

Annual Report

September 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009



Ethics in Action Creates Character®

440 Wheelers Farms Road • Milford, CT 06461
www.ethicsed.org

The School for Ethical Education is grateful to the organizations and individuals that have funded our mission to advance *ethics in action* in 2008-2009.

2008-09 GRANT FUNDERS AND DONORS

Maryann and Robert Betts
Bharucha Charitable Foundation
Bigelow Tea
BlumShapiro
Michael Carter
Carter, Morse & Mathias
G.X. Clarke & Co.
Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
ConnectiCare
Connecticut Department of Education
Judy Corchard
Richard Davoud Donchian Foundation
Peter and Alexandria Donovan
Dworken, Hillman, LaMorte & Sterczala
Chris Gallo
Christine Goudreau
Gilbert Hammer
Jim and Leticia Hashem
Eugene and Cathy Helm
Main Enterprises
Mickey Herbert

Michael A. Neufeld & Assoc., LLC
NewAlliance Foundation
Dr. Pasquale & Mrs. Peggy Perillie
Albert Perry III
Elizabeth M. Pfriem
Lunsford Richardson, Jr.
George and Paulette Rommel
Vincent Simko
James C. & M. Catherine Smith Fund
State Street Corporation
Richard and Donna Taber
John Templeton Foundation
Anthony Van Daalen
Eaton Vance
St. Vincent's Medical Center
T.D. Securities
Patrick Waide
David and Robbin Wangaard
Webster Bank
Jonathan & Helen Wood
Wright Investors' Service

SEE Board of Trustees

Michael Carter, Southport, CT
Judith Corchard, Secretary, Oxford, CT
David D'Addario, Easton, CT
Peter M. Donovan, Chairman, Westport, CT
Jacky Durrell, Fairfield, CT (In Memory)
Christopher Gallo, Treasurer, Shelton, CT
Eugene Helm, Oxford, CT
Mickey Herbert, Fairfield, CT
Steven Monahan, Wilton, CT (In Memory)
Peggy Perillie, Trumbull, CT

SEE Staff

David B. Wangaard, Ed.D. Executive Director
Linda Chaffin, Program Director
Shannon Romagnolo, Program Assistant
Michael Pirhalla, Intern
Franklin Eneh, Intern

Volunteers

Joshua Anusewicz, Meg Barone, Tricia Barrett, Helen Bennett-Harvey, Susan Clarke, Franklin Eneh, Michael Flament, Joan Gaylord, Sara Gerhold, Dr. Gloria Graves-Holmes, Dr. Gilbert L. Gigliotti, Dr. Andra Gumbus, Cathy Helm, Anika Knox, Samantha Malcolm, Sandi Michaelson, Sarah Moler, Ashleigh Pasko, Albert Perry III, Donna Phillips, Colleen Thompson, Marne Usher, Elliott Wangaard, Ezequiel Wangaard, Robbin Wangaard, Kristen Zimmer

Executive Summary

The School for Ethical Education (SEE) celebrates the completion of its 14th program year working to advance *ethics in action*. SEE continued to implement its core programs that include: *Youth: Ethics in Service (YES)* service-learning projects in elementary and secondary schools; Integrity Works!, which is focused on advancing strategies for academic integrity in secondary schools; *Laws of Life* essay writing program as a writing assignment that helps students reflect on positive values; and our teaching and consulting programs that include contracts with schools, the University of Bridgeport and other agencies.

Approximately 820 students and teachers working on 23 different teams participated in service-learning projects and practiced ethical reflection during Youth: Ethics in Service (**YES**). The service-learning projects included a variety of projects that served peers, community food pantries and students in foreign countries along with the administration of a youth philanthropy board. **YES** teams were engaged in their projects for an estimated 26,000 hours. Since 1998, there have been over 7,000 **YES** participants complete over 192,000 hours of service-learning. Most of these projects served local communities in Connecticut, and if the participants had been paid at Connecticut's minimum wage, **YES** would have generated more than \$1.4 million in service value. SEE continues to distribute its own project planning and reflection guides to help students and teachers integrate meaningful individual and team reflection into their projects. Reflection is an important strategy that SEE teaches to encourage character development.



SEE staff members celebrating the end of the project year (August 2009)

Integrity Works! is progressing in four Connecticut High schools along with communication with 23 other schools nation wide via a web-based Academic Integrity Network (AIN). The AIN is a joint effort between SEE and the Character Education Partnership in Washington, DC. Within Connecticut, SEE and its partners at UCONN are helping to facilitate and measure the outcomes of the each participating school's Academic Integrity Committee. The results from the project's academic integrity survey (which noted over 90% of the students from all schools participate in some form of academic dishonesty) have helped focus each Integrity Committee on the need to address this important issue.

