

# Phi Delta Kappa Newsletter



U.B.C. Chapter #0124

Vancouver, B.C.

June 12, 2007

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear PDK -UBC Chapter Members,

The 2006-07 school-year is drawing to a close, as are the activities of our PDK-UBC Chapter. However our organization, like many others, is planning for the upcoming year as it closes its present year. We postponed the confirmation/election of our executive at our last dinner meeting until our first dinner meeting in the fall. This has allowed us to have potential executive members nominated for all positions, and a smooth transition from the outgoing to the incoming executive members.

The past year has continued to be a vibrant one as we held a number of successful speaker evenings, selected future educators to whom we awarded scholarships, planned for the Global Summit which will be held in Vancouver, and developed a brochure which can be circulated to colleagues and will help us in our continuing effort to recruit new members. Dan Brown, Celina Mau, Eileen Phillips and I attended the regional leadership PDK conference in Denver Colorado entitled "Making Possibilities Real".

Our contacts with the PDK International office and staff were more regular this year as we worked together on the planning of the PDK Global Summit in Vancouver. Robert Myers visited Vancouver as

the regional chapter executive member. On his last visit, Jo-Anne Fujita, the outgoing PDK International President, joined him at our final dinner meeting in April. Jeanne Storm has been in regular contact with Celina Mau as the planning for the Summit takes form.

Our program committee, chaired by Dan Brown, has brought us a wide array of interesting speaker presentations. Our last dinner meeting was another example of inviting interesting educational leaders, researchers, academics and practitioners to present to our group. Judy Arnold from the BC Ministry of Education gave us insight into the current policy directions of the Ministry particularly towards school district reviews, district accountability contracts and school improvement plans.

Our treasurer-elect John Wilson has been working with our outgoing treasurer Eileen Phillips as our books are reviewed and closed. Their combined efforts at greeting us at the door and receiving our dinner payments have been appreciated by us all this year.

Norma Bryant has continued to record the proceedings at our executive meetings and to deal with any other correspondence related issues. We appreciate her willingness to continue in this capacity.

Marea Jensen has worked in the capacity of our Foundations representative this year. As a high school administrator, her expertise in assisting us with our scholarships was appreciated.

Nancy Paget took on the membership portfolio with an eye to increasing our membership and keeping our membership contact with PDK International. Our only source of funding is the membership contributions from PDK International! Thank you Nancy!

I cannot say enough about the continuing interest and dedication that Celina Mau, Eileen Phillips and Kerri Wallin have given our organization. Their

positive contributions and willingness to be a part of any PDK-UBC initiative are most appreciated. As Past Presidents they continue to live the values of our organization.

Our recent leadership seminar was yet another example of this work.

Patricia Gartland has been instrumental in developing our PDK-UBC brochure. I know we all look forward to distributing this brochure to friends and colleagues. Raising the profile, and informing others about what PDK is, should assist us in maintaining and growing our membership.

And finally - Marion Broadbent, who will become the President of our PDK-UBC chapter, your work as our Newsletter editor over the last years has been outstanding. Our last planning meeting bodes well for the PDK-UBC chapter year ahead as we have established dates and topics for our upcoming dinner meetings.

Thank you to our 2006-07 executive members and our general membership for this past year as I served as your President. I look forward to continuing as your Past President during the upcoming year.

Sincerely,  
Patrick von Hahn

## 2007 Vancouver Summit Update by *Celina Mau, Summit Liaison*



As the PDK 2007 Summit Liaison, I hope that you will help PDK International and our local UBC Chapter spread the word around of the upcoming **PDK 2007 Summit** to interested professionals and organizations.

This is the first time that PDK has chosen a site outside of the USA for its first ever annual Summit. We are also very excited that they have chosen the Bayshore, Coal Harbour in our most beautiful city of Vancouver, B.C.

The Summit will be held **during the PSA weekend, October 18-20, 2007 and its theme topic is Globalization and Education.** Thus far, the **program** includes a panel discussion about preparing our students for work and citizenship in a global society. Panelists include Michigan State University professor Yong Zhao; Vivien Stewart, Asia Society Vice President for Education; James Mahoney, Executive Director of Battelle for Kids; Shari Albright, Chief Academic Officer at International Studies Schools Network; and Karen Kodama, Principal at the John Stanford International School. Ms. Kodama's school was recently highlighted in a *Time* magazine article about the future of education. The **panel** will be **moderated by Lloyd Axworthy**, President of the University of Winnipeg and past Director of the Liu Center for the Study of Global Issues at the University of British Columbia.

Our **Keynote address** on Friday is **Gene Sperling**, Director of the Center for Universal Education at the Council on Foreign Relations and his article on "The Case for Universal Education for the World's Poorest Boys and Girls" was published in the November 2005 *Phi Delta Kappan*.

**Early Registration is now being accepted online** at [www.pdkint.org/summit/register.htm](http://www.pdkint.org/summit/register.htm).

One of the Summit's special features is our annual **Walk for Education**. The Walk is part of a worldwide effort by PDK International to raise awareness of the importance of universal education for children throughout the world. **60% of the US \$50 individual contribution** raised by the Walk will be **earmarked for the UBC Chapter to help support the following activities.**

1. Annually, within the UBC Chapter, one \$1,000.00 scholarship for a UBC Education graduate student.
2. Annually, within the UBC Chapter, two grade 12 scholarship recipients in the amount of \$250.00 each.
3. At the PDK International level, the PDK Educational Foundation touches the lives of students, teachers and communities throughout the world. Some of the initiatives are the Professional Educational Exchange Opportunities, the Dissertation Scholarships, as well as the annual PDK Prospective Scholarship for grade 12 students worldwide. Yearly for the past five years, UBC Chapter has at least one

recipient who has won either a US\$500 or US\$1,000 award. The scholarship awarded helps paid for some of their university or college tuition fees.

