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# Students Learn New Skills Through "Leadership Challenge" Workshop

Boston College Law School

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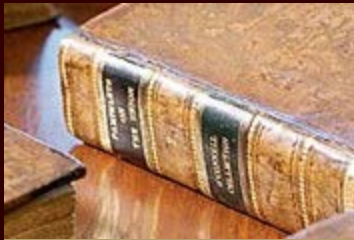
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## Students Learn New Skills Through "Leadership Challenge" Workshop

2014 NEWS ARCHIVE

07/24/14

Newton, MA--Boston College Law School recently partnered with Loeb Consulting Group on a pilot program to bring their leadership development workshop, "The Leadership Challenge" (developed by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner) to BC Law. A select group of law students attended the two-day workshop meant to challenge their thinking and consider how building their leadership skills would help them become better lawyers and business professionals.

Tracey West, BC Law's Associate Dean for External Relations, Diversity and Inclusion, met Natalie Loeb, a founder of Loeb Consulting, at a recent conference, where they discussed the idea of adapting the company's well-known leadership training for the law school.

"In my conversations with various external organizations, I kept hearing more and more about their leadership training programs," said West. "Corporations have been utilizing such programs for years and the legal profession was finally recognizing the need to teach these skills. However, most waited to train their employees when they were senior associates, junior partners, or incoming lateral hires. Why not start in law school? As an institution known for its production of strong leaders in many professions, BC Law would be a great place to begin this kind of training."

Loeb loved the idea, particularly since personality traits that can be a challenge to successful leadership often begin early in a lawyer's development. "Research conducted by Dr. Larry Richard of LawyerBrain Inc. confirms that not only are lawyers highly autonomous, they differ from the general public on six particular traits measured by the Caliper Profile," she said. "They score unusually high on skepticism, autonomy, urgency and abstract reasoning, while scoring unusually low on sociability and resilience. As a company dedicated to developing leaders, we recognize that some of these traits contributing to the success of lawyering are the same traits that can be an obstacle to successful leadership. After spending years practicing law and being surrounded by others in the legal world, personality traits deepen and those skills required to lead can become more and more unattainable."

With the support of her fellow deans--in particular Maris Abbene, Associate Dean for Academic, Career and Student Services--West worked with Natalie and Gordon Loeb to customize their presentation, which was held at the law school on a Friday and Saturday in July.

One exercise, centered around individual values, was very telling, West said. "Three common values we heard were happiness, empathy and community. As young adults about to enter a profession where those particular values are often challenged and unappreciated, I found myself inspired and hopeful that these future leaders will challenge the process and lead the way from a place of authenticity and compassion--wherever they choose to ultimately work."

One of the program's participants was third-year student Monica Nichole Rodriguez. "At the beginning of the first day, we were shown a glass half full/half empty," she said. "I can be a very pessimistic person, but hearing everyone's commitments really made me feel optimistic--especially about BC, but generally about the legal industry and where we're heading."

"If students leave BC with the confidence and belief that they have the skills and leadership

qualities to make a difference, they will bring that momentum with them into the workplace," Loeb said. "We see this as the next generation of lawyering and are proud to be a part of it. We thank BC Law and its students for embracing the possibilities."

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