

Mending Broken Wings

Jim Hulihan is a motivational speaker, education consultant and filmmaker who has been involved with leadership retreats for young people throughout the years. The purpose of these weekends is to get students involved in issues concerning their communities.

At one retreat, Hulihan noticed a young man hanging around and not participating much in any of the discussion groups. Hulihan was informed by some of the people involved in the program that the teen, T. J., had a troubled past and a lengthy arrest record.

As the weekend progressed, T.J. slowly became more involved in the activities. As he spoke and offered ideas, his peers listened and were actually very moved by his level of passion and understanding for some of the subjects that they were exploring. When a project on homelessness was created, he was elected to be co-chair of the student group that would spearhead the food drive.

At the start of the school week, the teachers were shocked to learn that T.J. was a part of this project. They held out little hope that his involvement would yield more than failure. Some even thought that he would steal the supplies he was in charge of collecting.

Later on, they were surprised to learn that not only was the food drive successful, but that with T.J. in charge, the students set a school record for how many cans of food they were able to collect in just a couple of hours.

When the local newspaper did a story on the food drive, T.J.'s picture appeared with the article. Someone at the school posted a copy on the main bulletin board and soon T.J. began to be recognized as a leader and not a lost cause.

Something else happened, too. T.J. became more active in his coursework and even led a second community service project for a local homeless shelter.

T.J.'s story illustrates the need to give opportunities to those who seem to have lost their way. Everyone has some kind of gift or talent to share with the world.

Jim Hulihan puts it this way: "A bird with a broken wing only needs mending. But once it has healed, it can fly higher than the rest."

Helping someone soar to his or her potential is a privilege we have in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home every day – in the service we provide to our customers and in the professional development of our associates.

And that brings a whole lot of personal satisfaction.

– Beecher Hunter

