

# alternate Newsletter

The BC Alternate Education Association: A PSA of the BCTF

Volume 33 Number 1, Spring 2022

## Out of Their Heads...

Michele Genge

### Inside:

- 2 *President's Message*
- 4 *Generational Trauma*
- 6 *Teach Like a Ranger*
- 6 *Award Winners*
- 14 *Sharing Resources*
- 19 *Contact Information*
- 20 *The Last Word*

Out of their heads and into their bodies: out of their phones and into the wilderness.

In my many years in alternate education, I have learned to keep my ears open

and pounce on unexpected opportunities. That was the case at the beginning of September when, with my hand on the door to leave a meeting with our new Student Services principal, Sean Lamouroux, I heard, "I have to ...continued on page 3



# President's Message

*Mike Shaw*



This is a bittersweet moment for me. After 34 years in School District #23, and nearly 32 years as an alternate education teacher, I'm retiring at the end of June. As a consequence of that decision, I cannot fulfil the final year in my current term as president as I will no longer be a full time teacher and therefore, according to our constitution, I cannot be a table officer. Tianay de Andrade, our capable Vice President, has graciously allowed the BCAEA to appoint her as Acting President beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> for the remainder of my term. She will serve you well in that capacity. I will still be involved in the association, just wearing my other hat as Publications Manager.

Over my 19 years with the BCAEA, and my 12 years serving as president, I can honestly say I have enjoyed every single minute. The personal and professional growth as a result of my involvement has been substantial, and the opportunity to work with the amazing people on the executive, both past and present, who collectively selflessly donate many hundreds of hours every year, has been one of the highlights of my career. I am pleased and proud to call them my friends.

But what an immensely rich, rewarding, and wonderful journey those decades in alter-

nate have been! I had a temporary assignment teaching Math and Computer Science at Rutland Senior Secondary (I trained to be a woodwork teacher!) when the new principal, Bob Lindsay, was looking to start an alternate program. It sounded interesting, especially since I had two very smart younger brothers who didn't graduate because they didn't fit in the mainstream. I stopped teaching in the main school on a Friday, and on the following Monday opened my door in a portable classroom on the edge of the school grounds with eight students. Little did I know that an incredible career had just begun.

And the fun began! Everyone started on Math 10A [remember that course?], and we quickly jelled as a small group. The original admin thinking was that these kids were somehow "broken" and I was going to fix them and send them back to mainstream. But it quickly became apparent that the differences from mainstream we put in place in the alternate program were what was responsible for the student's newfound success. Put them back in mainstream without those modifications and the same old problematic behaviours reappeared.

So we added numbers, and added two more teachers, and exported *...continued on page 17*

## Out of Their Heads

*(continued from page 1)*

find a way to spend all this Mental Health money”. Slam on the brakes, reverse, and pursue.

Overnight I wrote and submitted a Highland Mental Health Grant Proposal for Out of their heads and into their bodies: Out of their phones and into the wilderness. The rationale was that physical activity has been shown to be as effective as medication for treating depression and anxiety. Disconnecting from technology and reconnecting with nature reduces stress and increases wellbeing. The idea was funding for five days targeting small group of at-risk students at Highland. Remove them from digital connection and provide them with novel outdoor experiences. Within two days I received approval and we were off to the races.

In September a group of Advantage students went to Strathcona Park Lodge for a day of high ropes, zipline, and canoeing; in November they went to Air House in Nanaimo for a day of trampolining; at the end of January, they spent a day tubing on Mount Washington. All in the company of an LST, Family and Youth Care worker, and program EA. At Strathcona Park Lodge they were able to feast on a buffet of organic, locally sourced food; for Air House we purchased nutritious wraps from a local Mexican restaurant, and Mount Washington provided packed lunches for tubing.

The response has been overwhelming joy and excitement for new experiences and group bonding. Connel reflected, “It was good to get a break from school that was not a weekend. The ...*continued on page 18*

Reconnect-  
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nature  
reduces  
stress



# Generational Trauma: The Impact of Covid

Dr. Shimi Kang

**M**any things are passed down from one generation to the next. You could have an heirloom that's been in your family for multiple generations, or you could have inherited your grandmother's eyes. But traits and memorabilia aren't the only things passed down through the generations. Generational Trauma refers to the impact that trauma in one generation can have on the generations that come after it.

The term "generational trauma" has been used frequently in the media lately. We often hear this term when discussing medical conditions that are more prevalent in communities of colour due to trauma from past generations. However, generational trauma can impact anyone in a variety of ways.

## What is generational trauma?

It's hard to define generational trauma as it can present in various ways. For example, a new generation could be impacted by the trauma experienced by the generation before them through the parenting styles of the adults who experienced the trauma. We see this in the case of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis youth impacted by the residential schools in Canada despite not having attended a physical school themselves. The traumas experienced by the parents and grandparents directly impact today's school-aged children. You may

have heard this referred to as Intergenerational Trauma, another term for generational trauma or transgenerational trauma.

