



Retreat  
September 14, 2016

TAGLINE

IN THIS ISSUE

# Who is Omar Lyle?

by Dr. Lamont W Browne

Calm. Poised. Humble. Determined. Fighter. Yes, a single person can embody all of these traits. And we are fortunate to have a leader who personifies these and more. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Omar R. Lyle, president for the Leadership Aurora Class of 2017.

It's nearly impossible to ignore the quiet leadership Omar exudes and the gracious way he makes everyone around him feel comfortable – no doubt an influential cause of his nomination and subsequent election to serve as our class president. Upon hearing the announcement, he said, "I was shocked and didn't know what to think. The caliber of talent in the room made me feel less than average. It was one of the first times in my life where I wasn't the most educated in the room. It humbled me, and motivates me to get to know people - not only to learn from their expertise – but also to make sure I am leading everyone in the best way."



year is an exciting challenge to Omar, but certainly not the first time he has dealt with a leadership challenge. In a previous role at UPS, he made the difficult move from union worker to non-union supervisor. While most promotions are respected and followed by congratulatory support, Omar was looked at as a traitor. Omar quickly learned the difference between positional authority and inspirational leadership. He learned how to build strong relationships and how to convert the investment of his people into investment in the company.

Omar hopes to capitalize on that knowledge and experience by helping to maximize each of our strengths, pushing us to work as a team with strong communication, deep engagement, and maintaining fun – *for our entire 10 months together!*

Providing outstanding leadership to a diverse group of expert leaders and making a difference for the community of Aurora this



## Spotlight

Find out some fun facts about Omar that you don't know! The Q and A section is quite fun!

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## Study that Literature!

Our guest panel gave us some excellent suggestions for Fall and Winter Leadership reading. Get cozy next to the fire and check out these titles!

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## LEADERSHIP AURORA CLASS OF 2016/2017

### Read this now!

by Heather Wydock

We received many recommendations for understanding leadership, especially in the community and business world. Our esteemed panel of leaders provided new insight on what it means to be a leader and what to do with that power. Here are a few suggested books:

- ✚ Great by Choice by James Collins
- ✚ Firms of Endearment by David Wolfe
- ✚ The Advantage by Patrick Lencioni
- ✚ Start With Why by Simon Sinek
- ✚ The Ideal Team Player by Patrick Lencioni
- ✚ On Bullshit by Harry Frankfurt
- ✚ Community by Peter Block

*Or esteemed panel featured the City of Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan, Children's Hospital Human Resources and Inclusion Officer Dr. Nita Mosby-Tyler, and Cheery Creek School District Superintendent Dr. Harry Bull*



RECOMMENDED READINGS FROM THE PANEL

What does Leader mean to them?



# Leadership: Influence not Authority

by Gregory Cazell

It may be often difficult to define one's leadership style but it can often be found by seeking similarities when looking at others and their influences and style of leadership. An important aspect of leadership is one which stresses "influencing" subordinates to increase their level of performance rather than "dictating" orders to them. Often the latter will be being seen or interpreted by subordinates as an authoritarian approach and may result in less productivity than working alongside employees and influencing them with one's own actions. While the authoritarian approach is one example of legitimate power and can be used during crisis situations, it is not appropriate for day-to-day leadership.

United States Navy Lieutenant Commander Chris Peterschmidt is an example which seems to encompass the idea of strong leadership traits. While there is not a lot written about Peterschmidt, his leadership style can be contributed to saving the lives of countless US sailors. In October of 2000 Peterschmidt was the executive officer or second officer in charge of the USS Cole on the fateful day the vessel was attacked in the Sea of Yemen. Before the USS Cole was attacked, Peterschmidt was discussing the purchase of a new flat screen television. Peterschmidt was aware that his young crew was homesick and he believed the addition of the television was important to keep up the sailor's moral. In a sense, Peterschmidt was using his ability to reward his sailors based on the crew's dedication and commitment to the mission of the USS Cole.

While discussing increasing moral and the television purchase the USS Cole was attacked. Seventeen US Sailors were killed and another 39 crew members were injured. In his 2003 book "Losing bin Laden" Richard Miniter writes that the USS Cole came dangerously close to sinking if not for the leadership of Peterschmidt. Miniter describes the attack as putting a 40-foot-wide hole in the ship's hull. This hole was causing the Cole to take on large amounts of seawater and stressing the on-board pumps beyond their limit. If not stopped the ship would surely sink to the bottom of the sea. In order to effectively remove the water from the lower levels of the ship, Peterschmidt made the decision to use a cutting torch to cut holes into the ship's hull. These holes would be just

about the waterline and would reduce the distance the pumps needed to carry the water up and out of the ships lower levels. Peterschmidt recognized that the explosion had damaged the ships fuel tanks and most of the fuel floated on the surface of the water surrounding the Cole. One errant spark landing in the water would cause a massive explosion and finish what the terrorists intended, sinking of the ship. The fuel floating on the surface of the water was not only recognized by Peterschmidt, but by the crew as well. Nonetheless, when Peterschmidt told the crew to cut the holes, they did so without hesitation.

