



Leaders Address Boys State Delegates

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ANGOLA — When Earl Phalen asked the 500 high school seniors involved in Hoosier Boys State how many had a written set of goals for their future, about 3 percent lifted their hands.

Phalen — part of the Daniels Prize Lecture team — said three percent of high school students write out their goals and a plan for achieving them. He said statistics have shown those people are happier, healthier and have a net worth of 10 times their counterparts.

Phalen, former Indiana governor and current Purdue University President Mitch Daniels and General Motors chairman Tim Solso spoke to the assembly Monday in the Keith E. Busse/Steel Dynamics Athletic Recreation Center at Trine University. Along with hearing leadership tips from the three successful businessmen, they learned about a \$2,500 scholarship available to the Boys State participant who writes the best essay on the greatest leadership challenge this generation will face in the state of Indiana.

“Your state, your nation is going to need you,” said Daniels, who served two terms as Indiana governor. He encouraged the students to read biographies of proven leaders, suggesting Winston Churchill.

Monday, his team spoke briefly on their beliefs, which included five tips from Solso — act with integrity, choose the best people for your team, communicate, commit to helping others and be positive.

Solso received the first-ever Daniels Prize last year from the Mitch Daniels Leadership Foundation, recognizing him for excellence and action in furthering progress in Indiana. Solso was chairman and CEO of Cummins from January 2000 through December 2010, overseeing major environmental alterations to the company’s diesel engines despite resistance in the industry.

When he won the award, Solso was provided with \$50,000 to grant to a person he felt was making an impact in the Hoosier State. He selected Phalen, CEO and founder of Summer Advantage USA and Reach Out and Read programs and founder of the Phalen Academy charter

school in Indianapolis. Phalen graduated from Yale University and received a law degree from Harvard University. Though he could have taken a profitable job at a firm in San Francisco, he said he felt education was his calling and started his charter school with little initial financial impetus.

During a question-and-answer period, Hunter Price of Angola asked Phalen how his personal experience, abandoned at birth and adopted into a large Boston family, affected his work ethic. Phalen said after he'd chosen his career in providing educational opportunities for preschool aged children, he was faced with some things he didn't like to do and didn't feel he did well, particularly fund raising. He asked himself, "What are you willing to do for your children?"

The answer was, he said, that he would die for his children. "Anything that was less than that seemed easy," Phalen said.

Daniels encouraged the students to look past the obvious rewards of their careers, not just "to be something" but "to do something."

Hoosier Boys State continues through this week at Trine. It is organized by the Indiana Department of the American Legion and will send two to participate in Boys Nation this summer in Washington, D.C.

