

UNL Phi Delta Kappa

International Chapter 0015—Established 1914



Year II, Number I

Fall 2010

2010-2011

Chapter Officers

President, Dr. Mike McDonald

Chapter Advisors, Dr. Ron Joekel and Dr. Jody Isernhagen

International Board Member & Future Educator Association, Dr. Doug Christiansen

Research Chair, Dr. John Creswell

Secretary, Dr. Carrie Campbell

Treasurer, Ryan Mueller

Outreach and Awards, Dr. Harriet Gould

Programming, Jessica Rivera (Chair), Loretta Sheets, and John Neal

Membership and Scholarships, Jo Theis and Dr. Jeewa Moses

Undergraduate Student Representative and Retention, Melissa Casper

Web Content and Communication, Dr. Anastasia McNulty

Website and Listserv, Drew Ramaekers

Newsletter and Publications, Alicia Dallman

Scholarship Program

Visit our website for information and updates: pdk.unl.edu.

Membership

Resources:

The *Phi Delta Kappan* journal is included with membership dues and provides updates on current research and debates in the field of education.

Encourage fellow educators to become members of PDK and participate in chapter activities.

For more information, contact Jo Theis (jtheis@lps.org) or Dr. Jeewa Moses (yjmoses@ucollege.edu).

Recognizing Successes, Bringing Awareness of Effective Approaches, and Building Communities between Districts and PDK

In our Fall 2010 newsletter, we recognize talented PDK members representing new members, K-12 teachers and administrators, and university educators. Throughout this year, we will continue our focus on school improvement and the role of K-16 collaboration. Our PDK year commences with appetizers, wine-tasting, and the discussion and facilitation of the 42nd annual Kappan Poll at the Green Gateau on October 12. By involving members and regional school districts, including Lincoln, Norris, Omaha and Wahoo, we will learn how the educational community is working to close the achievement gap. We will showcase effective instructional, assessment, and administrative practices next spring, and then learn with our first scholar-in-residence. Joan Richardson, *Phi Delta Kappan* editor-in-chief, will spend time at UNL and at neighboring districts while sharing her expertise as a past writer for the Detroit Free Press and presenter for the National Staff Development Council. The year will culminate with the recognition of the first “Ron Joekel Scholarship” awardee and presentation by the PDK International President-elect. Our research committee was re-established and three action steps will be revealed to help you throughout the year.

This past year Dr. Doug Christiansen was elected to the International PDK Board. This post bodes well for Nebraska’s continued strong ties to Phi Delta Kappa and your voice is needed during this challenging time. We look forward to renewing friendships and assisting your professional growth. The three PDK tenets (service, research, and leadership) continue to pass the test of time and assist us as we begin to prepare for our centennial in 2014.

Dr. Mike McDonald—PDK Chapter President

A Global Lens: PDK’s International Initiatives Gain More Than Meet Goals

Dr. Thomas Cardwell, a licensed psychologist who serves as the Dean of Student Support Services at Southeast Community College in Beatrice, Nebraska, joined PDK when he noticed the efforts members placed in assisting international communities, particularly Georgia. He was a former Chair of the Global Education Committee and has traveled to Georgia several times. During his trips to this Caucasus Europe state, he made many friendships that he has maintained after returning to the U.S. Dr. Cardwell explains: “As you would expect with the use of Skype, my communication with people there is frequent. As a result, I am concerned about my friends’ safety in that volatile region of the world. In August 2008, Russia invaded Georgia, destroying the transmitter of an important radio station in Zugdidi that was operated by friends of mine working at the NGO Atinati. As you might guess, transmitters are the most important parts of radio stations and they are quite expensive. It was clear to me that the Atinati radio station is absolutely critical to the region, providing news and culture to a wide area.” Fundraisers to purchase a new transmitter soon became a worldwide effort and various organizations in Lincoln, Nebraska, decided to collaborate while working toward this goal. PDK members joined this initiative and made significant contributions.

