

Building Bridges through Leadership Training Junior



June 26 - July 22, 2010
Dhaka, Bangladesh



About BYLC



The concept of a youth leadership center was originally developed at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government in January 2008. The proposal for a month-long leadership program, Building Bridges through Leadership Training (BBLT), was jointly developed by Ejaj Ahmad, then a graduate student at Harvard university, and Shammi S. Quddus, then an undergraduate student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The proposal won the 2008 Kathryn Davis Projects for Peace Prize in March 2008.

Ejaj and Shammi jointly ran the pilot phase of BBLT in Chittagong in the summer of 2008 with technical and financial support from MIT Public Service Center. Building on the success and lessons learned from the pilot, the BBLT program was encapsulated within the framework of a non-profit organization, the Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC). In October 2008, BYLC formed its Governing Board. In early 2009, it was registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms In Bangladesh as a non-partisan social venture committed to creating an inclusive, tolerant and just society by training the next generation of leaders.

Subsequently, BYLC developed relationships with several leading organizations such as BRAC and City Year (USA), and expanded its programs. It has since received support from the US Embassy, the British High Commission and several local organizations in Bangladesh for three of its programs. BYLC is currently holding talks with several local and international organizations to further enhance its programming efforts.

Vision

Our vision is to create a poverty-free Bangladesh driven by the next generation of home-grown leaders.

Mission

BYLC works to bridge gaps in society by uniting youth from diverse backgrounds, equipping them with leadership, problem solving and teamwork skills and engaging them in community service and active citizenship.



Message

July 22, 2010



When we, the BBLT Junior team members, came together to work on this program, we did not realize how intense, overwhelming and emotional our journey together would be. The team, composed of BBLT graduates, could not have appreciated the lessons learned in Ejaj Bhaia's class better. After working with the students, and seeing their energy, spirit and eagerness to change the world with small initiatives, and take up the message of BYLC, we have come to believe that BBLT Junior is all the more effective because of the young age of its participants.

BBLT Junior was a risky undertaking for the organizing team, simply because Bangladeshi parents are reluctant to send their children to leadership programs at such a young age. But as we learned at BYLC, having courage to challenge the status quo is at the heart of leadership. So with little support and a lot of hope, we structured, improvised and stayed up late to solve the problems we faced along the way. The biggest challenge we faced was to create the right atmosphere in class to communicate the hardships of leadership in life, because unlike Physics and Chemistry classes, leadership lessons are not just about lectures and jotting down notes.

After three weeks of classes with ten adorable and energetic participants, we have to say that our biggest achievements are the changes in understanding and perceptions that we saw in them, along with the beautiful friendships that developed among the students of completely different communities. To our students, we want to say that we loved our experience with you, are proud and delighted to see how motivated you are to start working in your community. We hope that the lessons you learned at BYLC will help you make progress on issues close to your heart.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped give life to the idea of BBLT Junior. We are grateful to our sponsor Swadesh Properties for supporting our program. We also extend our heartiest gratitude to the BBLT graduates who helped make this program a success.

The following pages render glimpses of this wonderful journey we shared.

On behalf of the BBLT Junior Team,
Tonima Tasnim Ananna
BBLTJ Head Instructor and Project Co-ordinator

THE THREE COMPONENTS OF OUR PROGRAM

We have three distinct schooling systems in Bangladesh - English medium, Bengali medium and Madrassa. There is little or no interaction between students from different educational systems. We believe that this divisiveness in society is a threat to progress in our country. Therefore, one objective of our program is to bridge this gap by uniting participants from diverse backgrounds. The Junior program specifically targets to build these bridges at a very young age because values instilled at an impressionable age remain strong in adult life.



A good leader is somewhat like a good doctor. Just as the doctor must diagnose the patient accurately to ensure effectiveness of the prescribed drug, the leader must be able to diagnose problems, voices and values, and come up with effective solutions. Therefore, another objective of our program is to help participants develop diagnostic skills through large class discussions and small group case analysis. But diagnostic skills and speaking and listening ability alone cannot make an effective leader. A leader must also have a guiding vision, character, and courage. Hence, we discuss these issues in class and encourage students to start thinking about their personal leadership journey.



At BYLC, we do not use the word 'leadership' in a value-free manner. Values are at the core of our program. We believe that leadership as a position of authority alone is of no use unless it delivers positive results for others. Training in itself is not good enough; it must be followed by action. Therefore, the third objective of our program is to help participants apply their skills and knowledge in a real world setting by serving in their local community.



QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS



Nusrat Jahan Buli

"BBLT not only gave me the opportunity to make friends with a lot of amazing classmates from different educational backgrounds, but also it explained to me the beauty of leadership, and removed my earlier misconceptions. Here, leadership was explained to us as a process through which one can make a difference about an issue one cares about. At every step, our facilitators and instructors made us question ourselves, and help build our confidence to do something about the issues close to our hearts. I feel confident that with the better understanding, I can now be a more effective and engaged citizen of the society."

*Nusrat Jahan Buli
Sher-E-Bangla School*



Monoshita Ayruani

"Our beliefs influence our thoughts, which are finally reflected in our work. In BYLC I was taught that anyone can practice leadership, even those who do not hold formal authority positions; all a person needs is the knowledge of making an effective intervention to push the issue forward. BBLT has developed my confidence by giving me an understanding of how and why people react to difficult social challenges the way they do, and has given me the tools to isolate the problem so that I can do something to improve people's lives. I was also able to make friends from very diverse backgrounds, which has widened my capacity to diagnose a situation and understand people better."

*Hasibur Rahman
Shahazadpur Nazar Mahmud Madrassa*



Hasibur Rahman

"BYLC's junior program was an eye-opening experience for me. It has given me much more than I have ever expected. For example, I always had a tendency of standing up and speaking for the right, and here, I've been taught how to say what I want in such a way that it creates the most effective impact to resolve the issue. BYLC helped me realize the qualities in me and make use of them in a better way. Most importantly, BYLC has greatly influenced my perspective of life: it is not just about living, but about living with a meaningful purpose."

*Monoshita Ayruani
London Grace School*

TIMELINE

June 26: Opening ceremony was held at St. Joseph Higher Secondary School on June 26, 2010. Mrs. Homayara Ahmed, Assistant Professor in IBA, was present as the Chief Guest in the event.

June 28: Orientation - ground rules were set and students' initial concepts on leadership were discussed.

June 29: An intense large group session was held where the students were observed particularly to find patterns in their intervention. Important leadership concepts were discussed, followed by a small game of Tarp Changeover and finally a reflection round.

June 30: Large group session was followed by introduction in small groups.

July 3: Ejaj Ahmad, Founder and President of BYLC, conducted a signature BBLT class, where many of the key concepts were discussed. The second session was a fun Scavenger Hunt, followed by a reflection session on teamwork.

July 4: Guest speaker Colonel Q. Sajjad A. Zahir (Bir Protik), a renowned freedom fighter and a Professor at University of Dhaka honored the Junior program with an excellent interactive lecture session. He explained the spirit of the Liberation War of '71, shared his experiences from the war and answered the participants' and teaching team's various questions.

July 6: A session of 'Poetry and Presence' was held, where the students were explained the importance and art of "being one's message". Later, the students presented their understanding of leadership through artwork.

July 7: A session on Vision, Career Planning and Goal Setting was held, followed by a Public Speaking workshop.

July 8: A large group session about how to pace work, tools to approach issues successfully and types of conversation was held, followed by a small group session.

July 10: Public speaking session - each participant presented an informative and a persuasive speech and received feedback from other participants and BYLC Junior team. This was followed by a community service workshop.

July 11 -13: On 11th, the students went to the evening school for underprivileged children run by St. Joseph Higher Secondary School to locate issues in the children's lives which required attention. On the 12th, they diagnosed several of these issues, and planned and prepared their intervention campaigns on them. On 13th, they implemented their campaigns.

The first group - Monoshita, Iffat, Farhana, Nahian and Jasim - worked on an awareness campaign on basic child rights, focusing on child labor rights for an audience of class III and IV. The group put together several short but powerful dramas to present situations in which children were being exploited, followed by an interactive session using the help of posters and placards, to engage the children in conversation about social issues they face in everyday life.

The second group - Abida, Touhidul, Sajjad, Nusrat and Hasibur - covered issues of resource management, health and hygiene. They decided to convey their message about not wasting Earth's limited resources and the importance of healthy, clean living to the children through interactive conversations, story-telling, posters and placards.

July 14: There was a short review on leadership, a briefing on report writing followed by poster preparation.

July 15: In the first session, the two groups presented their community service projects through posters. The last session was a review of the leadership concepts taught earlier in the program.

July 22: Graduation ceremony was held at St. Joseph Higher Secondary School on July 22, 2010. Chief Guest, Shireen Manzoor, founding executive director of an English language training institute in Dhaka, distributed certificates among the participants.



