



GAEDE INSTITUTE FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS 2007 REPORT



Dear Friends,

We live in complex times. Broad cultural awareness is as necessary for day-to-day life in our neighborhoods as it is for global relations. Stewardship of the natural world takes solid scientific and economic knowledge paired with deep ethical concern. Careful analysis of information and critical judgment are vital to effective political engagement. More than ever, we need education for complexity.

We also live in fragmented times. Work, family, community, leisure, even church, compete for our attention rather than weaving together into a whole life. Education, when seen as relevant only to our professional lives, just worsens the splintering. More than ever, we need education for wholeness.

More than ever, we need liberal arts education.

At the Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts, we've been at work to equip those within the academy to strengthen liberal arts education. We've also expanded our efforts to raise awareness of liberal arts education and to offer liberal arts learning opportunities beyond the academy.

We're thrilled about the appointment of the Institute's new assistant director, Kristin Deal. She'll play a critical role in our efforts to help students from underserved backgrounds take full

advantage of all that a liberal arts education can offer. She'll also make possible the pursuit of new paths we've been eager to travel.

You'll see here just a sketch of our work. You can learn much more about each of these projects with a visit to our Web site at www.westmont.edu/institute. You can also send us an e-mail at libarts@westmont.edu.

To those of you who have taken part in our programs, we look forward to seeing you again soon. To those who have partnered with us, we're deeply grateful that you've shared in our efforts to make liberal arts education available to those who might otherwise miss out and to make it a vital force in the 21st century.

Best wishes,



Chris Hoeckley
Director



MISSION AND GOALS

The Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts was established to promote the continued vitality of the liberal arts tradition in American higher education.

We seek to:

Sharpen the vision of a dynamic, contemporary liberal arts education rooted in a rich, diverse tradition

Deepen understanding of the underlying commitments and values shaping liberal arts education

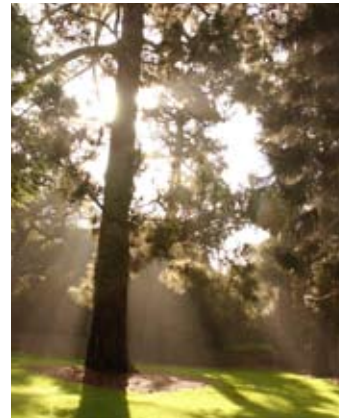
Stimulate dialogue between all streams in the liberal arts tradition

Strengthen the commitment of administrators, faculty, staff and students to the liberal arts vision

Equip faculty to implement the liberal arts vision at their institutions

Spread the message of the value of the liberal arts to students, parents, and the broader public

Bring faith into the conversation on liberal arts education



OUR HISTORY

The Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts grew from the inspiration of Westmont College's seventh president, Stan Gaede.

The germ of the idea came from conversations among deans and faculty of some of the country's best liberal arts colleges, conversations that revealed little consensus about the nature of liberal arts education or what unifies the holistic education these colleges claimed to offer. "Liberal arts," it seemed, had become little more than a marketing phrase. Liberal arts as a guiding educational philosophy, vital to contemporary society and rooted in a rich history, was losing its bearings.

In 2001, under the leadership of former Westmont Provost Shirley Mullen, the idea became a reality, and the Institute for the Liberal Arts was founded. Since then we've been spearheading conversations on the critical challenges and rich promise of liberal arts education for our time. We've also been reaching out to those beyond the academy, raising awareness of what is uniquely valuable about a liberal arts education. Upon Stan's return to a life of scholarship in July 2006, we became the Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts to honor his founding vision and his central role in making that vision a reality.



THE CONVERSATION ON THE LIBERAL ARTS

Our annual Conversation on the Liberal Arts gathers faculty and administrators from colleges and universities nationwide to address the challenges facing liberal arts education: How do we educate for membership in a global community? How is a liberal arts education related to work and calling? Can a liberal arts education foster justice in students?

We learn from some of the best in the field, but mostly we learn from each other as we share how things look through our sometimes very different lenses.

This past year's conference, "Learning Beyond Measure?" addressed how to evaluate educational programs whose results can't be easily quantified. Top researchers in the assessment of liberal arts education, as well as faculty and administrators from some of the best liberal arts colleges in the country, gathered with representatives of accreditation organizations to wrestle with the unique promise and challenges of assessment in a liberal arts context. We discovered that there are good strategies that go deeper than the numbers, and that the push for assessment must not come at the cost of flattening education into what is easily measured.

The edited volume of the conference presentations has reached presidents and deans of colleges and universities across the country. Stanford President John Hennessy said

of it, "I have tried to convince the Secretary of Education of exactly this view."

As we enter an election year, our upcoming conference theme will be "Learning in a Time of Politics." Led by Harvard historian of education, Julie Reuben, we'll ask how liberal arts education can best fulfill one of the goals most often claimed for it: preparing citizens for informed and discerning political engagement.



TUESDAYS WITH MORALS

Liberal arts education puts people in face-to-face learning communities, tackles issues that require different perspectives, and touches on all areas of our lives.

