National Park System Advisory Board 2013 Report

Task 10: Support Leadership Development

Building on recommendations offered in the 2009 National Parks Second Century Commission report, the NPSAB has focused on developing a 21st-century NPS organizational culture that is adaptive, resilient, and sustainable by helping the NPS develop leaders who are good learners, innovative, and who collaborate on solving complex system issues. These leaders learn and gain support from each other in formally sponsored communities of practice; they work well with multiple partners, neighboring communities, and other agencies.

Addressing the Task

Systemwide participation is essential for creating a 21-st century culture in the NPS. Successful development of deep organizational strategies will depend on collaborative and conversational approaches that directly engage employees in the park process and involve park superintendents and program managers throughout the NPS.

Progress Report

The new 21st-century vision applies a distinctive theory of culture change. Rather than filling a "gap" between the present and the future, new organizational cultures are created by noticing who is *already practicing* attributes and behaviors of the new culture. Their work is amplified and spread through a four-stage process: *naming* the exemplars; *connecting* them to each other; *nourishing* their work with resources, ideas, time; and *illuminating* their achievements to inspire others. National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis' "Four Priorities" and the 2011 "Call to Action" plan created focus, coherence, and direction for the NPS, and produced multiple opportunities to implement 21st-century leadership practices, including the following:

1. *The Collaborative for Innovation*. A new organization function that brings together all individuals involved in leadership development and learning, pooling resources to promote best practices for all NPS issues, communities of practice (groups of professionals with shared interests and experience), collaborative processes, and facilitation skills.

2. *Redesign and Redirection of the Organization Development Function* to support the "Four Priorities" and the "Call to Action."

3. *Addressing Issues from the Employee Viewpoint Survey*. The Organizational Development function has begun in-depth work with 20 parks to address issues raised in the Employee Viewpoint Survey. Work will continue with up to 50 additional parks. This ambitious, multiyear process will use 21st-century leadership practices of inclusion, conversation, diversity, and critical thinking to apply survey data to resolve park-specific issues.

Priorities Through 2016

This approach to culture change has already been embedded in many senior leadership functions. The Collaborative for Innovation and Change will continue to provide a clear organizational focus for furthering this work, and along with the Organizational Development function, has already advanced transformations in 21st-century leadership that will deepen, mature, and take root during the next four years.

Follow Our Work

Learn more about the Collaborative for Innovation and Change at ***www.nps.gov/csi***. Download the report, "Developing a 21st-Century Leadership Culture," at ***www.nps.gov/resources/advisoryboardreport.htm***. Visit the ***Call to Action*** website *(Item 31)*.