

Phi Delta Kappa

NEWSLETTER

UBC Chapter #0124

Vancouver, BC



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November 5, 2007

Dear Kappans,

It is with great honour that I serve as your President this school year 2007-08. I was introduced to PDK by Celina Mau back in 2000 when I had recently returned to Vancouver from Toronto. I immediately realized the value of joining a group such as PDK for many reasons. It was a way of participating in professional development while enjoying the company of colleagues in the education field with diverse backgrounds and positions including teachers, administrators, university professors and students. The professional development included speakers from diverse areas of education and many very current topics and, of course, it always includes dinner at the very beautiful Arbutus Club. Doesn't this sound like something that we should be encouraging our colleagues to be taking advantage of as well? Therefore, a challenge to all of us to invite our colleagues to attend a dinner meeting and they too will want to be a part of this very inclusive association, PDK. A few members recently participated in the PDK Summit Conference in Vancouver on October 18th to 20th. This conference focused on the issues of Global Education. We were blessed with

an Aboriginal welcome from Bob Baker of the Squamish Nation. This was a reminder of the wisdom and artistic talents of our First Nation peoples. Bob talked about the Longhouse and the notion of the hook at the outside door on which one leaves all negative energy before entering the Longhouse. This image is a very effective one if we view our schools as longhouses. On Friday morning we listened to Gene Sperling, Director of the Center for Universal Education at the Council of Foreign Relations. Gene Sperling was the chief economic advisor for Bill Clinton. In this role, he realized very quickly that education was not acknowledged as one of the top economic factors even though education, he strongly feels, is a necessary component in the fight against poverty. The mandate of the Centre for Universal Education is to advance the goal of universal primary education for all children. Mr. Sperling emphasized the fact that it is even a very ambitious goal but the only way to begin to address the issue of poverty in the world. This mandate requires an enormous commitment on the part of the more developed countries to help with

funding. Mr. Sperling mentioned several countries who have been very generous in helping to provide funding, for example the Netherlands and Britain whose new Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, has committed 1.5 billion dollars for the next 10 years to countries who have an EFA, Education for All, plan in place. We really felt that Mr. Sperling shared a sense of hope that when countries do pledge dollars on a long term basis that there can be significant change.

Lloyd Axworthy also joined us as the moderator of a panel of educators questioning the idea of global education and what this looks like. Mr. Axworthy presented a summary of this panel discussion on Friday, Oct. 19th. Eileen Phillips and I took a few minutes to speak with Mr. Axworthy before his presentation and he acknowledged that there are many examples of programs and schools that are attempting to provide diverse options for students in our public education systems. He talked about the notion "Teachers without borders", a network of teachers sharing their expertise all over the world. He also challenged our association, PDK, to become a leader in the movement towards supporting education that will provide our students with the skills they will need in a global world.

The Summit Conference concluded with a hilariously funny presentation by the Canadian group, Rock, Paper, Scissors. It was the most appropriate way to end a very positive, informative summit on global education.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the conference committee from the PDK-UBC Chapter headed by Celina Mau. They did a superb job of meeting the expectations of the PDK International conference committee as

well as showcasing our Aboriginal heritage, the VSB commitment to the Arts through the string quartet from Lord Byng Secondary, and our great sense of humour. Well done!

I am hoping to see many of you at the next dinner meeting on November 22nd.

Sincerely,
Marion Broadbent

Walk for Education Report

On Saturday, October 20th, more than 100 International Kappans (including eight from our local UBC Chapter) took part in the *Fourth Annual PDK International Walk for Education*. This year's walk coincided with the PDK Summit on Global Education that was held at Vancouver's Westin Bayshore Conference Hotel. All donations raised from this event went to the PDK International Foundation. As local and international Kappans travelled along our scenic Stanley Park Seawall we had opportunities to share our pedagogical stories and talk about global education issues.

Submitted by Don Allison, Walk for Education Coordinator

October PDK Dinner

Our program's theme for the October 3 dinner was "Declining Enrolment and School Closures." A distinguished superintendent led the discussion. John Lewis of North Vancouver (a district well experienced with closing schools) presented all aspects of the extensive and extended process. It included in-depth data analyses, fully honest exchanges,

consideration of all options, and eventual decisions. Declining enrolment and school closures provide opportunities to restructure and re-culture districts. He concluded that the process is a relationship between the district and the people it serves. He then rotated among the tables and participants engaged him one-on-one.

Educational Foundation Report - Scholarship

The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation has now been operating for more than forty years. The Foundation supports community outreach projects; scholarships for prospective and practicing educators; and research based books and periodicals. Find out more about the PDK Educational Foundation @ www.pdkintl.org/edfnd/fndhome.htm. Learn more about Graduate Fellowships and Dissertation Awards for PDK members, Prospective Educator Scholarships, and International Travel Scholarships. More information will follow in future PDK UBC Chapter newsletters.

Submitted by Don Allison, Foundation's Representative
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Rethinking School Health Upcoming PDK Dinner Program on Thursday, November 22

Sandy Vamos, a Professor of Health Education at SFU, will lead a discussion on general policies and school practices concerning student health and school ecology using a broad perspective. She has worked with the Ministry of

Education, has co-authored an ASCD report, and has conducted research on student health-related behaviours and attitudes. Mark your calendar!

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