Dr. Cardwell noted PDK’s participation and decided to become a member alongside other experts in the education field: “I joined because the organization helped me help some friends in Georgia. This was very important to me. I guess I liked that they had (at least in part) an international focus and I did appreciate the organization’s willingness to help Atinati...PDK was also involved because its mission is to support international education endeavors and they were willing to respond at a critical time to an important educational and civic need. I am indebted to this organization for their quick response during this crisis.” With collective contributions, Atinati is thriving and offering news and a means of communication to those in western Georgia. PDK members are pleased with the new transmitter as well as the addition of Dr. Cardwell to the 0015 Chapter.

PDK Connections: Charles Chevalier, Superintendent



Dr. Charles Chevalier demonstrates a dynamic pedagogical career, within private and public school systems in Nebraska and Kansas. He currently serves as the Superintendent at South Sarpy School District. He previously served as principal at Kapaun Mt. Carmel High School in Wichita, Kansas. He also worked as an English teacher, Coach, and Assistant Principal in various Nebraska high schools, including Auburn, Humphrey St. Francis, Daniel Gross, York, Millard, and Crete. For 22+ years, he has served as an active PDK member, an organization that he believes is essential to his successes.

He explains that PDK originally appealed to his aspirations of professional development and has continued to provide many professional and personal benefits: “I believe that PDK is the foremost comprehensive educational research organization in the world. PDK has always met my expectations and more.” He further illustrates that PDK provides fresh ideas and insights via magazines and conferences. By attending PDK meetings, he also learns by listening to interactive presentations and talking to other educational experts. Such invaluable networks and relationships have been a highlight for him throughout the years: “It has been a sincere pleasure to know educators from across Nebraska through PDK. The meetings have really been an island of joy, especially when the day to day list gets too full.”

The PDK Pillars have also supported Dr. Chevalier’s work as a professional. He notes the impact these pillars have had in his educational roles and categorizes their relevance to his objectives: “As a school administrator, I would first say leadership; however, to me, research goes right along with leadership. As a leader, you want to make sure you are leading people down the right path. That’s where research comes in. PDK’s research has always kept me up-to-date with the current information. With new knowledge coming out every day, such as brain processing information, it is important for the leader to keep up. PDK has always helped me do that.” In addition to offering a window to recent pedagogical investigations, for Dr. Chevalier, the PDK pillars help to shape the future foundation of education: “Right now, politics and oversight are playing too much of a role in what improvements we educators choose to initiate. Only through research and leadership will we get back on track – which is research based instructional practice. PDK research can provide that focus, so that political agendas are dismissed and we can get back to teaching kids and kids learning.”

Robert Brandt, Principal

Robert Brandt, who is currently serving as the Principal of Norris Elementary School, has also worked in many secondary settings, including Chase County High School, Aurora Junior High School, Beatrice High School, Palmyra Jr.-Sr. High School, and Schuyler Central High School. In his educational experiences, he has had the opportunity to participate in and simultaneously observe PDK involvement and outreach efforts:

“It has been exciting to see PDK program expansion recently. Programming options have included choices that meet needs and interests of many educators. Highlighting successful educational practices for the membership inspires pre-service teachers and supports the efforts of practitioners and teacher educators.

The past 10 years at Norris School District 160 reflects similar efforts. Many classroom teachers have shared with staff members. Educational practices and instructional strategies have been shared during professional development opportunities.

Major material selections have included the development of a content master plan with an expectation of how materials should support the master plan. The adoption of a reading series led to the recognition of more refined literacy strategies used by all staff members. A book study led to the adoption of a schedule that provided more literacy instruction time for the neediest students. Book studies for all PreK-12 teachers and administrators have developed more continuity to understand instructional purposes used in the district. Smaller interest groups have completed book studies with a focused study of an author. The relationship of nutrition and learning has been the most recent collaboration that has application for all staff members.

PDK should continue to be a proud partner supporting leadership, learning, research, and service. Summer graduate school courses introduced me to many talented educators. Ron Joekel, Rex Reckewey, Ward Sybouts, and Advisor Ed Kelley are four scholarly gentlemen who included me into their world. Their efforts helped guide and direct me into an inspirational profession.”



