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August 2007

## Making A Difference

A Report on Activities and Impact from the Center for Creative Leadership

### Lessons from Katrina: CCL Hosts Forum on Crisis Leadership

For residents of the Gulf Coast, hurricane season is a normal part of life. For many of the area's leaders, disaster planning is part of the job. But when Hurricane Katrina hit Mississippi and Louisiana on August 29, 2005, much of the conventional wisdom about disaster relief and recovery was blown away.

"It looked like an atomic bomb had just hit the Gulf of Mexico," said Joe Spraggins, director of emergency management for Harrison County, Miss., whose first day on the job was the day the hurricane hit. Spraggins, along with nine other leaders whose defining experience of crisis was Hurricane Katrina, participated in a three-day forum hosted by CCL® in March 2007. The event was part of the Alfred J. Marrow New Directions in Leadership Series, which was made possible through the generous support of the Marrow Family Trust.

"Crisis Leadership: Lessons from the Frontlines," held at CCL's Greensboro campus, used an interlocking series of facilitation methods to explore the terrain of crisis leadership. Hurricane Katrina served as the basis for much of the discussions. The forum participants included formal and informal leaders who were involved in Katrina response and relief efforts as well as a dozen discussants from CCL and other organizations who offered expert perspectives on crisis and leadership.

*Red Cross volunteer with evacuee in Tyler, Texas - August 2005*



"As an institution, we felt strongly that we should shine some light on what went right in response to crises such as Katrina," said David Altman, CCL's senior vice president of research and innovation. "We knew that people from all walks of life and from many institutions took on leadership roles in extreme circumstances. Through their stories, we hoped to learn more about leading in times of crisis."

One of the themes that emerged from the forum was how to better prepare people for the leadership demands of a crisis. Participants agreed that leaders should:

- **Plan for a crisis.** Traditional crisis planning, disaster preparedness and emergency training are essential but are often given low priority by organizations, communities and individuals.
- **Assume your crisis plan will fail.** A plan is a starting point, but every situation will involve something unexpected. People at all levels will be expected and should be empowered to improvise as dictated by the reality.

(continued)

- **Crisis capability is a matter of culture.** In a crisis, people need to operate beyond the plan, make decisions and take action. Leaders should create a culture that values critical thinking, flexibility and innovation-and find ways to develop these capabilities in others.
- **Build relationships because that's what you will bank on.** Crises are rarely managed in isolation. In addition to good relationships in

your organization, it is important to establish community connections. Who do you know outside your region who can help you? Who can you help?

“Clearly there is much to be done to prepare leaders and communities for crisis and disaster,” said Altman. “CCL is in a unique position to advance an agenda of leadership preparedness to go alongside the traditional disaster preparedness agenda.” ■

## Center Briefings

### Financial Times Survey Ranks CCL Among World's Best

CCL ranked No. 7 overall in the 2007 *Financial Times* worldwide survey of executive education. CCL was the only institution in the survey focused exclusively on leadership education and research, placing it in the company of many of the world's elite business schools.



The Center also ranked No. 6 worldwide for open-enrollment programs and No. 15 for custom programs.

With its No. 6 ranking, the *Financial Times* placed CCL's open-enrollment programs in the top 10 worldwide for the sixth straight year. The Center's open-enrollment programs also placed among the Top 5 in four categories: aims achieved, course design, teaching materials and faculty.

CCL's custom programs rated among the Top 10 in two categories: value for money and teaching materials.



### CCL Names New President

John R. Ryan began serving as CCL's new president and chief executive officer on June 1, 2007.

Mr. Ryan previously served as chancellor of the State University of New York (SUNY), the largest comprehensive system of higher education in the United States. He has also served on CCL's Board of Governors since 2002.

A retired U.S. Navy Vice Admiral, Mr. Ryan replaces John R. Alexander, who had served as CCL's president since 1997 and last year announced plans to retire.

Prior to becoming chancellor of SUNY in 2005, Mr. Ryan served as president of the State University of New York Maritime College and as interim president of the University at Albany. From 1998 to 2002, he was Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, where his focus on academics and fund-raising won widespread praise. A former pilot, Mr. Ryan commanded squadrons throughout the world during a 35-year career in the military.

### CCL Launches Premium Service for Alumni, Friends

Leaders looking for deeper access into CCL's expertise have a new option – the myCCL Premium membership. An extension of myCCL, an online community that offers alumni and friends newsletters and white papers on leadership, myCCL Premium provides a wealth of additional benefits to members, including product discounts, learning tools, premium articles and other information. For more information, visit [www.ccl.org/mycclbenefits](http://www.ccl.org/mycclbenefits).



## Story of Impact - Alumna S. Mignon Mazique

Relief organization's leadership development guru grateful for CCL support



Few people have a greater appreciation for the power of strong leadership than S. Mignon Mazique. As executive counselor for Mercy Corps, an international relief and development organization, she is charged with equipping field directors with the skills they need to lead others and marshal resources, typically in dire situations.

"We go into places no one else wants to go," says Mazique, whose organization provides aid and support for economic development to distressed regions in more than 35 countries. "The last thing you're going to be thinking about is how your behavior is being perceived by other people. You're busy trying to feed people or making sure women and families are safe or helping local farmers replace orchards and fields destroyed by gunfire."

