

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2016

Désirée McGraw Speaking Notes
For *One World* Reception for Patrons, Donors, Alumni, Friends

Good evening. I'd like to extend a **very warm welcome** to everyone here tonight.

While I've had the chance to meet **many** of you already – I look forward to meeting **all** of you soon!

Many of you have travelled considerable distances to be here, and we are **thrilled** to have you join us for this exciting performance.

Personally, I am doubly excited because this is my **first “official”** One World performance.

Last year, when I was under consideration for the role I now have as **“Chief Champion for Pearson College,”** I was fortunate enough to catch a dress rehearsal of the 2015 performance.

I was, in a word, **dazzled!**

The energy, the passion, the heart and the soul that 160 students put into that production was awe-inspiring and humbling all at once!

I think you will agree – after you've seen tonight's performance – that One World 2016 has generated a similar feeling of exhilaration for you!

I want to share with you the magical first impression a visiting scholar at Pearson had during her first encounter with One World.

Sue Montgomery is a Montreal-based journalist and educator – she’s a veteran of covering the **toughest** subjects imaginable. But listen to what this purportedly “hard-bitten” journalist had to say:

“I heard the music before I reached the Max Bell Theatre.

“Inside, students from half-a-dozen different countries were crowded into a corner of a room, practicing for the upcoming One World show.

*“A student from Chile seemed **transported** -- eyes closed as he played his flute -- another from Greece played guitar, a Scottish girl played the cello while a student from Burkina Faso rhythmically pounded her palms on drums. Two other students sang along in Arabic and Greek.*

*“And the crazy thing was they **all seemed to understand.**”*

The students of Pearson College – and we have had about 4,000 students grace our campus over the years – together with the adult community of faculty, staff and volunteers, have created **unique** One World productions for more than 30 years

Students take charge of **every** aspect of the production.

From scripting, auditions, choreography and staging, to costumes, lighting, and sound, One World is an opportunity for students to **show off** their individual talents and to **celebrate** their differences by **embracing** the things they have in common.

One World is a mélange of student talent and creativity, but it also speaks directly to the mission that Pearson shares with the United World College movement: **“To make education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.”**

At some places, a mission statement seems to be little more than **noble words** on a page or a website.

But, I can **assure** you that each and every Pearson student -- and in my experience, all of the adults on campus -- take these words to heart.

We will never lose sight of this guiding heritage, but we will also always have one eye on the future.

Pearson is entering a new era – an **exciting** new era of reinforcing the foundation of what we do best – providing an **outstanding** academic and experiential education to young people from around the world.

To be successful, we've narrowed it down to three things we want to achieve with élan and excellence:

- To ensure our International Baccalaureate educational program is **world class, cutting edge** and **always** innovative,
- To tell British Columbians, Canadians and the World about who we are and what we do,
- and
- To create the solid, **long-term** financial base to carry on the Pearson tradition for another 40 years and beyond.

Yes, we're aiming high!

And, in typical Pearson fashion, we're going to **work hard**, devote ourselves to the task at hand and we are **going to be successful** because, **now more than ever**, the world needs schools like Pearson College.

I want you to imagine – just for a moment -- the huge and positive impact these young people will have after they leave Pearson.

Think about the marks they will make when they step out onto community, national and global stages.

Think of the tasks they will take on – perhaps some will choose to serve as healthcare providers in remote communities -- others, who knows?

Will we see a young woman or man who graduated from Pearson **leading a nation** some day?

Don't bet against it – **I'm** not!

Mark my words, we are cultivating some of the world's future leaders and change makers here in Greater Victoria.

We are taking the **best of Canadian attributes** – living together sustainably; in peace, understanding and openness – and are encouraging young people to build on these qualities in their homelands across the globe.

None of this would happen without your support.

I know many of you have supported the College for a number of years. And tonight, some of you may be new to the Pearson Community.

Welcome. Welcome and **thank you** for being here with us.

We are **incredibly** grateful for your generosity, your community support and for your belief in the mission that our students represent.

Well, I've spoken long enough.

If you're like me, you're probably looking forward to sitting back and enjoying One World 2016.

But my advice is to be prepared to be on the edge of your seats with **delight** – because it's a great show!

Thank you!