SEE also administered Connecticut's 9th annual *Laws of Life* Essay Program. Approximately 3,400 participants wrote essays that provided students in grades 5 to 12 the opportunity to reflect and write about the values they believe would help them live productive lives. SEE recruits and supports local writing programs where the top essay writers from each participating school are submitted to SEE for entry in its statewide competition. Ten essayists were recognized as the state's top *Laws of Life* essay writers during an awards celebration on May 6 at Anthony's in New Haven, Conn. The awards ceremony was combined with SEE's third-annual Character Celebration which attracted over 110 guests to honor the essay writers and Dr. Susan Davis, the President and CEO of St. Vincent's Health Services as SEE's John Winthrop Wright *Ethics in Action* award winner.

In addition to the **YES** and *Laws of Life* programs, approximately 2,600 others participated in SEE classes, workshops or activities that included Integrity Works!. School districts and agencies contracted with SEE to provide workshops and SEE staff presented a series of classes through the graduate and undergraduate programs of the University of Bridgeport. Since inception, over 100,000 participants have engaged in SEE's programs.

History

John Winthrop Wright founded The School for Ethical Education in 1995. As a nonprofit organization recognized as tax-exempt by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, SEE provides courses and programs for teachers, parents and students to advance ethical behavior in schools and communities. Mr. Wright's vision for school improvement focused on expanding opportunities for teachers and students to learn how ethics in action creates character. This phrase became the school's motto and recognizes the power of positive ethics in the creation of character. The core ethical concepts or virtues Mr. Wright desired to promote included respect, responsibility, caring, justice, honesty, truthfulness, courtesy, citizenship and the principles of the Golden Rule. The goal of positive character development is integrated into all programs offered by SEE. With the passing of Mr. Wright in 1996 and his wife Mildred in 2002, SEE has continued to receive meaningful financial and administrative support from Wright Investors' Service, a private investment management and financial advisory firm headquartered in Milford, Connecticut.

Vision

The School for Ethical Education teaches strategies to put ethics in action. SEE encourages learning experiences that foster positive character and advance responsible and caring communities.

Mission

The School for Ethical Education affirms the need for an increased focus on ethical behavior for the 21st century. It also recognizes the contribution of sound ethical reasoning for the advancement of positive character. To teach ethical reasoning for positive character development, SEE provides courses and programs for teachers, parents, children and community leaders in collaboration with school districts, parent organizations, professional education centers, institutions of higher and continuing education and other like-minded organizations. SEE instructors

teach, administer programs, write, speak and host events and meetings, and consult with education organizations as the primary methods of disseminating strategies to promote ethics in action for the creation of character.

The following report summarizes SEE's major program areas in 2008-2009. In addition, an overview of SEE's year-end financial report and a description of future program plans are provided.

Teaching, Consulting and Communications



Teaching continues to be the primary strategy for SEE to put ethics in action. SEE reached approximately 2,600 participants during the 2008-2009 school year through teaching, consulting and its 13th year of collaboration with the University of Bridgeport. SEE's relationship with the University of Bridgeport provided Dr. Wangaard the opportunity to teach an undergraduate course on moral development and applied ethics and graduate-level courses on character education and conflict resolution. In all, SEE was contracted to present 5 credit hours of courses at the university. Including interns that attended SEE workshops there were 311 university students who attended SEE presentations in the past year.

Dr. Wangaard was contracted for the 12th year as a consultant for the Character Education Partnership (CEP) as a site evaluator for their National Schools of Character (NSOC) program. This project has continued to provide SEE first-hand experience in observing and evaluating some of the best school-based character programs in the country. The Fox C-6 School District near St. Louis, MO was visited this past year and became one of CEP's NSOC award winners.

SEE continued to facilitate the Youth: Ethics in Service (**YES**), a service-learning program that promotes student character development through action and reflection. Several **YES** team project reports including an initiative in New Haven are presented here.

Youth: Ethics in Service (YES)

Youth: Ethics in Service (**YES**) supports teachers and after-school program leaders to implement effective service-learning as defined by (1) students engaging in planning and implementation of meaningful projects, (2) teachers connecting academic goals to service work, and (3) all participants completing planned reflection activities and project evaluation. Service-learning has been an important project strategy of SEE's since 1998. SEE's development of **YES** has been supported by Federal Learn and Serve funds and grants from regional foundations.



Including the participants in our Integrity Works! Program, SEE facilitated the service-learning participation of 765 students and 64 adults during the 2008-09 school year. Twenty-three projects were initiated and addressed community needs related to (1) education, as in students tutored younger students and peers for a variety of goals (writing, diversity issues, math) and promoting links to post-secondary education opportunities; (2) human needs where students provided education resources for students in other countries; and (3) environmental projects, as in students presenting environmental awareness campaigns and completing clean-up projects. In all, the projects served an estimated 7,000 project recipients and participants engaged in over 26,000 hours of service-learning.

The **YES** program focused much of its recruitment of schools in the urban districts of New Haven and Bridgeport, and this resulted in about 45 percent of its student participants representing minority populations. In addition, the YES program continued to fund SASL (Student Activists for Service-Learning) a youth-philanthropy board for New Haven County which recruited and funded ten projects and sought to focus on increasing student awareness and connections to post-secondary education and career opportunities.

YES received funding from a Connecticut Department of Education Learn and Serve grant, State Farm Insurance Company, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Wright Investors' Service, Webster Bank and private donors. Selected **YES** project stories from elementary, middle and high schools are presented here.

Diversity Day

Beardsley School, Bridgeport; *Subject Matter: Reading, Research Skills, Oral Presentation, Character: Cooperation, Respect*

Two sixth-grade classes at Beardsley School in Bridgeport, Connecticut collaborated during the study of human disabilities to create a teaching activity for their peers and younger 4th grade classmates. The teachers Dawn Schirizzo and Nicole Vetter choose this activity to develop their students' reading, writing literacy and presentation skills through the research project. The project also included the character goal of building understanding for those with disabilities.

This low income and highly diverse urban school received a mini-grant from SEE to purchase books that told stories of children with disabilities. Additional research was completed by the students on various disabilities that included: cerebral palsy, paralysis, autism, spina bifida, downs syndrome, mental retardation, blindness, deafness, dwarfism, ADD and ADHD. The students worked in teams of two or three and learned about the condition they selected, read stories about individuals who lived with these conditions and created a presentation board (similar to a science fair display) and learning activity to supplement the narrative.

For example, one sixth-grade team researched the topic of autism and created their presentation board to include a game where fourth-graders would role dice to advance on a spot along a board-game path. Each location included a description of the symptoms experienced by someone with autism.



Sixth-graders with their presentation board.

The presentation to fourth-graders was made on Diversity Day. The sixth-graders set up their presentation boards on tables around the perimeter of the school gym. Individual fourth-grade classes entered and divided into pairs of students who then picked one presentation board to begin their Diversity Day experience. One of the teachers kept time so each pair of fourth-grade students had four to five minutes at each presentation board before they would move to the next station. There were more stations than could be visited in one period with a total of 17 disability presentation boards.

Student presenters and the fourth-graders demonstrated genuine enthusiasm and engagement during the event. When a visitor asked a question of the sixth-grade presenters, there were clear and well-prepared responses demonstrating authentic understanding of their subject. All sixth graders questioned agreed that they had learned meaningful information in this project and were glad they had participated. One girl noted, “I had never heard of autism until we began this study.”

Similarly, the fourth-graders who participated appeared engaged and interested in the presentations. Multiple inquiries with fourth-graders resulted in positive responses to the experience and interest in what they were learning. There was clearly positive energy in the gym as the event proceeded. The sixth-graders repeated the process for each of the three, fourth-grade classes at their school.

Books of Hope

Read Elementary School, Bridgeport; *Subject Matter: Writing, World Studies, Application of Technology, Tutoring, Character: Patience, Compassion*



Eighth-grader working with her kindergarten buddy.

Eighth-grade students worked with kindergarten buddies at Read School in Bridgeport to create Books of Hope (www.booksofhope.org) for children that have suffered from years of civil war in Uganda. Read teachers Lisa Farrell,

Marlo Ruggiero, Lauren Julian, Laura Andreoli and Tricia Marini combined their classes to help provide lessons in leadership, writing, use of technology, tutoring and world studies and tied this multi-disciplinary learning experience into a service project for children who live almost 7,000 miles away in the war-torn country of Uganda.

This service-learning project is in support of the Books of Hope (<http://www.booksofhope.org>) program that helps to organize U.S. teachers and students to write and ship storybooks with positive themes to students in Uganda who are studying English and have very few reading resources. In addition, U.S. students are invited to collect and send other teaching/learning supplies that might help students in Uganda.

The Read students worked together for several class periods in May to compose and illustrate the stories they wanted to send as Books of Hope. Eighth-grade students helped their kindergarten partners identify story themes that they wrote about and illustrated in their book. The eighth-grade students then typed up the stories and helped their younger partners place their illustrations in their book. The students planned a celebration of their finished books in June. Superintendent Ramos stopped by during the celebration to recognize the student work. The students recently chose to use the money they had budgeted for this celebration to purchase additional school supplies for Uganda students. One Read eighth-grader girl individually purchased supplies on her own to add to the shipment.



Superintendent Ramos complimenting student work.

Memory Book Project

Central High School, Bridgeport; *Subject: Computer Graphics, World Studies, Character: Empathy, Perseverance*



Honduran child with her portrait from Central High.

Students in Mr. George Bella's computer graphics-arts class were introduced to the Memory Book Project (www.thememoryproject.org) by SEE, where the high school students were given the opportunity to create a portrait of an orphaned child in Honduras for the child's "memory book" and as an assignment for their class. The specific learning objectives for

the students included mastery of proportion, symmetry, skin tones and spatial depth perspective. The students' received pictures of a Honduran child and then working from a blank screen, created a portrait to send to the child. A class visitor was hard pressed to discern the difference between the students' work and a professional photograph.



Central High Students with their portraits for Honduran orphans.

The Central students demonstrated a high level of engagement and dedication to the project. While it is acknowledged that Mr. Bella is a master teacher, he and the students recognized the additional class engagement as a result of the goal to provide the portrait to the Honduran child. Pictured here are the Central students holding the portraits they will send to Honduras and a Honduran child with the portrait she received from the class.

Student Activists for Service-Learning



Student Activists for Service-Learning (SASL) is a Youth: Ethics in Service Project consisting of high

school youth leaders in the greater New Haven area. SASL's mission is to advocate for the use of service-learning as a strategy to promote academic advancement, civic engagement and character development. SASL members promote the use of service-learning in schools and afterschool programs by providing presentations, training and encouraging teachers and student clubs to use service-learning to complete service-learning projects.

Fourteen students representing six different schools came together to move SASL's mission forward during the 2008-2009 school year. SASL members received training in service-learning and leadership to become a resource to the projects that they support. SASL also provided mini-grants of up to \$300.00 to projects that successfully completed the SASL application process. Last years projects included a school-wide battery recycling program (Common Ground High School); an environmental protection fair (High School in the Community); Best Buddies Peer Mentoring (West Haven High School) and teaching Spanish language to elementary students (West Haven High School).

Additionally, this year SASL launched a new service program called Career Catchers; Creating a Circle of Support for a Lifetime of Success. The goal of the Career Catchers program is to create a peer awareness campaign directed at keeping their high school colleagues in school and graduating ready for work or with solid plans for post-secondary education. Funded by the State Farm Insurance Company's Foundation; SASL's Career Catchers Program created an easy access web site that focuses student attention on post secondary planning and goal setting. SASL members are marketing the web site by recruiting teachers and student groups to create service-learning projects focused on career planning with use of the Career Catcher's web site. Last year's projects included tutoring peers in math (Micro-society and Ely Whitney Technical School); three career fairs (Hill Career Hill School and Milford's Academy), teaching special needs students job interviewing skills (Hillhouse High School); creating a timeline with steps to take to get to college that was give to all incoming 9th grade students (High School in the Community) and fund raising for college applications (Polly McCabe).





In August 2007, SEE was grateful to receive notification of three years of funding from the John Temple-

ton Foundation for a total of \$320,122 to support the implementation and evaluation of academic integrity committees to promote personal responsibility and reduce cheating. SEE is working in collaboration with Dr. Jason Stephens, a past Templeton scholar and currently a faculty member of the Department of Educational Psychology in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut, Storrs.

The primary purpose of this project seeks to make two important contributions to the research literature on academic dishonesty and educational efforts to ameliorate it: first, a better understanding of the process and challenges of working with students to design and implement academic integrity programs in a diverse set of public high schools; and second, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these programs in changing students' perceptions, beliefs and behaviors related to academic dishonesty.

Six schools were recruited and signed letters of agreement to participate in the project. The three pilot and three control schools are matched by Connecticut's socio-economic measurement factor known as the District Reference Group or DRG. The three pairs of high schools represented high, middle and low Connecticut DRG Reference Groups. The schools have been promised anonymity throughout the study and in any study publications and will be self-identified in our future reports by pseudonyms that they will create.



AIC student committee members at their information booth with their "Got Integrity" t-shirts.

The 2008-09 school year represented the second year of project activity. Each pilot school organized an Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) where each school has recruited faculty, students and parents to participate. AIC meetings have resulted in each AIC studying the topic of academic integrity and initiating a strategic plan. Examples of strategic activities include: completion of AIC narratives such as mission statements, identifying and defining core values in support of integrity, drafting or completing school statements for honor codes or honor pledges, establishing AIC officer roles with student participation and awareness building activities such as (1) integrity quotes of the week, (2) pledge-signing events, (3) showing video PSA's about academic integrity over school television networks, (4) producing AIC t-shirts and wrist bands as give-a-ways for student's signing pledge, (5) participating in school spring open-house events for incoming freshman and parents, (6) writing and distributing AIC brochures, (7) creation of AIC websites/blogs and (8) promoting AIC initiatives during school faculty meetings.

In addition, results from analysis of the project's Academic Motivation & Integrity Survey (AMIS) have been preliminary completed. The AMIS was designed to assess three components of moral functioning related to academic dishonesty, which include (1) moral obligation (a sense of personal responsibility to act on one's moral judgments), (2) moral identity (the centrality of moral values to one's sense of self), and (3) moral disengagement (the extent to which one tends to displace or otherwise neutralize personal responsibility for acting morally). All three components are thought to mediate the relationship between students' moral judgment of cheating (the belief that cheating is always wrong, regardless of school rules) and their engagement in cheating behavior. Two sets key findings are observed in our preliminary results. First and foremost, that moral judgment matters; that is, that the belief cheating is morally wrong is a strong protective factor against engagement cheating behavior. The power of making such a moral judgment (as opposed to seeing cheating as a "personal choice" or simply a violation of a "school rule") on behavior is statistically significant in our results.

