

University of Alberta Chapter 144 - Phi Delta Kappa International

Brief History

This year, the University of Alberta Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. PDK Chapter 144 was established in 1963 by a group of 49 PDK members from the Edmonton area; another 72 members joined in that inaugural year. Inspired by such legendary figures as Dean Coutts, Tim Bryne, and Metro Gulutsan, the Chapter's membership continued to grow in subsequent years.

Chapter 144 is one of over 600 chapters of Phi Delta Kappa International. This professional association for educators was established in the USA in 1906 and has grown to include tens of thousands of members worldwide. Today PDK is one of the largest education associations in the world. PDK's mission is to promote high-quality education, particularly publicly-supported education, as essential to the development and maintenance of a democratic way of life. Service, research, and leadership are the three basic tenants which guide the work of the association.

In addition to local programs and activities at the chapter level, PDK arranges international conferences, provides travel opportunities for members to study other education systems and publishes Kappan, a professional journal for educators, four times a year. This highly-regarded magazine deals with policies and issues on education and advocates research-based school reform. Through these initiatives, PDK helps members to deepen their expertise, advance their careers, and experience better results in their education research, classroom practices, and school operations.

Each year, Chapter 144 offers three awards in support of educators.

1. The *Future Educator's Award* (valued at \$500) is offered to a grade 12 student planning to study education at an Alberta-based teacher preparation institution. The Chapter scholarship award is publicized across the province through high school guidance counselors. In 2013, the Future Educator's scholarship was awarded to Heather Whitfield, a High Level student who is currently attending the University of Alberta.
2. The *Doctoral Dissertation of the Year Award* is offered in conjunction with the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta (both of whom donate \$500). Applicants must have completed a doctoral degree at the University of Alberta to qualify. The Chapter is assisted in the adjudication process for this award by three professors from the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. In 2013, the committee selected Dr. Yu Lei's dissertation on *Reading English Books With and Without Illustrations – Performance and Experiences of Young ESL Chinese Children* for this award.

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3. The *Kappan of the Year Award* is presented to a deserving member of Chapter 144 who has made outstanding contributions to the Chapter and to education in Alberta. In 2013, the award was presented to Mr. Duane Plantinga, Executive Director of the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta.