

**NEW MEXICO FIRST**  
**THIRTIETH TOWN HALL**  
*Leading With Integrity: Advancing New Mexico*  
**March 27-30, 2003**  
**United World College USA, Montezuma, New Mexico**

**INTRODUCTION**

More than 70 participants gathered at the historic Montezuma Castle at the United World College USA near Las Vegas, New Mexico, for New Mexico First's 30<sup>th</sup> Town Hall, on the subject: "Leading with Integrity: Advancing New Mexico." For four days, in small groups and larger plenary sessions, the participants explored the essence of leadership and integrity and how those subjective yet essential qualities can be developed to improve the health and well being of New Mexico's population, economy and environment.

The spectacular setting in the hills above Las Vegas inspired the Town Hall participants, a large number of them attending their first New Mexico First Town Hall. Central to the mission of the United World College is building relationships among future generations of international leaders.

A positive and thought-provoking tone was set for the participants by New Mexico Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish, a founder and board member emerita of New Mexico First, and a panel comprising Paul Shirley, chairman and CEO of Qynergy Corporation, Roger Kennedy, author and former director of the National Park Service and the National Museum of American History, and LaDonna Harris, president of Americans for Indian Opportunity.

### **Why should New Mexico pay attention to leadership now?**

The participants overwhelmingly agreed that New Mexico is at a crossroads. Now is the time to focus urgent attention on the development of effective, principle-centered leadership in order to address the challenges of today and to realize a positive future. The participants of the Town Hall achieved consensus on the following statements and recommendations.

New Mexico faces many challenges – social, economic and political. For years it has lingered near the bottom of many national lists that track positive attributes and at the top of lists that register deficiencies. New Mexico’s human and natural resources are at risk, reflected, for example, in the number of young people, including those who secure their degrees and education, who leave the state and do not return due to the lack of employment and professional opportunities. In addition, there is an increased disparity in income distribution within our state.

Effective, visionary leadership to protect and preserve those resources needs to be developed and/or strengthened. This new leadership must face the realities of New Mexico’s current situation and refuse to accept mediocrity.

However, the Town Hall also recognized that New Mexico is at a unique time in its history. The new leadership and cooperative attitude have infused a sense of vigor and enthusiasm based on the recognition that leadership can positively impact government, business and community arenas. The citizens of New Mexico are ready to seize the opportunity to address problems in need of immediate attention. We will nurture and increase pride in New Mexico. We will do this through improved government services, economic development and individual community success. In short, we will define ourselves as leaders within the state and on national rankings.

The Town Hall identified many assets that should be preserved to maintain New Mexico’s unique character. Four were highlighted as so essential that they must not be compromised through the lack of leadership: the cultural, historical, environmental and rural attributes that have attracted settlers, visitors and admirers to New Mexico for millennia.

Cultural diversity, including cultural retention – from the unique, sovereign status of Indian tribes to the acequia tradition brought from 15<sup>th</sup>-century Spain – sets New Mexico apart as a tolerant society that values inclusion and openness.

Formatted

Equally important is New Mexico's natural environment: a semi-arid landscape of openness, color and ecological diversity coupled with the rugged majesty of our mountain ranges.

Intertwined within these irreplaceable assets are the diverse human activities that contribute to New Mexico's singularity: a blend of traditional ways and modern technology, the proximity of modern cities and rural communities and extensive public land access for a wide range of outdoor activities.

### **What is good leadership?**

Many styles of leadership exist, and different situations call for different types of leadership. While the Town Hall identified numerous personal and learned characteristics of good leadership, consensus emerged around the following themes, not prioritized:

- The long run. Good leaders are not only committed to ensuring sustained leadership, but are focused on the global perspective and New Mexico's place within it.
- Collaboration-minded. Good leaders build alliances and teams within, across and among organizations. They pull people together and encourage participation.
- Principles. Good leaders follow ethical and moral-based principles and values; they act with integrity, courage and dedication to their mission. They are trustworthy and accept accountability for their decisions and organizations.
- Vision. Good leaders share a vision of a better future and a willingness to take the risks necessary to achieve it. They inspire others to do the same. They remain focused and keep others focused on the vision.