The Gaede Institute's weekly discussion series, Tuesdays with Morals, provides just such an opportunity to the Westmont community. Together, faculty, staff, and students wrestle with morally complex issues that require our best thinking from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and that call for our engagement with the needs of society. This past year, topics included caring for the elderly, global warming, human trafficking, and many more. As the presidential election campaign comes into full swing this year, we will consider topics that equip us to be informed and thoughtful voters in a politically polarized climate. The overflowing numbers at several of this year's sessions testifies to the fact that students are hungry to apply their learning to real-world problems.



LIBERAL ARTS AMBASSADORS

Too few young people are aware of what a liberal arts education can offer, especially those from underserved backgrounds: young people from underrepresented ethnicities, low-income families, or whose parents didn't attend college.

Unfamiliar with the liberal arts alternative, these young people risk missing out on an education that can serve not just their career interests, but all dimensions of their lives.

With the support of the Foundation for Independent Higher Education, Montecito Bank & Trust, and two generous friends of Westmont, the Gaede Institute created the Liberal Arts Ambassadors program to address this critical need. The ambassadors are college students, themselves from underserved backgrounds, who visit Santa Barbara area schools helping students discover all the ways that a liberal arts education can serve their future. Along the way, the ambassadors become more deeply invested in their own education, develop marketable skills, and enjoy a supportive network with others who share similar experiences.

We've partnered with the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) to place ambassadors as tutors in



the local high schools and junior highs, equipping scores of young people to be successful college applicants, and offering the inspiration and guidance so desperately needed through the complex process of preparing for college.

Before you Choose a College, Choose an Education, a booklet and companion Web site (www.college-choice.org) developed by the Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts Ambassadors program, help the young people our ambassadors are working with to discover all that college can be for them and show how a liberal arts education can meet their needs. Westmont's admissions and orientation programs are also using these resources, as are other colleges and universities, helping prospective students across the country better understand the value of a liberal arts education.

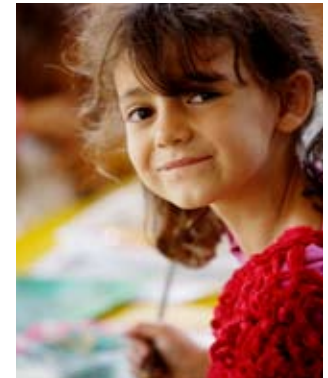
THINKCAMPS

Liberal arts education thrives on curiosity, and there's no one more curious than a child.

The Gaede Institute's ThinkCamps, summer day camps in the arts and sciences, bring liberal arts learning to Santa Barbara elementary and junior high students, fostering in them a love of learning in a college setting. Launched two summers ago with four camps, this year saw the program expand to six: a Spanish language camp, Somos Amigos; a science camp, Discovery Camp; a musical theatre camp, Bravissimo!; a computer camp, Computer Quest; a creative writing camp, Living Like Writers; and a visual arts camp, KidzArt.

Collaborating with the Santa Barbara Police Activities League (PAL), The Endowment for Youth Committee (EYC), and Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation, we made ThinkCamps available to a wide range of local children. 43 percent of the campers came from families of minority backgrounds.

Through grants from the Hutton Foundation, Venoco, Inc., and other sponsors we were able to award more than 50 full and partial scholarships, making an introduction to liberal arts learning accessible to all.



NEW THIS YEAR

Classroom to Congregation

One of the Gaede Institute's roles is to offer liberal arts learning opportunities to all of the communities to which Westmont belongs. Important among these for Westmont is the church. As a part of our effort to promote a more thoughtful and well-informed Christian community, we're launching Classroom to Congregation, connecting the resources of the Westmont faculty with the educational needs of Santa Barbara's nearly 150 local congregations. Already one local congregation has invited several of our faculty members to lead discussions on how they pursue their scholarly work with the utmost rigor as committed people of faith.



Reel Talk

Westmont's film series, Reel Talk, is now with the Gaede Institute. This program gives students, faculty, and staff the chance to bring their learning and their faith to bear on perhaps the most culturally influential medium in American society—film. This year's line up includes a range of foreign films, from the classic "Seventh Seal" to the recent "Lives of Others", as well as big Hollywood hits like "Superman Returns" and "Groundhog Day".

LOOKING AHEAD

Graduate students sometimes see a post at a research university as the mark of success.

We'd like them to see the rich professional rewards of the liberal arts alternative. We'll host future academics, especially those from backgrounds still underrepresented among faculty, for two-week summer workshops led by Westmont faculty members. Workshops will focus on teaching and scholarship in the holistic environment of a liberal arts community. With sufficient financial support, we hope to hold three workshops each summer over the next several years.

We're also working to bring liberal arts learning to adults in the Santa Barbara area. Liberal arts education fosters a passion for learning that lasts a lifetime. We want to offer opportunities in our local community to pursue that passion. We're developing week-long interdisciplinary summer seminars in the arts, sciences, and current events.

GAEDE INSTITUTE FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS


AT WESTMONT

955 La Paz Road
Santa Barbara CA 93108

805.565.6239
www.westmont.edu/institute