

Director's Report  
October 2005

A number of activities have occurred since the last report to the Board. The most significant is most likely DREAMstock. This event is an overnight event at Camp DREAM for all mentors in the DREAM. The goal of the event is to provide energy, synergy and training to mentors so that they start the new school year off with a bang. Over 70 mentors made it to DREAMstock and from the early reports and the evaluations conducted the efforts made by staff to get them there and to plan the event were most certainly worth it. It should be noted that the time schedule was kept and that all of the mentors were delivered to Camp and from Camp when we planned for them to be.

Staff is currently working on a number of office related issues and documents such as the DREAM office contract, the Alcohol Policy, and we are in the first stages of the Strategic Planning process. Currently staff is reviewing what has been written in the past including the last SP from 2003 and a document written by Jon prior to his departure that addresses a number of issues and goals for staff over the next year or two. From here we will meet as a group over lunch to determine what our process will be to develop a strategic plan for DREAM. I envision this to be a number of "mini-retreats" where we will tackle different aspects of the plan such as our Mission Statement, our Vision Statement, DREAM's Core Values, the Theory of Change, and then our goals and objective for the next 1, 2 and 3 to 5 years. I will keep the Board informed of these retreats and the outcomes.

I also want to let the Board know of a Grant that DREAM is going after. The Vermont Community Foundation is requesting proposals for a Strategic Grant. The idea of the grant is to offer funding to an organization that is proposing a new and innovative strategy to address a regional or statewide problem such as poverty or homelessness. The grant will also look at providing funding to ongoing strategies that have been proven effective and will strengthen the overall strategy and organization. What we are proposing is that VCF provides monetary support to assist DREAM in our evaluations, the research to support our Theory of Change, and the time that will be necessary to align all of our language between our Ends, ToC, surveys, evaluations, and the replication model that we want to develop this year and next. The grant also provides a leadership network, training and support process so we will be able to take advantage of this for staff development and assistance as we move through the process. It is a two-year grant. It is the hope that the process will provide DREAM with a publishable Theory of Change model, and a useable replication model for DREAM that will allow us to expand and to be very competitive for larger national grants.

Finally, DREAM is quickly approaching closure on the permitting process for Camp. We have provided the State with the last bit of information they require to make a determination on our wastewater permit and we expect to hear about this by the end of the month. Things look very good as the only additional information requested was a site plan with boundary dimensions on it. Once this permit is in hand we will be granted our Act 250 permit and the first of our local building permits. We are also putting the last pieces in place to close on the land grant with VLT and VHC. At the close of this grant DREAM will receive approximately \$83,000. The entire grant is for \$100,000, but we will have to provide VLT with \$17,000 for their work on the

project. This will leave DREAM with a large sum of money that would most likely be best invested rather than left in our standard operating account. Input from the Board as to how much should be invested and how much should be put into the program or the property would be helpful. This is probably something that we can take on as a discussion in our November or December meeting.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any specific questions regarding various other events or issues with DREAM that are not covered here as I do not want to make this report too long. See you all in October!

Mike