

Title of Session: Pepperdine Alum/Student Showcase - Paul Reynolds

Moderator: Paul Sparks

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Room: Pepperdine Malibu

PaulS: Hello everyone

MargaretR: Oh great Paul Sparks, director of OMET is here

PaulR: Hi Paul

PaulS: Just trying to make sure all our guests felt at home!

PaulS: We are so excited that you all joined us

PaulS: And we have a wonderful treat tonight

PaulR: and truly been transformational for me

PaulS: You will love our guest and the work he is doing

PaulS: But before we start I wanted to let you know we will be doing this every month from now on

WadeGst16: Thank you Paul....leaning towards it at the moment

PaulS: and want you to feel welcome to connect with us

PaulS: So I will now turn the time over to Margaret Riel one of our cadre parents

PaulS: She will do the intro of Paul Reynolds

MargaretR: I would like to formally introduce Paul Reynolds, President of Fablevision and in my cadre and our guest speaker for tonight

ChrisWB that is good to know. I will see about getting some of my staff to join as well as members of some of my ti rooms

MargaretR: And we will start by asking him to tell us a bit Fablevision

MargaretR: thanks Paul S

PaulR: FableVision is an educational media and technology company based in Boston

PaulR: I run it with my identical twin brother Peter Reynolds

PaulR nestles back into his beanbag chair

PaulR sips his tea

SusanKT sips tea and listens

MargaretR: And we are so pleased he is here.

PaulR counts his blessings

MargaretR: he is doing his action research around a wonderful story

ChrisWB makes some hot tea

MargaretR: and tonight we want him to help us think about how that story is our story.

PaulR passes biscuits to Chris

ChrisWB yummm

MargaretR: so Paul...what is the role of story.?

ChrisWB listens

MargaretR: why are stories so important?

PaulR: Ah . . . story.

MargaretR: what role do they play in learning?

PaulR: After crafting technology apps for many years

PaulR: we come back again and again to the power of story

PaulR: it transcends the technology

PaulR: and connects us

PaulR: it has the power to transform

PaulR: And The North Star is one of those stories

MargaretR: your action research is around NS (north star) can you tell us a bit about action research?

PaulR: Well -

PaulR: We published The North Star almost 10 years ago

ChrisWB wow!

PaulR: as an allegory that helped us to see that the "one path" educational system

PaulR: was losing many kids

PaulR: and grown up kids

MargaretR: If anyone has not seen this story, they can open from the link on the Malibu room and turn pages while we are talking.

PaulR: We published it as a real hold-in-your-hand book

PaulR: but also put it online

PaulR: for free

WadeGst16: because sometimes a hold-in-your-hand book IS the best technology

PaulR: traditional publishers warned us about "giving the story away".

PaulR: We just chuckled.

SusanKT smiles

PaulR: That's the point.

PaulR: And the little story

PaulR: made its travels

PaulR: around the country

PaulR: around the world -

MargaretR: <http://fablevision.com/northstar/read/index.html>

PaulR: from L.A. to Hong Kong

PaulR: Some people think its a "children's book"

MargaretR: Wasn't there a musical made from it?

PaulR: to which we say, "Sure, give it to your child."

PaulR: But before you do - make some tea - and curl up with it.

PaulR: The older you get . . .

PaulR: the more you'll understand it.

MargaretR: Is this an autobiography of a set of twins who didn't take the road well traveled?

PaulR: yes - the musical is beautiful.

PaulR: Composed by an educator

PaulR: in Colorado

WadeGst16: Tim Beckman

PaulR: who discovered the book

PaulR: Yes - Tim - amazing teacher/composer

PaulR: Good point Margaret

PaulR: yes -

PaulR: Peter and I both have stories

BrookeM: aren't children's books really intended for the adults who read them?