The holes cut into the ship's hull accomplished their intended purpose without causing an explosion of the floating fuel and reduced the strain to the on-board pumps. The decision by Peterschmidt ultimately saved the USS Cole from sinking.

It is clear the sailors trusted in the leadership ability of Peterschmidt. Not only did Peterschmidt have expert power in the eyes of the sailors and when told to cut the holes in the hull of the ship, the crew trusted this decision. But also Peterschmidt paved the way by earning referent power by looking out for the moral and wellbeing of the young sailors. This undoubtedly contributed to their faith in Peterschmidt's decision and led to the saving the USS Cole as well as the lives of the remaining crew.

For LA 2017, most of us will never be in the position of Lieutenant Commander Chris Peterschmidt, required to make lifesaving decisions during a crisis but that should not change how we lead our followers. Kenneth Blanchard wrote "The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority." It is clear Peterschmidt had the authority over his sailors simply because of his rank. However, it was his influence, his acknowledgment of their sacrifice, his desire to reward their dedication and increase moral which resulted in their unwavering trust in his decision making.

**It is by influencing others that LA 2017 will gain followers, the true sign of leadership.**

# Q&A with Omar

by Lamont W Browne

## What movie most resonates with you?

"Fight Club. During the time the movie was released, I identified with the main character as I too felt like a lost soul: I was a soldier who lived in a world of strict order, but yet I was drawn to chaos and its excitement and unpredictability."

## What brought the right balance of chaos and order to your life?

My son Kyan. His birth 8 years ago pushed me from living aimlessly with a job at Best Buy to being driven to be a role model. This led me to return to college – where I overcame past struggles in college to eventually graduating with a BA in Political Science from CU Denver. I went from doing just enough to get by to Dean's list while working full time and raising a family (Kyan, 8 years old and Kaleb, 11 months old).

## What does the Phoenix mean to you?

After I turned 19, I received my first meaningful tattoo. It was of a phoenix – the firebird that continues to get back up after being knocked down. I truly believe that one is never out of the fight. You can always come back stronger, smarter, and better. You just have to keep going.

## What's your message to the LA Class of 2017?

Let's have fun, stay focused, and build great relationships. We are great by ourselves, but even better as a whole. Our talent will lead us to accomplish anything we put our minds to.

We got your back Omar. We got you!

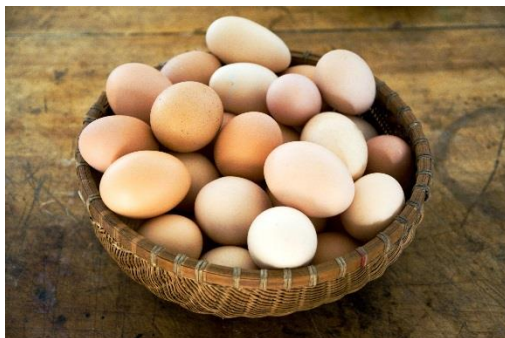
# What Eggs Have to Do With Our Class Project

by Terry Spencer

I enjoyed the great privilege of visiting with Justin Clark, last year's Leadership Aurora Class President. We talked about last year's class projects and how they were selected and what if any suggestions he had to offer our class.

## Variety is Good

Last year's class took on a variety of projects, rather than *(here comes the relevance of the headline)* "putting all their eggs in one basket" as Justin noted.



"Having a variety of projects to work on really allowed the people in our class to slot in when they were able to, which presented our class with the opportunity to have a diverse amount of causes to work on. You know, not all people are passionate about the same causes—someone might be passionate about veteran's while another person really wants to help the homeless" Justin recounted.

