

# Five Star Leaders: Learning through Civic Engagement

Kim Barbieri

**In the spring of 1986**, I was thrilled to learn that I had been selected to participate in the National Endowment for the Humanities teacher institute, “Classic Works of American Federal Democracy,” to be conducted by professors affiliated with the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University. My enthusiasm for the subject matter was matched only by my delight that the institute would be held in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Still I had no idea that I had taken the first step in an intellectual journey to rediscover my civic roots—a journey sparked by the masterful use of documents.

Word by word, phrase by phrase, guided by the institute faculty, we poured over fundamental documents like the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, Federalist and Whig essays, the writings of de Tocqueville and Lincoln, and many others. This intense, three-week experience with documents changed me as a teacher and as a citizen. It awakened in me a great depth of affection for the universal ideals of liberty: unalienable rights and self-determination. For the first time, I really appreciated—no, actually *felt*—the debt I owed to earlier generations whose struggles and sacrifices had established, and preserved, my freedom today. Most important of all, I came to understand my role in passing this legacy on to the next generation as the highest calling. For the next 11 years as a classroom teacher, I harnessed the extraordinary power of documents to instill in my students a knowledge of, and appreciation for, their civic heritage.

*Twenty years ago, I was already a veteran teacher, feeling rather satisfied with my career and academic attainment of a graduate degree in political science. During the summer of 1986, however, as a participant at a teacher institute, I realized that I still had much to learn about the history and nature of our government...*

## What is 5 Star Leadership?

Today, in my work as education specialist at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, in Abilene, Kansas, documents are both the foundation and the inspiration for our education efforts. For no project is this more true than for Five Star Leaders, our new experiential learning program, where secondary students are immersed in history, role-playing, and in the study of original documents. The overall objective is to give students a realistic experience portraying top-level leaders in history as they learn about and practice democratic leadership and consensus-based decision making.

Inspired by the vision and success of the White House Decision Center, developed by the Truman Library Institute, we set out to create our unique version, one that would be linked to the life and times of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Because Eisenhower was universally admired for his leadership qualities, we knew that his example would be our inspiration and beginning point. As the work began, choosing the D-Day decision during World War II as the first scenario for Five Star Leaders was easy. For more than a year, the co-creator of the White House Decision Center and the Eisenhower Library staff collaborated to brainstorm, develop concepts and an overarching theme, and, finally, an outline of the basic components of the program.

Our research on theories of leadership led to the creation of the Five Star Leaders Model, which stresses democratic, or shared, leadership as a pinnacle of leadership. Staff archivists laboriously searched our collections for documents that

*“Successful democracy fosters leadership on every level and in every area of national life... That is one of the tenets of the American faith.”*—DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

could be utilized for the leadership component of the program. Confidential Eisenhower papers (known as the Ann Whitman File, after the personal secretary who maintained them), oral history interview transcripts of Eisenhower associates, and Eisenhower’s pre-presidential and post-presidential papers are among the collections that are represented in the leadership documents. Months of research were necessary to identify and select documents on the invasion of Normandy, or Operation Overlord, that students would use to construct their understanding of the D-Day invasion plan.

From January through June 2005, nine experienced Kansas teachers and more than 200 students scrutinized the Five Star Leaders program. The teachers served as advisors as we conducted six pilots. The resulting student and teacher evaluations provided invaluable information for improving the program. Input from staff and volunteers who assisted with program development and the outcome of the pilots were important to the vetting process. Throughout the summer of 2005, Five Star Leaders went through final preparations in anticipation of the upcoming school year.

Initially, the Five Star Leaders program will operate out of the Eisenhower Library for up to two days a week. Students participating in the program work through six modules in all: four pre-visit modules in a classroom setting, and a module at the Eisenhower Library, followed by a post-visit module in the classroom. Teachers whose classes participate in the program attend a half-day training session. They receive lesson plans, handouts, a DVD, and documents to complete the classroom modules and to prepare for the onsite module.

### Module one

In module one, students are introduced to the Five Star Leadership Model through color-keyed handouts that outline five theories of leadership: trait, behavioral, situational, transformational, and democratic. Each leadership theory handout briefly explains the particular theory, provides quotations as examples, and requires students to complete a brief assignment designed to encourage reflection and application. Level one, one-star leadership, focuses on personal traits, emphasizing good character and self-improvement. Two-star leadership underscores behaviors. Students learn that, although effective

leaders employ a variety of styles, the basic courtesies of respect, patience, empathy, and fairness are prerequisites. The ultimate goal to strive for is level five, democratic leadership, which focuses on personal responsibility, the common good, and democratic principles as cornerstones of good leadership.

