

1997 Outstanding Mathematics Educator Awards

For the first time, MCATA presented *three* Alberta Mathematics Educator Awards. The following awards were presented at the 1997 MCATA annual conference in Edmonton to those who have demonstrated leadership in encouraging the continuing enhancement of teaching, learning and understanding mathematics in the province of Alberta:

- K–Grade 6 classroom teacher
- Grades 7–12 classroom teacher
- Those who have made exceptional contributions to the professional development of teachers at the school, local, provincial or national levels

Elementary Mathematics Educator Award: Lynwen Hart



Jan Lockley and Lynwen Hart

Lynwen Hart is a Grade 6 teacher at Capitol Hill School in northwest Calgary. Teaching Grades 4, 5 and 6 in the last three years has made her very familiar with the Division II curriculum, especially mathematics.

I met Lynwen in winter 1993, when the Calgary Board of Education began setting up study groups, using interested teachers as facilitators to examine the new math curriculum. We have been working together since. Last spring, I approached Lynwen's principal, Lynn Flaig, and her teaching colleague, Laurie Los, in my quest to see Lynwen nominated for this award. They were only too pleased to support my nomination. I would like to share some of their thoughts, as well as some other reasons as to why we believe Lynwen was a good choice for this award.

Laurie's son, Tyler, was in Lynwen's class for both Grades 5 and 6. In Tyler's words, "Mrs. Hart made me look at math in a different way." Laurie went on to say that Lynwen "has opened up a whole new world that is more than crunching numbers. She has challenged Tyler to think critically and taught him to approach math with a positive attitude."

Another parent of a learning disabled student in Lynwen's class wrote to affirm Lynwen's ability to reach students of all ability levels. She stated, "Mrs. Hart has gone the extra mile for Hilary in a number of ways. She has been willing to accommodate Hilary's special learning style so that she can learn to the best of her ability and can enjoy the successes we always knew she had in her."

Clearly Lynwen motivates and inspires her students. It isn't mere coincidence that her provincial math test results placed her school second in the city of Calgary, with 100 percent of her students achieving the acceptable level. Good teaching practice does equate to successful student learning.

Lynwen also believes that parents are partners in their children's learning. To help parents become familiar and more comfortable with the focus of our program of studies, Lynwen has provided evening curriculum meetings at her school to bridge the gap between home and school.

Furthermore, Lynwen helps teachers at her school and other teachers in the system by running Math Implementation Network meetings at her school to examine in detail and discuss the philosophy behind our new program of studies. Lynn Flaig believes that "Lynwen's success lies in her ability to combine theory and practice. She combines her knowledge of teaching theories with her curriculum knowledge to present workshops that cause teachers to reflect on their own teaching practice. They become increasingly confident in their understanding of teaching and learning mathematics." The number of teachers involved in the network is steadily growing. I'd even venture to say that Lynwen has a "following."

Lynwen continues to reach out to teachers by sharing her expertise at teachers' conventions, MCATA regional conferences, and through her involvement with Canadian Teachers Teaching with Technology. This past summer I had the pleasure of attending a calculator workshop that Lynwen conducted through Athabasca University. I learned how to use calculators

to develop math concepts and improve problem-solving skills in a practical hands-on approach.

In summary, let me say that any child who has the privilege to be in Lynwen's class is fortunate, indeed. Similarly, any teacher who attends a session presented by Lynwen will learn to excite and challenge his or her students. Everyone should be so lucky to have a Lynwen in his or her life. She is my colleague, my friend and truly an inspiration.

Jan Lockley

Secondary Mathematics Educator Award: Donna Chanasyk



Donna Chanasyk and Jo Dodd

In searching through some materials for my leadership class the other day, I came across a wonderful quotation which I believe expresses and reflects many of the qualities that Donna Chanasyk demonstrates in her role as mathematics department head at Paul Kane High School. The quotation comes from an unusual source, Hollywood actor Meryl Streep, who says:

Integrate what you believe into every single area of your life. Take your heart to work and ask the most and best of everybody else. Don't let your special character and values, the secret that you know and no one else does, the truth—don't let that get swallowed up by the great chewing complacency.

