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NPS Business School Lecturer Helps Build Youth Leadership Skills

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NPS Business School Lecturer Helps Build Youth Leadership Skills

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Article By: MC1 Leonardo Carrillo

In his spare time, Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Lecturer of Management has turned his passion for building leadership skills into a detailed developmental program for children and young adults called KidLead. Dr. Alan Nelson, CEO and cofounder of the educational organization, created KidLead after years of experience working in the social sector, finding just the right demographic that he wanted to impact outside of his NPS teaching duties.

"I wanted to do leadership development full time" said Nelson, "but I wasn't sure that I wanted to work with adults because I noticed that adults don't usually change."

With that, he decided to start a non-profit educational organization focused on leadership development and training programs for children, teens and young adults from as early as two to as old as 22.

Nelson noticed that no one was developing leaders at that age, when they were most moldable, so he turned his passion for leadership development and more than 20 years of experience as a leadership development specialist into the KidLead program.

He was joined in his efforts by his wife Nancy who shared his passion for child education. With more than a decade of experience in leading children's programs, Nancy focused her efforts into designing the trainer certification for the KidLead Curricula, one of the cornerstones of the program.

As part of the program, Nelson also wrote two books – "Lead Young" and "KidLead: Growing Great Leaders." The books are the latest in Nelson's extensive list of works that includes 15 books and hundreds of published articles. These latest books bring the essence of young leadership development in the program into a comprehensive guide to child leadership development.

The KidLead program works by certifying trainers in what they call the "LeadNow" and "LeadWell" materials consisting of training modules and exercises that trainers employ to teach kids. Trainers undergo multiple hours of preparation, training, and coached exercises to complete their certification before they are ready to train students.

Nelson said that many schools throughout the U.S. are using the program and are showing great results. The program has even expanded internationally with a presence in Pakistan, Singapore, Canada, Malaysia, Thailand and even countries in the Middle East.

"It's an audacious grandiose dream," said Nelson, "but we're providing tools to help change the world ... Instead of reacting, we're being proactive."

With a national and global presence, Nelson said that his vision is to create a network of schools, civic groups and generational leaders focused on developing and empowering young leaders. The concentration for this endeavor is in the headquarters for what has become the LeadYoung Institute of Monterey.

Located in Monterey, Calif., the institute is attempting to establish contact with local educational institutions help them develop their young leaders. Nelson hopes to obtain local, regional and even national funding to research how the identification and development of young leaders can help transform communities around the globe.

"Life experience itself gives us a lot of tools that we can use in leading," said Nelson, "but when you don't have a lot of life experience as a young person, it's tough to make it. This program is really designed to light the fuse in these young leaders."





Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Lecturer of Management and CEO/Cofounder of the educational organization KidLead, Dr. Alan Nelson, is shown with copies of two of his books "Lead Young" and "KidLead: Growing Great Leaders," Apr 11. KidLead is a non-profit educational organization that focuses on leadership development training programs for children, teens and young adults.

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