



# Class Project Review

## LEADERSHIP DOOR COUNTY CLASS XV

In 2003 and 2004, five Door County teens took their own lives, with another twenty-one documented attempts during the same time period. It was with this alarming information in mind that the Leadership Door County Class of 2005 chose **“Preventing Suicide: Keeping Our Community Healthy and Safe”** as their class project.

The class wanted to bring in a national educator/speaker that could offer professional insight and strategies in the prevention of suicide through two programs, one focused for health care professionals - the other to the general public and those whose lives have been touched by suicide.

The goal was to offer an educational opportunity that would launch a ripple of momentum that would continue long after the LDC class of 2005 graduated. The project brought area grass roots organizations together on common ground in hopes of revitalizing the momentum needed to restore the health of the community.

On Monday May 2, 2005, a special meeting geared towards health care professionals was held in the afternoon and the public was invited to attend a special event from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Third Avenue Playhouse in Sturgeon Bay. This public presentation was designed for parents and other interested adults, and was appropriate for youth that were in middle school or older. It was hoped that through the presentation, teens and their parents would talk to each other about the subject of suicide. Informational packets were distributed to those in attendance in order to give people a plan for keeping the community healthy and safe.

The featured speaker was Dr. David Mays, M.D., Ph.D. from Mendota Mental Health Institute in Madison. Dr. Mays has spoken in many communities throughout the state of Wisconsin on the subjects of suicide, mental illness, and school violence. He helped start the *Community for Hope* in Oshkosh, at a time when the area was experiencing a dramatic rise in teen suicides.