These findings from our research are meaningful in at least two important ways. First, they help (even if modestly) contributed to the long-standing and on-going dialogue among moral psychologists



AIC committee members at end-of-year picnic.

concerning the “judgment-action gap.” Despite being nearly three decades old, this dialogue has produced relatively few empirical investigations (though much theorizing), and we look forward to publishing these results in the near future. Second, the present findings may have important implications of educators and policy makers interested in reducing the widespread problem of academic dishonesty. Specifically, these findings suggest that intervention efforts should not only focus on helping students develop judgments that cheating is morally wrong, but also on forming both a sense of personal responsibility for not cheating and an ability to resist the use of rationalizations to justify cheating.

A compilation of student “Free Response” statements was also collected following their participation in the AMIS. Volunteer students in grades 9-12 participated anonymously. A summary of the themes of this free response writing are presented in a bound volume for all six schools and summarized here. The themes were identified through a qualitative coding and sorting process of all student responses.

For all six high schools, the total number of students that participated in writing during the Free Response was 638. The themes produced are entirely reflective of the students’ responses. This summary represents their opinions to the following questions: What specific changes would you like to see your school make in support of academic integrity? What role should students play in this process? and Any comments?

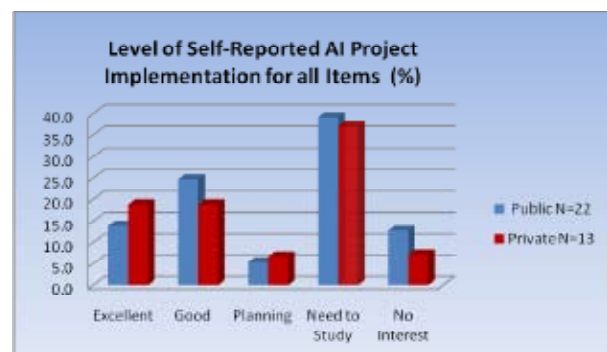
Within this summary there is a clear call for help from the students to their school leadership

requesting school leaders to address multiple issues associated with academic integrity. Given the size and diversity of this sample, it is also assumed this survey would be representative of many other U.S. public schools. Ranked by number of respondents, the first four themes expressed the students desire to see their school: 1. Create stricter consequences, 2. Offer more academic assistance, 3. Encourage student cooperation with policies, and 4. Reduce academic pressure. The sum of the number of responses in these first four themes represented 59% of all student statements.

And finally, a survey of Connecticut public and private high schools was completed during the school year. The goal of the survey was to investigate: 1. The interest among Connecticut high school principals to participate in a survey on academic integrity, 2. The level of self-reported implementation of research-based strategies to promote academic integrity, 3. Differences in response between public and private schools, and 4. School interest to obtain further information or to join future studies. Four solicitations to Connecticut public and private secondary schools resulted in completed surveys from 22 public schools and 13 private schools.

The approximately 12% response rate to this survey was lower than anticipated and may be attributed to the timing of the survey – near the end of the school year with some follow-up that went into the summer vacation. It is not clear whether the time pressures at the end of the school year or the topic itself contributed to the modest rate of return.

As depicted in the graph below, the clearest observation from this small sample is the reported Need to Study response from both public and



private schools. The Need to Study response was selected most (the data mode) for 10/16 items (62%) by the private schools and 12/16 items (75%) by the public schools. The items chosen as Need to Study represent implementation strategies that are suggested in the research literature as meaningful practices to promote academic integrity.

Private schools reported greater interest in obtaining more information about academic integrity as compared to public schools (85% to 64%) and private schools expressed more willingness to join future studies (47% to 27%) regarding academic integrity. While the observed differences seem meaningful, the modest response rate and small sample size warrant caution in generalizing these findings to other public and private schools.

If Excellent and Good Implementation levels are combined, both public and private schools reported 38% of their responses at one of these two levels. The most frequently chosen level of implementation for both Public and Private schools was the Need to Study category with 39% and 37% of their responses respectively. Public schools reported 5.6 % more No Interest items.

In the past year, the achieving with integrity project has documented that (1) 90% or more of the high school students from all six study schools have engaged in some form of academic cheating, (2) students who believe such cheating is morally wrong and students that can refute “rationalizations” for cheating are less likely to cheat, (3) the vast majority of “free responses” completed by students at the end of AMIS indicate that students would like their teachers and administrators to do more to promote academic integrity at their school, and (4) public and private school leaders acknowledge the “need to study” strategies to reduce cheating at the school and report a low level of implementation for many research-based strategies that prompt academic integrity.

SEE is strategically working to develop consulting services to help support schools to implement their own academic integrity program.

