictured: **Carrie Morse**, **Lianne Liang** and **Mario Oña**.



The 2008 Distinguished Educational Leadership Award winners. For a few days in July, the area's brightest educators are recognized for the stars that they are.

ing this fundamentally flawed aspect of society. While The Post isn't exactly offering seven-digit signing bonuses, every summer The Post hosts and educates the area's best and brightest educators through the Distinguished

Working on Safety

By **Brian Pratt**
Special to ShopTalk

Safety is the first consideration in many businesses. Safety improvements seem to work best when championed by management and employees. Here are six employee activities that help mitigate hazards on the job.

When a pallet elevator in the Springfield Plant broke down, machinist **Jaime Aramayo** took the time to put

Johnson repaired and performed the associated inspections, which got production running again.

Three new palletizers that dispatch the newspaper at night come close to the ceiling pipes and vent frame doublers. Realizing the

potential hazard, machinist **Joe Feiler** placed padding designed to cushion and reduce any head injuries by the machine operators.

Chad Messer, Springfield Plant maintenance supervisor, wanted to make it easier for the machinists and electricians to “Lock Out and Tag Out” (isolating

equipment to perform troubleshooting, repair or maintenance) the forty-eight machines on the ROP (run of paper) packaging lines. He



PHOTO - BRIAN PRATT

Springfield Plant maintenance supervisor **Chad Messer** created a plan to make it easier for the machinists and electricians to “Lock Out and Tag Out.”

devised a retractable cord that quickly re-enables the safety interlocks, designed to prevent accidents, at the point of use.

When the quick moving turntables on the paper stackers needed a safety guard, machinist **Johnathan Huynh** fabricated plexiglass covers, thus preventing a possible arm or hand injury.

Harry Reuse, Springfield Plant machinist, got the call to come up with a replacement insert hopper safety guard. In the process, Reuse developed a stronger and more efficient insert hopper guard for daily inserting operations.

Safety remains a top priority at both the Springfield and College Park plants. Post production workers are constantly looking for ways to not only improve the production of the newspaper but to ensure that no one gets injured in the process. ■



PHOTO - BRIAN PRATT

Springfield Plant machinist **Jaime Aramayo** wears a protection harness to repair a pallet elevator.

on a fall protection harness. He rigged the auto belay device and lanyard to a support beam as he worked on the edge of an unlikely, yet still possible fall.

When water entered the press high-voltage switchgear, Springfield electrician **Al Johnson** suited up with the appropriate electrical safety calorie-rated clothing. Without cutting corners on safety,



PHOTO - BRIAN PRATT

Springfield electrician **Al Johnson** puts on electrical safety clothing before working with high voltage switches.

aspect of the trip, the principals are put to work even in paradise. The trip revolves around a two-day media seminar, where the principals get to interact with several members of the media and hone in on their public relations and crisis management skills.

Former DELA winner Principal Tom Saunders, Elkridge Landing Middle School (Howard County, Md.), says, “Sadly, most principals are not trained to work effectively with the media, causing poor PR for both the school and principal. Therefore, the training was a wonderful professional development opportunity for me as I continue to learn and grow.”



Vice President Dave Burnett, a senior trainer from the media consulting firm, The Pincus Group, drills former DELA winner Principal Nelson McLeod, Newport Mill Middle School (Montgomery County, Md.) during a mock news interview.

“I’ve used the information that I learned to update my school’s crisis plan. I now have a specific section in my plan dedicated to working with the media during a crisis situation.”

Saunders continues, “A principal’s ability to communicate effectively about their school’s programs and activities is only second in importance to creating a safe, nurturing and academically stimulating learning environment for their students.”



Upon arrival, DELA program manager **Carrie Morse** conducts the orientation.

McCartney says, “Communicating effectively with the public, especially in a crisis, is a challenging and significant part of any public official’s job. When the well-being of children is at stake, it’s particularly critical.”