MOMENTS FROM BBLT JUNIOR



BBLT JUNIOR

GROUP: SHOPNO TORI



Nahian Muhtasim Zahin is a 7th grader from National Ideal School. He is deeply interested in animals and has lots of pets. Nahian likes to study living things, and wants to grow up to become a scientist and do research to find out more about the wonders of nature.



Nusrat Jahan Buli is a 10th grader from Sher-E-Bangla School. She is studying science and her hobbies include reading and painting. She aims to serve humanity, mainly through a medical profession. Her favorite personality is her mother.



Hasibur Rahman is a 9th grader from Shahzadpur Nazar Mahmud Senior Madrassa. He is studying science and he wants to grow up to become an engineer. His favorite personality is his mother. His hobbies include reading poetry and story books, listening to music, reciting poems and acting.



On the right, we see a step taken by authority to stop a rebellion or a mutiny. The issue will stay buried for a while, but it is likely to resurface. The situation here on the right has failed to improve human condition - which is portrayed by the stormy skies and the brown leaves of the tree. On the left side, however, somebody is taking into account the voices of all the people, and hence addressing the issue, instead of burying it. This situation has a hope for progress - which is portrayed by the sunny sky and the abundantly flourished tree.

GROUP: PROTTASHA



Farhana Jahan is a 7th grader from National Ideal School. She likes to read books in her free time, and she loves to paint. She wants to be an engineer when she grows up.



Touhidul Islam is a 9th grader from Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa and is studying science. He is working with the Quran Research Foundation and is a member of Bangladesh Algebra Foundation. He loves to debate and read. He is also brilliant at poetry recitation. He regards the Quran as the ultimate guide in life and wants to live his life by it.



Abida Alam Usha is an 8th grader from Maple Leaf International School. She has many diverse interests such as debating, doing community service and playing basketball. She is also an avid reader and Anime lover. She has many dreams for her future and she is committed to fulfilling as many of them as possible.



This picture shows an initiative taken by two people who live on either side of a river, coming together with friendship and peace. This peaceful initiative can bring about progress and improvement in human condition, and so is an act of leadership. Others around them are observing this action are being inspired - whatever was separating these two populations apart will now eventually dissolve. This act of unity questions their long held values and will create capacity for change.

GROUP: RUPANTOR



Sajjadul Alam is a 10th grader from Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrassa. He is studying in the science division. Sajjad loves to read, and is a passionate debater. His favorite personality is his teacher.



Monoshita Ayruani is a 9th grader from London Grace School. Her ambition is to become a successful economist some day. Her interests include basketball and music, and her favorite personalities include Ejaj Ahmad and musician Anusheh Anadil.



Iffat Sumaiya Mehzabeen is a 9th grader from Sunnydale International School, and her passions include debating and writing stories and poems. She deeply enjoys literature and music and dreams of becoming an author or a psychologist. She also wants to start a social support NGO in Bangladesh.



Jasim Uddin Qureshi is a 9th grader from Darunnajat Siddikia Madrassa. He is an avid reader and a humanitarian, and his aim in life is to join the army and serve his country.



The leader in this picture is the torch-holding figure - the identity of the leader is not important, and so all the figures are painted black. What is important is his action - making people focus on society's problems effectively, no matter who he is. Once the leader has successfully shown people the issue, he must push it forward, but the real change is a result of work done by the people who are facing the issue. The people who need to work are portrayed by the figures yielding tools and working on the wall. The darker figures in the corner portray those who are criticizing the leader - because the process of making people meet difficult choices often bring attack.

BBLT JUNIOR TEAM



Tonima Tasnim is currently enrolled at Bryn Mawr College, USA. She is majoring in Physics and Astronomy, but is committed to giving something back to her country. She is a BBLT II graduate, and she worked as the head instructor and project coordinator of the BBLT Junior Program.



Khan Md. Mohtasim Tamjeed has finished his A Levels from Oxford International School. He is a BBLT III graduate. He is passionate about Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics. He was an instructor and a public speaking coordinator in the BBLT Junior Program.



Md. Salahuddin Galib has recently completed his Alim from Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa. He is a BBLT III graduate. His interests include reading books and reciting poems. He has won many tournaments as a debater. He aspires to become a great politician. He worked as an instructor in the BBLT Junior Program.



Mobas Shirin has recently completed her Alim from Shazadpur Nazar Mahmud Senior Madrassa. She is a graduate of BBLT III. She aspires to change Bangladesh positively. She worked as a facilitator in the BBLT Junior Program.