We hope that this year's Summit's participants will join in the Walk around the Stanley Park Seawall on Saturday morning, October 19th. Please **register** online **under UBC Chapter**, for a good cause,  
[www.pdkint.org/summit/welcome.htm](http://www.pdkint.org/summit/welcome.htm).

On behalf of the Local Planning Committee and the PDK International, we look forward to meeting you at the Summit! If you have further questions, please feel free to email me at [cmou@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:cmou@vsb.bc.ca).

Sincerely yours,

Celina

*Celina Mau, [cmou@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:cmou@vsb.bc.ca)*

*Phi Delta Kappa International - PDK Summit*

*Liaison*

*PDK - UBC Chapter 2007 Vancouver Conference*

*Liaison*

## **Communications Report – Marion Broadbent**

It has been a great pleasure putting together the newsletters and sending out the dinner invitations for the last few years. I will be passing this role on to another member of the executive and beginning my year as President of PDK-UBC. When I first came to Vancouver I was invited to attend a PDK dinner meeting by members of the executive. I enjoyed meeting so many professionals from various different educational institutions and listening to the fabulous guest speakers that I have never looked back and here I am, I will be serving a term as president. I am very honoured to be President this coming year and I am especially excited about the upcoming PDK International Summit.

I urge you to continue to support PDK-UBC and join us next year at our dinner meetings to discuss some more hot topics in education.

Your newsletter editor would appreciate hearing from any member that has recently changed his/her email address. I often have emails returned to me. Please remember to check out our PDK website at [www.pdkubc.org/](http://www.pdkubc.org/)

## **PDK Scholarships**

**Congratulations to Vanessa Tan!** She has received a \$500 scholarship from PDK International. She attends Hugh McRoberts Secondary School in Richmond.

**Congratulations also to Anna Peled!** Each year PDK donates a \$1000 scholarship to a prospective educator at UBC. Anna is the recipient this year. She is from North Vancouver. We will be inviting these recipients to a dinner meeting this coming fall to celebrate their success.

## **Research Abstracts – Dan Brown, UBC**

One of the PDK tenets is research; therefore we will be including some abstracts from recent research studies in education. We have included the following abstract for your perusal.

### **Strengthening Home-School Connections within**

### **The Indo-Canadian Community**

Scott Johnson

Charlotte Siemens

Both Charlotte Siemens and Scott Johnson have worked at Harry Sayers Elementary and at Eugene Reimer Middle School. Harry Sayers Elementary is a feeder school for Eugene Reimer Middle School. Currently, Charlotte Siemens is the Vice-Principal of W.A. Fraser Middle School in Abbotsford and Scott Johnson is the Vice-Principal of Langley Fundamental Middle School.

[This abstract](#) is based on *Strengthening Home-School Connections within The Indo-Canadian Community* (2006) Unpublished Graduating Paper, Educational Administration and Leadership Program, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. 76 pp.

Electronic copies of a short article on the study and of the complete graduate paper are available from either of the authors.

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### **Abstract**

As cultural diversification increases within the Canadian population, Canada's schools need to adapt and evolve in order to reflect the increasingly diverse needs of learners. This paper focuses on the Indo-Canadian community and investigates if preschools can serve as an effective means to strengthen the relationship between family and

school. In some cultures, such as the Indo-Canadian culture, for many parents it is not traditional to take an active role within the school system.

There is substantial literature that supports the need for strengthening the connection between home and school. Fostering a strong relationship has a positive effect on student success. The literature also shows that barriers can impede success in creating a home-school connection ultimately resulting in poorer student performance. Some of the greatest barriers to student success are language and cultural differences. Previous studies have examined this broad issue of the home-school connection; however there is no research that has explored these issues specifically within the Indo-Canadian community.

The authors examined a preschool program in the Abbotsford School District to see if it had an effect on the home-school connection, student behavior and academic success in Kindergarten. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Ten parents were interviewed and were asked to complete a Likert style survey. Of those parents, six had children enrolled in preschool, whereas four did not. Four Kindergarten teachers and two preschool staff shared their perspectives of the effects of preschool on the home-school connection, and successful integration of children into Kindergarten. Upon entry in Kindergarten, all students take an entry test for English language proficiency. Tests results were analyzed to determine if a preschool experience had an effect on academic performance upon entry into Kindergarten.

Results from our interviews with the parents and the students in our study showed that the preschool experience was a benefit both academically and behaviourally for Indo-Canadian students entering kindergarten. Interview data suggested that parent involvement in school varies. However, there was strong affirmation for academics and respect for the school community. In addition, according to the study, the preschool experience brought English literacy activities into the home.

The authors made recommendations that could assist schools, in creating stronger home-school connections within culturally diverse communities. Suggestions to strengthen the home-school connection include: maintain the preschool and drop in center on the Harry Sayers site, expand programming to include ESL instruction for parents, house a Multi-cultural worker in the elementary school to assist in early intervention and

build a connection between the home and school. Recommendations for further research were made in order to explore this complex topic.

## ***Proposed PDK executive for 2007-08***

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