



**Pi Kappa Delta
Newsletter**

TO: PI KAPPA DELTA MEMBERS AND CHAPTERS

FROM: EDWARD S. INCH, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

DATE: OCTOBER 1991

Greetings from the National Council! I think the next two years will provide rich opportunities for professional growth and development. Most of us spend a great deal of time and energy helping students prepare for competition and attend tournaments. However, forensic educators need opportunities to grow and develop as do their students. One of the goals I hope to achieve during next two years is to provide educators and students with chances to extend their forensic education in non-competitive directions through a variety of research and convention program chances.

**The Role of Professional
Development**

This newsletter is intended as an impetus for you to begin thinking about the types of projects you might want to engage in during the next two years. When the members of the National Council met in Tacoma this summer, we discussed different directions and types of projects that might benefit both individual educators and the organization. I have three different tasks that I hope to accomplish to facilitate professional growth and development. First, I am the PKD planner for the 1992 Speech Communication Association Convention in Chicago. Second, I am organizing the 1993 Professional

Developmental Conference at the next national convention and tournament in Tacoma. And, third, I am developing the forums for the 1993 tournament.

To make any of these programs successful, I need your help and ideas. All input is welcome, but my hope is to theme all programs and panels broadly using the charge given to us by President Littlefield in New Jersey--RESOLVED: THAT *PI KAPPA DELTA* SHOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGED. Equally appropriate is the broader proposition RESOLVED: THAT THE PROCESS OF FORENSICS EDUCATION SHOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGED.



Goals and Objectives

Personally, I think that the national organization needs to foster and promote research and forums that help its members grow professionally. I think we do a very good job providing students with competitive opportunities in the national and regional tournaments. But I think it is equally important that students and educators alike have chances to visit the scholarly side of forensics. To this end, I think our goals during the next couple of years should be:

1. Participation. I want to encourage regional and national discussion of the propositions listed above. Perhaps the local PKD tournaments and the regional conventions could sponsor panels and promote discussions to involve the PKD forensic community in an active and aggressive dialogue to begin defining the future directions for forensics. The discussion has begun in the past two Developmental Conferences, but now is the time to involve individual members of individual chapters and get as much input as possible as we prepare for the national convention.

2. Scholarship. One of the most pervasive criticisms of our activity is the lack of much systematic scholarly evidence supporting the benefits of what we do. We know that forensics helps students and educators alike, but we are often hard pressed to document it. Beyond providing evidence to support the field externally, we need to exam-

ine the nature of our own practices internally to determine whether the techniques and conventions we employ are working and worthwhile. The last two Developmental Conferences offered several resolutions that might serve as beginning points for your own ideas for research and forum topics. These include (but are certainly not limited to):

PKD should develop a mechanism to educate administrators about the goals of the activity and develop a sense of how programs should be valued. This education should occur on the national, provincial, and chapter levels.

PKD should emphasize professional development for coaches/students and create special forums for the exchange of ideas between these groups.

PKD should examine the usefulness of having critics provide useful information to contestants regarding their evaluative and ethical philosophies.

PKD should articulate support for a fifty percent course reduction for co-curricular forensics coaching.

PKD should continue the PKD Professional Development Conference in the interest of co-curricular activity.

PKD should encourage forensic students to pursue an integrated liberal arts program to provide themselves with a strong theoretical background in communication.

PKD should address, fund, and produce a training video for individual events and debate judging.

PKD should endorse and facilitate research on ballot forms, especially using provincial tournaments as a resource base.

PKD should assess the gender and ethnic diversity of the student population to better understand and respond to student members.

PKD should assess student success by gender and ethnic diversity to better understand and respond to student members.

3. Professional Development. It is important for forensic educators to be visible within their discipline and outside of their discipline. As pressures to publish and produce scholarship increase, so should the forums for development. As I have mentioned ear-

lier, PKD should promote and foster such forums. At the national level, my hope is to have broad participation in a) SCA programs, b) the Developmental Conference, and c) Forums at the national tournament.

Start the Dialogue

There is a great deal of scholarly work to be done and I hope that PKD can provide you with a forum for your ideas and research. If you are interested in any or all of these, please submit your ideas to me as soon as you can. The goal here should be to start a dialogue and begin moving to make some meaningful changes.

I think the local chapters can begin the dialogue now and then the discussion can be taken to the regional conventions and then to Tacoma: What would you like to see at a national convention/tournament? What events make sense, what events don't? Has PKD made good choices? Has PKD made some bad choices? What should its role be in the 21st century? If the regional conventions initiate discussion, I think the national convention could be a hotbed of controversy and begin to ask the questions that need asking if we are to continue to thrive and be a leader in the forensic community.

Please send suggestions, ideas, panel, paper, panel, or forum topics to me at:

Edward S. Inch
Professional Development
Department of Communication & Theatre
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, WA 98447

Or, feel free to call me at: 206-535-8873. Have good discussions and I'll speak with you soon about your ideas.