- Role model and mentor. Good leaders lead by example and model competent, ethical behavior as standards for others. They encourage, identify and develop emerging leaders and contribute to their community.
- Passion. Good leaders are motivated to take action. They are persistent, dedicated and take personal responsibility for their decisions.
- Communication. Good leaders inform and articulate a vision that inspires others to enthusiastically pursue the group's objectives. They are open to other people and ideas.

### **Where does good leadership come from?**

Great leadership comes from people whose great desire, preparation and integrity intersect with society's great desires, needs and opportunities. Leaders emerge from every type of family and socio-economic background. Today, the emphasis on collaboration has expanded the potential for leadership to many more people through the creation of teams and stakeholder groups to address community concerns and projects.

Commonly cited opportunities for developing leadership are informal relationships such as families, friends, and peer groups, as well as volunteer and extracurricular activities, work experience, and meaningful experiences of life. Each has its role in the development of leadership, from serving as examples to setting expectations, building high self-esteem and building social skills.

More formal vehicles for developing leadership include clubs, schools and civic and religious organizations, which demonstrate and teach the value of community. Also available are leadership organizations, career planning programs, internships, job shadowing, mentoring and formal education. The military and public safety professions are common opportunities for formal leadership development. In fact, one of New Mexico's 17 public post-secondary two-year schools is New Mexico Military Institute, which provides a model for developing leadership skills in the youth of New Mexico. Election to public office is an opportunity for individuals to enhance leadership skills. Unforeseen political events and personal tragedies, job changes

Deleted: ¶  
¶

and disasters create opportunities for people to rise to leadership. Organizations and communities can build upon the leaders who emerge in this way.

Effective methods of developing leadership include formal leadership training or curriculum and practical experiences, as well as appropriate feedback, self-reflection, understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses, and listening.

While placing a person in a position of authority provides a base of responsibility, it does not always ensure success. Continued development of leadership skills is an important ingredient in forming an effective leader.

Many programs exist to expose potential leaders to the skills that are most useful in leading an organization or becoming a civic leader. However, these programs may lack coordination and formal connections that would make them more effective.

### **What are the incentives and disincentives to lead?**

One benefit of living in New Mexico is that its relatively small population provides an opportunity to make a difference. Prominent officials and leaders are largely accessible, and leaders can quickly emerge when problems need to be resolved.

As an appealing place to live, New Mexico attracts people with a wide range of skills and experiences, who can be called upon to participate in organizations and offer innovative ideas to address issues.

The Town Hall identified incentives and disincentives for the emergence of leadership. These include:

