

Leadership Conference

Addressing the Challenges of Education: Bringing back Civil Discussion, Debate and the Conflict of Ideas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CEPA 2019

The Presentation of Colors took place at 9:00 A.M., sharp, September 27, 2019. It signaled the start of the CEPA 2019 conference held at the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. Delegates gathered from around the country to discuss the conference theme: Addressing the Challenges of Education: Bringing back Civil Discussion, Debate and the Conflict of Ideas.



CEPA 2019 proved to be a most enjoyable and gratifying event. Drs. Meghan Carmody-Bubb and Phyllis Duncan, Our Lady of the Lake University; and Dr. Theresa Garfield, Texas A&M University-San Antonio served as Co-Directors. It was a beautifully orchestrated gathering.



Left to right: Dr. Fred Rodriguez, Dr. Phyllis Duncan, Dr. Heidi Reeder; Dr. Meghan Carmody-Bubb; Dr. Theresa Garfield

Distinguished Speaker



Dr. Heidi Reeder: Some people invest in sports, cards, memorabilia or gambling. CEPA invests in people: young people and future leaders. As the delegates gathered for CEPA 2019, they understood that this was a chance for everyone involved to excel. They had the opportunity to advance their careers, invest in themselves and their vision. To highlight CEPA's foundation of promoting future leaders a distinguished scholar, Dr. Heidi Reeder, captivated everyone with her comments on motivation, willpower, determination, and commitment.

Dr. Reeder is the author of *Commit to Win: How To Harness The Four Elements of Commitment To Reach Your Goals*. Creative, visual and action PowerPoint slides were used to illustrate the abstract idea of commitment, and the desire to win. These significant aspects of human cognition and human culture became crystal clear, as she addressed undergraduate honor students, doctoral-level future leaders and established university scholars.



Panel Discussion: Leading through Change



Left to right: Dr. Julia Mahfouz, U of I (on screen); Dr. Theresa Garfield, Moderator, TAMUSA (at podium); Dr. Bruce Rosenthal and Dr. William Brownsberger, OLLU; Dr. Heidi Reeder, BSU; Dr. Carl Sheperis, TAMU-SA

Panel of Deans and Scholars

The Panel of Deans and Scholars, moderated by Dr. Theresa Garfield from Texas A&M University-San Antonio, was thought-provoking as the panelists tackled some of today's most difficult questions surrounding civil discourse.

"The best way to solve problems and to fight against war is through dialogue." – Malala Yousafzai. Dr. Garfield used this quote to jump-start the panel discussion. "The unifying thread that brings us together is a passion for moving education forward and the belief that leadership is the key to our collective success," she said. "I am particularly excited about this year's theme, **Addressing the Challenges of Education: Bringing Back Civil Discussion, Debate, and the Conflict of Ideas**, as it speaks to our greatest calling as leaders- to provide the tools for a safe space to explore, disagree, and be comfortable with conflict in a way that is civil and productive."

She continued by highlighting Viktor Frankl, who states in his seminal work, *Man's Search for Meaning*, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom." "I challenge that the space between stimulus and response has become shortened in this age of immediacy and technology. It is up to leaders, such as those on this panel, to recapture that space, create environments where discourse is welcome, and civility is the expectation and not the exception," added Dr. Garfield.

The panelists were: Dr. William Brownsberger, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences and Dr. Bruce Rosenthal, Dean of the School of Business and Leadership at OLLU; Dr. Carl Sheperis, Dean, College of Education and Human Development at TAMU-SA; Dr. Julia Mahfouz from the University of Idaho (via Zoom); and Dr. Heidi Reeder, Boise State University.

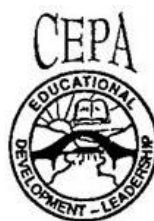
If there was ever a gathering of brilliant minds, this was it. Philosophical, theological, and existential thinking held everyone's attention, prompting the delegates to ask the tough questions on people's minds during these turbulent times. "What are universities doing to encourage dialog among students and faculty, rather than being shamed for thinking and wanting to share their ideas," asked a doctoral student. The consensus among the panelists was that universities need to spend as much time recruiting good, honest faculty as they do in seeking the academic skills needed for their schools and colleges. "To be a good leader, one must be a good person first," stated a renowned scholar. The purpose of universities is to encourage students to explore a world of ideas as they grow the next generation of leaders.

