

From the President's Pen...

We've just returned from another Student Trip to DC. Although it was the fourth time we have taken students from Furr High School in Houston, Texas, the trip was full of firsts.

This was the first trip where a new Facilitator participated in the program. All of our past trips have been led by Tomas Spath and me, but this spring **Robert Dahnke** stepped into Tomas' shoes. We also had three Community Observers on this trip, and each has made a commitment to become Facilitators on future trips.

The significance of this can hardly be overstated. As the Student Trips program expands, new leadership must be developed. We are excited by the talent and commitment of these dedicated volunteers!

This was also the first trip when the Institute provided a **Student Handbook** for use on the trip. This curriculum, geared specifically to the DC experience the Institute provides, was the brainchild of **Vanessa Winton**. Vanessa is the teacher from Furr High School who has accompanied us on many of our trips, and is now a member of the Institute's Board of Directors. She provided the core material

and format for the handbook, and then Robert Dahnke and I provided further collaboration. Part history lesson, part civics, part travel guide, part workbook, part journal – the students loved the handbooks and used them throughout the trip.

And what do the students gain from these trips? Some of the words used to describe the journey by the Furr students who just returned are *inspiring, stimulating, amazing, awesome, meaningful, unbelievable, phenomenal, and rigorous*.

What word would I use to describe it? Teamwork! The students, the teachers, the Community Observers and the Facilitators all pulled together to make this experience the best it could possibly be for everyone.

When asked to describe what they learned on the trip, the students said: *how to be civil, live life, stay informed, move quickly, how our government really works, how to work long hours, how to work together, what the monuments are all about, how to express a lot in a short time, respect, responsibility, honesty, and tolerance*. That is a lot of learning in five days!



Thank you for your support! **You may not be on the trips, but as members of the Institute, YOU make it happen! And we cannot thank you enough!**

Share the journey!
Spread the word!

Cassandra Dahnke,
President and Co-founder

page turners...

A Short History of Rudeness **Manners, Morals, and Misbehavior in Modern America**

The title of this book is accurate - especially the word “short”! Mark Caldwell wrote *A Short History of Rudeness* to poke some fun at those of us who ask the question: “**Where have all our manners gone?**” It’s an interesting history that he paints.

So what is rude? What are manners? Are they always the same? Do all people ascribe to the same principles? Not all manners are correct in every situation. Depending upon who you are speaking with, manners take on different understandings. If you don’t agree, perhaps this book will shed light on this subject.

A Short History of Rudeness has two parts: public life and our private lives. In public there are certain codes of ethics the author discusses. For instance, if someone opens the door twice for another person, what’s the right thing to do? Say “Thank You” twice, or would just once suffice? The author suggests it’s up to you to decide. Yet the book is not about giving advice. Rather it discusses how we all need to **become aware of our surroundings** so that we can be more civil with each other.

The bulk of the book contains five chapters dedicated to encounters in our public life. Examples are given of **manners in our general life, mobile life, work life, and at two critical stages of our lives: when we get married and when one dies.** Finally the fifth chapter describes **manners in our mass communications.** It’s interesting to learn that through the ages, manners have come and gone. What we define as good manners has changed greatly as time has passed. Not so long ago, professionals always wore a suit and tie to work. But look at the change! Many professionals now work at home in their T-shirts!

Each time a **new technology** comes into popular use, our world goes through a time when we discover the proper and improper use of the new discovery. For example, the telephone was revolutionary in its time. What was the proper way to cut into a conversation when one shared a phone line with another party?

Now the **computer** has revolutionized our world. Do you remember when we had to agree to certain rules about when and how to use a chat room on our PC’s? Manners – they matter. Yet we don’t always agree on what is or is not the right way to do things.

The latter half of the book is about **manners in our private lives.** The author is clear that the ground rules there are up to the individuals in each home and/or business. This book is interesting. It is short and to the point. While it **covers a wide variety of situations,** it confesses that it is not an all encompassing study of manners.

The author ends the book with a very realistic statement that **manners only work when we the people choose to accept them.** If people don’t care about manners, manners disappear for awhile. Through history though, manners have a way of returning. **As the Institute grows, perhaps manners will return a little more quickly than they otherwise might.**

About the Author: Mark Caldwell teaches at Fordham University.

