



*Paul H. Sullivan, on the air, with his wife, Mary Jo Griffin.*

# Middlesex Launches Paul H. Sullivan Leadership Institute

***“I fear the potential for a lack of volunteerism among the upcoming generation. It’s up to us to not only help identify leaders of tomorrow, but to teach them what it means to lead.”***

***- Paul H. Sullivan  
(1957-2007)***

**P**aul H. Sullivan had a vision. The popular radio talk-show host, political editor of the *Lowell Sun* and long-time adjunct professor at Middlesex, met with MCC President Carole Cowan to discuss a program he envisioned that would cultivate new community leaders from the college’s student population. These students would interact with local government and businesses to learn the skills needed to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Tragically, Sullivan was unable to get the Middlesex Community College Leadership Institute off the ground, waylaid as he was by terminal cancer. However, before he died in September, President Cowan had already developed a plan to reignite his Institute idea, drawing in advisors from inside and outside the college community to see it through and name it in his honor.

In his last days, Sullivan and his wife, Mary Jo Griffin, shared a conversation about his hopes for the Institute. He made it clear he wanted the program made available to any student who wanted to seek out leadership opportunities. He did not want it available only to an elite group, but instead to a diverse, widespread population of students willing to be challenged if they were presented with the opportunity.

Now, the Paul H. Sullivan Leadership Institute at MCC has been launched to help identify and develop community leaders. The Institute is still early in its creation, but already a number of Sullivan’s former colleagues have stepped forward and asked to participate. An advisory board has been formed, and a core cluster of workshops is being crafted, with an eye on a springtime launch.

Griffin has already met multiple times with college leaders, and expressed her full support for the project. She is involved in a number of other initiatives in her husband’s name, but said she knows how important the MCC community was to him, and how much he relished the plan to help develop young leaders.

“Character serves as the platform for the Paul H. Sullivan Leadership Institute,” said President Cowan. Participants in the program will learn to apply sound leadership principles, display appropriate leadership traits, demonstrate strong leadership skills and commit to the responsibility of community service.

“Paul was passionate about helping to teach and mold the next generation of our leaders,” said Cowan. “He saw that as his mission in his classes, and ultimately, he saw that as the goal of this Leadership Institute – to teach students that there are limitless possibilities available to them, as long as they are willing to engage.”

Although the curriculum of the Institute is still in development, some areas of instruction will include critical thinking, problem-solving, project planning, conflict resolution, time management and ethical decision-making.

For more information about the program, contact Lura Smith at 978-656-3110. To make a donation to the Institute make checks payable to the Paul H. Sullivan Leadership Institute, P.O. Box 716, Bedford, MA 01730.

*- Patrick Cook*

Photo courtesy of *Lowell Sun*