



Meet Chrissy

The first time I heard about PLA was through fliers from school, but I did not have the time or commitment level to join. The following year, I ran into a few graduates who all seemed like amazing people. They were confident people who were doing things with their lives. I joined PLA to gain that confidence to speak up for my beliefs. When my child's school was closing, I went to multiple BOE meetings and spoke up. PLA also gave me the tools I needed to speak up for my child's needs in his IEP. I fought for 5 years to get my son the services he needed without a lawyer or going to court. I also fought to have CREC Soundbridge (program that provides specialized expertise and technology to promote listening and speaking in children with hearing loss) come to Enfield for my hearing impaired son. As a result, the staff from Soundbridge has taught Enfield a lot about students with hearing loss. Since graduating, my husband and I started our own business. PLA gave me the strategies and confidence I needed to take a huge step in my life. It is an amazing program that I recommend to any parent looking to make a difference in their community. I learned about myself, my community and something I will never forget, to use people for what they are good at. Everyone has a purpose.



Alumni Spotlight

Meet Scott

You might know him as PTO Scott, tirelessly giving of himself throughout Enfield Public Schools. Scott is a 2014 graduate of PLA's Class 9. But as an outsider, moving to Enfield with his young family many years ago, he turned to PLA to make connections that led him to be the super visible volunteer and leader he is today. Currently he serves on the Enfield Board of Education as Vice Chair and encourages anyone looking to build their leadership skills to apply.





Alumni Spotlight

Meet Danielle

Overall, I have to say that PLA was really the starting point for me realizing my potential in the community and with leadership. Before I went to PLA I didn't understand aspects of Enfield and what resources were available. I wanted to help other families like me, but I didn't even know where to start. PLA laid the bricks for my foundation in leadership and helping the community. I met community leaders who explained to me how systems work in the town. I gained skills and confidence in preparing for meetings, writing agendas and minutes. I learned about conflict resolution and how to settle disagreements. With the help of Leadership Greater Hartford I gained knowledge on enneagrams and how to understand myself and others. Toastmasters also taught me great skills in public speaking that I still practice to this day. Also, I learned a lot about cultures and different ethnic backgrounds. I know I wouldn't be where I am today without the help of PLA.



Meet Jeremy

Why did I take PLA? I knew a lot of PLA graduates and they all said it was a great experience and a great program to help with public speaking. It was also a great way to learn your own strengths and weaknesses in certain areas, and diagnosing your personality. They said it would help with diagnosing and improving those weaknesses while enhancing those strengths. I also figured it would be a great social networking tool. Also, with being in the Army National Guard I was hoping to improve certain skills as I progressed in my career.

Because of PLA, I have more confidence in myself and my abilities. More confidence in public speaking. Learned what I need to improve on and how to make corrections. Helped in my career progression because it helped me get the job I have now as a federal technician. Helped me with my Army schools because I was forced into public speaking at the schools they sent me to. Most definitely helped me with social networking in town. Met a lot of people and made a lot friends and connections.



Alumni Spotlight

Meet Josh

Joshua took PLA because his wife recommended it and they both saw it as a way to learn how to be better parents. From PLA he learned more about the way Enfield government works, which reinforced his understand of the relationships between Board of Education and Town Council. He observed that PLA has a disproportionate ratio of mothers to fathers, and encourages more fathers take the program. Through PLA, Josh learned that project management involves equal amounts of planning, compromise and commitment; that there is no shortage of passion for worthwhile causes to work for and with. That PLA Is a great way to learn more about the community, build confidence, practice public speaking, and advocate for causes.



Meet Kristin

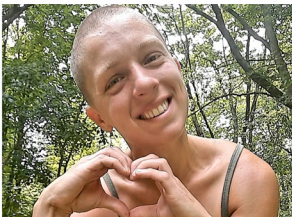
As a full-time working mom of two very active boys, who also worked part-time at night, I admit I was a bit hesitant about joining PLA. I was afraid I wouldn't have the time or energy to put into it and that I wouldn't be able to put forth a solid effort in order to have a positive impact on myself and others. As a parent it is very challenging at times to set aside time for ourselves, but I saw PLA as a perfect opportunity for me to focus on my own personal growth, while also being able to have free child care during our meetings and have quality time with my family. Since graduating PLA, I was blessed with a full-time teaching job and I am now presently taking post grad classes to become a Licensed Professional Counselor. I have been more active in the community, attending KITE meetings and events, helping with First Readers Association, and attending PTO meetings and helping when possible. I also started watching Board of Education meetings and Town Council meetings to become more informed. I feel that PLA helped to build my confidence and provided me with resources to help both myself and my family. It has helped me better communicate and listen both professionally and on a personal level and although I still have high anxiety with public speaking, PLA helped build my confidence when speaking in group settings as well. There is so much that I would love to do to help others and our community and PLA has helped to get me closer to my ultimate goals. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be a part of PLA and will forever carry the tools it provided me to be successful.



Alumni Spotlight

Meet Leslie

I took on the role of PLA Secretary after graduating in 2011 with the creation of the PLA Board. This was my first experience holding a seat on a Board. After serving on the board for 3 years, I eventually accepted the role of PLA President in 2014. I attended a PTO Meeting to promote the PLA class and that led to becoming Secretary of HMS PTO for 2 years, then PTO President at EW for 3 years, and PTO Secretary at JFK for 3 years. I also continued our class project, which was the Town Wide Tag Sale, annually for 9 years (and counting). Working on the Town Wide Tag Sale led me to join the Board of the Enfield Food Shelf. My love of volunteering in the town prompted me to make the decision to pursue a career in the Enfield Public School system 2 years ago, first as an Academic Tutor and now as a Secretary in the office at Eli Whitney. I also joined KITE as a Play Ambassador to provide the Enfield community with free, family-friendly events and information on the importance of play. Personally, the connections I have made through PLA have led to some of my most cherished friendships. I credit PLA for the path my life has taken over the last few years!



Alumni Spotlight

Meet Olivia

Hi! I'm Olivia Ballinger. I'm an Enfield native and mother of three kids. In 2017 I had the pleasure of joining a diverse group of Enfield moms through Parent Leadership Academy. I was looking to become more involved in my kids schools and in the town in general. This class brought me to gain many lifetime friendships, learn more aspects of myself and gave me the confidence to put my goals into action. PLA caused a ripple effect in my life, which brought me to many life changing events.

I am now living a very fulfilled life, putting my happiness first, so that I can share that happiness with everyone in my life, especially my kids. I will soon be celebrating the launch of my recently self-published book, and I can't deny the fact that PLA had a large part in me being able to do that.