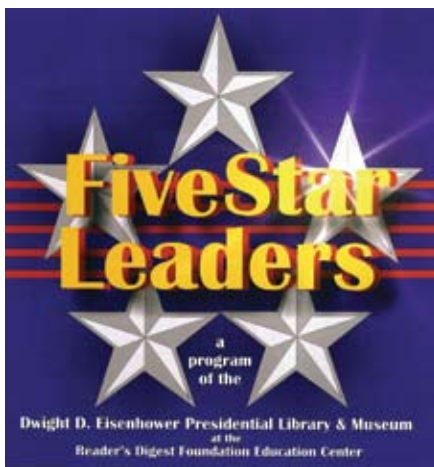
Students examine and evaluate leadership-related documents from the holdings of the Eisenhower Library in module two. Documents include excerpts from Eisenhower’s own copy of a 1911 *Officers’ Manual* from the United States Military Academy at West Point (see p. 396) and a 1953 letter from President Eisenhower to William Phillips, who had served as his political-diplomatic adviser (see pp. 397 and 398). Students locate relevant passages and identify examples of the five leadership theories within context. Letters, diaries, formerly classified memoranda, oral history transcripts, speeches, and early twentieth-century leadership manuals are among the types of documents that students explore as they uncover a history of leadership thought that spans much of the past century.

Module three introduces students to historical background and to the historical characters they will play. Students work in teams, and each team has a mission and specific duties. During the piloting process, the students who did their best to truly become their characters were those who enjoyed the process most. For example, one student playing the role of Franklin D. Roosevelt insisted on using a wheelchair; a number of students developed a passable English accent for playing Winston Churchill or members of the British armed forces; and some students arrived for the onsite module wearing military jackets or hats.

### D-Day Scenario

Students assemble in their planning teams in module four. For the Five Star Leaders: D-Day scenario, there are six teams: Political-Diplomatic, Combined Chiefs of Staff, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, Military Operations, Intelligence and Deception, and Meteorological. Each team receives a packet of D-Day documents related to its particular mission. Because the original documents have been digitized, the copies appear quite authentic. Based upon the quality of

*continued on page 394*



## FIVE STAR LEADERS

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the students' document analysis and of the ensuing discussions, each team prepares a briefing report to be presented during a dramatic re-creation at the Eisenhower Library of the May 15, 1944, briefing meeting for Operation Overlord. The students reenact the historic meeting in Hammersmith, England, where more than 131 Allied leaders, including King George VI, Churchill, Eisenhower, General George Patton, and British military commander Bernard Montgomery, met for the final "dress rehearsal" for D-Day.

Module five is a four-hour onsite experience. Students relive the intensity and mounting tension in the two-week period leading up to D-Day. Following the May 15, 1944, D-Day briefing meeting reenactment, students are escorted to "top secret" locations where they receive D-Day



Students from Abilene High School in Kansas participate in Five-Star Leaders Program at Eisenhower Library.

*Student—“Now and in the future on June 6th, I will think about what the men went through and thank them for what they did for our country.”*

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By Tara Ross  
Foreword by George Will

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Colonial Press



Students from McPherson High School in Kansas simulate the June 5, 1944 Commanders' Conference before the June 6, D-Day invasion.

*Student—“When you’re a leader, you have a lot of responsibility. But nothing could compare to the responsibility that Eisenhower had.”*

documents created between May 15 and June 5, 1944. As each team reads and analyzes the new documents, “real-time” intelligence updates arrive, further complicating and challenging students to form an accurate synthesis. Based on the documents and up-to-the-minute intelligence, each team must make a recommendation to General Eisenhower, played by a student, on whether to move forward with a June 6 invasion or postpone it. In the days before the actual D-Day, the commanders met at 9:30 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. each morning to get the latest weather forecast (including tidal and lunar conditions) and to report on the status of the planned invasion. At the June 4th evening meeting, the commanders considered going forward with a June 6 launch. At the early morning meeting on June 5th, Eisenhower made the irrevocable decision to launch the operation.