PaulR: we tend to think so :)

PaulR: Peter got in trouble in school

PaulR: for drawing in 7th grade math class

MargaretR: books often work on two levels...to the child and to the adult

PaulR: Mr. Matson called him up after class

PaulR: Instead of getting mad at Peter

PaulR: Mr. Matson asked him to draw a comic book about a math concept

PaulR: he was connecting his north star to Peter's

SusanKT excellent teacher

MargaretR: oh such a good teacher.

PaulR: he did do the comic book

WadeGst16: he invited Peter to build a weakness

WadeGst16: using a strength

ChrisWB: cool concept

PaulR: and then Mr. Matson invited him to turn it into an animated film

WadeGst16: the way learning happens

PaulR: which he did.

SusanKT: nice!

PaulR: and it changed our lives

BrookeM likes Mr. Matson

PaulR: that's what we're doing today.

MargaretR smiles at Brooke

PaulR: So the book IS a reflection of our own journey.

MargaretR: and a way to helping others on their journey

PaulR: a reminder of what it takes to lead a meaningful journey.

PaulR: And many times we feel like we're on a rescue mission

BrookeM: have you ever compared it to other people's journeys with the North Star?

PaulR: for many of the adults who got carried along the K12 conveyor belt

PaulR: and are doing something that is not their "North Star"

MargaretR: Not sure what you mean Brooke

PaulR: We've had educators all over the world use/adapt the book in their classes

SusanKT Wonders if Paul R is doing exactly that w/ his research (what Brooke is asking about).

MargaretR: it might be interesting to tell them a bit about your action research is

PaulR: one teacher on cape cod wrote a year long curriculum

BrookeM: well throughout history you hear stories about the north star...like people following it for different reasons. esp in slave stories

ChrisWB sees this as potential for professional development for his staff

PaulR: yes - my ARP . .

BrookeM: same guiding point...different stories

MikeFurGst22: Nice book Paul, and kudos for putting it online... Just read through it, and online is neat but not the same experience. I'm sure you haven't lost any sales, only made more...

PaulR: nice

SusanKT nods to CB

PaulR: so . . .

MargaretR: I agree with you Mike

PaulR: as part of my action research

PaulR: I felt I needed to do more in my practice

PaulR: to support the community

PaulR: growing around The North Star

WadeGst16: and it is a growing community

PaulR: So, I've done a lot of research

PaulR: around Communities of Practice (CoP)

PaulR: Etienne Wenger for example

PaulR: and now have a team of nearly 50 educators

PaulR: around the world

PaulR: who are my "co-researchers"

WadeGst16: so exciting, Paul!

PaulR: and helping us design this virtual community

MargaretR: I am not going to project this as it sometimes knocks people out of TI but here is Paul's personal statement <http://hale.pepperdine.edu/~pareynol/PARessay.htm>

SusanKT looks impressed

PaulR: where we will share best practices growing up and around the philosophy of the book

KarenGst18: It's definitely not a "Skinner Box!"

PaulR: It's really an underground movement retreat center. :)

MargaretR: There is another story that Paul suggest we look at.

MargaretR: He was me.

PaulR: At FableVision we also produce animated stories

WadeGst16: the most exciting part of Paul's research is that he's uncovering legitimate, best practice built on the cornerstone of the book....that reaches the hard-to-reach....that encourages alternative teaching and learning strategies....that integrates technology...and that results in increased achievement, plain and simple

PaulR: and this one is an example of "giving it away" again

MargaretR: <http://fablevision.com/hewasme>

PaulR: Wade is one of my co-researchers

MargaretR: It is a about 4 minutes long

PaulR: the film is very quiet

MargaretR: you are welcome to listen to it now

PaulR: usually best watched over a cup of tea. :)

MargaretR: and others can ask Paul questions

PaulR: I know several of you have seen HE WAS ME.

JulieMo: yes!

PaulS warns everyone that it is quite a touching story

ChrisWGst15: Just watched it - great little movie.

PaulR: Thanks Chris.

