

Setters Leadership Program: Strengthening Leaders Through Service

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Students explore different leadership styles through programs on campus as well as across the country. The Setters Leadership Initiative is a program designed to bring out the inner leader in students exclusively on the Pleasantville campus.

The Setters Leadership Program (SLP) and Setters Leadership House (SLH) are new programs developed to meet the needs of students. Beginning in 2010, the Director of Student Development and Campus Activities (SDCA) and a team of faculty and staff began researching leadership as an entity, then resulting in the piloting of the Setters Leadership Initiative.

“Employers have said students have the hard skills (technology, specifics of industry), but not the soft skills,” Director of SDCA Rachel Carpenter said. “Soft skills are things that relate to conflict and self-awareness, and may not necessarily be easy to grasp.”

While Pace does offer leadership programs and courses, not everyone takes advantage of them. In January 2012, the first group of the Setters Leadership Program took flight, providing now seniors and juniors the opportunity to begin their journey. The first semester was geared towards self-awareness and learning about individual strengths and weaknesses through programming and service events.

SLP was initially designed for incoming students, but has now been opened up to second-year and transfer students. The Dean will send an invitation to accepted students, inviting them to apply for the Setters Leadership House, as long as they have above a “B” average. Similarly, the Dean will invite all accepted students to the Setters Leadership Program, which does not have a GPA requirement. There are similar programs and service events, but each is unique to the students involved within it.

“I have learned so much about myself and how to use my strengths to work with others people’s strengths,” junior communications major Samantha Clarke said. “We do a lot of workshops to learn about how to be a leader as an individual, with the community, and working in groups.”

In addition to SLP, SLH resembles the newly formed First Year Interest Groups (FIGs) on campus. The SLH is designed specifically for freshmen who wish to engage in community service, volunteering and community and on campus leadership.

“I’m volunteering with a program called, Spark,” freshman business major Samantha Henry said. “We work with kids with Autism and other developmental disabilities and it has truly been a learning experience.”

Through programming and workshops, the Setters Leadership Initiative provides a variety of opportunities for students. There are mentor group meetings, workshops (conflict management,

communication, leadership values), group projects and more. Faculty and staff also play a role in the program by speaking with students about their experiences with leadership in their respective fields; in total, there are between 20-25 faculty and staff that are involved with the program.

Carpenter expressed her excitement for future plans in the growth of the program. Some of the ideas include providing opportunities for third and fourth year students, including transfers, who are interested in becoming part of the SLP. Integrating co-curricular activities and leadership, as well as academics, are just a snapshot of what may be coming to the campus. A mentoring and leadership academic course is also being discussed which will allow upper-classmen to influence the newer Pace students.