The dialog between delegates and panelists was not the typical scenario of professors lecturing subservient students on a campus. It was intellectual minds, regardless of age and academic status, speaking rationally and respectfully on a level playing-field discussing today's challenges. The El Tropicano venue was ideal — creating a cordial, welcoming atmosphere.

Leading scholars from over 50 universities nationwide, Latin America and the Caribbean have graced CEPA conferences during the past twenty years. CEPA 2019 reached a milestone when the two major universities in Idaho were represented. Dr. Julia Mahfouz from the University of Idaho nearly 2,000 miles away, joined in the panel discussion (via Zoom) along with her Idaho colleague, Boise State University's Dr. Heidi Reeder. Both



Idaho speakers extended their university's brand as they worked in partnership with other top-level campuses in Texas. This initiative extended CEPA's outreach into the Northwest region of the nation for the first time.



Diving into the Conference Theme

Scholars from a number of prestigious universities presented critical leadership challenges facing the U.S. and Latin America. Among the many outstanding presentations were:



Dr. Claudia Donoso, St. Mary's University, discussed the crisis in Venezuela, South America, and the impact of the migration of Venezuelans to Columbia and surrounding countries.



Dr. Meghan Carmody-Bubb, Our Lady of the Lake University spoke on *Creating Cultures of Learning to Address the Current Crisis in School Safety*.



Dr. Stephen Benigno, Texas A&M International University, introduced *Fear and Evaluating Threat, School Shootings and Violence in the U.S.*



Dr. Jeannie Scott, Associate Dean and Professor, H-E-B School of Business and Administration, University of the Incarnate Word, briefed the results of her research: *Creating Leaders with Experiential Learning*.



Visionary Leadership

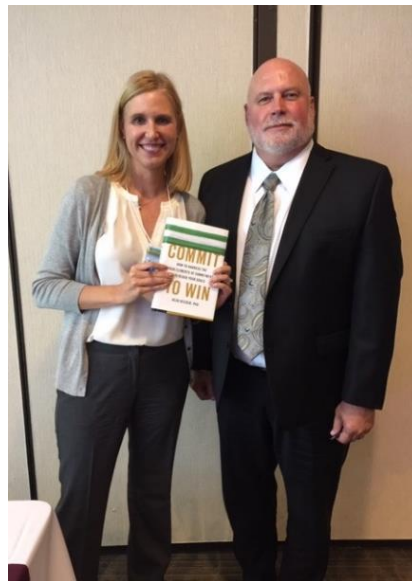
Vision is not seeing things as they are, but as they will be!



Kathy M. Garcia and David Garcia, undergraduates from the McNair Scholars Program, Our Lady of the Lake University, highlighted *How Internalized Racism Impacts College Enrollment in Underserved Neighborhoods of San Antonio* and *Social Networking: Cyber Hate Allows No Safe Space*, respectively. Young, emerging scholars presenting alongside established leaders is the hallmark of CEPA's mission



Educational paradigms were brilliantly displayed by the doctoral students at Our Lady of the Lake University



Dr. Reeder presents her book *Commit to Win* to Doctoral student Brad Wallace Our Lady of the Lake University

Wrap-Up – Lessons Learned



CEPA conferences are a place for everyone to discover new possibilities and explore their potential. “A major goal of CEPA conferences is to help and guide future scholars, mentor and support these emerging leaders, while providing an intellectually challenging atmosphere,” stated Dr. Meghan Carmody-Bubb, School of Business and Leadership, Our Lady of the Lake University. “We are happy to support the excellent work being done by CEPA. Our students will receive a huge benefit from attendance,” added Dr. Carl Sheperis, Dean, College of Education, Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

“Everyone wants to feel that she or he counts for something and is important to someone. Invariably, people will give their love, respect, and attention to the person who fills that need.” John C. Maxwell, Leadership 101. Real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow.