Connecticut's *Laws of Life* Essay Program

The *Laws of Life* essay program is a writing assignment with a focus on character development. *Laws of Life* provides students in grades 5-12 the unique opportunity to reflect and write about their core values, principles and ideals that will guide them throughout their lives. Writing with laws of life encourages a dialogue between students and their teachers, parents and community members to advance excellent writing, positive values and character. The writing process for laws of life can be integrated into many academic subject areas such as English literature, language arts, history and health. *Laws of Life* is a non-sectarian, academic activity that typically identifies universal ethical principles or laws of life such as – love, service, perseverance, honesty, respect and courage. These values are recognized to be life affirming, support positive citizenship and transcend religion, culture and national borders.

SEE has been administering the *Laws of Life* essay program in Connecticut since 2000. Public and non-public school participants have recognized the great value in having students write from the heart to identify their *laws of life*. The program was established by Sir John Templeton in 1987. With the support of the Templeton Foundation, the *Laws of Life* essay program has been established as an effective writing and character-building activity with students participating from nations around the world.



Connecticut Laws of Life finalists celebrate with SEE project coordinator Shannon Romagnolo (far left) (May 6, 2009).

Benefits of *Laws of Life* Participation

- Provides students the opportunity to write, reflect and discuss their values with peers, teachers, parents and others
- Motivates students to “write from the heart” to produce excellent narratives
- Integrates the writing process with effective character education
- Encourages schools to obtain community support to recognize student writing
- Provides schools a positive opportunity to recognize students’ values
- Promotes a sense of positive community within the classroom
- Prepares students for writing process on standardized tests (in CT, the CMT and CAPT)
- Fits easily into any writing curriculum (Language Arts/English, History, Social Studies, Health)
- Encourages students of all writing ability to participate

During the 2008-09 school year, approximately 3,400 writers participated in *Laws of Life*. On May 6, 2009 over 110 guests celebrated with the *Laws of Life* essayists at the Anthony’s Ocean View Restaurant in New Haven, Connecticut. Connecticut’s ten essay finalists, family members, teachers and statewide judges participated in the celebration. Two students volunteered to read their essays, which identified the themes of respect for family and integrity.

All of the students’ essays were on published in the Celebration’s program handbook and are available on-line at www.ethicsed.org.

Laws of Life is an excellent opportunity to advance ethics in action, and SEE is grateful for the support of Bigelow Tea, Eaton Vance, The John Templeton Foundation, NewAlliance Foundation, Wright Investors’ Service, and other private donors.

John Winthrop Wright *Ethics in Action* Award

The School for Ethical Education (SEE) supports the recognition of a leader in Connecticut who demonstrates authentic commitment to ethics and positive character. Named after SEE’s founder, John Winthrop Wright the *Ethics in Action Award* seeks to highlight men or women who successfully lead others while clearly demonstrating positive character.

In 2009, the *Ethics in Action Award* was presented to Dr. Susan Davis, President and Chief Executive Officer of St. Vincent’s Health Services (<http://www.stvincents.org/>). Dr. Davis received the award during SEE’s Character Celebration on May 6. The award was presented during the same evening as SEE’s *Laws of Life* Essay celebration.



Dr. Susan Davis, President and Chief Executive Officer of St. Vincent’s Health Services.

In receiving the award, Dr. Davis reflected upon her own aspirations to demonstrate ethical leadership and a grateful embarrassment in having others recognize her for demonstrating her goal. In addressing the audience of peers and students, Susan highlighted her recognition that character is developed over time and shaped by many factors. Dr. Davis recognized key characteristics she needed to demonstrate have been determination and perseverance. [Visit – http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/award/davis_keynote.pdf for full text of Dr. Davis’ keynote.]

Dr. Davis’ colleagues at St. Vincent provided a testimony of other positive traits that Susan has demonstrated in her leadership. One of her administrators at St. Vincent’s shared this observation,

“Susan has an innate ability to see the good in all people and situations. She consistently turns everything into a learning situation with even disciplinary challenges turning into a positive outcome. She has fostered a “just culture” environment where staff are never afraid to admit a mistake and always willing to help to solve an issue. Susan sets the tone of the organization and emphasizes the patient,

their care and their satisfaction, above all. I have heard her say, "Always do the right thing for the patient and the rest will follow." She brings out the best in all of us and helps us to see what is right in any situation. What a role model!"

Susan has set high expectation for members of the Medical Staff and held them accountable, because she has implemented a "trust" relationship that she backs up by her own actions. Dr. Davis has presided over the opening of the region's most advanced Operating Suites and Intensive Care Units, and has launched the most ambitious technology upgrade in the Medical Center's history, including new clinical and diagnostic technology and a computer record-keeping system.

Under Dr. Davis's leadership, St. Vincent's has embarked on a new \$141 million Master Facility Plan, which includes a multi-year expansion effort to "build on the tradition of trust." Phase one of the project, which is due to be completed in 2009, includes development of a new Cancer Center, expanded Emergency Department and new parking facility.

Dr. Davis has received both local and national recognition for her commitment to the community and to volunteerism. Throughout her career, she has been actively involved in the United Way, Hospice, and the American Cancer Society, Visiting Nurse Association and has been recognized for her service in

New York State and Connecticut. Her commitment to patient safety and excellence has made her a change agent at St. Vincent's and within the healthcare industry.