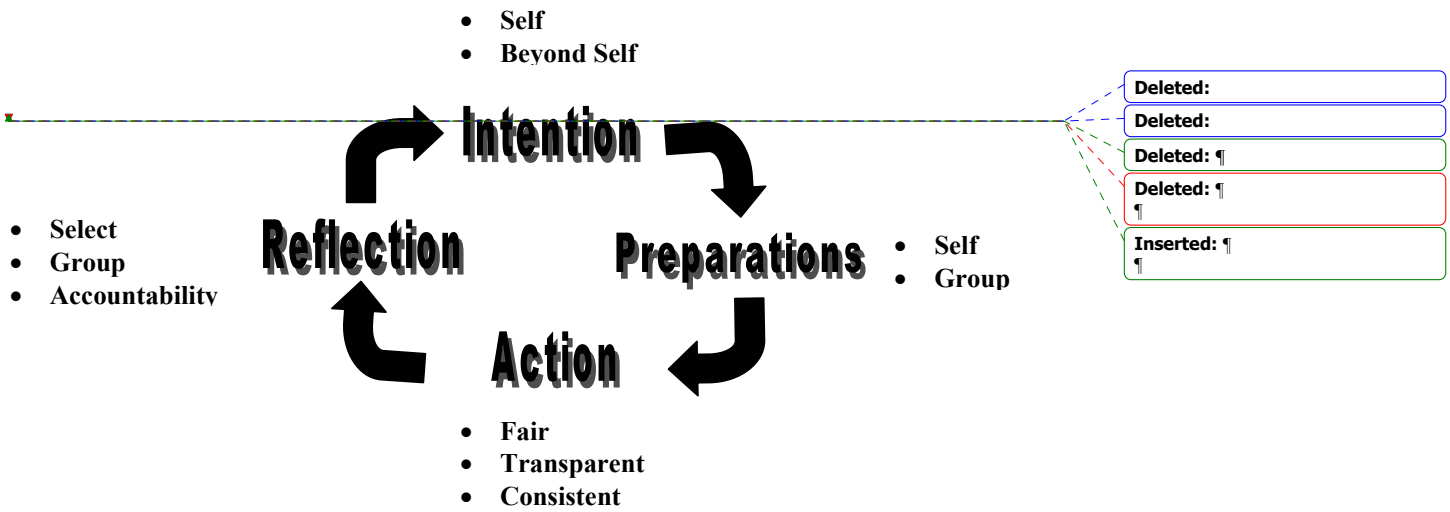
Incentives	Disincentives
Ability to effect positive change in community	Costs in time and personal stamina, stress and health consequences. It is a burden and responsibility.
Increased visibility	Scrutiny and personal attacks, loss of privacy, public abuse, lack of respect. Low opinion of public officials. Media attacks and untruths must be endured.
Recognition	Risk / fear of failure
Increased confidence and personal development on career path	Risk that failure will take you away from career path
Opportunity to develop networks that result in increased financial ability	High cost of running for public office and loss of income
Building loyalty, alliances, followers and supporters	Resentment from others who are not participating
Exposure to people and building relationships with agencies and resources	Learning how to deal with bureaucracy and red tape
Growth in potential for increased earnings along with credibility and respect	Lack of tangible rewards

**What does it mean to lead with integrity?**

In addition to the qualities desired of a leader listed in the previous section, leading with integrity has distinctive qualities. It begins with intention, personal responsibility, preparation and competence: a clear sense of personal identity, capacity and values and taking action without regard to personal gain or glory. Leadership with integrity requires personal and collective accountability and responsibility, which begins with reflection and results in correcting the gaps between what we say and what we do. It

Deleted:

includes positive, value-based decision making which considers all perspectives. The ongoing cycle of leadership is summarized in the following diagram.



**What does it mean to follow with integrity?**

Leadership requires followers. Followers must be informed and loyal. They provide support for the leader and develop their own skills to assume leadership positions as the opportunities arise. Followers participate in many ways. Perhaps the most obvious is voting, which must be encouraged at every opportunity, including time off for workers and educational activities for students. Particularly in the electoral system, an apathetic public can result in failure to articulate issues of importance, cause leaders to miss opportunities, and result in disillusionment. Followers are essential in the private and non-profit sectors as well as in the public realm. Followers are invested in the cause and work for it, trusting in their leaders’ ability to direct the overall effort.

**Recommendations for advancing New Mexico through development of leadership**

**with integrity.**The Town Hall recommends an array of actions to enhance the development of integrity-based leadership skills aimed at impacting New Mexico’s critical issues. A CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN NEW MEXICO

Many of the functions could be performed through collaboration among organizations that already exist or would be created to focus attention on leadership. The New Mexico First Implementation Team would have a role in identifying or creating the organization, which could carry one of these suggested names: the “Center for the Advancement of Leadership in New Mexico” or the “New Mexico Leadership Development Institute.” The Town Hall proposes the following specific mission with supporting objectives and tasks:

**Mission:** Provide leadership skills workshops and training opportunities that are accessible by New Mexicans from all regions and sectors. This includes offering life-long leadership skills development, leadership internships and certification programs.

**Objective:** Provide a forum for a New Mexico-based information exchange process that examines best practices in leadership. This forum provides the opportunity to share and distribute successful leadership practices utilizing a formal, methodical and systematic approach. Such an approach would include elements of assessment, planning, prioritization, implementation, evaluation and feedback. The Town Hall also acknowledges the importance of continuing to recognize and encourage ethical behavior. Programs such as “The Samaritan Counseling Center’s Ethics in Business Awards” and the “Governor’s Distinguished Public Service Awards” should be examined as potential role models for expansion.