During the re-creation of the early morning June 5th commanders’ conference, complete with dramatic lighting and sound effects simulating the pounding rain and hurricane-gale winds, the group captain for each team delivers a recommendation and Eisenhower must make his decision. Students then prepare for a press conference where Eisenhower and his commanders are peppered with questions about their decision from classmates playing the roles of war correspondents such as Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Andy Rooney, and an Associated Press reporter

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clerk, the use of ordnance stores or quartermaster articles, he should always speak to the captain about the matter.

### THE CAPTAIN AND THE LIEUTENANTS

The company officers should set an example to their men in dress, military bearing, system, punctuality and other soldierly qualities. It should be remembered that the negligence of superiors is the cue for juniors to be negligent.

If the men of a company are careless and indifferent about saluting and if they are shabby and lax in their dress, *the company commander is to blame for it*—company officers can always correct defects of this kind, if they will only try.

The character and efficiency of officers and the manner in which they perform their duties are reflected in the conduct and deportment of their men.

Of course, courage is a prerequisite quality for a good officer, and every officer should seek to impress his men that he would direct them to do nothing involving danger that he would not himself be willing to do under similar circumstances.

If a company officer be ignorant of his duties, his men will soon find it out, and when they do they will have neither respect for, nor confidence in, him.

Company officers should take an active interest in everything that affects the amusement, recreation, happiness and welfare of their men.

An officer just joining a company should learn without delay the names of all the men. A roll of the organization should be gotten and studied.

The responsibility devolving upon company and other officers in time of war is great and serious—they are entrusted with the lives of men, and the lives of their fellow-beings often depend upon their judgment and efficiency. Their mistakes are paid for in human blood. Officers should, therefore, in time of peace by study, application and otherwise, do everything possible to qualify themselves for their duties and responsibilities in time of war.

What would you think of a pilot who is not capable of piloting a boat trying to pilot a boat loaded with passengers, or of an engineer who is not capable of running a locomotive trying to run a passenger train? You would of course, think him criminal, but do you think he would be more criminal than the officer who is not capable of commanding a company in battle but who tries to do so, thereby sacrificing the lives of those under him?

Every officer should study himself carefully, he should analyze himself, he should place himself under a microscopic glass, so as to discover his weak points—and he should then try with his whole might and soul to make these weak points strong points. If, for instance, you realize that you are weak in applied minor tactics, or that you have no "bump of locality," or that you have a poor memory, or that you have a weak will,

OFFICERS' MANUAL

June 5, 1953.

Personal and Confidential



Dear Bill:

I appreciate your taking the time to write me. Letters from old friends who are qualified by experience to comment critically on public matters are invaluable to one who, like myself, sometimes feels insulated from popular contact.

Let me hasten to say that your observation is, in my view, obviously correct. Anyone who accepts a position of responsibility must, by that very fact, exert the leadership required in that position. He must, of course, determine and employ the methods applicable to his particular situation.

Clearly, there are different ways to try to be a leader. In my view, a fair, decent, and reasonable dealing with men, a reasonable recognition that views may diverge, a constant seeking for a high and strong ground on which to work together, is the best way to lead our country in the difficult times ahead of us. A living democracy needs diversity to keep it strong. For survival, it also needs to have the diversities brought together in a common purpose, so fair, so reasonable, and so appealing that all can rally to it.

I deplore and deprecate the table-pounding, name-calling methods that columnists so much love. This is not because of any failure to love a good fight; it merely represents my belief that such methods are normally futile.

Personal and Confidential



Personal and Confidential

Speaking from a more distinctly personal point of view, the present situation is, I think, without recent precedent in that the particular legislators who are most often opposing Administration views are of the majority party. People like to think of Mr. Roosevelt as a leader; in the situation where his own party was delighted to hear a daily excoriation of the opposite political party, his methods were adequate to his time and to the situation. As of today, every measure that we deem essential to the progress and welfare of America normally requires Democratic support in varying degrees. I think it is fair to say that, in this situation, only a leadership that is based on honesty of purpose, calmness and inexhaustible patience in conference and persuasion, and refusal to be diverted from basic principles can, in the long run, win out. I further believe that we must never lose sight of the ultimate objectives we are trying to attain. Immediate reaction is relatively unimportant -- it is particularly unimportant if it affects only my own current standing in the popular polls. These are the principles by which I try to live. I regret that I so often fail.

