# **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 eportfolio."
  - 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 overarching 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