

Fall 2007
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Join us for a cup and conversation



Coffee with a Leader Sessions

Next Sessions:

Superintendent of
Kalamazoo Public Schools,
Dr. Michael Rice, **Tues-**
day, December 4, from
7:30 to 9:00 a.m. at the
Chamber.

Dr. John Dunn, presi-
dent of WMU, on **Friday,**
January 18, at 7:30 am at the
Chamber. To reserve: Call
381-2977, ext. 3205 or
jmoore@kazoochamber.com

Grads can made a difference...

Members challenged to get involved with youth

This issue of our newsletter is a *Call to Action*. We are offering several specific opportunities where you, as an individual, CAN make a difference in the life of a young person in our community. Rick Chambers has offered us encouragement in this direction in this issue's *One Leader's View* (see page 2).

Incidents of youth violence, and even death of young persons in our community this past year suggest an urgent need for us to invest our time and talents in the future of our community's children. The Kalamazoo Promise is a wonderful gift. But will ALL our children be ready to take advantage of it without some support from the community's adults?

The opportunities we've featured offer flexibility to accommodate your schedule; offer training and/or orientation to better prepare you to work with youth; and certainly offer the rewards of seeing the difference you can make in a young person's life.

These are just a FEW of the youth-serving organizations and opportunities we've gathered over the last few weeks. We've included contact information for each so that you can get more specifics, and have your questions answered. Whether you have a day or two a year, or one hour a week to offer a child, we hope you'll consider making a commitment.

BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS
3501 Covington Rd.
Contact: Chet Hart
269-382-6800

Big Brothers/Big Sisters also has a number of programs that offer something for everyone who is interested in volunteering with youth. One of the newest programs is *Mentoring Girls 2 Women*, which will provide mentors to 100 girls per year. The women will serve as career role models and help the girls see opportunities, and motivate them for the future.

Another new approach to mentoring is their site-based mentoring programs. Big Brothers and Big Sisters meet with kids every other week at their business, or at the school. *Bigs at Eaton* is an example and Eaton Corporation was recently named the *Bigs in Business* program of the year.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
915 Lake St.
Contact: Krissy Rahn,
Program Assistant
269-349-4485, ext. 110
krissyrt@bgckzoo.org

The Boys and Girls Club matches their volunteers' interests with programs they offer youth. If you're into technology, art, sports, character & leadership, or health and life skills, they have programs where you can be involved with their kids, and share some of your skills and interests. You could be helping with academic

skills, or teaching a group how to do something you've mastered. Call Krissy, and find a way you can be making a difference!

**COMMUNITY ADVOCATES
FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS**
Interfaith Community Center
1037 Interfaith Blvd. (off
Woodward Ave.)
Contact: Janice B. James or
Dorothy Young, Co-Chairs
269-345-3619
caps_janicebjames@yahoo.com

CAPS is an organization to help students prepare for and access The Kalamazoo Promise. They offer assistance to elementary, middle and high school students in English, reading, writing, math, and help with homework. A tutor orientation is offered, and their program is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school, and on Saturday mornings.

**KALAMAZOO COMMUNITIES
IN SCHOOLS**
75 Exchange Place
Contact: Coco Cook
269-337-1601, ext. 218
ccook@kcisfkidsfirst.org

KCIS has a long list of programs to support kids in many different ways. This offers a variety of opportunities for volunteers to pick and choose terms of their time and interests. Some are one-time events, such as *Cider & Stories*, or *Books and Bagels* (adults reading with students, and the students keep

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One Leader's View

Rick Chambers, Pfizer Inc *Director, Worldwide Communications*

One Person. One Small Step...

A few years ago, while visiting my son's middle-school science class, he introduced me to his classmates as "my dad, the space freak."

He's right. I *am* a space freak. I'm the guy who closely follows the progress of the latest space probes, who can name any classic "Star Trek" episode inside five seconds, who travels with a copy of *Astronomy* magazine under his arm while others thumb through *Fortune* and *Fast Company*. Pretty freaky.

Small wonder, then, that I continue to find inspiration in a phrase uttered by a starry-eyed flyboy from Wapakoneta, Ohio, as he stood on a gray, desolate plain a quarter of a million miles from home:

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Neil Armstrong's simple-yet-poetic words resonate across nearly four decades since the day he stood on the moon. But do we truly understand the meaning of those words? Can we apply them to our present reality?

When the United States began its quest to land humans on the moon, the challenge was beyond daunting. Reaching another world is frighteningly complex, stunningly expensive and downright dangerous. In the end, success depended on far more than the first man to leave his footprint in the lunar dust.

Hundreds of thousands of people became part of the quest – the engineers who designed the space vessels, the factory workers who built them, the programmers who wrote software for computers less powerful than today's handheld calculators, the astronomers, the geologists, the accountants, the medics, the nutritionists ... and on and on. Every analyst, every

security guard, every janitor owned the vision. No matter how small the task, each had *meaning*. Each person believed what he or she was *really* doing was making it possible to put a man on the moon.

And so the "giant leap" that Armstrong noted was a collective vault into the future by countless people willing to make one small step.

