Servant Leadership in the News

by Larry Spears, Executive Director

Information concerning Robert K. Greenleaf, servant-leadership, and the
Greenleaf Center has appeared in a number of publications in recent
months. The following are some of the varied publications which have
recently reported on servant-leadership:

- The Winter, 1991 issue of In Trust, a publication for friends of
  theological education, based at Washington Theological Union, carried a
  story on Robert K. Greenleaf. This issue featured a conversation about
  Robert Greenleaf and servant-leadership between Malcolm Warford, President
  of the Bangor (Maine) Theological Seminary; Robert Lynn, formerly of the
  Lilly Endowment; and Christa Klein, consultant on theological education.
- In the wake of Robert Greenleaf’s death in late September, a number of
  publications carried expanded obituaries. Among these publications were:
  Terre Haute Star-Tribune, The International Times-Herald, The Indianapolis
- The December, 1990 newsletter of the Cathedral College of the Laity,
  Washington Cathedral, featured an interesting essay by Matthew Buresch, in
  which he discussed the similarities between the ideas of Robert Bellah and
  Robert Greenleaf concerning the spiritual dimensions of work.
- As previously reported, a series of display advertisements appeared in ten
  magazines between October and March. These ads have resulted in hundreds
  of orders for Robert Greenleaf’s essay, The Servant as Leader. One of these
  ten publications, Ministry magazine, also included a lengthy essay on

We will continue to keep you updated on additional coverage of servant-
leadership in the public media.

June Celebration of Greenleaf and Servant Leadership to be Held in Indianapolis

The Robert K. Greenleaf Center is sponsoring a two-day national program to
be held in Indianapolis, Indiana. The June 14-15 program will feature a
Friday evening memorial service and celebration of the life of Robert K.
Greenleaf; followed on Saturday by a conference which will examine the
meaning and applications of the servant-leader concept. This program, to be
held at the University Place Conference Center & Hotel, located on the campus
of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, is expected to attract
proponents of servant-leadership from across North America. You are cordially
invited to attend this two-day event. Specific information will be sent out to all
Greenleaf Center members later in the Spring. If you are not currently a
member, but would like to receive registration information, please contact our
office.

(Continued on page 3)
Message from the Chairman

by James B. Tatum

I am amazed at the number of people who know of Robert Greenleaf's essays on Servant Leadership. These people work in a variety of occupations and speak of what the concept means to them; how it has struck such a receptive internal chord. Many of them tell me how they are strengthened through contact with others who have read some of Greenleaf's work. An impossible wish would be to know how many people have read and taken to heart the Servant Leader philosophy. It is, of course, not necessary to know! I raise the issue simply to encourage those who might read this that they are not alone. I also raise the matter to address the issue of the mission of the Greenleaf Center and how it is viewed by the board of directors.

The mission and strategies of the R.K. Greenleaf Center are, as follows:

- to fundamentally improve the caring and quality of all institutions through a new approach to leadership, structure, and decisionmaking. The servant-leader concept emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decisionmaking.
- to help deepen an understanding of the original ideas of Robert K. Greenleaf and the principles of servant-leadership, via the preservation and promotion of his writings.
- to nurture colleagues and institutions by providing a focal point, and opportunities to share thoughts and ideas on servant-leadership.
- to produce and publish new resources by others on servant-leadership.
- to connect servant-leaders in a network of learning.

The board of directors does not see the Robert K. Greenleaf Center as the fount of all wisdom on the subject. As a matter of fact, it is a high priority to encourage other organizations and individuals in their efforts to practice servant leadership and to experiment with new ways to implement it. It is also important for the Robert K. Greenleaf Center to use its resources to sow the seeds of servant leadership in a variety of ways including workshops and seminars. These would not be in competition with others, but would indeed be designed to create a greater awareness of the great good which comes from caring enough to see individuals and institutions become more serving.

The compelling purpose of the Center, as I see it, is to play a part in creating a world wide society dedicated to empowering all people to achieve their full potential for service to others.

Leadership studies cause focus on words such as mission, purpose, vocation and dream. The level of power in these words moves from the factual statement of what we want to the driving commitment of action and then back to the movement to fulfillment. Long time workers in the vineyards of noble causes know that the Torah was right when it said, “It is not our job to finish the work, but we are not free to walk away from it.” These same people also know that the great Christian message of losing oneself in worthy endeavor is the way to find oneself. This beautiful paradox is also emphasized in Eastern religions focusing on egolessness and what it means to truly be on a journey without goal.

This is my way of saying, yes, we have a vision of peace: a vision of people caring about people and a vision of people losing themselves in their service to others, a vision of individuals and institutions seeing their reason for existing as

(Continued on page 3)
Advices to Servants (Continued from page 1)

universality of the servant role and will take heart that, whatever the circumstance, the true servant can, with integrity, make that role manifest. " The following excerpt is taken from Greenleaf's "Postscript" to Advices to Servants.