I repeat -- there has been no change in my convictions as to principle or my determination to serve the long-term good of all the people. I simply must be permitted to follow my own methods, because to adopt someone else's would be so unnatural as to create the conviction that I was acting falsely.

With warm personal regard, and many, many thanks for your letter.

Sincerely,

The Honorable William Phillips,  
"Highover,"  
North Beverly,  
Massachusetts.

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Originator: COS

To : AGWAR (B-33)



Info: British Chiefs of Staff London (M-37)

"BIGOT"

U R G E N T

U.S. SECRET - BIGOT

"Edited Literal Text"

To : AGWAR and TROOPERS  
For : Combined Chiefs of Staff rptd British Authority  
From : SC, AEF  
Signed: Eisenhower

DECLASSIFIED

J.C.S. MEMO

Date 7/5/72

By DJH, NARS Date 11/19/73

1. I have now had an opportunity of discussing the 'OVERLORD' plan with my Commanders-in-Chief. We are convinced that in all discussions full weight must be given to the fact that this operation marks the crisis of the European war. Every obstacle must be overcome, every inconvenience suffered and every risk run to ensure that our blow is decisive. We cannot afford to fail.

2. In this light we have reviewed the 'OVERLORD' plan and we are fully convinced that it is, as the Chiefs of Staff have already asserted, on a narrow margin. The present plan is limited to a three divisional assault. To ensure success we consider it essential to increase the assault force to five divisions. Nothing less will give us an adequate margin to ensure success.

3. Our reasons for this view are that an operation of this type must be designed to obtain an adequate bridgehead quickly and to retain the initiative. Three divisions are insufficient for this. The present frontage of assault is consequently too narrow. It will be essential to extend the front to give us a greater opportunity of finding a weak spot through which to exploit success. Moreover, the chances of success of the operation will be greatly increased and the capture of a port speeded up if we could extend our assault to the EASTERN beaches of the COTENTIN PENINSULA WEST of the barrier formed by the RIVER VIRE and its marshy estuary. Further, the securing of the EASTERN flank, and the early capture of the important focal point of CAEN with the vital airfields in its vicinity will be facilitated by the extension of the assault to the beaches just WEST of OUISTREHAM.

4. With five divisions we should carry out our assault as follows. We should land one US and two BRITISH assault divisions on the CAEN beaches each on a two brigade front as already planned. We should land one additional BRITISH division with one brigade up on the beach just WEST of OUISTREHAM and a US division with one brigade up at the SOUTHERN end of the EAST COTENTIN beaches. The whole assault would thus be made by five divisions with eight brigades up. These would be followed on the second tide of D day by the equivalent of two divisions in landing ships and craft

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as in the original plan. To assist the assault on the COTENTIN an airborne division would be landed on D day to seize the exits from the beaches; followed probably by a second airborne division in approximately twenty-four hours.

5. I understand that COSSAC has previously stated that additional craft becoming available for 'OVERLORD' should be used to strengthen the follow-up on D plus 1 by embarking in landing craft units at present carried in ships. While I agree as to the desirability of this, I am convinced that the first necessity, as stated above, is to widen the frontage of the assault in order to obtain a larger initial bridgehead.

6. I have had examined the additional resources required to fulfill these proposals. By cutting down the scales of vehicles carried in the assault and follow-up I can find enough craft from within those already assigned to me to provide lift for one more assault brigade in reserve. The balance required will have to come from resources outside my control.

7. To carry out the revised plan will require an addition of the following:

1 L.S.H.  
6 L.S.I. (L) or A.P.A.  
1 L.S.I. (H)  
(All with full complement of L.C.A. or L.C.V.T.)  
72 L.C.I. (L)  
47 L.S.T.  
144 L.C.T. (see paragraph 16 below)



8. The following additional naval forces will be required above those already requested:

(a) ESCORTS:

24 destroyers  
28 motor launches

(b) MINESWEEPERS:

4 flotillas

(c) BOMBARDMENT FORCE:

5 cruisers  
12 destroyers  
1 or 2 monitors or old battleships.

9. The majority of the naval forces, including the assault shipping and craft, must be formed in the UNITED KINGDOM by D minus 42, the last ships and craft joining their naval forces by D minus 28 at the latest.

