



A Letter from the President

I am honored and excited to begin serving as your incoming President. I know the work, commitment and the accomplishments of the Presidents before me. Their work has been inspirational. I will make every effort to build upon their achievements. Their past efforts will keep me mindful of our future goals, which is supporting your professional needs and the needs of our students.

During my last two years as President-elect, I've learned that hard decisions need to be made for the right reasons. What are the right reasons? The answer will always be students and their success. That's the compass that served me well as

Dean of Education Programs and Learning Support at Schoolcraft College,
Michigan....and that's the same that guides NADE.

Our work on our campuses supports retention...our work is retention...but do our colleges recognize this? Many of us who have always championed retention through developmental education courses, programs and support services are all too often overlooked regarding the current reform or are being excluded from committees of change. Why? Our campuses don't understand our field. As a consequence, NADE has listened...and we've been working hard to promote and define our field. We grappled with the idea of a name change during this year's Conference. Sadly, we shouldn't have to define who we are....however, the word developmental education suffers from stigma, and has become a barrier regarding our organization's spirit, intent and ability to serve. It's become tainted because of the limitation that's being imposed. As Dr. Arendale has written, and as Dr. Ozz has stated, it's become a euphemism for remedial. We are so much more. We need to remind ourselves and others of our motto: Proudly....we do serve the underprepared students...but we also help the prepared students to advance and the advanced students to excel.

As I serve, I will work to find ways and opportunities for NADE to work with political, research and education organizations to ensure that they understand who we are. We must learn to work together. These organizations need to understand students the way we, the practitioners, do in order to truly move the needle of change forward. Many are proposing critical changes to laws, policies and structures within our colleges without ever having stepped foot into a developmental education classroom (remedial reading, writing, math, science, gateway courses, student success courses, student athletic support courses...or honor program courses just to name a few examples of developmental education) nor have many ever worked with students in any capacity - - - other than having been one. The practitioner and the student are often missing variables in current research. Some of the research doesn't take into account the impact of good

teaching on the part of faculty - - - which NADE members know is critical to success. Great programs can fail if the professionals don't have the necessary skills. The impact of poverty, hunger, or the need for a student to work two jobs is also not being considered, nor is the rise in student depression and the need to bridge the humanistic with the academic – how can students possibly be successful academically if they don't know how to take control of their lives, minds and thoughts. In general, the needs of part-time students are not as visible as they should be. Student success and changes have to be more than programs, credits, processes and content. We need to be mindful of the diverse needs of our students. We are working with human beings who are all too easily discussed in terms of numbers and pass/fail rates.

Conversely, as practitioners, we need to be open to change and innovation, and become familiar with “what works.” We need to be open to programs that provide more access for all students...programs that can shorten the amount of time it takes for students to complete and achieve their goals....when appropriate...and be ready to fight and support those students when it isn't appropriate. We should be adding our experiences and recommendations to the new courses and programs which are emerging. It will require flexibility, aggressive thinking and the development of many “just in time services.”

And, since higher education doesn't require a teaching certificate...yet...we need to share with our fellow faculty how to embed success skills into all courses...teach them how to contextualize....and provide ongoing support. We know what works in developmental education, works well in all classrooms.

Additionally, it is going to be necessary for practitioners to become more involved in higher level research, or we will continue to leave ourselves vulnerable to misinformation and misinterpretations which leads to bad programs – or the removal of good ones. We need to let go of practices that are outdated and not working well with today's students...and we need to validate that we are making a

positive difference - when we do. We need to better understand and speak the language of research...so that our studies become our ride home...and will allow our results to be easily pooled with those of research organizations.

More importantly, our individualized studies need to be shared with decision makers at our own institutions...instead of relying on generalized data from outside research. Our own distinctive data need to be shared with our college administrators, high school leaders, state policy makers, with our community. And, most importantly, the research needs to be shared with students so that they understand their pathway options more clearly.

For the last two years, NADE has been under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Robin Ozz, and it is my goal to continue on course. She has done much to move NADE forward in the reform....and has accomplished much during her two years as President.

Regarding Robin, I have the utmost respect for her intellect, vision, work ethic, ability to communicate, and her common sense. Our leadership styles may be different, but our hearts and desired outcomes for this organization and for the field of developmental education are the same. Robin has always been a voice of encouragement – reminding me to speak my truth – lead through my truth. I would say that my truth is greatly influenced by my heart, however my polestar is the combination of data and the input of practitioners.

As your President, the Board and I will continue to work on the established goals through Awareness, Engagement and Partnerships. The more we know about new practices, laws and policies, the more proactive we can be. NADE will continue to encourage networking, sharing and informing through our newsletters, the Digest, Social Media, the JDE, and through NADE's SPINs and Committees. NADE will continue to renew the SPINs and Committees so that they are reflective of current needs. They have the ability to share, teach, and engage us regarding

research, best practices and key principles in the field.

NADE intends to increase membership and, professional development opportunities. Additionally, NADE will promote political advocacy by teaching members how to connect and effectively communicate with state, local and national leaders who have the power to positively influence our work - - - we need to be aware and understand the changes in laws and policies throughout the country that may change what we do and, more importantly, impact equity and access for our students.

The overarching goal is to keep NADE as the go-to organization for the developmental education practitioner. NADE has always been and will continue to serve as a valued resource to support you. All of our field's best practices and strategies, when appropriately integrated into current reform models, should provide the right solutions regarding student success. We have learned that a one size approach to solving the deficits, in all aspects of developmental education, does not work. Our students are depending on us to be flexible and to stay committed to what we know is in their best interest. Dr. Robert McCabe authored a now famous book regarding students and steps for meaningful change...titled, "Yes We Can."

I think that today, it would be titled, Yes, We Must.

"We are who we are only in combination with others. The magic ingredient for student success is, and always will be, the dedication and commitment of the practitioners."

I look forward to working with the Board and with you this year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Deb Daiek, NADE President

Connect with NADE social media!

NADE recently added to its social media with the creation of its listserv. Join the conversation at <https://groups.google.com/a/thenade.org/forum/#!forum/nade-discussion-forum>.



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