The three servant essays that preceded these advice were written because, in my observation of people and institutions, far too many of those who have the capacity to serve well settle for mediocrity. What is mediocrity? It is anything that is substantially less in quality than what is reasonable and possible with available resources, human and material. "Mediocrity is the truly diabolical force in the world,"—Burckhardt.

In the Western world I believe that this all too common fault, settling for mediocrity, derives from a flaw that is right at the heart of traditional moral law. When Moses came down the mountain carrying the law, chiseled in stone and bearing God's imprimatur, he may have laid the groundwork for our present condition. If we view Moses as a human leader, subject to error like the rest of us (in The Institution as Servant I pointed to one such), he may have yielded to the temptation, common to this day, to attribute the law to "those higher up" rather than to assume the burden of justification himself. We do not know his conditions; he may have felt that he could not be sufficiently persuasive as a mere rational man. But how much better it would be for us today, if, as the inspired man he obviously was, he had presented the law as a reasonable codification of experience and wisdom, a summary of those sensible rules to guide individual conduct and the basis for a good society. This would have opened the way for continued growth of the law with further experience and would have made the rational justification of the law always a contemporary concern. The law, thus derived, would still have been essentially religious in the root meaning of religio, to rebind. Man is rebound to the cosmos so that, as intellectual man, probably estranged by his intellectuality, he can belong in this world and be at home in it.

There may have been two further flaws in the original concept of the law. Most of it was "thou shalt not's" and they are quite categorical. The few affirmations are general, and conformity with them is difficult to establish. This allows the interpretation that if one obeys the prohibitions, one is virtuous.

Then, by stating the law as uniform for all persons, regardless of their capacities, rather than placing the greater obligation on the more able, the better endowed persons are relieved of the obligation to measure up to their opportunities and their potentials. This permits many to be seen as law abiding when, in fact, their performance is far below what it might be.

In the shadow of this view of the shortcomings of the traditional moral law, I have tried to delineate the servant as one who meets the test of a higher law whose requirements of both persons and institutions are proportional to their opportunity to serve. While I would like to see more nonservants converted to servanthood, my greater hope is that more of those who are natural servants, who get joy out of serving, will become aggressive builders of serving institutions. Within these institutions the opportunity may seem larger for those in higher status positions; but, as more and more people, regardless of their status, are asserting their autonomy and articulating their beliefs (a commendable trend), literally everyone who is inside and who has some force as a person can be an institution builder.

Those outside can criticize, flagellate, disrupt; but only those who are inside can build.

For the servant who has the capacity to be a builder, the greatest joy in this world is in building.

(Continued from page 2)

one of service. It is also my way of saying that the organic growth of purpose amongst those who would labor together is more important than the written words of describing the mission, although both are necessary. The trick is to plant a healthy seed and then be wise enough to grow with it.

It is also to say that our greatest time of beauty will occur when we are lost in ourselves through our service to others.

It is in the spirit of cooperative ventures that the Robert K. Greenleaf Center exists. It is important that we reach out to touch each other and to learn from each other in the cause of service. Perhaps Armando Villadares, Cuban poet and dreamer, said it best when he said, "What I want is to see a world in which the dignity of the individual will be more important than any political concern what so ever."
Trustee Renewal Project Notes

by Diana Leslie

Today over three million people in the United States are serving on boards of directors as trustees of nonprofit organizations. In many ways the quality of our lives is related to the quality of these institutions. Yet few of these volunteer boards spend time reflecting on what they hold in trust and the role they could play which would enable these organizations to be more caring and responsive to the needs of the people and communities they serve.

Faced with this challenge, the Trustee Renewal Project, a program of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center, is attempting to bring renewal to the trusteeship of nonprofit boards by developing materials which will help trustees and boards reflect on their sense of purpose. What is the sense of vocation that dedicated trustees bring to their work? What is the responsibility, role, and practice of the servant leader trustee board?

We believe that in order for trustees to explore meaningful answers to these questions, they need to know the stories and experiences of other trustees and boards. Stories bring forth the rich texture of trusteeship—its joys and dilemmas, its victories and losses—enabling story tellers and listeners to become more conscious of why and how they serve as trustees. By bringing a greater degree of consciousness to trusteeship, we think trustees and boards will become more reflective and intentional about their responsibility, role and practice.

The project is gathering stories from trustees and boards, and over the next year-and-a-half will be producing materials which illuminate stories of trusteeship and which will guide other trustees to reflect and probe their own sense of trusteeship.

Partners in the Trustee Renewal Project are Dick Broholm, Anne Hoover, and Diana Leslie. If you are interested in the work of the Trustee Renewal Project, or would like to share with us your experiences as a trustee, please contact us through the Greenleaf Center.

