

## **Krista Williams**

### *The Function of Leadership*

Ralph Nader once quoted, "The Function of Leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." As a student in the Emerging Leadership Institute, I feel that my classmates and I have been greatly affected by the program and will continue to use leadership skills we have learned and apply them to our everyday lives. In the past couple of months, I feel that such programs as Appreciating Diversity, Time Management, Communication, and Perspectives on Leadership have all influenced me the most in my skills and leadership ability.

In particular, the Appreciating Diversity lecture was a very special session for me because I, as an African American woman, am constantly living in a minority world where only few understand the trials I go through each day. But the lecture was a kind of remembrance to me that everyone in some way or another can be a minority and experience situations such as my own. The importance, I feel, the lecture tried to convey was the fact that people need to be open and accepting in order to appreciate diversity and the many ways it can bring very unique perspectives to a situation.

The Time Management Lecture, indeed, was an extremely essential class session for me especially considering the semester hours and different activities I was involved. Somehow, I needed to find a way to survive managing what activities I did and when I did them. The Time Management class really gave me some insightful information that I could use later in life like prioritizing and making my free time useful. In leadership, so many times we try to do everything in a small frame thinking we can be both effective

and fast. But a lot of times, we end up wearing ourselves out and in the end, nothing gets accomplished. Time is all in the way a person uses it and not about having enough of it. Of course, the Communication session was equally informing especially since Communication is one of the most important skills in leadership. Upon walking into this particular session, I thought, "Whoa, what could I possibly learn about Communication?" And the answer afterwards, was everything. Communications, I learned that day, can be expressed in many ways other than verbally speaking. Expression, silence, and eye contact can all convey a form of communication in so many ways. As a leader, communication is important in getting your message across in a project. If you are passionate about something, it is very important that the group that you are over is aware of how important your mission is and how they can communicate that message to other people.

Finally, the Perspectives in Leadership session was a great influence on my skills as a leader. The most important aspect the session was once again becoming aware of the fact that a person has to be willing to receive all types of views in order to get the best effect out of the project. As leaders, we often domineering in our own projects and sometimes, there called a time to step back and allow others to bring in their perspectives. In this way, a group can move together in their pursuit of achieving a common goal. In my leadership project, I think if I could have developed more communication between people in the group instead of communication between I and another person, I feel the ideas would have come together a little more.

In conclusion, I feel the Emerging Leadership Institute has greatly impacted me as a person and a leader. I have formed wonderful relationships with my classmates

throughout the semester that I intend to cherish my four years I am here. As a challenge to the peers in my class, I challenge you all to go on and dream the impossible and become the leader of leaders, helping others rise to the top as you once did.