

UNL Phi Delta Kappa

Chapter 0015 Established 1914



Fall 2009

2009-2010 Chapter Officers

President, Dr. Michael McDonald

Secretary and Treasurer, Carrie Campbell

National Chapter Membership Liaison, Dr. Harriet Gould

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

Programming, Loretta Sheets, John Neal, and Jessica Rivera

Membership and Scholarship, Jo Theis and Dr. Jeewa Moses

Research, Dr. Marilyn Grady

Web Content, Dr. Anastasia McNulty

Scholarship Program Continues for Undergraduates and Future Educators

Visit our website for information, membership and updates. pdk.unl.edu

Members:

Remember to Read

Phi Delta Kappan, the journal you receive with membership dues includes updates on current research and debates in the field of education as well as podcasts of latest articles.

www.pdkintl.org/

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

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

Unique Opportunity: 2009-2010 PDK year opens by bringing teachers from around the globe around a dinner table.

On October 7, 2010, PDK members have the opportunity to meet 26 teachers from countries that include: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, India, Bangladesh, Senegal, Haiti, Argentina, Columbia, and Turkmenistan. The evening will begin with dinner, which will allow people to visit in a small and casual setting. Some of the visiting teachers may even bring student work or other cultural artifacts to show PDK members. At the 2008 event, for example, one teacher brought a collection of writing projects to share during this time.

Following dinner, PDK members may visit a series of brief interactive panel presentations that will be organized according to country. Each panel will be led by the teachers who will share information and insights about their culture and system of education. The question and answer session that follows was a favorite part for many of last year's participants. During this session and dessert, a drawing for two, PDK memberships (must be present and complete initiation at a future meeting) and educational resources will be held.

All of the visiting educators are secondary-level teachers of English as a second language and/or social studies. The program's name is TEA (Teaching Excellence and Achievement) and it is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. TEA is hosted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's department of Educational Administration.

2009 Leadership Conference with Keynote Speaker Dr. Douglas Reeves September 30- October 1, 2009 Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln, NE

The UNL and UNO PDK chapters will jointly participate in the Showcase Reception from 4:15-5:30 on Wednesday, September 30. Dr. Rick Kolowski, Past-PDK International President; Steve Joekel, UNO Chapter President-elect; Dr. Ron Joekel, Past-PDK International President; and Dr. Harriet Gould, National Chapter Membership Liaison, will share at our display.

PDK members are encouraged to attend all conference events. For a full schedule and registration information please visit: www.lcaconference.com

Presented by: The Nebraska Department of Education
Co-sponsored by: The Nebraska Council of School Administrators
Nebraska State Education Association
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Education and Human Sciences

PDK Connections: Dr. Roger Breed, Commissioner of Education

Dr. Roger Breed has served in Nebraska public schools for over thirty years in a variety of positions and on March 30, 2009 he began serving as Nebraska Commissioner of Education. While his position and work in the state may be visible, it is his membership in PDK we wish to highlight. Around 1977, Breed was encouraged to join PDK by Dr. Ed Kelley, Dr. Ward Sybouts, and Dr. Ron Joekel while working on his masters at UNL. Since his original commitment to join, Breed has been an active member in the UNL and then UNO chapters. Breed has genuinely enjoyed attending the activities over the years and found “without exception the meetings were informative and the collegiality was unmatched.” While he has not held office in the honorary, he has contributed to the planning of programs on numerous occasions.

The pillars of PDK have been an integral part of Breed’s life, shaping his past and current goals. Breed said, “This is my 39th year in public education service in Nebraska. I have been a teacher, coach, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent in four Nebraska communities (Lincoln, York, Axtell, and Elkhorn).” His service is also reflected in his participation in community organizations, including over ten years as a volunteer firefighter/EMT and twenty-plus years in Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. In each of his educational endeavors, Breed said he actively sought leadership positions, “most recently serving as chair of the NCSA Board, Nebraska’s Superintendent of the Year in 2007, and as Commissioner since March of 2009.” Research is one connection between Breed’s service and leadership. He said, “My UNL professors taught me to respect, seek and use research as a process to select between competing alternatives. It is important as a teacher, principal, superintendent or commissioner that one has a reason for your beliefs and your actions - and research often informs both of these.”

Reflecting on the future of education and PDK’s role, Breed said the following: “Out of the recession crisis comes a great opportunity to remake and refocus the Nebraska education system P-16. For one of the first times in my professional life, the federal government, the state government (Governor and Legislature), the state board of education, higher education leaders, and other important partners are unified in making changes to our education system. The opportunities inherent in the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top fund under the control of Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will be the hammer to drive significant reform. I hope that includes for Nebraska quality early learning opportunities for low income students, an infusion of rigor in high school graduation requirements particularly in math and science, an extension of learning time for students who require it, a sophisticated and responsive professional development and educator certification process, an expansion of digital learning opportunities so that every student regardless of location can access a rigorous curriculum, and many other initiatives that could if properly implemented and sustained reduce learning gaps and raise the bar of learning for all students. As in the past PDK will in many cases provide the research, evaluate the possible alternatives, and professionally and enthusiastically weigh in on the possibilities.