Message from the Executive Director

by Larry Spears

I would like to thank the many people who have written or called me to express their appreciation for my account, in our last issue, of my visit with Robert Greenleaf, which occurred just a week before his death on September 29. I am grateful to know that others were also touched by my encounter with Bob Greenleaf. He has left a significant and enduring gift for all of us through his own writings.

The ongoing renewal and expansion of the Greenleaf Center continues at an increasing pace. One exciting new program which is in development involves our putting together a servant-leadership workshop program which will be offered throughout the United States and Canada. In February a group of twelve people gathered together in Indianapolis in order to plan this ambitious new program. The Center’s workshop program will initially focus on offering a day-long program on servant-leadership, including the meaning of servant-leadership; an analysis of examples of institutions which have adopted the servant-leader model; and, practical suggestions concerning actions which anyone can take to begin moving their own institution(s) along a more servant-led path. We will be reporting more extensively on the workshop program later this year.

The response to the first stage of our membership campaign has been most encouraging, with Greenleaf Center members now residing in most states and in a handful of foreign countries. Additionally, our new members have responded enthusiastically to our offer to send similar membership packets to others for whom they have provided us with names and addresses. The second stage of this campaign is also now underway and features the ongoing placement of display advertisements within a variety of magazines. A first round of magazine ads made their appearances in ten publications between October and March. These ads have resulted in hundreds of additional orders for Greenleaf Center materials, as well as many new memberships. Most importantly, over one-half million readers have now been initially introduced to the concept of servant leadership. A second round of advertisements are being prepared for placement this coming Fall within several of the earlier publications, along with a number of new ones.

I would like to publicly welcome James Robinson as the Greenleaf Center’s new Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant. Jim joined the Center’s staff in January, replacing Arleigh Kennedy, who is now working down the hall from us as Office Manager and Editor for the Trustee Renewal Project—the affiliated project of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center. Jim is both a Lutheran minister and a businessman. Like Robert Greenleaf, Jim has also had a longtime interest in Nikolai Grundtvig, the 19th Century educator who is known as the father of the Danish Folk High Schools.

Finally, the Greenleaf Center has recently doubled the number of resources available to us on servant-leadership. A new resources catalogue has been printed which lists many new essays, books, and video-and-audiotapes which may now be purchased. If you haven’t yet seen this catalogue please drop us a note or give us a call. We will be happy to send it to you. Now is a perfect time to learn about the expanding number of new resources by Robert Greenleaf and other servant-leaders.
Letters

Editor’s Note: Letters is intended to offer the insights and observations of Greenleaf Center supporters. The inclusion of any letter is done so with the approval of its writer. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space limitations or other factors. Readers are invited to submit letters for possible inclusion in this column.

The “Servant Leadership” booklets have been distributed to all our faculty and staff, with additional copies on reserve in the library for the students. I have also sent copies to our Michigan and Florida campuses to spread the word and share the spirit with others. I feel we’ve found a wonderful new resource in the Greenleaf Center.

Keep up the good work. America’s leaders need that Greenleaf message. As a coda to the student conference I planned, [Greenleaf Center Trustee] Jack Lowe, Jr. made an extraordinary impact on the students. His humanity, intellect and ‘servant leadership’ posture made the students sit up and take notice. They haven’t stopped thanking me for ‘finding’ him. I’m grateful to you both. Thank you.

Paula Ulmer, Campus Coordinator Corporate Arts & Cultural Affairs Northwood Institute Cedar Hill, TX

I was thrilled to receive the materials on the Greenleaf Center. I am pleased to become an individual member and I hope to develop institutional ties.

I became a follower of Greenleaf’s values during my five years as a senior program officer in education and leadership with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in Michigan. I accepted Marietta’s presidency because we have an institutional commitment to developing leadership in our students. Servant leadership is our preferred style: it is the ethical basis upon which the work of our McDonough Center for Leadership and Business is constructed.

Please accept my very best wishes for your every success.

Patrick D. McDonough, President Marietta College Marietta, OH

As you may know, we at The Niagara Institute are great supporters of the work of Robert Greenleaf. We have long been in the forefront of advocating the servant-leadership values, including distributing his essays.

It is gratifying to see the progress you are making on behalf of our shared ideals. In spite of the fact that we are also a not-for-profit organization, we gladly enclose a cheque for $100 to make us a Corporate/Institutional Sponsor, thus enabling Niagara Institute to have the benefits of membership.

Douglas B. Bowie, President The Niagara Institute Niagara-on-the Lake Ontario, CANADA

Demonstrate Your Commitment to Servant Leadership—

Become a Member of the Greenleaf Center

The Robert K. Greenleaf Center invites you to join us as a sponsor and member. Your tax-deductible contribution entitles you to receive our quarterly newsletter; discounts on future conferences; and, notification concerning other significant servant leader publications and symposia. Most importantly, your support will enable the Robert K. Greenleaf Center to continue to carry forward our important educational work in servant leadership.