What should that mean for us today, nearly 40 years on, here in Kalamazoo, Michigan?

As a community, we cannot afford to be pessimistic. We cannot waste our time blaming "the system." We cannot merely dump the problem on government. We cannot shake our heads and say, "I'm not up for this," or "I don't have time," or "It's not my thing."

Increased gang activity and youth violence are capturing the local headlines these days. Kids are threatening and killing kids. It's horrifying. No less serious are other issues, such as homelessness, joblessness, racial divisions, poverty, crime, economic uncertainty, school dropouts,

teen pregnancy and more. None of us is removed from this. It's a growling darkness that stalks us all, snapping at our spiritual being.

Maybe the time has come for each of us to take individual ownership of a collective vision – in short, to take one small step.

A few months ago, my wife decided she wanted to do something to support our troops overseas. But how could she, just one person far away from the battlefield, make a difference? She dared to take one small step. She became involved in Soldiers' Angels, a network that organizes mailings to soldiers and their families. What started with a few cards and notes soon grew to a daily routine in which she emails, sends letters and ships care packages. Many are the expressions of gratitude she's received, from heartfelt personal thanks to flags and patches from soldiers who feel loved.

One person. One small step.

As a community, we cannot afford to be pessimistic. We cannot waste our time blaming "the system." We cannot merely dump the problem on government. We cannot shake our heads and say, "I'm not up for this," or "I don't have time," or "It's not my thing."

If every person reading this were to take one small step – mentoring an at-risk youth, sharing ideas on careers and job search skills in a classroom, hiring a teen who needs work, showing respect to young people regardless of background (and insisting on respect in return), volunteering to take a tiny part in other emerging initiatives – the giant leap to conquer youth violence would become less and

less daunting.

The same is true for other community issues, where solutions are found when each of us dares to take one small step. Stocking a food pantry, coaching a jobseeker, joining a board, mentoring a child, counseling an entrepreneur, even buying a hot dog and Coke for a homeless person or mowing the lawn for an elderly neighbor. With every small step, the moon comes closer to our reach.

And there's nothing freaky about that. Nothing freaky at all.



Rick Chambers, a 2003 Leadership graduate, was born and raised in Kalamazoo. A graduate of Western Michigan University and KVCC, he began his career as a print journalist before joining The Upjohn Company in 1987 in public relations. Today he is Pfizer's media spokesperson in Michigan. Rick is a published writer and award-winning short-story writer, active in his church and on several boards. He and his wife, Terri, have two grown children and a baby granddaughter.

New LK Leadership Advisory Council, New Strategic Plan

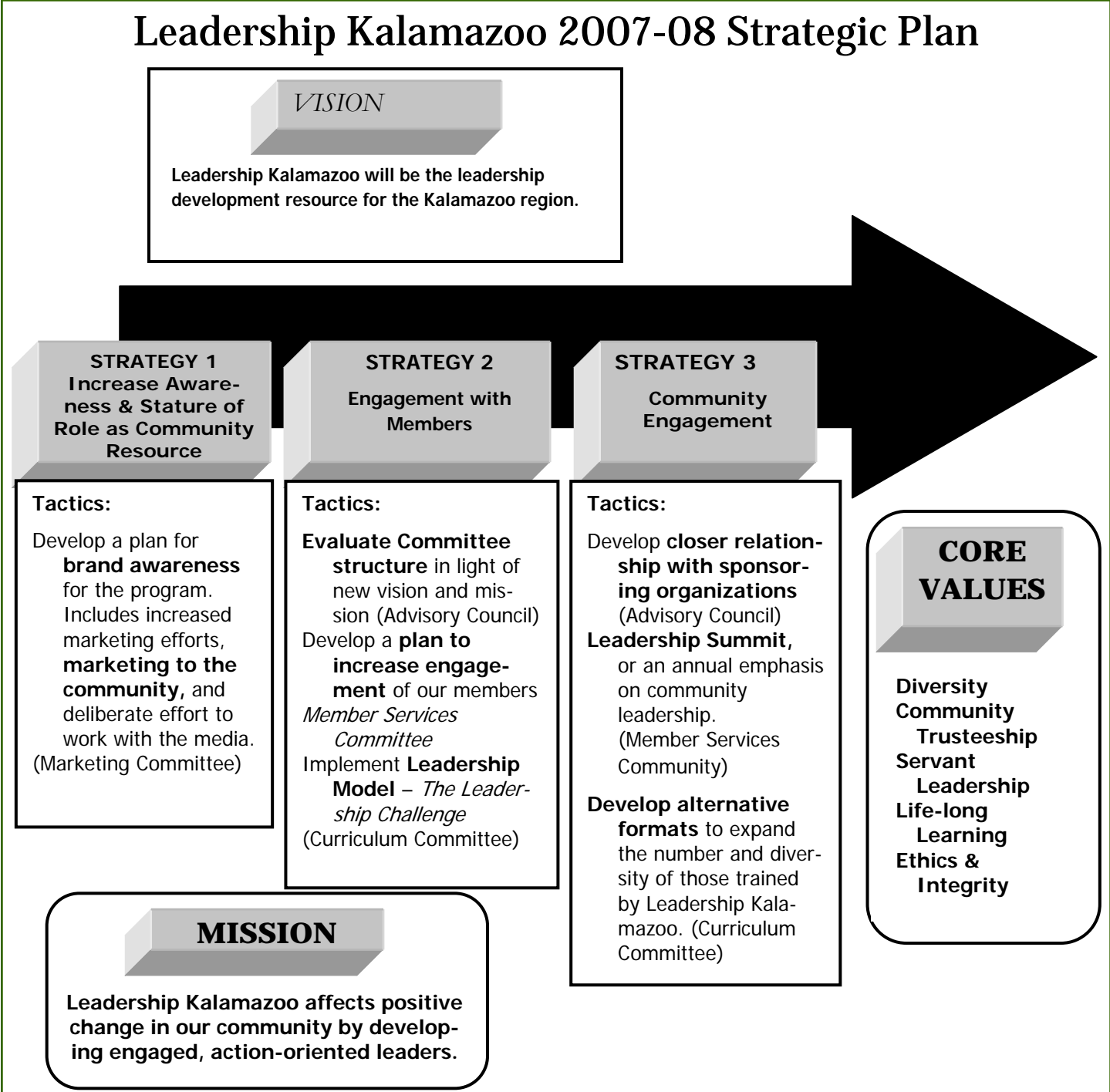
Leadership Kalamazoo Advisory Council Chairperson the Reverend Denise Posie, vice chairperson Anne Wend Lipsey, and treasurer, Jim Luginbill (who is also a new council member, *Fifth Third Bank*), have welcomed several new members since May.