BrookeM: sniff sniff

PaulR: Just another way to get people to think about the gifts they were given.

PaulR passes Brooke his hankie.

ChrisWGst15: Now I feel even more depressed about not following my dreams earlier on.

KarenGst18: He Was Me is like a Zen Hurricane-- you can't help but be inspired to check back in with your North Star after you watch it.... many times....

WadeGst16: it's all about finding the diamond...and polishing it

MargaretR: so is it too late???

PaulR: Nice Karen

PaulR: It's never too late

WadeGst16: Chris, you should be thankful you're now on your way

PaulR: William Steig didn't start writing children's book until he was 72.

MargaretR: what does it take to get [off] of the routine path?

PaulR: (he wrote Shrek - the original)

MbushGst20: To answer Brooke's question about comparing other people's journeys with The North Star - on the North Star website - there's a section about Famous "North

Stars" - most of them historical figures who "followed their own path". Would be great to have kids research other famous folks, or even people in their own lives, who have followed their "north stars:"

PaulS: Whew! I still have time

PaulR: And he lived until over 100

PaulR: go Paul S!

MbushGst20: sorry to loop back around, but it took me a while to catch up on the chat, having come in late.

PaulR: Hello Maribeth!

PaulR: Another amazing educator - up in Maine

ChrisWGst15: Indeed. Hey, I finally decided this year I was going to learn to play the guitar after dreaming about it for 25+ years, so now I have a shiny red Strat, tender fingertips, and a few gray beard hairs already showing up.

PaulR: Who has been using The North Star for years

PaulR: Cool Chris

ChrisWGst15: So I guess it's never too late, even though sometimes you feel like it is.

ChrisWB: I love the other story as well

PaulR: that's what I want to do next

MbushGst20: my family's motto "It's never too late!"

PaulR: (after OMET ends!)

MbushGst20: well, I recently decided it's our motto... but still....

MargaretR: that is a good motto to have

PaulS: Chris, This is your year!

PaulR: Maribeth - might be neat to just say why you connected with The North Star

PaulR: Maribeth is a school counselor

ChrisWGst15: It's that "if only I had started sooner, think where I could have been now..." way of thinking that kills me.

MargaretR: Chris we should ask you to play for us...

MbushGst20: ok Paul, that made me laugh out loud... only because... how much time and bandwidth do you have?

MeredithN thinks Maribeth has some great stories to tell

PaulR: Well Chris - the joy is that you didn't pass up on it.

WadeGst16: lol

ChrisWGst15: Heh, get back to me in about 5 years and I'll play something for you...

MargaretR: and the technology will be there for us to play with you.

PaulR: You'll be glad you pursued it.

ChrisWGst15: Indeed.

MargaretR: what are other dreams people are pursuing?

MbushGst20: I'm a school counselor, but before that I developed an ability awareness program for Maine Easter Seals, which I implemented in public schools here in Maine... grant funded

MargaretR: great ...good for you!

MbushGst20: the goal was to help all kids understand what a disability is, but even more so, to see the abilities that everyone has

PaulR: What is great is that technology has created a community for educators who resonate with our work - to connect and share - and build tools/stories with us - like Maribeth.

MbushGst20: however, I was finding so many children focusing on what they CAN'T do... it wasn't because of disabilities, but socio-economic reasons... or, if they couldn't do something the "same" as peers, then it must not be good enough

MargaretR: Maybe we want to start some alumni and friend story telling...

MikeFurGst22: dreams? making education more global, more engaging for students

MbushGst20: I'd hear "Well, I would like to go to college some day, but I never will because my parents never went to college"

ChrisWB: love the story telling

MargaretR: Maybe we can open a room to tell stories.

BrookeM loves story time

PaulR: While the educational system lumber along with big text book publishers thinking they control the universe, wonderful innovations are sprouting up all over

MargaretR: Alumni and friends story telling room.

