



International Baccalaureate

Association of Rocky Mountain Schools

IBARMS News

Spring 2007

Read on and you'll find:

- Notes from the President
- June 2007 MYP Workshops
- PYP workshops are coming!
- Two new IBARMS committees dispense funds
- MYP Student Summit
- A Student's View

Notes from the President

It has been an eventful year for IBARMS! During the 06-07 year, we have hosted both the IBNA workshop provider's meeting and the IBNA subregional leader's meeting, held a level 3 workshop on the standards and practices across the continuum, organized our largest teacher training workshop to date, adding MYP level 2 subjects, secured permission to sponsor PYP trainings for next year, continued to add innovative roundtables and symposia as well as student summits, and have gone to a more intensive meeting format bringing in guest speakers for professional development of our members. One can understand if our executive committee is feeling a bit tired!



I am excited about the work that IBARMS is doing with issues that span the continuum of the PYP, MYP and DP programs. We are on the vanguard of this movement, and I have learned much from all of you about the meaning of the Learner Profile in the IB.

It seems that the Learner Profile changes the focus of the IB program. In the early years of IB, when the Diploma program WAS the IB, the emphasis was on performance. In those days in the US, the IB was viewed as a fairly elitist program. There was a series of walls of ever-increasing heights, with the final Great Wall being the daunting battery of IB exams at the end of the senior year. The implicit attitude of the program back then was, "do your best to climb." We educators would reach our hands down to help, but some students would inevitably fail to attain these goals. I would even hear some teachers remarking that a particular student was "not IB material" because they had failed to scale the walls of certain assessments, as if the program were a selective country club.

The Learner Profile establishes a ramp for the students, rather than a series of walls. It focuses on a series of attributes rather than achievements -- attributes we can all strive to develop. We can now view the K-12 continuum as a ramp that takes students from where they are and gradually develop them as learners and individuals. As a parent, I am far more concerned that my children grow as principled, caring, lifelong learners than I am about how they perform on a particular Chemistry test. While few of us can remember many of the exams we took in our educational careers, I believe we all care deeply about educating our students to be reflective global citizens who can think critically about the challenges facing our world today. The Learner Profile exemplifies this aim much better than a series of exams.

Of course, the Learner Profile creates new challenges for us. Should these traits be assessed? How will we know if students are developing as open-minded or well-balanced? By what standards should we define principled and caring students? While many of these traits are more difficult to grapple with than a math curriculum, the Learner Profile does stimulate us to grow as educators while we all grow as Learners.

Have a great summer!

Roger Dowd
Thornton High School

IBARMS members get the first of the hot spots in June MYP Workshops



The wildly popular MYP conference filled nearly every available spot by early March. IBARMS member had a 5-week head start in registering.

IBARMS offers 11 workshops in Keystone, CO June 17-20, 2007. Level 1 subjects include English, Humanities, Math, Science, Coordination, Heads of Schools, and Physical Education. Level 2 subjects include English, Humanities, and Math. Special Education Needs is offered at Level 3.

Conference Committee members are thrilled to provide workshops for our ever-growing MYP populations in the Rocky Mountain area, but also for those from other parts of North America and the English-speaking IB World. Also at Keystone this June, we will have a guest from IBCA in Cardiff, Wales – **Fang Shelly**.

Benefits to YOU include more affordable training to those within driving distance, an income stream that subsidizes IBARMS offerings to members, and the chance to network with important players in the IBO family. As a result, IBARMS is looked upon as a leader in IB education. In offering conferences, IBARMS attempts to model the Learner Profile: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective.

PYP workshops are coming!



The long wait for local PYP workshops is over. **In June 2008, IBARMS will offer all 3 levels of PYP training**, as well as additional sessions of the MYP training that we currently offer.

The success of being able to expand our offerings is due to the tenacity of the Executive and Conference Committees – Community Service in action! We also invite suggestions for continuous improvement of our product. We hope to see you and yours at our June workshops.

Projects Grants: Your membership affecting the community

IBARMS member schools will have the opportunity to apply for funding for special projects for the 2007-08 school year. The IBARMS Project Committee will evaluate proposals from participant schools who are desiring to implement a project that supports the IB Mission and promotes international understanding. Committee members are **Jan Lotter, Julie Webster, Jade Amick-Fulgenzi, Susie Mitzelfeld, Matt Brown and Anne Frazier**. Applications and criteria will be available at the first IBARMS meeting in September, 2007.



Scholarship Fund: your membership helps students

Lisa King (Poudre High School) heads a new committee assigned to grant scholarship funds to Rocky Mountain area IB students. Applications and criteria will be available in September.



Science Bowl win credited to IB influence



From Chris Hays, Poudre HS -- You probably have heard by now that Poudre High School's team won the National Science Bowl competition. Although all members are IB students, I never credit IB for such brilliant work.

However, when talking to one of the moms I casually asked if she thought IB played any part of her son's success. She told me he never would have joined Science Bowl or found out that he had a love of science if he hadn't had to fulfill his CAS requirement. That alone caused him to join Science Bowl.

This is something I never thought of before and I wanted to share this with all hard working Coordinators!

MYP Student Summit: Community & Service – From Awareness to Action

Thornton, CO, February 8, 2007 IBARMS hosted 185 participants at the Second Student Summit for Middle Years Program students.