CEPA continues its relentless drive to seek good people who are interested and dedicated to the idea of placing “Students First,” by allowing future leaders and free thinkers to explore the world of ideas. As alluded to during the panel discussion, to be recognized as a top-level university requires the faculty’s commitment and wiliness to mentor young people. The challenge is clear.



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Photo Galary Addendum

Photos provided by Marisol Weymouth



Presentation of Colors



St. Mary's University ROTC Cadets

Dr. Rodriguez Presents CEPA Clock to Dr. Reeder



The Team



Drs. Fred Rodriguez, Phyllis Duncan, Heidi Reeder, Meghan Carmody-Bubb, Theresa Garfield

Exploring the World of Ideas



Monica Schlueter



Brad Wallace



Doyle Edeni



Judy Canales



Cynthia Hernandez

Cisco Iguaran



Belinda De La Rosa



Aspiring Leaders



Tiffany Bryson



Brian De Leon



Melissa Williams

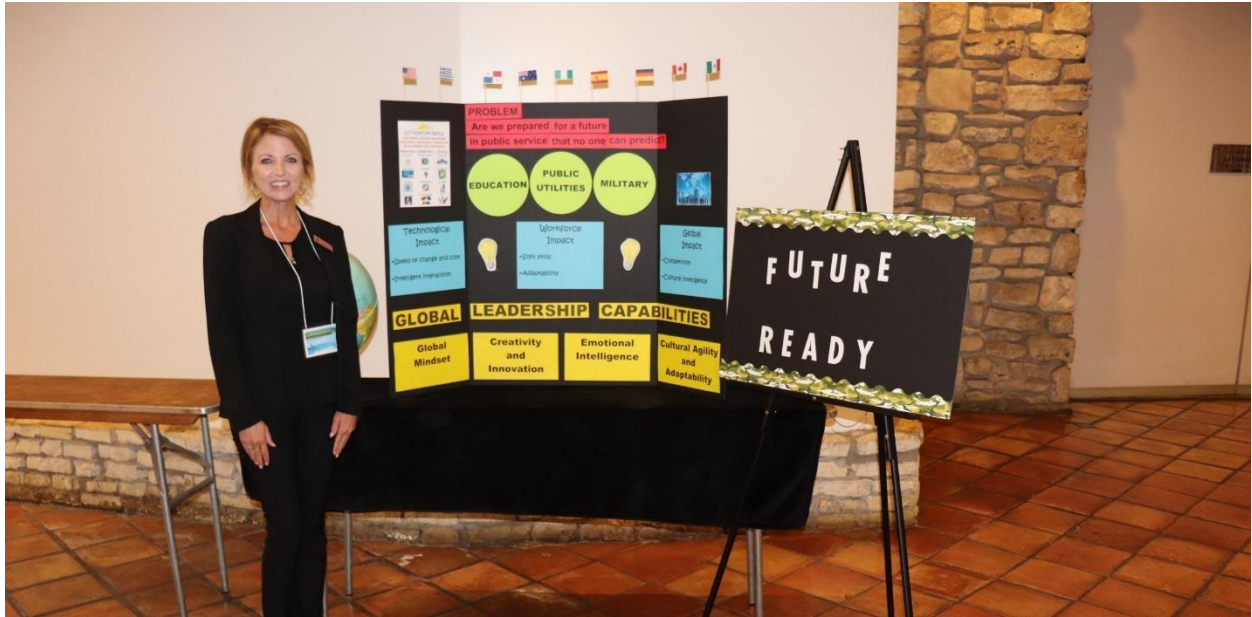


Mari Weymouth



Visionary Leadership

Monica Schlueter



Belinda De LaRosa, Judy Canales, Dr. Phyllis Duncan



Cisco Ignaran, Judy Canales, and Belinda De La Rosa



Mari Weymouth



Recognition





Drs. Rodriguez, Theresa Garfield, Lourdes Viloria, Heidi Reeder, Marcela Uribe, Stephen, Weam Al-Tameemi