



Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE *CHALK TALK* WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

Letter from the Editor

I've often thought that it was not surprising that my younger brother — who as a small boy would wake up the family at 6 a.m. on a Saturday morning with the sound of dozens of nails being hammered into blocks of wood — grew up to be a master carpenter. Denis Herard, Chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Education and Employment, in the January 31 edition of the *ATA News*, discusses how Alberta can increase its K-12 and post-secondary graduation rates and comments that “the word *vocation* comes from the Latin word *vocatio* or “the voice from within”. “Turned on kids”, he tells us, “do so much better”.

As a student, I recall that my teachers sometimes referred to it as finding your “calling”. The trick was to listen to that inscrutable something, inside each of us, that knows what it is interested in, what it is good at and how it wants to live its life. But sometimes that tiny voice from within is drowned out by the other very loud ones that say “Work hard”, “Get good grades”, “Get a good job”. These messages, often rooted in the need for financial stability or status, or to fulfil familial expectations for a certain kind of success, can be overpowering.

In past issues of Chalk Talk, we have taken a look at how students can prepare academically and financially for their lives after high school. The best laid plans can be undermined by the lack of direction, even if everything else falls into place – the money, the grades, good work habits. Educators are in a unique position to provide a forum where students can express their dreams, hopes and fears which can help them choose the right path as they transition into adulthood.

This week's *Chalk Talk* features the RBC Royal Bank® Financial Lifeskills Scholarships program which, notably, lists a ‘solid career direction’ as a key qualification. This program, supported by two effective Seminars designed to help students in grades 10-12 to prepare for the future, will assist educators in opening up this important dialogue with their senior students within the classroom.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing resources on a range of topics for the classroom. We invite you to visit our website at 4edu.ca to view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

Clear Direction — Learning to Read the Signs



RBC Royal Bank® Financial Lifeskills Scholarships honour the achievements of senior students across Canada pursuing studies in any field. They recognize hard work, innovation and solid career direction.

To be eligible, students require a minimum grade average of 65 per cent and acceptance into a Canadian college or university (and/or CEGEP in Quebec) for full time study in the 2006 Fall/Winter session. Ten awards of \$2,006 will be distributed to students across the country. The application deadline is **May 12, 2006**.

For details and to download applications for this year's scholarship, please click [here](#).

In addition, RBC Royal Bank® Financial Lifeskills offers a free seminar kit designed to help educators provide senior students with some clear direction on the path to financial literacy. Seminar One — **The Rest of your Life** and Seminar Two — **Financing Your Education** are designed to cultivate in students an interest in financial and career planning.



The free **Senior** educational program for grades 10-12 includes: 2 seminars, student worksheets, scripts, poster, scholarship (10 @ \$2,006). Order here: www.4edu.ca/tors/RBC

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

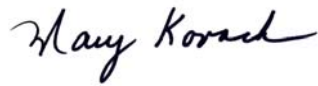
“If you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. When you can see that, you begin to meet people who are in your field of bliss, and they open doors to you. I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be.”

-- Joseph Campbell, [The Power of Myth](#)

A hearty thanks to our readers who sent us their thoughtful comments regarding last week's issue of *Chalk Talk* which focused on Black History Month. We strive to keep the newsletter useful and relevant and encourage you

view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

As always, your thoughts are appreciated.



Mary Kovack

useful and relevant and encourage you to pass it along to educators in other areas as you deem appropriate. We'd love to feature your school in an upcoming issue and invite you to send your stories to maryk@coedcomm.com.

Education News

[Graduation rates key to labour force supply](#) — *ATA News*, Vol. 40, Number 10, January 31, 2006

Increasing high school and post-secondary completion rates would help Alberta avert a projected shortfall of 100,000 skilled workers over the next decade.

[Kids who start behind, stay behind in school](#) — Peggy Berkowitz, *University Affairs*, November 2005

People have known for a long time that children from disadvantaged backgrounds do more poorly at school. But a study from Manitoba has quantified the differences, showing that poor children are doing dramatically worse than children from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, both in terms of staying in school and doing well when they're there. Moreover, the differences begin to show at a very young age.

[Life after high school](#) — Janet Ecker and Norman Riddell, *The Toronto Star*, February 8, 2006

Two recent studies of applicants to Ontario colleges and universities published by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation highlight the extent of the challenge. They show that too many young Ontarians — and in particular those who need the most help to pay for their studies — are entering post-secondary education with no money in the bank, with little prospect of financial support from their families, and with little knowledge of the costs they will face or the types of financial assistance available.

[Tuition fees must be raised, McGuinty says](#) — Canadian Press, *The Toronto Star*, February 1, 2006

Premier Dalton McGuinty says tuition increases are necessary to ensure the province's post-secondary education system is top notch. McGuinty says that means colleges and universities need investment from the government — and from students in the form of higher fees.

[Raising tuition fees will lower chances](#) — Letter to the Editor, *The Toronto Star*, February 3, 2006

Gaining a post-secondary education has become essential in order to get anywhere in the world. By raising fees, the government is lowering the chances of people getting anywhere.

[Made-in-Canada advice a boon for students](#) — *University Matters*, reviewed by Beth Oakley

University Matters is really directed at students who are about to begin university and could be very useful during first year.

Facts & Figures



- According to [Statistics Canada](#), University students experienced their smallest increase in tuition fees in more than a decade in 2005/06.
- After years of double-digit increases in the early 1990s, undergraduate students can expect to pay 1.8% more on average when they return to school next month.
- This is about half the rate of growth recorded in the previous academic year, and the lowest since the 1.5% increase in the academic year 1978/79.
- Undergraduate students will pay an average of \$4,214 in tuition fees for the 2005/06 academic year, up from \$4,140 the year before. This is almost triple the average of \$1,464 in 1990/91.



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