

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Brigade Leadership Training Conference Huge Success!

In early June the Brigade hosted its annual Leadership Training Conference (LTC) at Camp Onaway on the Chain O' Lakes in Waupaca. LTC is an elite Brigade program in its core mission of building leaders and is the ultimate leadership camping experience for youth in 10th-12th grades. The conference was another huge success this year with 93 boys and girls in attendance, as well as over 30 volunteer leaders, guest speakers, and staff.

The Neenah Rotary Club generously approved a grant of \$2,000 to help Brigade fund scholarships and expenses at LTC. The Brigade distributed four financial and six merit scholarships to youth so they could benefit from this leadership training. All of the campers who responded to a survey reported an increase in their leadership skills with 65% reporting their skills increased a lot and 98% felt better prepared to take a leadership role.

LTC provides excellent workshops, group initiatives, presentations, and activities for students. Speakers this year included Ron Strege, Director of Multicultural Affairs at UWSP; Chip Lutz, with Covenant Leadership, LLC; motivational speaker Craig Hillier; and a panel of speakers including Joie Pirkey from Shouts of Joy Ministries, Pastor Rick Crampton from Living Vine Church, and Bridget Kramer from the Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

In addition to the above speakers, the volunteers also led various breakout sessions on personal safety, CPR, health and wellness, stereotypes and family diversity, gender barriers, ethics, dining etiquette, and much more. Members of the Bic Open Sailing team brought along several sailboats and taught the kids about sailing. Other breakouts included stand-up paddling, wetland exploration, and ballroom dancing, to name a few.

Conference attendees participated in water sports such as tubing, skiing, wakeboarding, swimming and boating. Many learned how to ski or wakeboard for the first time at Camp Onaway! They took part in the challenge courses, including the low and high ropes elements and had plenty of time to enjoy the basketball, foursquare, kickball, and sand volleyball courts. The talent/no talent show and grand campfire are always a favorite!

John Dery, Brigade's Executive Director stated, "We would like to extend a huge thank you to the volunteer leaders who dedicated their time to help make LTC successful." These leaders are: Camp Director Tom Ter Horst, Jan Krueger, Linda Ahles, Mike Babbitts, Mike Bubolz, Bill Casper, Coley Deltour, Erin Doepker, Adam Fisk, Erin Gilliland, Jeff Harding, Adam Hendries, Jody Hoppe, Meghan Houlihan, Jenni Koenecke, Nate Koenecke, Jeb Lorenz, Gerri Meverden, Nick Miller, Ben Olson, Ali Rector, Jess Roseen, and Cassie Thacker. Trina Lux, LTC Conference Manager said, "We are happy to see several LTC graduates back as leaders! It is rewarding to see them grow throughout the three years and then to come back and help others at the conference."

LTC has a 3-year curriculum designed by staff and volunteers. This year, 16 boys and girls graduated from the program. We would like to congratulate the following attendees and wish them the best of luck in their future plans: Stephanie Birchfield, Marlys Brehm, Andrea Buss, Tremaine Carson, Tommy Grelecki, Ethan Guyant, Kayla Hasse, Chrissy Jilek, David Kittel, Mike Lesinski, Marie Melzer, Tyler Nation, Katrina Riddell, Steven Roeder, Emily Ruthven, Racheal Salentine, Michaela Schmidt, Kelsey Schuh, Karly Tate, Noah Wichman, and Jacob Woelfel. The Brigade staff extends a special thank you to class mentors Jeff Harding and Ali Rector and class leaders Ben Olson and Jess Roseen.

CAPTION: LTC is an elite Brigade program in its core mission of building leaders and is the ultimate leadership camping experience for youth in 10th-12th grades. The graduating 3rd year class, with their class leaders, poses in the crystal clear water at Camp Onaway. All of the campers who responded to a survey reported an increase in their leadership skills with 65% reporting their skills increased a lot and 98% felt better prepared to take a leadership role.