Those new members are: Bob Ezelle, *Boys & Girls Club*; Andy Vorbrich, *Early Lennon Crocker & Bartosiewicz*; Lisa Williams, *Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo*. Our new council liaison to the Chamber's Governing

Council is Jim Stephanak, *Kalamazoo Gazette*.

The group has recently approved a new strategic plan, with a focus on increased engagement of our members. The new plan also introduces alternative formats for delivering leadership

development in new ways to new audiences. The new plan is expected to serve as a foundation for Leadership Kalamazoo — and to benefit both members and the community of the Kalamazoo Region — for many years to come.





Introducing the Class of 2008

The 22nd class of Leadership Kalamazoo represents a broad range for-profit, non-profit, public and private organizations from throughout the region.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Tammy Barnard | Edison Neighborhood Association |
| Karen Bouche | Greenleaf Trust |
| Coco Cook | Kalamazoo Communities in Schools |
| Vicki Georgeau | City of Portage |
| Jennifer Granzow | Kalamazoo County Prosecutor's Office |
| Rob Gray | Comerica Bank |
| Hap Haasch | Community Access Center |
| Barbara Hathaway | The Owen Group |
| John Hayden | Bronson Healthcare Group |
| Ginger Hentz | Local Initiatives Support Corp. (L.I.S.C.) |
| Adam Herringa | City of Portage |
| Gretchen Johnson | WordPlay Marketing & Communications |
| Kevin King | Kalamazoo Public Library |
| Kevin Linders | Consumers Energy |
| David Lipowski | State Farm |
| Vince Marcinek | ProMed Healthcare |
| Kimm Mayer | Stryker Medical |
| Michelle McDade | Junior League |
| Nick Metzger | State Farm |
| Derek Naylor | Keystone Community Bank |
| Kelly Odean | Comerica Bank |
| Michael Oliphant | Yeo & Yeo, P.C. |
| Marci Psczolkowski | Kalamazoo Gazette |
| Randy Schmitt | Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes |
| Dan Sherman | Specialty Business Forms |
| Jeff Timmerman | Miller-Davis Co. |
| Kristen Utrecht | Manatron, Inc. |
| Daniel White | Big Brothers/Big Sisters |

...Call To Action

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the books.) They also have programs where adults can meet with groups of kids once or twice a month, read books, and discuss them in small groups.

Tutors for all age students are needed. Volunteers to help with basic reading, writing and entry-level high school work would be welcomed. What was YOUR best subject in school? How about signing up to help some students in that subject??

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN

Contact 337-1722 for more information or to sign up.

KPS is seeking volunteers to serve on sub-committees that will develop expectations for district families and staff and community members. The groups will start meeting in November and have their reports prepared by early Spring.

The new superintendent, Dr. Michael Rice, wants to develop a set of social and academic expectations for students by age and grade level. And, expectations for four other groups: parents, teachers, school support staff, and the community will also be a part of the plan.

— Judy Moore

LK Grads Lead Region

Congratulations to the Leadership Kalamazoo graduates recently elected to serve the region: Bobby Hopewell, Hannah McKinney, David Anderson, Sean McCann and Barbara Miller in Kalamazoo. Elizabeth Campbell and Larry DeShazor join Ed Sackley in Portage. We now boast five in Kalamazoo and three in Portage.



LK Graduate Bobby J. Hopewell, ('93) center, recently elected Mayor of the City of Kalamazoo, poses with Dan White of the 2008 class, and Anne Wend Lipsey, ('96), at the LK Fall Reception.