Jahedul Islam has finished his Dakhil and Alim from Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa. He is a graduate of BBLT II. He runs a small community school for poor children. He also has his own band. He likes to write, act and debate. He was a facilitator in the BBLT Junior Program.



Ryan Nabil is currently an A level student of Mastermind. He was the valedictorian of BBLT Batch II of BYLC. Ryan represented Bangladesh in the World Scholar's Cup World Finals 2009 in Singapore. He is the founder and president, of Youth for Community, a non-profit organization for youth. He was a facilitator in the BBLT Junior Program.



Raihan Ferdous is a second year student in Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa. He is a passionate debater and has participated in and won many debating tournaments. He is also accomplished in poetry recitation, anchoring and event organizing. Raihan co-coordinated the public speaking workshop in the BBLT Junior Program.



Kazi Ziyad Ansary is currently enrolled in Australian Marine College (AMC), Australia, as a merchant marine cadet. He was a graduate of BBLT II. Community Service is one of his hobbies. He practices calligraphy, acting, writing, and motorbike racing. Ziyad is also actively engaged in supporting Human Rights. He was the community service coordinator of the BBLT Junior Program.



Tahsin Hyder is a first year student of BSS in Economics at BRAC University. His hobbies include playing classical piano, writing and photography. While in school he was an active climate activist and co-founded and served as the president of Green Club, Maple Leaf International School. Tahsin is also a Silver Awardee of Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program. He worked as one of the photographers for the BBLT Junior Program.



Niyonta Nahia Chowdhury has completed her A Levels from Sunbeams and is currently enrolled at Sarah Lawrence College, New York. She aims to be a psychologist, while pursuing other interests- photography, writing, art, music and theatre. She is a BBLT II graduate. She was the brochure designer and a photographer for the BBLT Junior Program.

The Editorial Board

Niyonta Nahia Chowdhury (Designing and Editing)

Tonima Tasnim Ananna (Documentation)

Khan Md. Mohtasim Tamjeed (Proofreading)

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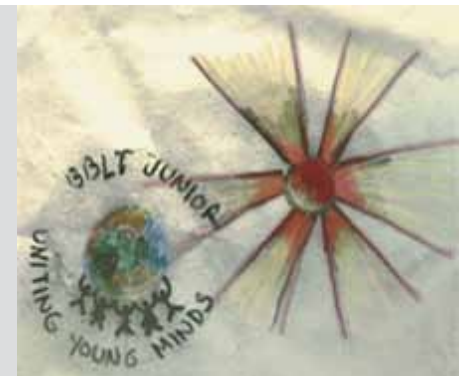
Print & Production

EXHIBITOR 

This brochure is a testimony to the wonderful time the BBLTJ students shared with each other. It was a powerful experience and we tried to bring it to life as much as possible in the pages of this booklet. It was a delight making it and I would like to thank the editorial board for helping give BBLTJ and its memories this tangible form.

We would also like to thank the entire BBLTJ team and students for your co-operation.

On Behalf of the Editorial Board,
Niyonta Nahia Chowdhury
Editor



Governing Board of BYLC

Zafar Sobhan, Chairperson of BYLC, is a 2009 World Fellow at Yale University and a 2005 Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum.

Ejaj Ahmad, Founder & President of BYLC, is a social entrepreneur with extensive professional and academic training in leadership.

Syed M Sajjad, Treasurer of BYLC, is the Marketing Director of Majumder Group.

Manzoor Hasan OBE, a barrister, is presently the Director of BRAC University's Institute of Governance Studies (IGS), and was previously the Founding Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

Sara Hossain, a barrister, practices at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, and is a member of the law firm of Dr. Kamal Hossain & Associates.

Homayara Ahmed, Assistant Professor, Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University, is an expert on human resource management.

Pial Islam, Founder and Managing Partner, pi Strategy Consulting, was previously a Global Leadership Fellow at the World Economic Forum.

International Advisory Board

Gowher Rizvi, Honorable Advisor to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, is the immediate past Director of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Ronald Heifetz, King Hussein bin Talal Senior Lecturer in Public Leadership at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, was the Founding Director of the Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership.

Barbara Kellerman, James McGregor Burns Lecturer in Public Leadership at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, was the Founding Executive Director of the Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership.

Mijarul Quayes, career diplomat and homme de letters; presently the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary.

Max Klau, developmental psychologist with an expertise in leadership in complex systems; presently the Director of Leadership Development at City Year, a national service and leadership development program headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts.

Sultana Afroz, career bureaucrat; presently the Economic Counselor in Bangladesh Embassy, Rome.

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