

The ripple



effect

TURNING WORDS INTO ACTIONS

(above) Kindergarten students EMILY CAPELL, ANDY VITELLO, and MORGAN RILEY with their teacher, Lana DuBose, after sharing what the word “leadership” means to them.

VISUALIZE THAT FIRST RAINDROP — the one that hits the surface of an undisturbed puddle. At first, the impact of the raindrop is limited, reaching just its immediate vicinity. Soon, though, the effect of that single raindrop begins to spread, gradually growing, until the ripples it creates expand throughout the entire puddle.

Now picture this: What would it look like if every Ravenscroft teacher talked about, taught, and modeled the ideals of effective leadership and good citizenship in the same way? It might start just like that one raindrop in a puddle. Eventually, though, also like that raindrop, it would reach — and transform — each and every Ravenscroft student.

The ripple effect of Ravenscroft’s one-of-a-kind partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) is already underway. As faculty find creative ways to integrate the School’s new leadership and citizenship initiative, they are connecting with their students and shining light on the leadership and citizenship framework: *leading self*, *leading with others*, and *changing your world*.

Lower School

Fifteen members of the Class of 2025 huddled on the brightly-colored rug in Lana DuBose’s Kindergarten classroom, squirming with excitement and eager to share what the word “leadership” means to them.

BRYCE AUGUSTI: “Being respectful to all people.”

MORGAN RILEY: “Being honest and good.”

EMILY CAPELL: “All leaders have to be proactive.”

Proactive. An undoubtedly BIG word for such young students. Each of DuBose’s Kindergartners, however, can clearly articulate what proactive means, and why it’s an essential part of being a good leader and citizen.

“I have to help other people,” said Andy Vitello.

Morgan echoed his classmate’s remark. “If someone falls down, I won’t laugh at them. I’ll help them up.”

DuBose has ingrained in her students these ideals of leadership and citizenship through simple exercises that are Kindergarten-appropriate. Using a box of crayons is just one of the ways her students have expressed how they see themselves as leaders. Each drawing, which depicts the student in a leadership role, reads: “I am a leader. Be proactive.”

Simple sentences to be sure.

But thanks to the efforts of DuBose, our youngest Ravens are beginning to see themselves as leaders and citizens, with their actions speaking far louder than their words.

Middle School

It was an easy adjustment to make to her curriculum, but one that reinforced important values of leadership and citizenship in an unconventional way.

Dr. Michelle Nunalee, a seventh-grade science instructor, has annually taught a unit on animal conservation. Part of the unit includes an exercise that requires students to work in teams to complete a life-sized drawing of a black bear.

“If someone falls down, I won’t laugh at them. I’ll help them up.”

As Nunalee became familiar with the language of Ravenscroft’s leadership and citizenship framework, she realized it could be integrated into her lesson plan.

Before students began working together to draw the black bear, Nunalee used the white board to quickly jot down the three areas of focus: *leading self*, *leading with others*, *changing your world*.

At Nunalee’s cue, students easily identified which areas of the framework applied to the collaborative project they were about to undertake: *leading self and leading with others*.

“In our unit on conservation, we learn about some of the many species that we have the privilege and responsibility of sharing our habitat with,” said Nunalee. “This activity originally started as a way to get to know black bears a little better, but over the years it has transformed into a leadership activity as well. This year, I was able to make a slight adjustment to the exercise to include our new leadership and citizenship framework. I love to see how excited the students get when they are able to use these concepts and work together to complete their life-size bear and hang it on the wall.”



Leadership drawing by EMILY CAPELL '25

Upper School

For Max Sminkey '13, President of Ravenscroft's Student Government Association (SGA), the concepts of leadership and citizenship boil down to one word: respect.

Max believes that being an effective leader and a good citizen means listening to and valuing others' opinions and ideas — something that can be challenging in a community as diverse as Ravenscroft.

“No matter how small the part you play, you do have the opportunity to make a difference. It's important to have those skills, learn them, and use them later in life.”

Max's involvement with SGA has given him reason to reflect on how he leads himself, how he interacts with fellow students, and the larger impact he can have at the School.

MAX SMINKEY '13 discusses upcoming SGA events with SAVANNAH JANE STORY '13, Mark Laskowski, faculty advisor, and BRYANT DOWD '13.

“It's a balancing act,” said Max. “You have to balance your own life with SGA and everything else you do. You have to be careful with what you do, what you say, and the short and long-term impact of your actions. In the end though, you get to enjoy seeing the work you do appreciated by others in your community.”

Max also recognizes that not everyone can serve the School through SGA, and that's why he feels all students should have the chance to learn what it means to *lead self, lead with others, and change your world.*

“Being in the Ravenscroft community really has changed the course of where I would be today,” said Max, who first came to the School as a sixth grader. “People don't seem to realize that they have the chance to make a difference at the school level or community level. Schools need to teach that. No matter how small the part you play, you do have the opportunity to make a difference. It's important to have those skills, learn them, and use them later in life.”

The Long-Term Vision

Just months into Ravenscroft's partnership with CCL, the needle is beginning to move.

“I've begun to see faculty members who are incredibly talented in their academic disciplines make early connections between the concrete curriculum they are teaching and components of our

6-0
I am a Leader.
BE PROACTIVE.



Leadership drawing by GRANT CORKUM '25

leadership and citizenship framework,” said Christopher Ward, CCL team member. “As we continue to co-create this new way of educating our young people, I believe we will witness dynamic growth in the students and the Ravenscroft community that will have a far-reaching impact on education and the 21st century world.”

Colleen Ramsden, Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, said: “We have created a bold vision statement for our leadership and citizenship initiative which states, ‘As members of the Ravenscroft community we take responsibility for our behaviors and actions and strive to grow and learn through action and reflection. We will honor the perspectives of others and seek to lead through a spirit of collaboration and compassion. We will strive

to serve our communities by helping put bold ideas into action for positive change through courage, creativity, civic engagement, and dedication.’

“Through our partnership with CCL, Ravenscroft is pioneering new ways for young people to embark on a leadership and citizenship journey. We believe this is one of the ways our society will be transformed globally. Ravenscroft students will develop as leaders and will use these new skills and mental models in their everyday work without even thinking about it; faculty will design curriculum with an additional lens of *leading self, leading with others, and changing your world*; and students will begin to feel the power of a unified leadership and citizenship framework.” R

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Students in Dr. Michelle Nuanalee's seventh-grade science class work in teams to complete a life-sized drawing of a black bear.



Leadership