Many of Mercy Corps' senior leaders credit their effectiveness, in part, to the Center for Creative Leadership and its scholarship program.

"CCL is the best in building adaptable, self-aware leaders with a keen sense of the importance of intentional leadership," Mazique says. "But because we are a nonprofit and totally dependent on grants and donations, we could never afford CCL without the scholarship program."

Mazique, an adjunct facilitator, coach and trainer since 1981, sees in the classroom and on the frontlines the impact of CCL's leadership training. The emphasis on self-awareness enables individuals to maximize their strengths and to more effectively tap into others' talents.

"If we ask our leaders who have gone through CCL to place themselves along a continuum that goes from 'very willing to make decisions with little information' to 'willing to make decisions only after understanding the entire context of the situation,' they are able to place themselves accurately along that scale," Mazique says. "That kind of self-awareness is critical in the field during an emergency. For instance, in the Tsunami in Aceh, our director immediately decided to create a material pipeline of non-food items (like stoves, tents, blankets). She decided on the basis of what she saw in front of her rather than waiting for a complete analysis of the full scope of the disaster. She consciously chose the approach most

"Having decisive leaders who understand their own strengths and weaknesses creates a better chance of positive outcomes for each person on the team, especially in really stressful environments."

**S. Mignon Mazique**  
Executive Counselor  
Mercy Corps  
Portland, Oregon

appropriate to the proportions of the emergency."

The communication skills honed at CCL provide field directors another powerful tool. "I know everyone who goes to CCL is going to come back knowing how to give feedback," Mazique says. "Knowing how to have a conversation with someone about the impact their behavior is having is very important. Even when you're working in an emergency 16 hours a day, perhaps even especially in such a high-stress environment, a leader has to be attentive to what's working on his or her team, has to be tuned into the interpersonal dynamics and potential for misunderstanding. It can't just be about the work itself. Knowledge of how to create a safe environment in which to tell the truth, in the form of feedback, is a critical gift that one takes from CCL."

Having access to world-class leadership development through CCL's scholarship program is key to Mercy Corps fulfilling its mission – to alleviate suffering, poverty and injustice by helping people build secure, productive and just communities.

"Our leaders have to be ready for everything," Mazique says. "The more they're grounded and accepting of their own strengths and weaknesses, and can inspire commitment in other people by their own clarity and confidence, the more they're able to withstand the unpredicted events."

Over the last two years, the Center has granted 409 scholarships to leaders of nonprofit organizations, a contribution valued at nearly \$1.8 million. For more information about the Annual Campaign or to make a contribution, please contact Lisa Lopez at [lopezl@leaders.ccl.org](mailto:lopezl@leaders.ccl.org) or +1 336 286 4057.

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## Creative Leadership Council

# Creative Leadership Council - Americas Chapter Spring 2007 Meeting

### *Lessons in Building Leadership Legacies*

For more information about the Council, contact Sue Simmons, Corporate Relations Manager, at +1 336 286 4014 or [simmons@leaders.ccl.org](mailto:simmons@leaders.ccl.org), or visit [www.ccl.org/clc](http://www.ccl.org/clc).

From the opening exercise, the 21 members and invited guests knew they would walk away from the spring meeting of the Americas Chapter of the Creative Leadership Council (CLC) with concrete tools and an expanded outlook.

Held in Chicago April 19 and 20 and hosted by U.S. Cellular, the one-and-a-half day meeting, *Leaders Growing Leaders: Building Leadership Legacies by Developing Others*, provided these senior HR professionals the opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices for growing leaders in the future.

U.S. Cellular CEO Jack Rooney brought his signature energy to the event as he introduced his company's Dynamic Organization Model, which keeps leadership development at the core of U.S. Cellular and is the key to driving business results and relevant organizational outcomes. Sharing a module from its Servant Leadership program, U.S. Cellular inspired participants to think about their own leadership legacy and placed in their hands a solid leadership development tool.

In a more relaxed, conversational setting, John Alexander, retiring president of CCL, shared the leadership insights he's gained over the years, not only as head of a premier leadership organization but as a preacher's son, journalist and editor. Alexander provided valuable insights for CLC members and guests as he answered questions about his own personal leadership lessons and leaders he admires most.

Leading up to these keynote presentations, CCL enterprise associates David Berke and André Martin focused the group on planning for the future. Berke, using his book, *Succession Planning and Management: A Guide to Organizational Systems and Practices*, drew a clear link between leadership succession and an organization's development. In his high-energy style, Martin painted a vivid picture of the changing landscape of leadership and the demand for leaders who inspire innovation.

Sustaining the event's energy level, Council members Bryan Gray and David Cain, CEO and President of MediaSauce

respectively, talked about high-tech dynamic messaging and its role in leadership training.

Throughout the event, Council members and guests discussed ways to more effectively define and develop leadership.

"Being a member of the Creative Leadership Council at CCL is an integral partnership in our leadership journey here at U.S. Cellular," said Jim Gustafson, of Strategic Leadership Research & Development at U.S. Cellular.

The Creative Leadership Council is a group of senior HR professionals who believe in the pivotal importance of leadership development in their organizations. Membership in the Creative Leadership Council supports the work and mission of CCL and helps fulfill our mission to advance the understanding, practice, and development of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide. In so doing, CLC members are able to draw from CCL's considerable resources while connecting them to a broad range of other member organizations. ■