A Short History of Rudeness: Manners, Morals, and Misbehavior in Modern America is published by Picador USA, New York, New York, 1999.

Thank You!!!

Special thanks to **Clear Lake Presbyterian Church** for hosting our Annual Meeting on April 25th. Your hospitality was very much appreciated.

Thanks also to **Jo Ann Currie** for her dedication during two years on the Institute’s Board of Directors. The Board recently accepted Jo Ann’s resignation with regret, and with thanks for her commitment and support.

the Institute for Civility in Government Annual Summary 2009

As of December 31, 2009, the Institute had 445 people join since it began, drawing from 30 states and the District of Columbia. Of those, 271 are active members. Seventy-eight of them joined in 2009, marking a record number of new members for the Institute in a single year. Our thanks to all of our members! The following is a list highlighting Institute events during 2009.

January

- Television – Taping PBS Show – “*Living Smart with Patti Gras*”
- Speaking Engagement – Northwoods Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas
- Exhibit – Church Officer Training, St. Luke’s Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas
- Speaking Engagement – First Methodist Church, Wimberley,
- Exhibit – Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Conference in San Antonio, Texas

February

- Exhibit – American Citizens’ Summit, Denver, Colorado
- Exhibit – Annual Meeting of Texas Diocese, Episcopal Church – Houston, Texas
- Speaking Engagement – First Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas
- Radio – Taping Radio Show for www.demos.org

March

- Student Trip to Washington, DC with Texas City High School

April

- Annual Meeting at Atascocita Presbyterian Church

May

- Exhibit – St. Augustine Presbytery Meeting, Jacksonville, Florida
- Student Trip to Washington, DC with Furr High School

June

- Exhibit – Annual Southwest Conference, United Methodist Church – Corpus Christi, Texas
- Exhibit – United Church of Christ Conference – Austin, Texas
- Second Restated Articles of Incorporation Filed with State

July

- Speaking Engagement – Houston County Summer Program for Youth (Texas)
- Television – First showing, “*Living Smart with Patti Gras*”, Houston PBS
- Speaking Engagement – Crockett, TX Summer Program for Youth
- Trip to DC to write curriculum

August

- Speaking Engagement – Helms Elementary School Teacher Training

October

- Exhibit – Mission Presbytery Meeting, Austin, TX.
- Exhibit - Advocacy Camp/Texas Impact - Covenant Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas
- Speaking Engagement – West University Rotary Club

November

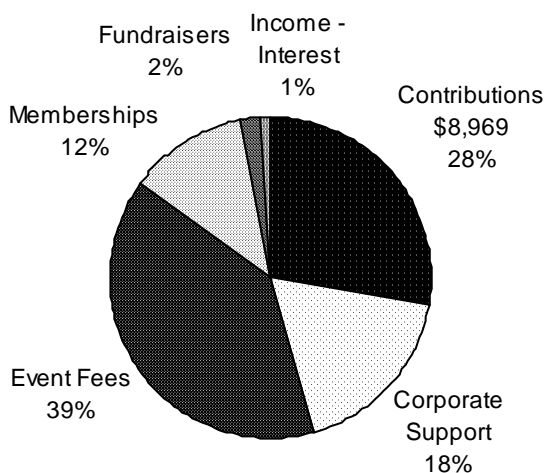
- Open House, Hosted by Victoria and Jack Agee, Houston, Texas
- Speaking Engagement – “*Keeping Current Series*”, Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
- Civility Training – Woodforest Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX.
- Open House, Hosted by Phillip and Edna Monroe, Corpus Christi, Texas
- Publicity – Facebook Page Launched

Institute for Civility in Government Unaudited Annual Report for the year Ended December 31, 2009

Income Sources

Contributions	\$8,969
Corporate Support	5,814
Event Fees	12,750
Memberships	3,910
Fundraisers	650
Investment Income - Interest	340

