

## International Peer Program

### Successes

- ❖ Created a resource (legacy) for future IPP leaders
- ❖ More interaction among leaders
- ❖ In-depth exploration of topics such as leadership, volunteerism, cultural identity, and insights into the meaning of IPP as well as its impact
- ❖ Learned more about group leaders (deep thinkers, philosophers, optimists, great sense of humor, high level of maturity, amazing writers and poets, many speak French)
- ❖ Staff had an opportunity to provide more and faster feedback to students
- ❖ Staff collected rich information for students' references
- ❖ In annual evaluations, students listed creating e-portfolios among the benefits gained through IPP
- ❖ Elgg became an additional space for leaders to share thoughts when in person interaction was not possible
- ❖ Students learned more about themselves and program impact by articulating their experiences in writing and reading other leaders' blogs

### Challenges

Related to Process and IPP:

- ❖ Started in the middle of Term 1
- ❖ Already used on-line community "Memlink"
- ❖ Most communication happens via email
- ❖ Group leaders have a lot of responsibilities

Related to Elgg:

- ❖ "Community members" have to be added as "friends"
- ❖ No email notifications regarding new posts
- ❖ Need more structure (events, concepts, ideas)

### User Feedback and Support

- ❖ Focus group: post-use focus group
- ❖ On-line survey: post-use survey
- ❖ Support: 1 training session, 1 working session
- ❖ Support available via email, phone, in person and monthly group meetings
- ❖ Assignments, and reflective questions to shape discussions
- ❖ Bi-weekly reminders (identifying champions)
- ❖ Q & A sheet: Using Elgg features
- ❖ Uploading all e-portfolio materials to community files
- ❖ Types of questions asked: how to ensure privacy of information; how to structure your postings

- ❖ Quotes from our users:
  - Related to Elgg:
    - “I must say, I am not a big fan of blogging and typing out my daily life online. I still have some difficulty on navigating this website and my profile.”
    - “I have benefited in so many ways from IPP this year, far more than imagined. One of the benefits is that I was able to create an e-portfolio.”
  - Related to the impact of the program:
    - “If it wasn't for IPP and various other life-changing events in my life, I really do think I would have stayed in my "I don't care" bubble. I have developed certain boldness and confidence.”
    - “The teamwork and extraordinary efforts that I witnessed were amazing! It nearly brought a tear to my eye! One of the over-arching ideas is that you are contributing something, however small it may seem, to your community and to your peers.”

## **Recommendations**

- ❖ One electronic community for next year, decide which one
- ❖ Introduce e-portfolio concept during initial training and orientation in early September
- ❖ All IPP members (not just leaders) to develop e-portfolios
- ❖ More training
- ❖ Monthly working sessions