PaulR: because of educators like I've met in the OMET program

MargaretR: Our own north star stories.

BrookeM misses Margaret's stories the most from OMET

MbushGst20: I wanted to move the program away from being about disabilities but about abilities, overcoming challenges for ALL kids... breaking down the "can'ts" and opening the doors to "can"...

PaulR: everyone is passionate - AND connected!

SusanKT: A story room would be nice.

PaulS: great idea Margaret!

MbushGst20: I wanted to help kids to find their north stars... follow their own paths... to dream... and believe in those dreams

MargaretR: And I think that is a great gift that we can take from our speaker tonight...

PaulR: Maribeth's site is www.ucando.org

PaulR: very cool place.

PaulR: great work

PaulS: There is nothing better in the whole world than helping others see their possibilities!!

WadeGst16: incredible site, everyone

MargaretR: We can call it the Pepperdine North Star Story Room and get Mary Beth to tell her story.

MbushGst20: so, when I met Peter (yes, super lucky me!), and read The North Star for the first time, it was a very "wow" moment... because of how it touched me personally, but also because I could see how it could make a difference in the lives of so many children

WadeGst16: Marybeth's influence is felt all over the place....here in Virginia for sure

WadeGst16: she's a north star giant

PaulR: nice Margaret.

PaulS smiles

PaulS Clears throat

PaulR: Together, we're making a difference.

MargaretR: We are winding down...thank you so much Paul

MbushGst20: ok, I've completely lost track of what anyone else said while i was yammering away about my north star story - so I have to go back and read.

PaulR: You're very welcome - my pleasure really.

MargaretR: and I will set up a North Star Story telling room.

PaulS: Unbelievable that we have been together almost an hour now

MargaretR: and we can share stories.

SusanKT: Yes.. time passes quickly in TI

PaulR smiles

ChrisWB: thank you for the stories...

MargaretR: because stories of change inspire.

ChrisWGst15: Very enjoyable and inspirational session.

ChrisWB: they are powerful!

MargaretR: and we have the power to change.

PaulS: we do want to bring the session to a formal close so we don't wear out Paul R

MeredithN: Thank you Paul and Maribeth

PaulR: Glad to share

PaulS: He's on the east coast you know

SusanKT: Thanks Paul!

MbushGst20: you're welcome!

PaulR: And I do think inspiration is key

MbushGst20: I'm glad I came, even if I was late

PaulR: None of us can give up

MargaretR listens the loud applause in the room.

KtoGst14: Thanks Paul(s)

PaulR: the mission is too important.

JulieMo: Thanks so much for hosting this event!

BrookeM: Thank you!!

PaulS: We do want to thank Paul R from the bottom of our hearts

JayWy: thanks

ChrisWB: thanks!

PaulS: How 'bout a hip hip...

WadeGst16: thank you Paul

MargaretR is so pleased you came this month and invite you all back for next month.

ChrisWGst15: TY

MeredithN: Hurrah

PaulR: Feel free to stay in touch - paul@fablevision.com

DeboraJ: Thanks!

MargaretR: when we will have another speaker.

PaulS: hooray!

PaulR: Thanks all for coming.

WadeGst16: hoooooray!

MargaretR: watch your email for announcements

MargaretR: and do come to the story telling room.

MeredithN: See you later

PaulR lets OMET confetti fall from ceiling

MargaretR: bye Meredith

PaulS: Hang out longer and chat if you have time

DebbyK: Great job Paul R!

PaulS: And we will continue next month

PaulR: for OMET in July. :)

ChrisWGst15: Do any of the OMET folks use video iChat for collaboration?

PaulR: Thanks Deb

MargaretR: yes we have some great ideas for upcoming open houses.

PaulS: Please send any ideas for this time to me psparks@psparks.com

MargaretR: yes Chris

PaulS: For questions about the program pleas go back to the reception area

PaulS: Thanks again for sharing the evening with us