Total Income \$32,433



Expense Areas

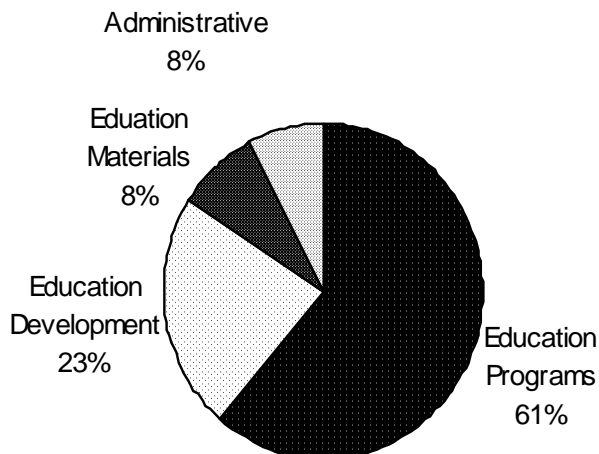
Education Programs:	
DC Group Trips	17,239
Exhibits	1,698
Congressional Student Forums	0
Speaking Engagements	115
Training Workshops	160
Total Education Programs	\$19,212

Education Development:	
Contract Fund Raising	\$6,000
Networking/Public Relations	1,264
Total Education Development	\$7,264

Education Materials:	
Books	\$85
Newsletters	1,720
Website Development & Maintenance	604
Other Educational Materials	91
Total Education Materials	\$2500

Administrative:	663
State Filing Fee	100
Postage	557
Office Equipment	0
Office Supplies	564
Printing	532
Post Office Box Rental	54
Total Administrative	\$2471

Total Expenses \$31,447



Total Income	\$32,433
Total Expenses	\$31,447
Income over Expenses 2009	\$986

Institute Sponsored Trip to Washington DC



Houston Area Congressman **Gene Green** greeted Furr High School Students.

Students met to discuss issues and concerns with staff from the offices of **Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison** and **John Cornyn**, as well as from **Representative Al Green's office**. They also met with **Representative Gene Green**.



Welcome New Members!

<i>David Allen</i>	<i>Selena Montano</i>
<i>Betty Bays</i>	<i>Howard Morse</i>
<i>Cherie Bugtong</i>	<i>Jean Obando</i>
<i>William Calvert</i>	<i>Ray Ochoa</i>
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Gail Purvis</i>
<i>Christianson</i>	<i>Linzhe Real</i>
<i>Summari Diaz</i>	<i>Tony Reese</i>
<i>Stephen Drachler</i>	<i>Don Scherer</i>
<i>Sara Eddy</i>	<i>Carol Stephenson</i>
<i>Angel Garcia</i>	<i>Sandra Strauss</i>
<i>Eric Garcia</i>	<i>Rachel Thomas</i>
<i>Ruth Hiersemann</i>	<i>John Toellner</i>
<i>Briana Joseph</i>	<i>Brionn Warner</i>
<i>Margaret Lynn</i>	<i>David Yates</i>
<i>Ariana Montano</i>	

Who do you know who needs to join?

Join us on Facebook

See this dot?!

This dot is your guide to your membership in the Institute, and will be a part of each newsletter you receive.

Green - your membership is current. Thank you! 😊

Yellow - Your annual fees are due. Please send \$25 to the Institute to maintain your support and to continue receiving newsletters, emails, and invitations to special events. ☹️

Red - Past due! Sorry, but unless you renew your membership, we will be unable to keep you on our mailing list. ☹️

We thank you for your support!

Membership and contributions may be mailed to:

the Institute for Civility in Government

P.O. Box 41804

Houston, Texas 77241-1804

the Institute for Civility in Government
P.O. Box 41804
Houston, Texas 77241-1804

*You are invited to a
Citizens' Civility Symposium
Monday, June 21, 2010*

*1:00 pm – 5 pm
at the*

*Woodrow Wilson International Center
for Scholars*

*One Woodrow Wilson Plaza
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20004-3027*

Reception following

*Confirmed panelists include:
Bill Archer, Henry Cuellar,
Cassandra Dahnke, P.M. Forni, Os
Guinness, Lee Hamilton,
Jim Leach, Bertie Simmons,
Tomas Spath*

*Advanced registration is required.
Register at www.instituteforcivility.org*