

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF
STUDENT COUNCILS**

THE REPORTER

FEBRUARY 2015



Fall in Love With Leadership



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The Reporter is the official publication of the Illinois Association of Student Councils, published quarterly for students, advisors and friends of the association.

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Message from the President



Hello IASC,

I hope that your second semester has started off nicely and that our seniors are enjoying their final months of high school; I know I am! Here is a quick IASC State Convention speaker preview:

Judson Laipply

Known across the globe as "the Evolution of Dance guy," Judson is much more than that. As an accomplished speaker and motivator, he focuses on the power of change and what we can do to improve our world. His presentations are down to earth and highly motivational, creative and appealing, humorous and thought provoking, lively and enriching. Judson will be the keynote speaker during the First General Session, as well as the entertainment on Thursday night.

Houston Kraft

Houston has spent his time as a speaker working with students, teachers, and parents all over the country. He focuses on positive messages - an advocate of kindness, compassion, and love. His keynotes are relevant, funny, and real, and are paired with powerful leadership workshops to leave behind excited advocates of change. One keynote doesn't change a culture, so Houston works hard to sustain his message with follow up resources, a positive social media presence, and his new app CharacterStrong. Houston will be giving his keynote Friday afternoon during the Third General Session.

I hope to see you all at the State Convention, May 7-9!

Respectfully,

Matt Bourke

President of the IASC

York Community High School | Elmhurst, Illinois

(630) 825-8753

Advanced Works



By: Charles Gomez
Liaison of the Chicago District
Vice President of Hancock College Prep Student Council

The IASC Advanced Workshop has always been an eye opening experience for me. It's taught me amazing things about myself that I had years struggling to see. This workshop has also introduced me to people I cannot live without now. This workshop helped me find my best friend. It was so difficult for me to find a guy who wouldn't judge me for who I was and what I did, but also a guy who wouldn't assume things about me and bring me down. This workshop has helped me accomplish things internally that I never knew could be possible. I didn't know that so many people could care about me... At times in my life, I just didn't believe people would worry about me. I felt like a burden. But this workshop made me feel like a real leader. It made me realize my potential and what I do. It's beyond amazing what power I have. And the Advanced Workshop has helped me gain trust in my power and make it stronger.



Workshop Experiences



Skylar Flynn
IASC Assistant Communications Director

When I registered for Advanced Workshop I was thinking that it would be the ordinary student council convention with the guest speaker, team building activities, and meeting new people. The weekend did consist of team build exercises and meeting new people, but it was on a totally different scale. Advanced was only three days long, but the relationships formed with the group of students there will last a lifetime. During the camp we participated in team building exercises, a high ropes course, and emotional strengthening exercises. My favorite team building exercise was the blind folded can stack. In this activity if you were blind folded and had to rely on your team for help. The team building exercises brought us closer together and allowed for activities on the high ropes course to run smoothly. After the high ropes course the day was far from over. That night all attendees of Advanced got really connected as we discussed things in a circle. I am so glad that I was able to take part in Advanced. There are so many memories and people that I will cherish for the rest of my life. Attending Advanced has given me such an amazing group of friends that supports me and allows me to feel comfortable in opening up with them. I wish I could go back next year, but sadly I am a senior. Thank you to everyone who made my time at Advanced so special and memorable.



LEAD Experience

By Alec Roth

Prairie 8 District President

My experience at LEAD was a very unique one. Being the only attendee from my school, I was very nervous to go to the conference. As soon as the first session started, all the nerves went away. I really liked the options available for breakout sessions. There were so many to choose from and you attendees are able to go to whatever ones they want. I also really enjoyed the main session speakers, especially The Original Mike Smith. I think that he was an excellent speaker who involved all the students at the conference.

It was a very welcoming and fun experience. I am very thankful that Mrs. Ebens was my substitute advisor and for the Byron students for working with me. I would definitely recommend attending LEAD next year to any prospective NHS or Student Council members.



Getting to Know Linda Pickett

Linda Pickett was one of the recipients of the 2014 Illinois Award. Mrs. Pickett has been involved with student council since her high school career in the 1970's, including serving as the student body President her senior year. She then later became an Assistant Student Council Advisor during her first year at Columbia High School and took over the organization as the lead advisor 12 years ago. Her commitment and involvement has led her to being a recipient of the 2014 Illinois Award.

Upon winning this award Mrs. Pickett shared that she felt honored to be recognized for this award at the IASC State Convention and was pleased and humbled to be awarded at the same time as Kyle Gordon, who has been her mentor since her involvement in student council. Winning this award was a total surprise for Mrs. Pickett. She said, "I've seen previous advisors earn this for their dedication to their councils and knew it was a significant and very special recognition but knew very little about it. So, yes, I was totally surprised." Mrs. Pickett also shared with us that the students who have stepped up to assist her in making CHS a better place for everyone played the most important part of her earning the 2014 Illinois Award. She said, "Without them, none of it would have been possible."

Mrs. Pickett may have been surprised to win this award but it is no surprise that she has won other awards in her past for her hard work. She was previously recognized as the Kaskaskia District of Student Council Advisor of the Year. Along with being awarded at both the district and state level, she has also served as a 13 year member of the Waterloo School Board. Her achievements do not stop there; she has also been honored at her school for Teacher of the Month six different times, which is an honor chosen by other teachers and co-workers.