Jessica Rivera, English Instructor

Inspired. This was the word, Jessica Rivera used to describe her formal induction into PDK, on June 9, 2009. According to Rivera, many members with lengthy histories in the honorary shared their experiences and perspectives on why PDK had been a meaningful organization throughout their careers. “Hearing such respected educators discuss the significance of PDK in their work amplified my commitment to the honorary and determination to contribute my best in the classroom.”

Rivera was encouraged to join PDK by Dr. Mike McDonald, her former education professor at Nebraska Wesleyan University. She said, “Mike was an excellent professor and I’ve found that the collegiality and support he provided to me after my graduation is the same type of support I have found in members of PDK.” Last year Rivera was involved with PDK primarily as the sponsor of a high school Future Educator Association chapter. Now she serves as a programming officer for the UNL chapter. She said, “I am honored to serve PDK in this capacity and am working to continue my support of FEA chapters and bring new educators into the organization to meet and collaborate with their colleagues.”

Rivera often sees her service, leadership, and research as creating bridges between people and their ideas. Currently, she is a composition instructor and PhD student in the English department at UNL. “Working as a teacher and researcher simultaneously is thrilling and the best way for my theory and practice to connect,” she said.

Natalie Svoboda, Education Student

In June 2009, Natalie Svoboda was named one of our chapter’s Future Educator Scholarship recipients. This month she began her first semester of college at Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. While she is taking 16 credits, she is most excited about her work in “Teaching as a Profession” and “Introduction to Literature.”

When Svoboda was a high school student, she participated in the Future Educator Association, coordinated at Lincoln Northeast High School. One FEA event she recalled as meaningful was volunteering at last April’s PDK activity focused on the PLC process. This experience allowed her to learn “about what teachers talk about and expect to provide for their own students.”

Svoboda plans to pursue secondary education and will most likely specialize in English. She also plans to join a student education association at her university to stay informed on current educational information and develop her professional experience. When she becomes a teacher, Svoboda said she wants to provide her students with the best instruction, hoping that they “can rely on me to help them and make them better students like my past English teachers have done for me.”

2009-2010 Activity Schedule

Wednesday, October 7, 2009—6:00-8:00 PM

Dinner and Conversation with Teachers Abroad, Union College
Fall Initiation

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

5:30-6:00, wine, social and appetizers from various cultures, 6:00-7:30 PM

“Culturally Sensitive Instruction and Supervision—Strategies and Situations”

Interactive sessions with elementary through high school teachers and administrators from a range of schools.

Location--Community Room, Hyvee, 51st and O Street

Co-sponsored by the Lincoln Public Schools. Limit is 55. RSVP by November 13.

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

5:30-6:00, social and appetizers, 6:00-7:30

“Showcase of Teaching and Administrators”

Location--Nebraska Wesleyan University

Experienced teachers and administrators will share and discuss their best practice with PDK members. Research-based strategies and tie to School Improvement will be emphasized. New educators, pre-service students and the Future Educators Association (high school students) will participate. All PDK members are encouraged to attend and to invite any new teacher or administrator who might be interested. This activity will also provide an introduction to our scholarship program. Participants may nominate a high school student as a “Future Educator” and encourage their attendance.

Nomination forms for Showcase Teachers and Administrators will be mailed by mid-December. Be thinking of an outstanding educator to nominate. Limit is 110. RSVP by January 27.

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

5:30-6:00, social; 6:00-7:30, dinner and presentation

Senator Greg Adams (invited)

“Education Policy and Funding—A Legislator’s and Former Teacher’s Perspective”

Collaborative Activity with the UNO PDK Chapter, Mahoney State Park. Limit is 90. RSVP by March 24.

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

5:30-6:00, social and appetizers; 6:00-7:30, program

“Can There Be a Balanced Assessment and Instructional Approach--How Are Districts Addressing the Transition from STARS to State-mandated Testing?” A keynote speaker will share research (ie., reading) and key leaders from districts including Norris and LPS will share approaches.

Co-sponsored by the Norris Public Schools. Limit is 100. RSVP by April 21.

Location—Conference Room A, NE Schools Association, 500 Charleston Street (across the street from Haymarket Park)

Monday, June 7, 2010

5:30-6:00, social and appetizers; 6:00-7:30, program

“PDK Research and Gallup Findings—Practical Applications For Your School”

Presenter--International PDK Officer (invited)

Scholarship Winners, Recognition of selected PDK members, Officers and Initiation.

Location--Concordia University, Lincoln Campus, Fallbrooke Site. Limit is 60. RSVP by June 1.

To Attend Activities

Please respond via email to the invitation sent by Loretta Sheets: wsheets@radiks.net.

Also, find information and updates on our website: pdk.unl.edu. Special thanks to Suzie Becking for technology support and Jessica Rivera for developing the newsletter.

