

## Désirée McGraw Speaking Notes

One World 218

17 March 2018

### WELCOME TO THE ONE WORLD OF PEARSON COLLEGE UWC!

*Bienvenu à tous et à toutes – et bonjour/bonsoir!* A warm welcome to all of you – our distinguished guests – in particular to the parents and family members of our students, our alumni, members of our volunteer Board of Directors and our host families who open their hearts and homes to our students year-round.

On behalf of us all, I acknowledge that the City of Victoria and its surrounding area lies within the territories of various Straits and Coast Salish peoples including, the Esquimalt, Songhees, and WSÁNEĆ. WSÁNEĆ means ‘emerging people’ – what better description of our incredible students?

This is my third *One World* and I continue to marvel at the talent of the performers who have already taken us on a magical musical and spoken word world tour from Cape Breton to South Africa and its beloved show-stopper “Gumboot”. And we are only half-way there!

I hope that you took advantage of the intermission to visit *One World Expo* in the lobby. Introduced last year, this program element is designed by students to tell you more about what happens at Pearson College UWC, the diversity and depth of our mission, our community and community engagement in Victoria, in Canada and around the world.

The student-driven *One World* is a perfect illustration of what Pearson College UWC – “Canada’s School for the world” – is all about. Despite the incredible talent of our student body, we are not a *Performing Arts School*. We are one of 17 United World Colleges that draws accomplished young leaders and change makers, ages 16-19, selected from every province and territory of Canada as well as 160 other countries. Founded on the vision of our namesake and Nobel Peace Laureate, Lester B. Pearson, the College has been a pioneer in international education; we were the first International Baccalaureate school in Canada, now in thousands of schools across the globe.

Our students come not only for the academically engaging program but for experiential education – one that engages our student hands, heads and hearts. –. Above all, our students come to expand their horizons on so many different levels, reaching a greater appreciation of the richness of diversity in humans and in nature.

By living, learning and laughing together, and serving across different communities, countries, cultures and contexts, our students hone their leadership skills to make a difference in the world. And thus further the mission of Pearson College and the United World College movement to *make education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for a peaceful and sustainable future.*

While the experience Pearson offers our students is an exceptional one, we are **not** a school for the privileged. Our students are selected based on their promise and potential; and above all merit. We are **not** a school where you can buy your way in. 91% of our students attend on full or partial scholarships.

We **are** a school that celebrates deliberate diversity and we welcome students from across the socio-economic spectrum – including refugees and young leaders from areas of conflict. We also recruit and support indigenous students from across Canada and all regions of the world. We could not do this without the generous support of our sponsors and donors. The College relies on donations to fund scholarships and the very necessary renewal of our middle-aged campus in line with our Campus Renewal plan. We are delighted that McLaughlin House will undergo extensive renovations this summer; it is the third student residence to receive badly-needed attention and upgrading.

If you are not already a Pearson College supporter, I hope that you will consider joining the ever-growing number of donors to Pearson. The Host Family Program and Jack Matthews Circle are two examples of how you can support the College, and you will find more details on the back of the One World program.

Pearson College is proud to call Greater Victoria our home. Service to the community is an important part of the Pearson experience. For more than 40 years our students have volunteered and fulfilled their local service commitments across this community.

Victoria supports Pearson College in so many ways – not least of which through the four community members who volunteer their time and talent to serve on our Board of Directors. I especially want to single out: Chuck Burkett; Michael Dingle who chairs our Infrastructure Committee; Gloria Metzger, chair of our HR committee and Michael Stubbing, Chair of the Finance Committee. And of course, the immediate past chair of the Board, Tony Macoun, continues to provide invaluable advice to us all.

Since last November, we've had a new chair of our Board: I would invite former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable Anne McLellan, to join me here on stage to say a few words.

*One World* is student-driven: every student has a role to play – whether on stage, backstage, in designing, coordinating and staffing the One World Expo, or carrying out the hundreds of unnoticed and unheralded tasks without which, the show could not in fact 'go on'.

The students are, however, the first to recognize the essential support from staff and faculty, headed by **Production Director Alan Plenty; Music Directors Paul Faber and Teodora**

**Georgieva, Dance Director Adriana Martinez**, and the many others whose names you will find listed in your program.

Of course, the production would not be possible without support from our many community sponsors. I invite you to consult our program and acknowledge the contribution of local businesses that support One World. Please, when possible, give them your business!

**Thank you for your support!** Thank you for being with us today to applaud our outstanding young people and for **supporting** and **enjoying** this unique *One World!*

Now: Let's embark on the second half of the One World voyage from Argentina to Bollywood with numerous cultural destinations along the way. *Bon voyage à tous et à toutes!*