



Live. Learn. Learn to Lead in Healthy Ways.

Dear Youth Leaders and Their Parents:

Oct 8, 2019

The Leadership Enhancement Workshop (LEW) uses ancient methods to help us understand ourselves and how strengthening ourselves might also strengthen our communities. The experience will happen on the banks of our beloved Gila River. The focus of the trip is on each individual's 'capacity to endure' (e.g. 'to-live-sustainably'), as determined by familiar zones and safety protocols. *An ability to weather extremes is one of the most important skill-sets* for creating a resilient human community. This skill-set, while adapted to a 'modern' setting, comes to us through an oral tradition well-grounded in direct experience and echoed within indigenous cultures throughout the world. At this one-day *abbreviated* workshop, students will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning from experienced life-coaches in the spheres of both non-religious spirituality & holistic physical health.

The LEW experience is for student **volunteers only and is not mandatory**, as it involves participation in (1) a guided sweat-lodge ceremony, (2) a group sharing circle, and (3) the preparation & clean-up of a communal meal. This trip will occur from 4 pm on Thursday, Oct 10 until 11:45 PM on Thurs Oct 10. Once again, please note that this trip is **for committed student volunteers only**, as it will involve discomfort, personal challenge, and 'extra effort' from all participants. The trip will be led by experienced local volunteers who are engaged each step of the way with ALCS staff guidance & support.

Here are the essentials:

Who: Student volunteers on a first-come basis

What: A ½-day trip to the Gila River (Near mile-marker 7 on Turkey Creek road in Gila, NM)

When: Depart ALCS at 4 pm on Oct 10 and return to campus by 11:45 PM on Oct 10th

Where we will be: On private land near the Gila National Forest, just off Turkey Creek Road in Gila, NM.

Why: To expand our consciousness of how our personal capacity to endure is reflected in (a) our local community's journey to create a more sustainable world, and (b) our school's capacity to grow & endure.

*Website for more information:

<http://schooloflostborders.org/content/wilderness-rites-passage-healing-growth-and-initiation-john-davis-phd>

How Much: \$5 basic fare; \$10 standard fare; up to \$15 to help us cover all trip costs; \$2.50 subsidized fare

Travel, as you know, can be both enlightening & expensive. As always, ALCS faculty have endeavored to keep our trips as affordable as possible, relying on the expertise & good-will of both parents & community members. 2019 marks the sixth year that ALCS has sponsored such a leadership enhancement trip for multiple grade levels, & we are hoping that dedicated ALCS student-leaders will be able to attend this experience-based journey that offers students a way to find their own internal strengths.

The cost of this trip to the school – not including teacher salaries – comes to \$15 per student. This amount includes a small recognition of our volunteers’ time; the cost of driving the bus; and one meal. As is our usual practice, we have a three-tiered fee structure for this trip. The “basic” cost covers just the food we will purchase to feed your student. That’s \$5. The standard cost also includes the cost of transportation and a gift for volunteers; that brings the amount to \$10. And the full-fare option, for those families able & willing to help ALCS continue to provide such rewarding experiences to Grant County’s teenagers, is \$15. Eligible households qualify for a school subsidy, bringing their cost to only \$2.50. This last option is available to families who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. The Aldo faculty will never let a student’s financial challenges get in the way of attending a school trip.

We are asking students to bring snacks for the drive on Thursday Oct 10, and two quarts of water each. We will return to ALCS around 11:45 PM on Thurs Oct 10.

The Leadership Enhancement Workshop (LEW) is intended to advance the school’s stated vision to create graduates who have the necessary skills for enhancing “their own lives and to advance social, economic, and environmental sustainability.” To achieve this intention, students at LEW will have the opportunity to gain skill-sets that are largely independent of being a passive, comfort-motivated consumer. As such, it is our goal that these young people gain confidence in their ability to take meaningful action in their own lives, and in the greater world, as engaged citizens who believe that change starts from within. Turn your attention to the final page of this document for information on (a) the day’s itinerary, and (B) the trip’s application process. Remember, your spot is not secured until you give your permission slip to Cathie Gomez.

