

# LINKING LEARNING TO LIFE

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## PILOT Begins Third Year of Leadership and Career Exploration

By Megan Johnston - PILOT

As the new school year begins, so does the third year of PILOT! PILOT (Program to Inspire Leadership, Opportunity, and Thought) is a youth leadership program for high school juniors in Chittenden County run by Linking Learning to Life and the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce. Twenty students from four area high schools – Essex, Burlington, South Burlington, and Champlain Valley Union high schools - join together in this program to spend a year exploring their community, engaging in leadership activities, and learning about various career opportunities.

PILOT students in the 2009-1010 class will have the opportunity to get to know one another and explore their personal leadership styles during the PILOT Opening Retreat in September. The Opening Retreat is an exciting and fun-filled day where students will challenge themselves with different team-building and leadership activities at Northern Lights Rock and Ice. This day helps to forge new relationships and set the stage for the upcoming PILOT year.

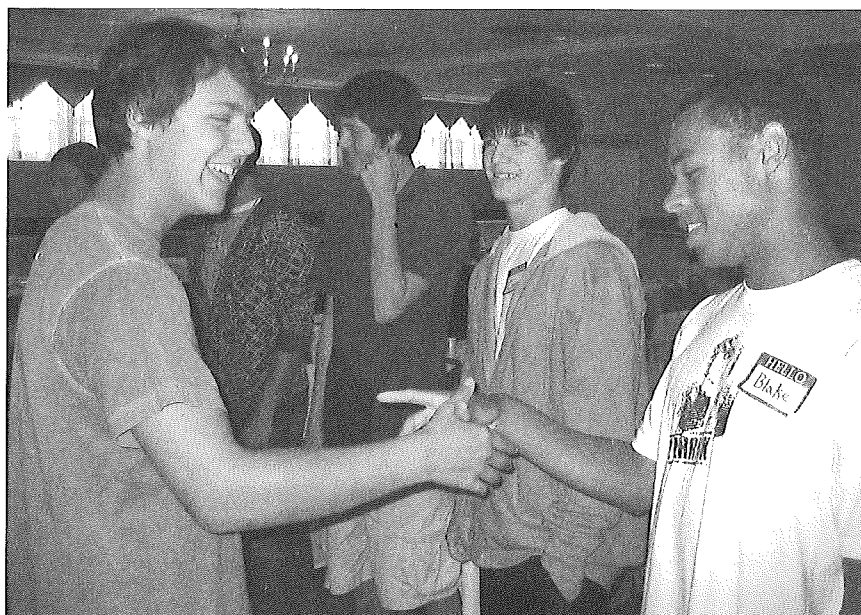
Throughout the 2009-2010 school year, PILOT students will get a "behind the scenes" look at different sectors of the community during monthly PILOT seminars. Seminar topics include: health care, human services, criminal justice, government and politics, business and job shadowing, media and communications, and community service. During each PILOT seminar, students visit different businesses and organizations, engage in conversations with professionals and community leaders, and explore a wide variety of careers related to the seminar topic. Leadership activities and reflection are also woven into each seminar. Through this program students will gain a better understanding of community issues and resources and will also develop and improve their leadership skills.

### Support Local Youth, Be a Mentor!

Mentors for Kids, a program run by Linking Learning to Life, is looking for responsible, committed, caring adults to serve as volunteer mentors for Burlington School District students in K-8th grade. Mentors meet one-on-one with students at school for one hour each week during the school year. The time shared is about having fun and establishing a meaningful relationship.

Mentoring is a great way to become more involved in the community, support local youth, and have a lot of fun! With just one hour a week you can improve the life of a child!

For more information about becoming a mentor please contact Megan Johnston at [mjohnsto@bsdvt.org](mailto:mjohnsto@bsdvt.org) or (802) 951-8848.



*PILOT participants playing a name game at the 2008 PILOT Opening Retreat*