

Message From the TODOS President February 2024

Colleagues,

I was able to attend the NCTM Regional Conference in Seattle in early February. TODOS, along with a sponsor, Texas Instruments, hosted a Student Awards ceremony on Thursday February 8. It was a beautiful time to meet five amazing youth, their families, and their teachers.

One of the youth, a high school senior who identified as Latina shared a powerful story of the way that she experienced racism in her high school. The youth was the only visible human that did not present as white in the classroom. The explicit experience was about taking a test and the results of that test. The youth was the last student to complete the test in the allotted time. When the results were returned the youth noticed that one of the correct responses on the test paper was graded as wrong. When the youth approached the teacher, the teacher suggested that the youth had cheated in some way. When the youth tried to talk to the teacher, the teacher accused the youth of being aggressive. I am paraphrasing what the youth shared with all of us present at the Awards ceremony; mostly I was in awe of the courage and strength that this youth exhibited as they shared their experience with all present in Spanish and English.

The experience this youth shared resonated with me, and for some others in the room. For some of us in the room the youth's experience helped us to recall the ways in which we had to.

- A Black educator shared that they too had the same experience as the youth - but 50 years ago.
- Female learners required to advocate, or have our parents advocate for us, to take high school mathematics and / or college level mathematics courses.
- I, personally, recalled the ways that the high school calculus and physics teacher 'separated' the two female-presenting students from the male-presenting students in my high school experiences for in-class activities, and being told that action was being done because 'we, the two of us' could not keep up to the 'males.'
- I also recalled a response I had when I identified as 'native' in my first university mathematics classes, that "I thought you people couldn't do mathematics.'

The experience at the Student Awards ceremony really 'struck' me as the lessons and experiences of youth and humans in relation to Mathematics and Mathematics classes that were shared at the Opening Session was still resonating in my heart and mind. The opening plenary at the Regional Conference was titled "Embracing All Through Mathematics: Putting Value and Belonging at the Core." This was a beautiful session that included recordings of youth in mathematics classes that talked about the ways in which they feel valued and belong in a mathematics class plus a moderated panel that included speakers Filiberto Barajas-Lopez, Hanaa Elmi, RunningHorse Livingston, Pamela Seda, and Cathery Yeh. The panel was moderated by Abel Maestas. The voices of the youth alongside the voices of the diverse humans in the panel all intersected in the opening session.

These experiences remind me of the importance of the ongoing work that ALL mathematics educators need to do, reflect on, and take action on - and that is to ask ourselves, in what ways are the spaces that we inhabit, spaces of belonging and feeling valued. What actions might we, as individuals take, to contribute to the spaces being spaces where diverse learners / humans belong and feel valued?

I will share one more experience from the NCTM Regional Conference. The Opening session panel included 5 speakers. The advertisements around the convention center included all 5 speakers plus the moderator. However, the NCTM Conference App only included the names of 3 panelists and the moderator. The two names that were not included on the app were the two humans that identified as Indigenous or Native American. I was so stunned and confused as someone who identifies as Indigenous to the place now called Canada. I wondered, did these two speakers not make their flights to Seattle? When I arrived in the ballroom I noticed that all of the speakers were indeed present...but then I wondered, why were they not included in the App? With the help of an NCTM Board member I learned that the limitations on the App was 4 speakers. So then I began to wonder...how was it that only the Indigenous humans were left off the App? I never got an answer as to why the two names were left off the App, but it did remind me of the importance of someone being accountable for ensuring that ALL of the speakers were included. By the way, once I raised this concern to the NCTM Board member and they spoke with some human, the two names were included on the App. So, while the Opening Session was to be a session about feeling valued and belonging in mathematics classes, no one took accountability to ensure that the 'system' supporting the Opening Session was also an inclusive space. I certainly hope that raising awareness of this limitation to the App will assist future NCTM Program Committees to be aware of their accountabilities.

These two experiences at the Regional Conference reminded me, once again, as an Indigenous person in this field of mathematics education that there is still much work to be done. TODOS Mathematics for ALL has amazing resources that you can use to Take Action in the spaces that you inhabit - to advocate for, and build spaces, for belonging and feeling valued in mathematics.

I encourage you to 'take in' the resources shared by the PD Committee for the Month of February 2024 on page 3 of this message.

I acknowledge, with gratitude, to all who organized the Student Awards, Lisa Jilk, Susie Håkansson, Maci Nelson, Seattle Awards Lead, and the Seattle Public Schools Student Awards Committee, the nominating teachers, Maria del Rosario Zavala, and gratitude for the ongoing support of Texas Instruments. Texas Instruments representatives Vince O'Connell and Tom Steinke joined us on February 8.

With respect for your continued commitment to advocating and taking action for creating spaces that promote a high quality mathematics education for ALL.

Florence Glanfield, President (2022-2024)
TODOS: Mathematics for ALL

TODOS' Resources February 2024

TODOS Live! From December 2022

[Bringing Social Justice to the Upper Elementary Classroom: From Student Questions to Taking Action](#)

Presenters: Tonya Gau Bartell, Cathery Yeh, Mathew D. Felton-Koestler, and Robert Q. Berry III

Teaching Math for Social Justice (TMSJ) is much more than the lessons teachers might implement in their classrooms. It is about the relationships they build with and among students; the teaching practices that help them do that; and the goals to develop positive social, cultural, and mathematics identities—as authors, actors, and doers.

TODOS Podcast, Season 1, Episode 1

[Committing to Social Justice: A Conversation with Julia Aguirre](#)

In 2016, TODOS and the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics released a joint statement on social justice in mathematics education. Host Maria Zavala interviewed key author Dr. Julia Aguirre in July 2019, to reflect on the history of the document and the continued need for educational leaders to commit to social justice in mathematics. Access the position statement [here](#).

TODOS Blog, January 2018

[Mathematics & Diversity](#)

Why think about diversity in the teaching and learning of mathematics?

TODOS 2021 Conference Recording

[Healing-Informed Social Justice Mathematics: How Might I Incorporate Social Justice Mathematics in My Own Context?](#)

Presenters: Kari Kokka and Michelle Cody

In this interactive workshop participants will learn about healing-informed social justice mathematics (Kokka, 2019) which incorporates radical healing (Ginwright, 2016) and multi-tiered trauma informed care from an ecological approach (Harvey, 1996). We will use breakout rooms to analyze existing social justice mathematics tasks, from elementary to high school, for use in one's own context. We firmly believe social justice mathematics is for students of all backgrounds in a variety of school contexts, e.g., students of relatively privileged backgrounds in elite independent or wealthy suburban schools, students of historically marginalized backgrounds in Title I urban setting schools, students in rural schools, etc.