During the seminar, McCartney and the Pincus Group—a consulting firm specializing in media relations and crisis management—led discussions encouraging principals to utilize the media to their advantage or at the very least, to not shy away from it.

At times, the discussions became heated when principals like Jarcelynn Hart (Rosa Parks Elementary School in Prince William County, Va.) argued that their job is to protect the children and their schools by trying to fix things internally and minimize the negative publicity, while the media members argued that timely public knowledge is an equally important service for the community.

During McCartney’s session, when pressed by the principals on why the media insists on reporting on the negative “stuff,” McCartney offered the analogy that a

“plane landing isn’t news,” but that a “plane crashing is.”

There were also moments of mentorship. The Pincus Group guided the principals through mock

interviews and a press conference following the scenario of a student bringing a gun to school. And when Principal Stephanie Wesolowski, Milton M. Somers Middle School (Charles County, Md.) asked for advice on controlling false accusations and unaccountable news sources like disgruntled bloggers engaging in a new era of yellow journalism, McCartney advised her to go off the record, if necessary, to combat the false reports. He then made another plea for principals to be proactive in reaching out to the media, quoting Henry Kissinger as once saying that it’s better to leak out the bad news your-

self, because then you can put your own spin on it.

Beyond the sessions, Saunders says, “The DELA program provides an opportunity for principals to gather from various local school districts to meet, share and learn from each other. It was comforting

to hear that we all share similar joys, problems and concerns.”

But at a time when the newspaper industry is scrambling to cut cost, what’s the incentive for The Post to continue a program like DELA, even if Public Relations continues to find creative ways to offset the cost?

“The Post benefits first from the goodwill toward the

order to remain relevant, The Post needs to remain engaged with its community. One can argue that the community’s loyalty towards The Post, stemming from community-related programs like DELA, is what is keeping the newspaper afloat and will help navigate it to safer waters.

Public Relations manager **David Jones** says, “People want to give their business to

a business that cares about its community and its children, and advertisers want to advertise through a newspaper that is appreciated and revered by its community.”

Saunders concludes, “The DELA program is proof positive that The Washington Post not only talks the talk, but walks the walk. I am

unaware of any other Washington-based business that reaches out to principals to provide training and support for their continuing professional development. I am truly grateful to The Washington Post for their support and friendship.” ■



The three amigos from Howard County, Md. (from left): Former DELA winner Principal Tom Saunders, Elkridge Landing Middle School, former DELA winner Principal William Ryan, River Hill High School and new DELA winner Principal Patrick Saunderson, Marriotts Ridge High School. Saunders and Ryan won a raffle to come back on the trip a second time. Yes, Howard County rigged the raffle and no, Saunders and Saunderson are not in uniform.

newspaper that DELA inspires,” explains McCartney. “Principals are influential people in our community, and it helps in several ways if they have a positive view of us. It promotes the paper’s reputation and standing, and encourages readership and circulation. The principals are more likely afterward to cooperate with our reporters and editors, and I return from the trip each year with at least a couple of good story ideas.”

Saunders adds, “DELA is a very visible way in which The Washington Post supports public education and their readers’ and employees’ communities.”

In whatever iteration The Post will continue to exist in D.C., it seems crucial that in



Public Relations manager **David Jones** takes the time to publicly thank his staff. Assistant Managing Editor Bob McCartney stood up shortly after to acknowledge Jones, who has been acting director for the department for nearly a year.



DELA winner and private school representative Principal Daniel McMahon, DeMatha Catholic High School (Hyattsville, Md.) enjoys the view with his wife, Donna McMahon.

Mailers Win 36th annual Post SoftBall Tourney



COURTESY OF JAN PASTOR

Yes, the 36th annual Post Softball Tourney! Led by **Jan Pastor** and **Tom Foley**, Mailroom employees won the tournament. *ShopTalk* will do a full story on the win and recap this Post tradition that is well into its third decade in an upcoming issue.