- Collecting gloves and socks for Aurora Warms the Night
- Organizing volunteers for the Colorado Freedom Memorial
- Providing volunteers and secured the donation of a vehicle to the Asian Pacific Development Center
- Painting art studios at the Downtown Aurora Visual Arts
- Collecting donations for the Comitis Crisis Center
- Organizing a fund raiser for the Pay it Forward Leadership Aurora Scholarship *(wait there's more)*
- Supported collections for the Colfax Community Network Holiday Party, Collected hygiene items for Inside/Out a community Re Entry Place,
- Held a private movie screening at the Aurora Fox Theatre for the 7/20 Memorial Foundation

In addition, the class did also have one "big" project, which was Organizing a fundraising effort and online auction to support the 7/20 Memorial Foundation. Justin pointed out that

the idea for this project came from their class's leadership retreat weekend when Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan was responding to an audience question about community need. This project included creating the auction platform, soliciting auction items and cash donations, and securing media coverage. The auction items raised \$5,365.00 dollars and they also helped to generate an additional 6,391.00 dollars of cash donations for a total of \$11,756.00 dollars. In addition, there were a few more items and donations coming in,

which should easily have pushed that number over \$12,000.00 dollars.

## Guidelines for a Good Project

Even though the class of

2016 had a variety of projects, Justin suggested that our class "define success on our own terms, and figure out what success looks like for us, and not to worry about the moniker of best class ever" He shared a number of recommendations including:

- Look at the project from all angles--- what type of capitol (money) or materials will be needed to be raised to complete the project, are materials needed
- Are there "outside" organizational impacts that would suggest the need for a feasibility study?
- Take the time to figure the complete needs of the project before beginning to hastily
- Be aware of all the red/blue/yellow and green colors of and use everyone strengths

As we were finishing our conversation, Justin observed that no matter what project (s) we as a class choose, all the projects are a wonderful benefit to the community and truly appreciated.

## ROPE CHALLENGE SUCCESS



WOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!



Go team go!



We did it!

# Leaders are Readers

By D. Rico Munn, Superintendent of Schools

This year the Aurora Public Schools will continue our tradition of asking community leaders to participate in the “Leaders are Readers” program. In the years that we have been facilitating this program, both community members and students provided us with overwhelming positive feedback from these days.

The “Leaders are Readers” program will be held three times this year, with the second reading day scheduled for Thursday, November 3rd 2016. We are asking for your participation with this program. We only ask for your donation of time, from one-half to one hour to visit an APS classroom and read to students. The school sites will provide a selection of books for you to read.

We have surveyed our sites and currently have requests for at least one hundred community readers. Will you consider being one of those readers?

Please contact Kristin Britt at 303-365-7816 Ext. 28410 or by email at [kmbritt@aps.k12.co.us](mailto:kmbritt@aps.k12.co.us) to schedule a convenient time to read to APS students. We will work with you to ensure that you are matched with a school and time that meets your availability.

Our common goal is to increase student achievement throughout Aurora Public Schools. Your participation in “Leaders are Readers” will certainly help us move toward our goal to accelerate learning for every APS student.







<b>What:</b>	Leadership Aurora is participating in the Denver Veterans Day 5K Run. <a href="#">Click here</a> to visit the website for event details.
<b>Why:</b>	To fundraise for LA and the Colorado Veterans Project, and to provide a social event for LA members.
<b>When:</b>	Sunday, November 13 – rain, snow, or shine 8:00 a.m.
<b>Where:</b>	Denver's <a href="#">City Park</a> surrounding the Denver Zoo. See page 2 for the race route.

## What we need:

### 1. Runners!

We need 5 LA members in order to register as an official race team. Alexa Pecorella is volunteering as Team Captain. If you are interested in participating in the 5K, [please email Alexa and Omar by Friday, October 14](#). The cost is \$28 each, which gets you a race t-shirt, finisher medal, timing bib, and race bag. Runners will arrive at 7:00 a.m.

### 2. LA Supporters!

You don't have to run to support us, as the Social Committee is also offering this as the first optional social event. Bring your families, children, and dogs to participate in this Fun Run or enjoy the festivities with our LA crew. Take pictures and cheer on the registered team! Supporters should plan to arrive no later than 7:30 a.m. as parking surrounding City Park fills up quickly on the weekends. We encourage carpooling.

## What we've got covered:

### 3. Fundraisers!

The Pay It Forward Committee will be calling Aurora Chamber member businesses to request pledges for our cause. We will have the opportunity for your employers and business contacts to support us at future Pay It Forward events.

- A portion of the proceeds will support the [Colorado Veterans Project](#).
- A portion of the proceeds will support the Leadership Aurora Chamber Foundation.



**We want YOU to attend the Denver Veterans Day 5K Run.**  
**We'll see you there!**





## Leadership Aurora Class Retreat 2016/2017