Looking back at all the great memories Mrs. Pickett had with student council she chose to share this recap of a moment with us: "There are so many memories that this is very difficult to choose a favorite. I will have to go with attending the KDSC Convention held in 2008 at Centralia High School. I attended my first Advisor's meeting and was sitting at the table when they asked for a volunteer to host the district convention. The advisors at Centralia assured me that everything was on a disk so it would not be a difficult task... I just needed to have a student willing to volunteer. I went out and met my students during lunch and Zeke stepped up and said he'd love to do it so there we went... this was the beginning of students at CHS getting involved in the district and we have held a district office ever since. We had a great convention and I had a great group of students that led this entire convention."

“Through that experience, I realized that my students had much more potential than I could ever imagine. At that time, I encouraged students to be more involved on all levels to the point where I have a student on the state board for the first time! I was just invited to the 5-year class reunion for Zeke’s class held over the Christmas holiday break and was the only teacher invited to attend. I was so honored and so pleased to see the students and their accomplishments now that most are college graduates. The bond that I first developed with this group of students was an inspiration to me. Since that time, I have seen numerous outstanding students develop leadership skills which have made a significant impact on them and on myself. I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with high school students in this capacity. Life changing.... many significant memories that I will never forget!”

Linda Pickett has gone above and beyond when it comes to being involved with student council and epitomizes the definition of the Illinois Award!





"I have many student council memories that are wonderful and memorable. However, the memories that are the strongest are of the two weeks spent on a bus with 54 other students from Illinois traveling to the NASC Convention in Cupertino, CA. Whether it was Mr. Hank Clark (former IASC Executive Director) and his wonderful sense of humor, singing "American Pie" as we drove around the Great Salt Lake, whitewater rafting down the Colorado River, the energetic Mr. Phil getting the crowd going before each general session, or seeing Peter Yarrow from Peter, Paul, and Mary perform "Puff the Magic Dragon" at the outdoor arena at Stanford University...these memories always bring a smile to my face and warmth to my heart."



Getting to Know Cyndi Mihalik

Cynthia Mihalik (nee Sulak) was the recipient of the 2014 Advisor of the Year. This is no surprise when you realize how long she has been a leader and involved with student council. Mrs. Mihalik has been involved with activities such as attending IAJHSC Summer Camp as young as a sixth grader. She has also held many leadership roles at a young age. Mrs. Mihalik was the president of her middle school class, served many different positions in high school, and as a senior she had the privilege of being the Northeast District Convention Secretary. Being involved with student council has allowed her to attend IAJHSC State Conventions, IASC State Conventions (every year), the NASC LEAD Conference, and the NASC National Convention in Cupertino, California. Cynthia Mihalik expresses that she has learned so much from each of these experiences and her love and passion for student council has grown with each successive event.

Being involved with student council since sixth grade has given Mrs. Mihalik a chance to learn how powerful a selfless advisor can be and she is very thankful to her own advisor, Mrs. Megan Stanley, for always encouraging her to get as involved as much as possible. Upon receiving her teaching job at St. Charles North High School she was thrilled to hear that there was an open advisor position for student council. Mrs. Mihalik said she felt that her life had come full circle and was determined to follow in the steps of her advisor. As an advisor she was sure to get her students involved in serving on many different boards from the North Central District Executive Board to the IASC Executive Board, because she knows how rewarding the experiences are that she had and wants all her students to have the same opportunity.

Her involvement with her students and being an amazing advisor has led her to receive the 2014 Advisor of the Year. At the banquet Mrs. Mihalik revealed that she was helping her students develop good banquet manners and had missed Mr. Clark's announcement. This shows that Mrs. Mihalik did not expect to win this award even if, like most advisors, she secretly hoped that her students would nominate her for this award. Mrs. Mihalik was in awe that she was selected out of all advisors in the IASC. In March 2013, Mihalik was selected as the WGN Teacher of the Month, and was nominated by Kylie Reed; the same student who nominated her for this award. Mihalik shares with us, "Sometimes we have people who enter our lives and completely change us for the better. They make being an advisor easy and extremely fulfilling. To receive that award at the last IASC convention I would be attending for a while, surrounded by Kylie and my graduating seniors, was the cherry on top of what I believe has been an extremely rewarding life in the student council world."



CONVENTION REGISTRATION NOW AVAILABLE

2015 IASC State Convention

This year's IASC State Convention will be held May 7-9, 2015, at the Westin Yorktown Center Hotel in Lombard, IL. Mount Vernon Township High School is the proud host of this year's convention, "Thirteen Districts...One IASC".

The registration packet is available online, and registration is due by March 7, 2015. The packet contains the following forms:

- Registration Form
- Delegate Information Form
- Convention T-Shirt Order Form
- Medical Permission Slip
- Contract for Responsible Conduct
- Hotel Room Listing
- Convention Meal Form

The convention is the annual business meeting of the IASC member schools, who elect the new state officers, and vote on any constitutional amendments. However, the convention is more than just business, it's a time to enhance student leadership through spirited and engaged speakers, student-led workshops, and roundtable discussions. By the end of the convention, you're sure to be reinvigorated with the power of student leadership, and will be ready to return to your schools to share your experiences with others.

During the Friday night banquet, we reflect and honor several students who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, and have made a difference in their schools. Each school is invited to nominate one student to be recognized as a Reflections Nominee. This ceremony is a positive time for reflection on the year and the leaders of the IASC. Advisors should nominate one student to be recognized by sending a short essay (150 words or less) stating why you have chosen him or her and their contributions, and send it to Mr. Kyle Gordon (kgordon@kahoks.org) by March 14.

If you are a new advisor, or this is your first time coming to an IASC State Convention, the IASC is here to assist you. If at any time you have any questions regarding the registration process, please contact Trey Riley, Convention Secretary, and his advisor, Mr. Jamey VanZandt at convention@illinoisstuco.org.

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deadlines and more.**