Front row, from left: **Joel Barefoot**, **Reggie Taylor** (standing), **Billy Brown**, **Mike Sheffer** (sitting) and **Rick Costantino** (standing). Back row, from left: **Dave Vassel**, **Steve Dixon**, **Tom Foley**, **Max Pastor** (son of Jan Pastor), **Jan Pastor**, **Ken Brown**, **A.J. Brown** (Brown's son) and **Tim Lett**. Not Pictured: **Mike Ward**.

Your Opinion Counts

Are you a PostPoints member with plenty of feedback and ideas? Marketing would like to meet with you to get your positive and constructive feedback, as well as any future initiatives that you think might engage even more members. If you're a PostPoints member and would like to do your part

in making this program even better, this is your chance. Simply send an e-mail to shoptalk@washpost.com if you're interested in participating.

Discount Mystics Tickets

Washington Mystics tickets are available to Post employees at a discount. The season

ends in September, so there is plenty of time to catch Washington's professional ladies basketball team in action.

Visit:

<http://www.mysticstix.com/post.html> for details. Contact

Linda at x4-5257 with any questions.

New Matching Gifts Program System

Did you know that as a Post employee you might be eligible to have your donation to a nonprofit organization matched by The Post? The program is called Matching Gifts and The Post has recently switched vendors. Truist, the new vendor, is providing The Post with an online system that allows Post employees to personally manage their matching gifts accounts. The new system just went live and it is easier to use than ever. If you missed the recent informational sessions by the Public Relations Department, contact **Tito Tolentino** or **Darrick Hansen** at x4-6834 with any questions.

In the Green Corner

FACT: The Post has nearly 200 recycling bins at Metro stations through the D.C. area.

GREEN TIP: At the end of the workday, turn off space heaters, fans, desk lights, lamps and computer monitors (IT requests that you leave your computers on for overnight maintenance). This seemingly minor measure is making a big difference.



Note to All Post Employees

The Communications Department is requesting that Post employees and supervisors contact **Mary Robinson** or **Monica Williams** on x4-6000 or robinsonmm@washpost.com and provide the following information: departmental changes, new employees, extension numbers, home and cell numbers to update the database.

Marketplace

FOR SALE: Moving sale! Pecan-colored wooden dining room table with six matching chairs. Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired design. Like new. \$600.00. Call Don at x4-9293 or 202-213-1399.

FOR SALE: Condo for sale in Cleveland Park \$339,000. Gem in pre-war building between two Metro stops. Has hardwood floors, lots of light and plenty of closets. Office nook in bedroom and screened-in porch off living room. Dining area, updated kitchen. Extra storage and new fitness center in basement. Low condo fee. Cats welcome. Generous street parking (or nearby spots available for rent or sale). Contact Lisa Rein at reinl@washpost.com or at 202-821-3120.

FOR SALE: Need somewhere to put your extra clothes? White, three-month-old wardrobes for \$70. In great condition with one adjustable shelf and one clothes rail included. Product dimensions: width: 31 7/8 in. (81 cm), depth: 19 5/8 in. (50 cm), height: 70 7/8 in. (180 cm). Contact Stacy Noel at x4-6090 or noelstacy@hotmail.com. Pictures available upon request.

FOR HIRE: Licensed Family Child Care. Infants and up. Clean and safe environment. Age-appropriate educational activities. Breakfast, lunch and snack served. Contact John at x4-4778.

FOR SALE: Baby Jogger Deuce Coupe, double jogging stroller, very good condition. Tandem seats with ample canopy. Comparable models sell for \$500 today. For sale for \$200. Maclaren double stroller. Tandem seats, ample canopy, storage space on back and underneath, good condition. Cost \$400 originally. For sale for \$175. REI Piggyback child carrier, includes day pack and kick stand. Sells for \$165 today. Good as new: \$75. Photos available. Contact Joyce at jonesjoyce@washpost.com or 540-349-7214.

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