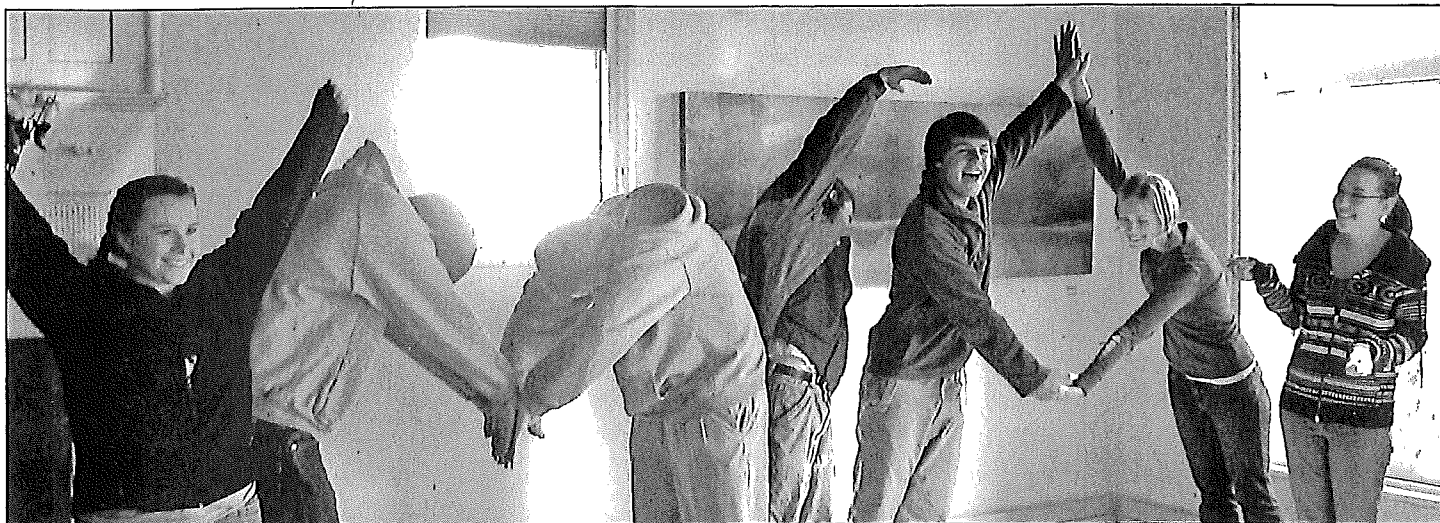


# LINKING LEARNING TO LIFE

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## PILOT Offers Students Leadership, Learning, and Laughter



By Megan Johnston, *Linking Learning to Life*

According to John F. Kennedy, "leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." High school students in the PILOT program are spending this year learning the meaning of this quote.

PILOT (Program to Inspire Leadership, Opportunity and Thought) is an interactive year long leadership and career exploration program for high school juniors in Chittenden County. The vision behind PILOT is to motivate and empower young people to make a positive difference within their communities through leadership, creativity, and action. This program is specifically designed for students who are emerging or non-traditional leaders. The 2008-2009 PILOT class is made up of twenty students from Burlington, South Burlington, Champlain Valley Union and Essex High Schools. The program is modeled to a large degree after the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber's Leadership Champlain program.

PILOT participants meet for a full day seminar each month to learn about important issues affecting the community and to explore different career pathways. PILOT seminars provide students with opportunities meet professionals in different sectors of the community, explore potential career opportunities, and learn how to put their leadership skills into action.

Since September, PILOT students have participated in seminars that explored team work, health care, human services, and criminal justice. During these seminars, students participated in numerous activities related to

the seminar topics and visited different businesses and organizations, such as Fletcher Allen Health Care, COTS, Spectrum Youth and Family Services, The Burlington Police Department, and The Costello Courthouse.

In the spring 2009, PILOT students will continue to learn about different leadership skills and careers during the government and politics, business, and media and communications seminars. PILOT participants will also have the opportunity to explore careers of interest through individualized job shadows and will give back to their community during two community service days.

If you would like to know more about PILOT, please contact Megan Johnston at (802) 951-8848 or [mjohnsto@bsdvt.org](mailto:mjohnsto@bsdvt.org).

### Employer Training

Please join Linking Learning to Life for a valuable training on successfully employing Vermont youth.

**When:** Wednesday, February 18, 2009 from 8:30-11:15 a.m.  
**Where:** Marriott Hotel - Burlington, VT  
**What:** The training will focus on successful ways to employ and work with all youth, including those with disabilities  
**Who:** For employers seeking ways to better communicate with youth and effectively employ them  
**RSVP:** Dayna Collette at [dcollett@bsdvt.org](mailto:dcollett@bsdvt.org) or (802) 540-0286