PDK Connections Continued: Dr. Nancy Brandt, Assessment Coordinator

We Want to Hear from You

If you have an event, current issue in education, or other matter related to PDK that you would like to see in the Spring 2011 newsletter, please send details to dallman.alicia@gmail.com.

Thank you for your participation and collaboration.

International Travel

Your membership allows you to apply for the Howard Read Travel Scholarship to support travel to China and other nations. Refer to: pdkintl.org/

Dr. Nancy Brandt's diverse experiences in education include serving as a 6th grade teacher during graduate school, holding a staff development position for 17 years, and acting as a part-time Principal for six years before coming to Lincoln Northeast High School as an Assessment Coordinator. Her current responsibilities entail supervising state and national exams, appraising 19 teachers, and working alongside Principal Kurt Glathar on projects ranging from AdvancED accreditation to School Improvement & Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). She is also an administrator for non-athletic clubs and activities, the Student/Parent Program, and the Student Child Learning Center.

In each of these capacities, Dr. Brandt applies her pedagogical knowledge, which has been reinforced and expanded by her membership in PDK. She joined PDK as a graduate student at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln and continued her participation by serving on the Executive Board. PDK has been enriching both professionally and personally for Dr. Brandt. She has "learned and gained information from PDK-sponsored activities" as well as found the [Phi Delta Kappan](http://PhiDeltaKappan.org) to be a "great resource for knowledge and information." Attending Chapter 0015 activities also afforded her many interactive venues to build relationships with fellow educators. She has particularly "enjoyed the opportunity to meet and learn from colleagues in a casual setting."

2010-2011 Activity Schedule

Tuesday, October 12, 2010, 5:30-7:30, Green Gateau, 330 S. 10th Street. Kick-off Social, Wine Tasting, Ron Joekel recognition, roundtable discussion of the 42nd Kappan Poll, and application to NE led by facilitators from school districts: Elkhorn, Fremont, Lincoln, Millard, Norris, Omaha, Raymond Central, Wahoo, and Waverly (tentative).

Tuesday, November 16, 2010, Hyvee Community Room, 84th and Holdrege. "Our Model for Developing Proficiencies in Teachers, Administrators, Students and Building Dialogue with the Educational Community", Elkhorn Public Schools and TBA.

Tuesday, February 1, 2011, Nebraska Wesleyan University. Showcase of Teaching, Learning, and Administration by PDK members and invited guests representing five school districts and three universities.

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, Mahoney State Park. "A First-hand Perspective on School Innovation Across the Nation and Nebraska" by Kathy Andreson, PDK International President-Elect, (Collaborative Activity with the UNO PDK Chapter).

Tuesday-Wednesday, April 19-20, 2011, collaborative activities with Norris Public Schools, location TBA.

Joan Richardson, Kappan Editor-in-Chief (formerly with the National Staff Development Council and Detroit Free Press), will present on "Transforming Education and the Role of Media" and "Kappan Research" as well as serve as a Scholar in Residence at UNL, Norris, and TBA.

Tuesday, June 7, 2011, Walton Retreat Center. Initiation, Awards, Scholarships, Inaugural Joekel PDK Scholarship Presentation and Interaction Session on "TBA—Spring 2011."

To Attend Activities

Please respond via email to Loretta Sheets at wsheets@radiks.net.

The social and activity nights generally take place between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m.

For additional information and updates, see our website. pdk.unl.edu. Special thanks to Drew Ramaekers for technology support.

Executive Board meetings will be held on September 21, November 2, January 18, and April 5, from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Newsletter Acknowledgements

Featured members, including Thomas Cardwell, Charles Chevalier, Robert Brandt, and Nancy Brandt offered their personal PDK stories and shared pedagogical insights.

Jessica Riviera provided guidance and suggestions for newsletter formatting and features. She created and established the Chapter 0015 PDK newsletter in 2009. Melissa Casper offered fresh perspectives and ideas for future issues and Alicia Dallman developed the present version and enhanced the scope.

Sincere gratitude is extended to each of them.

