

# LEAD FOR DIVERSITY 2011



**American Conference on Diversity**

VALUING DIVERSITY, EDUCATING LEADERS, PROMOTING RESPECT

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# A YEAR OF CHALLENGE, GROWTH AND IMPACT

**Lead for Diversity** is a yearlong commitment to personal growth, peer leadership development and school improvement. During the summer, teams of up to four students from high schools throughout the state participate in a week-long peer leadership program designed to prepare them to make decisions based on an appreciation of the diversity—including ethnic, racial, faith, and gender identity—within their schools and communities.

In the summer of 2011 student teams from 24 charter, public comprehensive, and private high schools, and their advisors, made the commitment to create positive change in their schools and neighborhoods, identifying opportunities to apply the awareness they gained. They developed Action Plans that will be implemented throughout the school year, helping to create inclusive school and neighborhood communities.

During the school year, *Lead for Diversity* teams come together for advanced peer leadership training to share their Action Plans and strategies. During the 2011-2012 academic year, it is estimated that student-led Action Plans, intended to affect their school populations, will impact close to 18,000 students throughout New Jersey.

## Who Came in 2011?

### 24 High Schools:

2 Rural  
14 Suburban  
8 Urban

12 Central NJ  
10 Northern NJ  
2 Southern NJ

2 Charter  
5 Private  
17 Public, non-charter

### Grade Levels:

9% Sophomores  
39% Juniors  
52% Seniors

### 88 Students Total:

62% Female  
38% Male

### Racial Demographics:

9% Asian  
7% Biracial, Multiracial  
31% Black, African American  
24% Latino(a), Hispanic  
2% Middle Eastern  
27% White

### Faith Demographics:

3% Agnostic  
2% Atheist  
70% Christian  
2% Hindu  
3% Jewish  
3% Muslim  
10% None  
7% Other

### Sexual Orientation / Identity

4% Bisexual  
2% Fluid  
1% Gay  
88% Heterosexual  
2% Questioning  
3% Other

# 2011: BY THE NUMBERS

*Delegates completed their assessment of the program at the conclusion of their Lead for Diversity session.*

## Delegate Survey

### As a Result of Attending Lead for Diversity 2011:

	<i>Strongly Agree/Agree</i>
I am more open to having friends of different ethnicities and races.	96%
I am more open to having friends of different genders.	96%
I am more open to having friends with different religions.	92%
I am more open to having friends with different sexual orientations.	96%
I have an increased understanding of, and appreciation for, people of different races, genders, sexual orientations, religions, and ethnicities.	100%
I have an increased understanding of the harmful effects of prejudice, stereotypes, and assumptions on people because of one or more of their social or cultural identities.	99%
I have a better understanding of the pain some people feel because of discrimination.	100%
I am more aware of my own stereotypes and prejudices.	100%
I have learned skills that will help me to work for causes and issues in which I believe.	99%
I am more aware of how I deal with conflicts and have good strategies for working through conflict with others.	100%
I will be able to contribute to people getting along better at my school.	99%
I feel comfortable that I can utilize my skills and knowledge, related to leadership and diversity awareness, when I return to my school.	100%
I have created an Action Plan that I believe will create positive change in my school community.	99%
I would recommend Lead for Diversity to a friend.	99%

### Participating Schools, Lead for Diversity 2011:

Absegami High School	Marlboro High School
Asbury Park High School	Memorial High School (West New York)
Bayonne High School	Moorestown Friends School
Franklin High School	North Star Academy Charter School
Freehold Boro High School	Piscataway High School
Freehold Township High School	Roselle Park High School
Gill St. Bernard's School	St. Benedict's Preparatory
Howell High School	Saint Vincent Academy
Kearny High School	Secaucus High School
Kent Place School	Spotswood High School
Lakewood High School	University Academy Charter High School
Marist High School	William L. Dickinson High School

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

*"It was one of the best experiences of my life. I can't wait to change the world one person at a time, starting with me. Before I didn't believe in change, but now I believe."*  
- Andrew Altamirano

*"I found a new person in myself. LFD made me realize that although I had always been a nice person, I did need to learn more. LFD was one of the best things that ever happened to me and I leave with a new perspective. It was truly amazing."*  
- Alexa Baglione

*"LFD has taught me so much. I got to experience so much in such a short amount of time."*  
- Aseeli Coleman

*"I want to come back, but I have to take what I've learned and spread the word! I was challenged to become accepting, but now I truly am. I've seen things through others' point of view."*  
- Kashena Galloway

*"I am glad I came to LFD. The whole experience has been amazing and enlightening. I can't wait to go home and make a change."*  
- Christopher Panepinto

*"It changed me more than I thought it could. Thank you, LFD."*  
- Robert Hummel

*"The most important part of LFD for me was that it opened up my eyes to a lot of the things I wasn't aware of before. I am a new person. Hands down, this was the best 6 days of my life; I met so many new people and I have a totally new understanding of life. I wish everyone could experience what we all have."*  
- Summer Kocerha

*"The whole program was important for me. I learned something new every day. I loved my delegation. I love my counselors and I was inspired to make a change."*  
- Juan Ouviaña

*"LFD has been one of the best weeks in my life. I feel everyone was supportive and gave comfort for problems."*  
- Mihir Shah

*"It was amazing. No words can explain it."*  
- David Philemon

*"I am so glad I got the chance to open up and see the actual world around me I will forever remember every new lesson I have learned here. I will make a change."*  
- Cassie Petty

*"My overall experience was amazing. I learned so much from all the workshops and programs."*  
- Nyjia Stephens

*"It was life-changing and something I will always remember."*  
- Linda Salazar

*"I loved it and I hope my school continues going and my Action Plan is successful."*  
- Samantha Tunnell

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