

WWU's Center for Canadian-American Studies Celebrates 30 Years of "STUDY CANADA"

Last month, the Center for Canadian-American Studies at Western Washington University marked the 30th anniversary of its annual STUDY CANADA Summer Institute for K-12 Educators, the oldest and best-known Canadian Studies outreach program of its kind in the US. The strong support of both the US Department of Education and the Government of Canada must be acknowledged since Title VI Grants and Embassy of Canada Outreach Grants have been awarded since 1988 and 1978, respectively, to fund STUDY CANADA'.

Colorado middle-school teacher, Holly Bishop, a 2008 STUDY CANADA participant, indicates the value of such investment her evaluation of the program: "This [workshop] opened my eyes to the importance of Canadian Studies and our relationship with Canada. Sustainability and negotiation will be something I not only learned but will try to incorporate in my life and classroom."



Program Director Dr. Alper and Consul Kim Blanchette (6/22/2008)

The longevity of STUDY CANADA is remarkable considering the constant shifts in focus and interest for K-12 social studies curriculum development. It is not surprising that world events have led social studies educators in the US to teach beyond borders and to establish a sense of global citizenry in K-12 students; yet it is noteworthy that—despite not being a "hot spot" nation of the world—STUDY CANADA continues to regularly attract a nationwide audience of teachers. The larger-than-usual number of twenty-four registrants this year bodes well for renewed interest in Canadian Studies curriculum since most state educational directives do not include Canada as a subject for study.

Indeed, as one teacher remarked on this year's conference evaluation form:
"Everyone in the US should have the opportunity to study/re-study the history and development of our wonderful neighbor to the North! We should take the time to reevaluate how much there is to learn from Canada/Canadians—and NOT assume that the US has given more to the world than others—especially Canada! We need to learn how to negotiate and live together more fairly and equally as the incredibly diverse and cohesive Canadian people have learned to do."

It is also heartening that teachers traveled from Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Washington State—despite increasingly high costs for travel—to gain a stronger foundation for teaching about Canada. Registrants were delighted to discover that the Consulate of Canada in Houston and the Consulates General of Canada in Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles and Seattle awarded additional travel support to encourage attendance and build regional connections with American teachers.



Ken Melamed, Mayor of Whistler, meeting socially with STUDY CANADA participants. (6/24/2008)

The Consulate General of Canada, Seattle, and Québec Government Office, Los Angeles, offered additional sponsorship to help celebrate the program's anniversary. At the consulate-sponsored opening reception, Consul Kim Blanchette, presented a commemorative plaque to Dr. Donald K. Alper, director of STUDY CANADA, that indicated how he (along with fellow-founders Dr. Robert L. Monahan and Dr. Donald C. Wilson) acted as "a foundation stone, compass, and continuing inspiration for excellence" at the annual workshop.



Dr. Paul Storer presenting on the world's largest trade relationship (6/23/2008)

Following the reception, the group attended a Cirque du Soleil performance of *Cortéo* that served as a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the 400th anniversary of French-Canadian settlement in North America, experience French-Canadian culture and set a high standard of excellence for the duration of the STUDY CANADA program. Throughout the remainder of the week, core faculty from WWU, the University of Washington and Simon Fraser University offered academic presentations and led activities that immersed American participants in Canada's history, culture and identity. Special attention was also given to Canada's First Nations, social and environmental sustainability issues, and the upcoming 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. Tina Storer, WWU's Education and Curriculum Specialist, organized all details of STUDY CANADA's agenda with such precision that even the presentation given about *la belle province* by Dr. Frédéric Gagnon, Université du Québec a Montréal, was serendipitously offered on Tuesday, June 24, *la fête nationale*,

The high caliber of the STUDY CANADA program is made evident in the program details posted online at www.k12studycanada.org/scsi.asp. It is rewarding to know that teachers like Cynthia Carlisle (South Carolina) continue to find that it is "a great program illuminating Canada and its people for any teacher interested in integrating (or infusing) Canada into the curriculum. Whether Canada is new or familiar, or you teach elementary, middle or high school students, there is something for [all subject area teachers] in this STUDY CANADA Summer Institute."