Students from MYP schools in the Denver Metro area, Ft. Collins, Colorado Springs and Summit County gathered to learn from others regarding Community and Service, one of the Areas of Interaction integral to the MYP. The emphasis of community and service is on developing community awareness and a sense of responsibility towards the community so that students become engaged and empowered to act in response to the needs of the community. Students' reflection on the needs of the community and their ability to participate in and respond to those needs will contribute to the development of caring and responsible citizens.



The keynote speaker, **Ken Rutherford**, shared his story of how his personal experience led to his involvement in a global service organization. A land mine destroyed his legs while in Somalia in 1993, but he launched an effort to rid the world of the devices by starting the Landmine Survivor Network. He was part of a group that received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Students were moved by Mr. Rutherford's story and pictures. Following his presentation, students from Hinkley High School in Aurora shared their mission of raising awareness and funds to help eliminate landmines, as well as helping survivors. The Hinkley group has worked on this project for four years and has been able to send three students to Mozambique to witness landmine fields be cleared with the financial assistance from IBARMS. The day continued with groups of students sharing what they are doing in their own communities regarding community and service, and then creating an action plan for what they want to take back to their school to implement. It was a very successful day, as described by the participants:

- *"It was a great experience and I would love to do it again."*
- *"Mr. Rutherford was an inspirational speaker and a great teacher."*
- *"I realized that even students can help make the world a better place. It really motivated me and (I'm sure) others."*

The Denver Post covered the event at http://www.denverpost.com/search/ci_5188589.

A Student's View

IB Outward Bound, by Shannon Seiferth, Littleton High School

LEADVILLE, SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 2, 2006 The class of 2008 IB Juniors and three LHS teachers attended a weekend Outward Bound session. I was among those 35 students, and I came out of the weekend with an experience I will never forget.

Throughout the course of the weekend, we managed to conquer our fears and apprehensions in order to overcome the various challenges we were faced with, which varied from rock climbing and hiking a mountain to group problem-solving skills. The result was extremely rewarding on many levels. While some students believe that the biggest benefit of the weekend was a strengthened sense of camaraderie, others felt that they had found the ability to overcome whatever personal barriers they may face in the future. Not only were valuable life skills learned, but there seemed to be a general appreciation for the relaxation that the weekend afforded. (Who would have thought that hiking a 13-er could *ever* be considered relaxing?)

The skills that were strengthened during the weekend also tied closely to the attributes that IB identifies as essential traits of well-rounded students, such as **thinking, communicating, risk-taking, reflection, care,** and leading a **balanced** life that not only is intellectually developed, but also physically and emotionally sound.

The weekend began with games of the "get-to-know-you" variety, where we were all introduced to our instructors and one another. From there, we broke up into four smaller groups, aptly titled "patrols," with whom we would spend the better part of the weekend. Each patrol was led by two Outward Bound Instructors and consisted of about eight students.

The first day, the patrol was led through various challenges that required immense teamwork and cooperation. At times, the challenges felt daunting and nearly impossible, such as getting all members of the group over a 12-foot high wall with no holds on it. Others required more complex problem-solving skills, such as the challenge where we were asked to maneuver our way through pedestals given only a few boards, and the rule that we were not allowed to touch the ground. We were forced to become active **communicators** and **thinkers** to decide on ways to best approach and execute these large-scale challenges. Despite the demanding nature of the tasks, they were all very much enjoyed by the students.



The second day was spent hiking considerably high mountains of around 13,000 feet in altitude. Two patrols tackled Mt. Galena, while the other two attempted Mt. Champion. Whether or not the patrols were able to summit, it seemed as though everyone learned a lot about themselves and finding the will to push forward no matter how tired they were. The will to push forward when fatigue kicked in came partly from being **reflective** and able to mentally assess our own needs, but also from the **caring** quality demonstrated by the members of the patrol toward one another. Encouragement certainly was not in short supply as we climbed.

On the final day, we went rock climbing at a nearby rock face. While some students had significant prior experience with rock climbing, others (myself included) had none. Experienced or not, all students and teachers were able to set individualized goals which were met with enthusiasm, each and every one of us acting as **risk-takers** in our own way. For some, reaching the top of the rock face was a challenge in and of itself, though others attempted to climb blindfolded, with their leg tied to another person's, or a combination of the two. One student, Will Cernanec, even managed to climb the face without use of his hands. No matter how the rock face was climbed, we all learned invaluable lessons in trust, especially when the person billeting for you is a novice.

The weekend concluded with a ceremony with our patrols, where all students received pins and certificates. While these, and perhaps a few snapshots from the weekend, may be the only tangible confirmation of a weekend well-spent at Outward Bound, the lessons that were learned from the trip will certainly enhance our IB experience and beyond. By displaying many the qualities that are central to IB, the Juniors demonstrated that, even early in the IB experience, some of those qualities are already being shaped.

This and That

At www.IBARMS.org, you can...

- Check out the IBARMS calendar for upcoming events.
- Find a listing of member schools, contacts, and websites.
- Get conference and meeting notes from past events.
- See biographies on your executive board members.

Keep an eye on the IBARMS webpage for everything you need to know about what's going on in the world of IB.

Idea for an article? From you, an IB teacher or an IB student?

We welcome submissions to *IBARMS News*. Submissions must be relevant to the International Baccalaureate and consistent with IBARMS mission of promoting the IB program in our region. To submit an article, email your at-large program representative at:

pyp@ibarms.org

myp@ibarms.org

diploma@ibarms.org



Tell us what you think

Please let us know feedback on this newsletter, the new meeting format, and how IBARMS is serving you -- workshops@ibarms.org.