**Promotion:** The center would promote excellence in leadership with integrity and ethics in business, government and community through programs that recognize success. The center would partner with media to market the advancement of leadership in New Mexico. It would support existing programs, encourage professional and community organizations to implement recognition programs and publish a leadership magazine for education and recognition of leaders.

**Networks:** The center would identify and catalogue leadership programs that serve adults and youth with descriptions of the programs. It would establish and gather data using evaluative criteria for outcomes such as basic leadership skills, goal setting, problem solving, decision making, strategic planning, character development, parenting

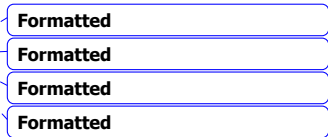


skills, conflict resolution, civic responsibility and role modeling. The institute would facilitate leveraging of existing programs and resources using systems alignment. The center also would establish links with educational institutions and community programs through modern communication technologies to allow distance-learning methods that engage the broader community. These activities would develop the basis for a statewide outreach and education effort: a virtual leadership development institute.

Education: The teaching of leadership, ethics and integrity to all students at all levels of education should be integrated through curriculum and classroom management. All teachers should be prepared to exemplify and model leadership behavior for their students.

### STATE EMPLOYEE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The governor's office should conduct an inventory of existing state government leadership training resources and should coordinate these state programs with existing external leadership development programs, including those developed by the institute.



In addition to those programs, the Town Hall recommends the following actions to promote leadership and integrity in New Mexico.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Town Hall believes that leaders emerge to address important issues and to propose solutions. A strategic plan is a necessary catalyst to focus the efforts of New Mexico's current and new leaders. New Mexico must restart its strategic planning efforts. The Governor's Office should take the lead in proposing a process to create the New Mexico Strategic Plan. The plan would address the state's most pressing problems and would provide a blueprint for strategic planning at all levels of government. The Strategic Planning Town Hall's implementation team should re-engage the state executive and legislative branches to promote the plan. We request that the Governor's Office include in the strategic plan for New Mexico a commitment to the leadership development of

state employees, which could include re-starting and expanding the state's public servant leadership program.

Deleted:

New Mexico should also consider adding evaluation criteria covering community leadership and public service to competitively awarded state contracts.

Deleted: ¶

#### ETHICAL STANDARDS AND LEADERSHIP

The Town Hall recommends a partnership between citizens and government to form an Ethics Initiative Committee responsible for the following items:

- The adoption of and support for a model statewide code of ethics.
- A review of existing statutes, regulations and codes and an examination of potential opportunities to determine whether adequate safeguards are in place to ensure ethical behavior in all branches of government.
- Recommendations for measures needed to fill any gaps, including enforcement gaps.
- Studying and considering other state models for monitoring compliance with established ethical and leadership standards.

#### VOTE

All New Mexicans should exercise their right to vote, as this is fundamental to the democratic process. The Town Hall acknowledges that with the "Help America Vote 2002" act, positive changes are under way. These changes are supported by the Town Hall. Towards this end, the state should assist by enhanced use of electronic technologies that increase and simplify access to voters' manuals and other election materials. Also, the concept of "vote-where-you-congregate" by expanding polling locations should be considered along with Internet voting. A curriculum to educate all students in voter and civic responsibilities should be become standard in New Mexico's schools.

#### MINI TOWN HALLS

The New Mexico First Implementation Team should consider developing a partnership with the Children’s Cabinet to conduct a pilot mini town hall that would focus on issues of importance to a community. Support for this pilot would be based on a public-private partnership.

Deleted:

### **Conclusion**

New Mexico over the years has benefited from hard-working and dedicated leaders. Leadership continues to be a complex concept to define and requires different skills in different situations. Leadership requires passion, modeling ethical and moral behavior, accountability and a commitment for the common good. New Mexico is blessed with a rich multi-cultural history and a diverse and enthusiastic citizenry. It is up to all of us to encourage good leadership, become leaders ourselves and use the diversity of our state to grow new leaders for the future. This will preserve the quality of life and environment we know as the “land of enchantment.”