Even though we will be lower in elevation than Silver City and in a warmer climate, the principle of layering prevails when you’re in the desert during the fall; a jacket or fleece is necessary, as are closed-toed shoes, light clothes for layering. So, too, are a towel & appropriate sweat lodge attire necessary. Men wear shorts into the lodge, and ladies wear a long dress (this attire will be discussed in detail at the pre-trip meeting and is covered below in writing). And, while rain is a rare blessing here in the Southwestern U.S., it’s always possible—so students should bring rain gear.

A packing list is attached below. If you have any questions about the trip, don’t hesitate to contact me at 575-654-3622 or at prankin@aldocs.org.

With kind regards, Pete Rankin

Leadership Enhancement (Oct 10, 2019)

Please complete, detach & return with payment:

Name of student: _____ Meal Preference: Meat / Vegetarian (circle one)

___ All medical information is up-to-date in our school records. If this is not true, then please let Jim McIntosh (ALCS school nurse) know as soon as possible.

___ Our address & phone number are up-to-date in our school records. If not, please update these with Cathie or Andrea.

___ We have signed this ‘LEW Registration Form’

Choose from the following options:

___ \$15 is attached, representing (a) the cost of food & mileage for my student, (b) a gift-fee to honor the contribution of community volunteers, and (c) an extra donation to support the ALCS experiential education program.

___ \$10 is attached, representing the standard fee (food & mileage), and a gift-fee to honor the contribution of community volunteers.

___ \$5.00 is attached, representing the cost of food

___ \$2.50 is attached, representing the cost of food less the school’s subsidy

Parent signature: _____

ALCS Leadership Enhancement Trip - Packing List

Items with an asterisk (*) beside them are available on loan from the school. "Loaners" require that students offer \$50 collateral as a guarantee that items are returned in good condition. Please let Pete Rankin (prankin@aldocs.org) know if you need any of these items.

- Duffel or "softside" travel bag (or backpack*)
- Cap with a brim
- Rain poncho or raincoat and pants
- 2 sturdy water bottles or Camelback-style hydration system
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Sandals lodge (very optional in winter)
- Mess kit (sturdy bowl, cup, spoon, fork)
- Trash bag
- Towel
- Bandana
- Bus snacks for the drive
- 2 optional items for camp:
 - Lighter (for fire-starting)
 - Pocket knife with a 2-inch (or shorter) blade for food prep

- In general, you need loose-fitting clothes for sweating in the lodge.
 - Towel and attire for the sweat-lodge. This requirement will be discussed at the pre-trip meeting during lunch on Tues Oct 8 in Pete's room.
 - *"...It is suggested that women wear a long dress, covering the upper body and the lower body and carry a towel to cover one's self. It is suggested that men wear shorts with a towel wrapped around their waist. Most Elders suggest that women sit to one side (usually the left of the lodge and up to the middle) and the men sit to the other side..."*

Link: <https://www.strongnations.com/gs/show.php?gs=4&gsd=3914>

Itinerary

Trip Name: ALCS Leadership Enhancement Workshop (LEW)

Objectives: Students will...

1. *Be respectful* to the ceremony & space.
2. *Learn* from community elders about resilience & positive choices.
3. *Embed* their individual identities in the riparian ecosystem.
4. *Deepen* their cultural, physical, psychological & spiritual roots in our local region.
5. *Understand* how to replace dysfunctional habits of mind or spirit (e.g. substance abuse) with rituals of growth & renewal (e.g. sweat lodge, service to community & meditation).

Plan:

Thursday Oct 10

4:00	Depart ALCS after loading vehicles
5:00	Help with wood for sweat lodge & prep communal meal
6:30 – 8:30	Sweat lodge guided by community elders
8:30 – 10:00	Dinner & sharing circle
11:00 – 11:45	Arrive back at ALCS