



TORONTO ASSOCIATION FOR LEARNING & PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF WWII IN ASIA

Press Release



Toronto ALPHA and Toronto District School Board sign Memorandum of Understanding

Toronto Association for Learning and Preserving the History of World War II in Asia (Toronto ALPHA) held a press conference to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The Toronto District School Board, the largest and most diverse school board in Canada and Toronto ALPHA will be working together to support educators to bring a more inclusive world history curriculum including the atrocities of WWII in Asia to their students. Working together, both parties aim to teach students about peace and reconciliation and to encourage them to become global citizens.

Toronto ALPHA has worked with TDSB for many years but the signing of the MOU will solidify their relationship to provide an expanded curriculum for their teachers and students. Some highlights of the MOU include:

- I. Collaborating on program goals: areas of collaboration include a summer program with a focus in leadership, human rights, social justice and citizenship, teacher and student study tours, one of which will include an interdisciplinary study course and provide an opportunity for students to receive course credits.
- II. Supporting development of resources: enhancement of Asian history curriculum resources for Toronto area high schools in subjects such as World History, and other Social Science courses and within the Genocide curriculum to include the atrocities of World War II in Asia. In addition, TDSB is committed to assisting with the development of the second edition of ALPHA's Teacher Resource Guide for classroom teachers.
- III. Implementing educational programs and professional development opportunities for teachers: this includes providing focus groups for educators upon completion of the teacher resource guide prior to the launch for September 2014.



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- IV. Future development of an education centre and museum specializing in Asian history, with a focus on WWII in Asia.

For more details regarding the MOU please read the attached appendix.

Dr. Joseph Wong, Founder and Chair of Toronto ALPHA started the press conference by providing a warm welcome to those in attendance. He further went on to explain the importance of the collaboration of Toronto ALPHA with the Toronto District School Board as it in itself is a “historic moment...no other jurisdiction in the world has taken the steps to bring this aspect of history into schools.” He also said that “Toronto ALPHA and TDSB share common values of justice, truth, peace and global citizenship. We live in a global village and we should share the values and promote each other.”

Ms. Donna Quan, who was officially appointed Director of the Toronto District School board last week also welcomed those in attendance and brought greetings from the senior team. “TDSB believes in inclusion as it is crucial to a global future... we live in a borderless society and history helps to shape the future.” She also went on to further explain the areas of collaboration between the school board and Toronto ALPHA and thanked trustees Gerri Gershon and Shaun Chen for their attendance and support in this historic initiative.

Ms. Gerry Connelly, who is Chair of Toronto ALPHA’s Education Committee, also brought remarks during the conference. She explained how important the work is that ALPHA does and its commitment to students and young people. They are “closing gaps within education” and bringing forth the importance of having an inclusionary curriculum.

Ms. Flora Chong, Vice Chair and Executive Director of Toronto ALPHA brought closing remarks and emphasized the importance of our young people. Through her recent research on ALPHA’s youth, she learned of many of the challenges, including identity confusing and “a lack of cultural relevance” faced by East Asian Canadian youth today. She stated that “Toronto ALPHA’s direction is to empower and engage these young people through critical and culturally relevant education.”

TDSB Trustees Gerri Gershon and Shaun Chen also provided some supportive words and spoke of their involvement with Toronto ALPHA. At the conclusion of the official signing of the MOU document, a group of students from the University of Toronto Korean Student’s Association presented Toronto ALPHA with a donation from their speaker’s series.

Today’s signing of the MOU with TDSB confirms that ALPHA’s work has ignited change, not only within the organization but with the youth they have worked with over the years. We invite you to join us on November 3rd, 2013 for our fundraising dinner, “Metamorphosis.” This year’s theme reflects what we want to convey to our supporters about the changes we have seen over the past nine years, in the youth and with organization. Toronto ALPHA’s work in bringing this history lesson to classrooms has achieved remarkable success and we would like to celebrate with you.

Toronto ALPHA 2013 Fundraising Dinner – “Metamorphosis”

Date: November 3, 2012 (Sunday)
Time: Reception - 5:30pm



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Dinner - 6:00pm

Venue:

Le Parc Conference & Banquet Centre
8432 Leslie Street, Thornhill

Ticket:

\$80 / \$120 (Patron) / \$50 (Student)

Enquiry:

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