10. The following additional BRITISH land forces will be required to start training in the UNITED KINGDOM by D minus 42:

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- 2 beach groups
- 1 beach sub-area headquarters
- 2 dock operating companies.



11. An additional eight fighter squadrons will be required to ensure the necessary cover over the extended assault area and wider shipping lanes, and two hundred troop carrier aircraft to ensure reasonable provision for the dropping of two airborne divisions within approximately twenty-four hours. These air forces must be available in the UNITED KINGDOM by D minus 60.

12. To allow an increase in the rate of follow-up and build-up proportionate to the increase in the assault, an additional 64 MT/Stores ships will be required for the first month.

13. The problem that must be faced at once is the provision of these additional forces.

14. I regard 'ANVIL' as an important contribution to 'OVERLORD' as I feel that an assault will contain more enemy forces in SOUTHERN FRANCE than a threat. The forces both US and FRENCH are in any case available; and the actual landing of these forces will increase the cooperation from resistance elements in FRANCE.

15. 'OVERLORD' and 'ANVIL' must be viewed as one whole. If sufficient forces could be made available the ideal would be a five divisional 'OVERLORD' and a three divisional 'ANVIL' or, at worst, a two divisional 'ANVIL'. If insufficient forces are available for this, however, I am driven to the conclusion that we should adopt a five divisional 'OVERLORD' and a one divisional 'ANVIL', the latter being maintained as a threat until enemy weakness justifies its active employment. This solution should be adopted only as a last resort and after all other means and alternatives have failed to provide the necessary strength by the end of May for a five divisional 'OVERLORD' and a two divisional 'ANVIL'.

16. As regards the target date, it is preferable from the army point of view that the early-May date should be adhered to if possible in order to obtain the longest campaigning season. I should prefer, therefore, to adhere to the existing date if it were possible. Rather, however, than risk failure with reduced forces on the earlier date, I would accept a postponement of a month if I were assured of then obtaining the strength required. Such a postponement would give an additional month of good weather for preparatory air operations and for training the additional troop carrier aircraft crews. It would also make available an extra month's production in the UNITED KINGDOM of about 96 L.C.T.

17. An immediate decision on the plan to be worked to and the date is a vital necessity. I request this decision at the earliest possible moment in order to allow time for the transfer of the additional resources to this theater and to enable planning and training to be completed in the limited time still available. The recommendations contained in this message have been made after consultation with my commanders and my own staff, but with no outside agencies.

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**"BIGOT"**

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DISTRIBUTION:

- Copy No. 1. - General Eisenhower  
2. - A.C.M. Tedder  
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4. - Admiral Ramsay  
5. - Maj. Gen. Bull  
6. - Maj. Gen. Whitefoord  
7. - Lt. Gen. Morgan  
8. - General Montgomery  
9. - Lt. Gen. Bradley  
10. - Maj. Gen. Brownjohn  
11. - Maj. Gen. J.C.H. Lee  
12. - Lt. Gen. Spaatz  
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## FIVE STAR LEADERS

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from Eisenhower's own hometown, Henry Jameson. The post-visit module is designed to give students opportunities for reflection and further development and to enable them to apply leadership and decision-making skills.

Only by applying the principles of democratic leadership and consensus-building skills and techniques to the problem, crisis, or mission of the Five Star Leaders scenario can students feel reasonably certain that they have arrived at the best-possible decision. Through the process, they gain historical insights and perspective; they regularly reveal a new appreciation for the challenges and responsibilities of leadership and decision making in free societies; and they begin to understand that they, too, form an integral link in the long continuum dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of democratic life. 

### Note:

Five Star Leaders: D-Day is part one of what will eventually be three leadership and decision-making scenarios in which participating teachers may choose to enroll students. Development of Five Star Leaders: Little Rock Crisis will begin in early 2006 in preparation for 2007, the 50th anniversary of the integration crisis when Eisenhower sent federal troops to ensure that nine African American children could attend classes at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. A third, foreign policy-related, scenario will follow.

Linda Segebrecht, an experiential learning expert and chief operating officer of Project Explore, which specializes in transforming public venues into meaningful learning spaces, assisted in the design and development of Five Star Leaders.

**KIM BARBIERI**, a former middle and high school teacher, taught American government, U.S. history, world geography, and Spanish for 22 years. As education specialist at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and Museum, she is responsible for curriculum development, onsite educational programming, outreach, K-12 special events and projects, and education collaborations.

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