Since coming to St. Vincent's Medical Center, Dr. Davis has called for transparency in identifying and reporting on all areas related to patient care. Results of St. Vincent's outcomes in patient satisfaction, quality indicators, CMS critical standards are all now reported by St. Vincent's both internally and externally. Under Susan's leadership, St. Vincent's became the first hospital in Connecticut to "Go Green". All cleaning supplies (except those used in operating rooms) and all new construction now follow "green" guidelines. St. Vincent's has been honored by the head of DEP and the governor as a result of these efforts. Susan also guided St. Vincent's to become the state's first smoke-free campus.

Dr. Davis received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Mt. Saint Mary College, Newburgh, NY, her Master of Arts in Nursing Administration and Doctorate of Education from Columbia University with an emphasis in management. She is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

The School for Ethical Education is privileged to honor Dr. Davis and welcomes the nomination of other Connecticut leaders who demonstrates a commitment to ethics and character through our website at – <http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/award/index.htm>.



Dr. Susan Davis (4th from right) with trustees of The School for Ethical Education after her receipt of the John Winthrop Wright *Ethics in Action* Award (May 6, 2009).

SEE Financials

SEE continues to receive meaningful operational support in terms of office space, technology and administrative assistance from Wright Investors' Service (WIS). WIS was recently recognized for its remarkable commitment to SEE by the *Invest in Others Community Leadership Awards* project of Investment News (www.investmentnews.com/communityawards). Within the application sent to Investment News, it was noted that "The market value of work and office space [provided by WIS] would equal approximately \$50,000/year if SEE had to pay for these services." In addition, during the current year there were four multiple-year grants that include: State of Connecticut Learn and Serve funding-\$35K (year 3 of 3); The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven-\$20K (year 3 of 3); StateFarm-\$78K (year 2 of 2), The Richard Davoud Donchian Foundation- \$15K (year 2 of 3) and the John Templeton Foundation- \$106K (year 2 of 3). These were meaningful budgetary contributions to SEE and helped SEE provide services and products for character education.

SEE's overall income for the year was \$307,210 and expenditures for the year were \$291,900 with a carryover of \$37,860 restricted and unspent funds to 2009-10.

Laws of Life (LOL) received a grant of \$2,000 from the NewAlliance Foundation to administer a statewide *LOL* writing program. Additional donations from Eaton Vance, ConnectiCare, BloomShaprio and other private donors helped SEE fund this excellent initiative.

Teaching and Communication income of \$9,910 represents fees for contracted services paid to SEE and includes course instruction at the University of Bridgeport. Donations to SEE came in response to requests solicited from past and potential supporters of SEE's mission. The total for all private donations in 2008-09 including donations that came to the Character Celebration was \$31,144.

SEE continues to work to develop its base of individual and corporate funders to help establish a broader foundation of support for its mission.

Strategic Steps for 2009-10

Results from our Integrity Works! project included the observation that 90% or more of the high school students who participated in our academic integrity survey from six diverse high schools reported cheating in some manner during the school year. The corrosive effect of this behavior undermines any academic accomplishments our school systems might represent. The crisis of academic integrity in U.S. schools is only one example of the need to continue our mission to advance ethics in action.

As compared to the norm of student cheating, one of the members of an Integrity Works! school academic integrity committee noted,

In my sophomore year, I was one of the founding members of my high school's Academic Integrity Committee (AIC). This organization was founded with the intent to radically change the mindset of our school community regarding issues like academic honesty, personal responsibility, and general morality. As secretary of this group, I have helped to advocate such values through public service announcements, visual stimuli, and peer discussions.

Working with the University of Connecticut and the School for Ethical Education the past three years, the Academic Integrity Committee has set up school-wide essay and logo contests in order to get students involved in this process. We have displayed posters representing integrity in everyday life to constantly remind students of this value. By developing interview segments, we committee members challenged our peers to really consider the idea of integrity – in an academic sense and beyond. AIC has plans next year to bring the concepts of honesty and personal responsibility to the local middle and elementary schools through activities and programs geared toward younger audiences. Through these and many other projects, this extracurricular organization has really helped me in building my passion for integrity.

It is the passion and engagement of students such as this AIC member that encourages SEE staff to continue to focus on our mission.