Please enroll me as a member of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center. Enclosed is my check for:

$25 Individual Sponsor
$100 Corporate/Institutional Sponsor
$500 Sustaining Sponsor
$1,000 Leadership Sponsor

$_____ for my sponsorship plus a donation to further support the Greenleaf Center.

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Also, please send information on servant leadership and the Greenleaf Center to:

NAME ___________________________
ADDRESS _________________________
CITY/STATE/ZIP ___________________
Servant Leader Books in Brief

You Don’t Have To Go Home From Work Exhausted! The Energy Engineering Approach
By Ann McGee-Cooper, with Duane Trammell and Barbara Lau, Bowen & Rogers, Dallas, TX, 1990, 349 pages. $29.95.

Servant-leadership requires an individual to recognize the need to delicately balance a number of competing notions. One of the important balancing acts, it seems to me, involves learning how to be productive and effective at work and in service—while also taking care to renew one’s energy reserves during evenings and weekends. In You Don’t Have To Go Home From Work Exhausted!, these three authors offer a compelling look at some of the difficulties we all encounter in maintaining this balance. Most importantly, they provide a series of methods which can be used to put joy and passion back into both work and play. In a chapter on cures for burnout, the authors discuss Robert Greenleaf’s suggestions concerning the need for individual spiritual growth. Many of their suggestions draw upon current research in creativity, stress management, and brain hemisphericity and learning methods. This is a wonderful, life-enhancing book which should be read by every busy person. —L.S.

In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership

Henri Nouwen offers us a personal look at Christian leadership based upon the servant-leader idea. Nouwen discusses his life as a former academic and priest at Harvard University, and his subsequent move to working with the mentally handicapped at the L’Arche communities in Toronto. His frank account of how his own thinking was affected by the desire to be powerful, popular and relevant offers a very human perspective on his subsequent notions about the nature of Christian leadership. “The leadership about which Jesus speaks,” writes Nouwen, “is a radically different kind from the leadership offered by the world. It is a servant-leadership—to use Robert Greenleaf’s term—in which the leader is a vulnerable servant who needs the people as much as they need him or her.” In the Name of Jesus has much to offer to servant-leaders from a variety of religious and non-religious beliefs. —L.S.

Combining Service and Learning: A Resource Book for Community and Public Service (3 vols.)
By Jane C. Kendall and Associates, National Society for Internships and Experiential Education, 3509 Haworth Drive, Suite 207, Raleigh, NC 27609-7229, 1990. (Price varies depending upon discounts, and whether all three volumes are purchased together or separately.)

Experiential education includes community and public service in combination with active learning. Servant-leadership seeks to create a better, more caring society by encouraging individuals within institutions to be both servant and leader. These two concepts are increasingly being viewed by many as mutually reinforcing and enhancing ideas, and is frequently termed “service-learning.” Combining Service and Learning, a most impressive three-volume collection, is an important new resource for servant-leaders and experiential educators alike. The 1,300 pages contained in these three volumes provide a comprehensive look at service and learning from a variety of perspectives. Robert K. Greenleaf’s work on servant-leadership is quoted by a number of the individual authors whose articles and papers have been collected together in this massive work. It offers an extraordinary look at the potential for combining service, leadership and learning. —L.S.

Center for Value Based Leadership Seminar

The Center for Value Based Leadership has been recently formed in Dayton, Ohio in association with the University of Dayton. The Center’s mission is to conduct programs, provide guidance and coaching to help individuals and organizations build leadership characteristics and skills that allow them to put their chosen values into action.

The Center is currently sponsoring a seminar for leaders struggling with a disparity between their values or beliefs and their daily activities. It covers the leadership process (the call, vision, and series of leadership acts): the leadership characteristics (courage, will and persistence, compassion, and clarity of personal values or principles); and the way we grow by integrating values into our lives. The format is participative and reflective.

Participants will gain insights from their past experiences, myth and a personal story; the Hall-Tonna values inventory; and interaction with other leaders. It is designed to help leaders clarify their own principles and build the courage necessary to put them into action. Those who believe in the servant leadership concept will gain personal insights that will help them in their quest to become more like the servant as leader. The seminar is lead by CVBL’s senior staff of five that includes two business leaders, a specialist in human growth and symbolism, an organization development consultant, and a professor of religious studies and mythology. Past participants have found this seminar to be a life shaping event.

This seminar will be held at the Bergamo Center in Dayton, April 21-26, 1991. The cost is $995. Call or write the Center for Value Based Leadership for more information at 532 Stonehaven Road, Kettering, OH 45429, (513) 298-7783.

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