Donna does integrate her beliefs into what she does with her students. She believes in hard work, in paying amazing attention to detail, in being dedicated to one's purpose and to always being organized and prepared. She takes her heart to work with her. She truly believes that every student should be given every opportunity to be successful.

Last year at Paul Kane, Donna gathered a group of some 35 students who were supposed to graduate but had not yet fulfilled their two compulsory math class requirements. She took them under her wing and gave them materials for the Math 14 and 24 courses. Although they worked on their own time, she spent many hours of her own time tracking them down, encouraging them to complete their work and phoning parents to discuss their progress.

In the present era of educational cutbacks, increased class sizes and reductions in funding, it is difficult for one not to become complacent in one's view of schools. Not Donna. She organizes our school's Awards Night and Color Night; she is on our grad committee and our district Professional Development Committee; she is in the Edmonton Regional, the provincial AP Council and is the MCATA secretary. All this—and she has a son in Grade 10.

What is her secret? It is obvious that under that quiet, controlled, organized, knowledgeable and professional exterior, we have a woman who loves teaching, who is very dedicated to her teaching of mathematics and whom students can rely on. She is also honest and quick to share times when her classes have not gone as planned, students have gone wild on a Friday and material had to be taught again. She can laugh at her mistakes. I love her honesty and her ability to make other teachers feel wonderful about something they have done.

The greatest people are often the most humble. Donna is one of them. Congratulations, Donna, we are all honored to present you with this Secondary Mathematics Educator Award.

Jo Dodd

Non-Classroom Category Mathematics Educator Award: Klaus Puhlmann



Klaus Puhlmann and Art Jorgensen

Dr. Klaus Puhlmann, superintendent, Grande Yellowhead Regional Division No. 35, was awarded the Non-Classroom Category Mathematics Educator Award. Dr. Art Jorgensen, long-time friend and professional colleague, made the award presentation.

Dr. Jorgensen said that “he was honored to be asked to make the presentation to an individual whom he considers to be a credit to mathematics education in Alberta and in Canada.” Klaus Puhlmann has dedicated his professional career to the development and betterment of mathematics education. His academic background—including a B.Sc. from the University of Berlin, and a B.Ed., M.Ed. and Ph.D. from the University of Alberta—has been directed toward mathematics curriculum development, improvement of instruction in mathematics and making mathematics alive, meaningful and relevant in the lives of teachers and students.

Klaus is committed to the enhancement of student understanding and the meaningful application of mathematical concepts. His personal involvement has included committee work and special projects with Alberta Education (member of the Examinations Program Committee, Examinations Review

Committee, High School and Secondary Math Review Committee, Diagnostic Math Committee and Diploma Exam Advisory Committee: Math 30 and 33) and the Alberta School Board Association (Computers in School Task Force member).

Klaus unselfishly gives of his time and effort in assisting and serving professional colleagues. Because of his extensive background and expertise, many educational professional development organizations have invited him to make presentations and provide workshops in mathematics. He has been a regular presenter at The Alberta Teachers' Association teachers' conventions and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) conferences, as well as presenting at the Canadian Educational Association 100th Anniversary Conference, the Alberta Diagnostic Math Program and Grande Yellowhead Regional Division No. 35 Annual Teachers' Institutes. Academic institutions, such as the University of Alberta and Grande Prairie College, have invited Dr. Puhlmann to provide professional seminars and workshops.

Dr. Puhlmann has continued an ongoing personal professional development program throughout his career. He is a regular delegate at MCATA annual conferences, NCTM national and international conferences, as well as symposia for math teachers in Alberta; he also maintains involvement with the Canadian Mathematical Society. He has been a member of MCATA for 26 years, served as an executive director (1979–83), and has been a member of the MCATA executive since 1995, and as editor of *delta-K*.

Klaus Puhlmann is not only a recognized leader in mathematics education but also a valuable professional associate and fellow teacher. Sharon Armstrong, president, Evergreen Local No. 11, ATA, describes Dr. Puhlmann as “a leader, not only in words, but in your actions to the teachers of Grande Yellowhead Regional Division No. 35 as demonstrated by your initiatives in the mathematics area . . . to be the recipient of the Alberta Mathematics Educator Award is indeed an honor, and one you richly deserve.”

Alvin Johnston