

Message From the TODOS President June 2023

Colleagues,

You will receive this newsletter on the eve of the Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere, June 20.

The [Summer Solstice](#) has the longest number of hours of sunlight and is significant in many cultures, and in particular, Indigenous cultures. I specifically mention Indigenous cultures as June 21 is [National Indigenous People's Day](#) in Canada and this year, TODOS: Mathematics for ALL community will be gathered together on June 21 in the place now called Albuquerque, the homelands of the Pueblo of the Sandia.

This month I had the opportunity to co-lead a working group with two Indigenous Elders and 3 mathematics education colleagues at the Canadian Mathematics Education Study Group's Annual Meeting. The working group was titled "*Machi kis kiyih tam Uske/Nantaw ota: Iteyih tam mas kooch etikwe Apehka tam eyiniw misiwe uske kawapahtik ake ihike win ewa kiskino huma kewina / Learning from/on/with land/place: Imagining possibilities for braiding Indigenous worldviews, mathematics, and teaching.*"

A part of the working group was to walk outside and begin to listen to Mother Earth - to be quiet and to be present with Mother Earth to see and hear what is shown and calling to you. As I was leaving the building birds were chirping. I noticed so many spaces as I walked through the grasses and parks of the University Campus - some carefully manicured; some not so manicured and more natural. As I was walking, trying to be 'present' with Mother Earth, I saw young dragonflies and butterflies fluttering; and I observed some plants:



The short walk of only 1 hour slowed me down to pay attention - to all of the diversity that exists within a small piece of land. Two thoughts were with me as I slowed down to listen - the first was a reminder of a book called Sacred Geometry that I was given many years ago. I was reminded of how I could 'see' geometric ideas within the plants, trees, and grasses.

The second reminder for me was a mathematics classroom - where there are so many diverse learners. Learners are teachers and teachers are learners in those classrooms. When I look at the diversity of the plants in the pictures I think about the interdependence of those plants and that somehow they rely on one another to thrive. I believe the same is true in a mathematics classroom - learners rely on one another to thrive as mathematical beings.

One of the conversations that emerged in the discussions following the working group was the ways in which mathematics curricula rarely includes reference to human beings' relationships with Mother Earth. Does the mathematics we teach contribute to humans being a good relation with Mother Earth?

Colleagues, I invite you to enjoy the month of June - go for a walk and be 'present' with Mother Earth. Notice the mathematical ideas that are present, waiting for you to 'see' or 'hear'.

Be present and connected,

Florence Glanfield