On April 14, 2006 twenty-five 10th graders of Eaglecrest High School in Aurora, Colorado buzzed with excitement! These students had worked so hard for months preparing for this – Semi-Formal Dessert and Silent Auction an event to raise money for the United Leukodystrophy Foundation, specifically to further research for adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD).

At 6:00pm AVID students with their teacher bustled about the cafeteria readying the several dessert and silent auction tables. These students are a part of a competitive academic program called AVID. AVID stands for "Advancement Via Individual Determination" and is a program geared towards students that demonstrate high academic potential through standardized tests, but for whatever reason do not perform as they should in the classroom. Other criteria that qualify students for the AVID program include first generation to graduate from high school, lack of organizational skills, or need more of a structured academic environment and additional support. It is with sheer delight to report that AVID made a total of $1,713.00 that went directly towards the ALD Newborn Screening Project.

AVID
Eaglecrest High School
Aurora, Colorado 80014

THE FOLLOWING ENTRIES PROVIDE A STORY OF A TRULY AMAZING CLASS AND THE JOURNEY THEY DECIDED TO TAKE TOGETHER TO HELP BRING ATTENTION TO A DISEASE:

ENTRY #1:
Shortly before Thanksgiving break, my AVID class began a journey that has been incredible to witness. I presented my class with an article from *The Wall Street Journal* entitled, "The Doctor, The Father, The Movie and the Medicine." Essentially, the article is about the struggle of a family where their son was diagnosed with a hereditary disease in 1983. This disease is known as Adrenoleukodystrophy or ALD and affects about one in 21,000 males. My AVID students diligently read this challenging article and took Cornell Notes to strengthen their understanding of the disease and those parties affected by this disease. After completing the exhausting work of taking these notes on this seven-page article, we viewed the film, *Lorenzo's Oil*, which is based on the true story of young Lorenzo and his parents struggle to find a cure to this merciless disease. We had two intense discussions centered around the Socratic Seminar methodology on November 21st and December 2nd and I was absolutely blown away by the energy and depth of my students' questions and comments.

ENTRY #2:
Beginning on December 8th my students congregated in groups and began brainstorming ideas about how more attention could be brought to the United Leukodystrophy Foundation. I asked them, before they submitted their work, to select two or three ideas that they felt the most passionate about. During the class periods of December 12th and 14th students began working on formal persuasive business proposals. The ideas that have emerged from these six groups are amazing. One group's proposal focuses on a school-wide fundraiser where posters will be developed and posted around the school to educate our student population about the United Leukodystrophy Foundation and ALD in particular. Other group proposed to write letter to the

Denver Broncos, Colorado Avalanche, and the Denver Nuggets to ask for support. Another group has proposed to organize a school-wide ALD dessert social that would include a silent auction for the benefit of the United Leukodystrophy Foundation to assist with further ALD research. Another group proposes to provide immediate assistance to local families that are directly affected by ALD and Adrenomyeloneuropathy, (AMN), the adult form of this disease. And finally, one group even has gone so far as to propose a Jell-O wrestling competition for young children as a fundraiser and a fun activity for the community.

ENTRY #3:

The focus and energy is contagious in the AVID class! The AVID students formally presented these presentations to one another on January 24th. At the end of the day we made a decision about which three business proposals had the most potential of being accepted by the AVID Administrative Team. On January 26th these three groups went forward to present to AVID Administrators, fellow faculty members, and parent in order to seek approval for this grand community project. A group consisting of three members, Charlotte Junk, Steven Hughett and Lauren Hiett came out ahead and won the approval of the vast majority present for the community service presentations. This project has been so inspiring! I am really proud of my AVID students and am so excited to see where this journey will take us. I am filled with joy as I find myself in the midst of such compassionate young adults that strive to make a difference for a family, a person, or the community.

ENTRY #4:

When the AVID students were asked to ponder such questions as: What did you think of the entire process? What would you change or add? What is you overall evaluation of the energy of our AVID class? I am happy to report that most feedback was positive. One AVID student, Caitlin Carron, commented on the process saying, "At times it was rough because you would struggle with ideas being rejected," Cantron went on to elaborate about the energy level in the class exclaiming: "The overall energy of our AVID class was driven and thoughtful. Our class loved the fact that we were helping people in need. I think our class was truly touched by the article, the movie, and the stories we heard about ALD. This really fired us up and created motivation for our project." Another AVID student, Alanna Dickinson, shared her thoughts on the energy level, "The energy in our AVID class is amazing. We know how to work, learn and communicate with one another."

Additionally, AVID student Anna Fifita, shared her feeling about how AVID methodologies assisted with her understanding of ALD explaining, "The Socratic Seminars helped us get out our opinions and be able to contribute in some way. The business proposals were a lot of work but the end result was unforgettable. I loved being able to come up with our own idea and share it to the class." Victor Fullmer commented on what I provided for them and how he took Cornell Notes. He says, "She (Mrs. Childers) gave us an article that took us a few days to evaluate and write Cornell Notes on." This again excited me because students were recognizing the value of Socratic Seminars and Cornell Note Taking in order to gather further meaning and understanding from content. My suspicion of students' appreciation for the AVID methodologies was heightened when AVID student, Alina Lungulescu, wrote in a reflection: "I especially liked the part when we had the Socratic Seminar, because we all voiced our opinions on what we thought about the film, *Lorenzo's Oil.*

In closing, when positive things are happening in the classroom, positive vibes are felt most by the students. David Garza, AVID student, comments, "The energy in the class was very uplifting. Listening to everybody's ideas on how to help others, I think that this was a great idea and it was fun to work on." Ashley McCurdy agrees sharing, "In AVID the ALD plans were exciting to make because we all knew that we would have the chance to help young boys with ALD." Kori Jo Whitsitt, a group member of McCurdy's, went on to say, "The overall energy of the class was phenomenal! This is because everyday we came to class, we were so excited to learn more and more about ALD." And, what better way to conclude this endearing story with a quote from another AVID student, William Giglio as he comments on the longevity of this project. He explains, "Also, I believe that the energy in the AVID class is great and will be a good influence to future classes."

ENTRY #5:

A decision has finally been made about when the Semi-formal dessert and silent auction will be held. This event will take place on Friday April 14, 2006 at Eaglecrest High School in the cafeteria from 6:30 – 8:30pm. Items to be auctioned off vary from artwork, to donated goods from families, to more items donated from businesses in Aurora and Denver. The AVID class is proud to present a handcrafted book that will be presented to a local family that has personally struggled with ALD and the aggressive treatment that their son has had to endure. Speakers will include a few of the AVID students, the AVID Coordinator and me. The evening proves to be an enjoyable event for all that participates. The cost for admission is $5.00 per person and $20.00 per family. All proceeds for the evening will go directly to the United Leukodystrophy Foundation to assist with further ALD research.

ENTRY#6:

May 10, 2006

On April 14, 2006 twenty-five 10th graders of Eaglecrest High School in Aurora, Colorado buzzed with excitement! These students had worked so hard for months preparing for this – Semi-Formal Dessert and Silent Auction an event to raise money for the United Leukodystrophy Foundation, specifically to further research for adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD).

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