



Abstract

“I Can Literally Change the World”: Longitudinal Research on the Impacts of the Champions of Caring Ambassadors Leadership Program

Few studies assess the long-term impacts of programs for teenagers designed to foster leadership and public service. Here we contact former participants in one such program, the Champions of Caring Ambassadors Leadership Program, to see how they may have been influenced in adulthood. We find that participants remember specific aspects of the program vividly, and they apply the lessons they learned as Ambassadors in their adult lives. Specifically, they have used the program as a launch pad into other leadership and service roles. They employ the practical and organization skills from the program, and they recall the sense of belonging and the value of meaningful interactions across race, social class, religion, and other social background characteristics. Finally, many saw the lessons learned during their time as Ambassadors a legacy they have incorporated into their adult lives. Many continue two decades later to be engaged in social justice activism.

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