SEE continues to administer each of its programs to maximize its present capacity and put ethics in action. SEE's strategic goals for the coming year include:

1. Continue to provide teaching and consulting services that support ethics education and character development strategies to teachers and students with a focus on K-12 education.
2. Continue to implement Youth: Ethics in Service (**YES**) as a research-based character education strategy
 - a. Obtain continued funding to support **YES**
 - b. Meet state, corporate and community foundations goals for implementing **YES** projects
 - c. Develop SEE website as a service-learning resource for teachers
 - d. Implement service-learning projects to advance student character development and promote post-secondary education opportunities for high school students.
3. Expand SEE's donor base and support through grant writing
 - a. Expand SEE's private, corporate and grant giving donor base
 - b. Successfully host SEE's fourth-annual Character Celebration as a fundraising event in combination with *Laws of Life* awards and John Winthrop Wright *Ethics in Action Award*
 - c. Increase in SEE's successful grant writing
4. Continue the development of Integrity Works! Program
 - a. Facilitate schools strategic planning for Integrity Works!
 - b. Continue development of Integrity Works! Tool Kit for teachers
 - c. Develop evaluation instrument for academic integrity to be used beyond project schools
 - d. Begin to market evaluation instrument to advance SEE's consulting role
- e. Seek national publishing partner for Integrity Works! Tool Kit
- f. Identify and obtain new multi-year funding for Integrity Works!
5. Successful implementation of *Laws of Life* Essay Program
 - a. Recruit over 3000 student essayists
 - b. Host successful awards ceremony for finalists
 - c. Expand donor base for *Laws of Life*
6. Expansion of SEE's trustee board to recruit three new members
 - a. Recruit trustees with clear understanding of SEE's mission and expectation of board responsibilities
 - b. Recruit trustees with a goal of diversity in professional occupation and cultural background
 - c. Engage the board in active financial and program development for SEE

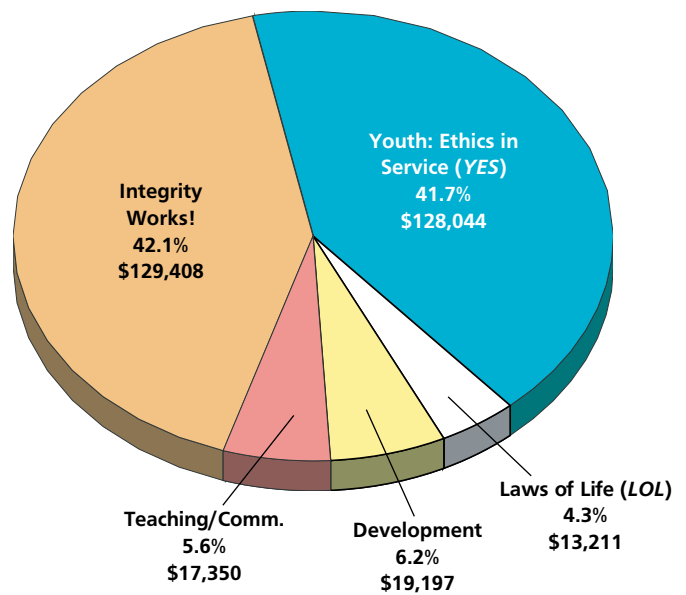
The Opportunity

The six strategic goals just described have the potential to move SEE into the role of a nation-wide provider in support student ethics and character development through our Integrity Works! project. Economic challenges and capacity issues must be addressed to successfully reach the potential of this program and all SEE projects.

SEE welcomes the support of those who believe in the critical need to build positive character in support of the family, local schools, their communities and our nation. SEE's vision is a progressive work and is moving forward with the positive expectation to advance *ethics in action to create character*.

To join us and make a donation to advance a vision of positive character, you may contact SEE through our website – www.ethicsed.org.

Summary of SEE Program Related Income 2008-2009



The School for Ethical Education Program Related Profit and Loss Statement For the Fiscal Year September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009

	YES	INTEGRITY WORKS!	TEACHING & COMMUN.	DEVELOPMENT	LOL	CONSOLIDATED
INCOME						
Tuition & Sales			\$9,910			\$9,910
Grant income	\$93,585	\$111,036			\$2,000	206,621
Carryover	39,689	7,714				47,403
Donations	4,300		4,500	\$14,325	8,019	31,144
TWC office services	13,020	10,658	2,940	4,872	3,192	34,682
Restricted	(22,550)					(22,550)
TOTAL INCOME	\$128,044	\$129,408	\$17,350	\$19,197	\$13,211	\$307,210
PERCENT INCOME	41.7%	42.1%	5.6%	6.2%	4.3%	
EXPENSES						
Personnel Expenses						
Salary & benefits	\$89,187	\$56,645	\$4,976	\$7,808	\$10,730	\$169,346
Office Expenses						
Supplies/Postage	921	2,077	977	1,227	172	5,374
Facility Cost	13,020	10,658	2,940	4,872	3,192	34,682
Travel Expenses	3,106	4,767	605	106	13	8,597
Outside Services (inc audit, website, print)	3,225	41,690	2,105	4,955		51,975
Other Expenses						
Project grants	5,067	15,790				20,857
Project materials	106	963				1,069
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$114,632	\$132,590	\$11,603	\$18,968	\$14,107	\$291,900
NET SURPLUS (SHORTFALL)	\$13,412	(\$3,182)	\$5,747	\$229	(\$896)	\$15,310

Spreadsheet rounding accounts for modest differences between this report and audited statements. TWC = The Winthrop Corporation, parent company of Wright Investors' Service.



2008–2009 Annual Report