Generational trauma can also come from further down the family line, where the generation experiencing the impacts of the original trauma never actually meet those who experienced it. For instance, this could be the lasting impact of a horrific event on a great-grandparent. The new generation may not directly interact with the survivor, but the effects of the trauma are still felt. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors experience more significant psychiatric distress even though they did not personally experience the Holocaust, nor did their parents. Generational trauma is passed down through DNA at a cellular level. The study of genetics is called Epigenetics. Scientists who specialize in this field say that the trauma and stress experienced by parents and grandparents alter the genetics of future generations.

## How does generational trauma impact health?

Generational trauma leaves lasting impacts on the DNA of future generations. A study of worms even found that trauma lasted in the DNA for over ten generations. What do these effects look like?

Ultimately, trauma and stress increase the stress hormones, such as cortisol,

*Generational  
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lasting  
impacts*

in our bodies and cause us to exist in a prolonged state of fight, flight or freeze. This constant state of stress impacts our mental and physical health. Generational trauma can look like increased rates of anxiety and depression or even an increased rate of Type 2 diabetes. Triggers can cause stressful reactions, and the individual experiencing the trigger may not even know why it's upsetting or frightening to them because it's coded into their DNA.

I recently wrote in Drishti Magazine that I believe my father's experience with trauma during the partition of Punjab has affected my own genetic disorder and chronic pain.

### **How might COVID-19 impact future generations?**

We're all experiencing a state of prolonged stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we experience another wave thanks to the Omicron variant, we worry about the impact on our youth. Children are living through a global pandemic and experiencing it firsthand. Due to the new variant, they're experiencing school closures and uncertainty, mask mandates, racial prejudice, hospitalization, and even death. It's safe to say that this prolonged state of stress will have a lasting impact on how our society functions. However, how much of an effect it has on the genetic DNA of future generations is up to us.

### **What you can do to help reduce the generational trauma caused by COVID-19**

Many parents and grandparents are wondering how to help children cope. We need to find ways to help today's youth manage the stress of this pandemic as it will impact future generations to come.

Try these tips to reduce stress in your life and the life of the children around you:

- **Be kind to others.** Show compassion towards others to reduce stress in public places and social gatherings.
- **Be kind to yourself.** Model self-care to your children. Take time to eat healthily, practise mindfulness and journaling, get enough sleep, talk about your feelings, and exercise. All these things may seem simple and trivial at first, but they genuinely help reduce the stress hormones in our bodies and help our children learn valuable coping skills.
- **Stay connected.** We may be distancing and avoiding groups right now, but staying connected is important. Maintaining connection with loved ones helps boost our mood and happiness and improve the emotional health and wellbeing of others. Opt for walks or video chats instead of social media feeds. On the topic of connection, make sure you stay up to date on the latest news and think criti- *...continued on page 19*

*Reduce stress in your life and the life of the children around you*

# How—and Why—I Teach Like a Park Ranger

James Fester

**D**uring a recent workshop, a teacher talked about how, despite her best efforts, students weren't interested in participating in classroom discussions.

"They just didn't want to share," she explained. "The silence was deafening."

I told her that I had experienced a similar challenge when I led tours at Angel Island State Park in California. The park rangers taught me that the key to lively discourse was starting out by asking questions that everyone could answer, then after everyone was warmed up, try getting into questions that required more thinking.

"That actually might work," the teacher said. Then, after a momentary pause, she followed up with "What else did the park rangers teach you?"

Classroom teachers can learn a great deal from the educational approaches used in our nation's public lands. One program, Teacher Ranger Teacher (TRT), was created specifically to forge stronger links between students and national parks by giving their teachers access to training and resources provided by the National Park Service.

The benefits of these partnerships go both ways. Parks make inroads into communities that may not be likely to visit, and they gain a teacher's perspective on their educational programming. The teachers walk away with

new resources for their classrooms, graduate credits, a stipend, and a better understanding of how to teach like a ranger.

While informal learning in a national park might seem like a dramatic departure from brick-and-mortar education, my TRT program helped me realize just how much classroom teachers can benefit from integrating methods used by park rangers to facilitate learning experiences for the people who visit them every year.

## **Four Key Strategies I Took From My Experience**

1. Create an audience-centered experience. A ranger never knows who will be joining them on any given day, so programs are influenced by the knowledge, interests, and participation of their group. While the learning goals remain constant, the way the lesson is taught varies from group to group. This results in an individualized experience where interests and questions guide learning.

In the classroom: lessons, activities, and projects should always be designed with students at the center. What interests do your students share, and can these be leveraged? If you're looking to teach your students about identifying themes in a story, can you model this with a popular movie, graphic novel, or television show? Got a classroom full of budding Jedi? Maybe Star Wars is a way to engage students in thinking about literary themes such as

*The way  
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group to  
group*

the perils of reliance on technology or the power of collaboration.

Occasionally, rangers make use of teachable moments that occur along the way, like chance encounters with animals. Planning connections between students and curriculum is important, but teachable moments occur spontaneously. If you're teaching about ancient cultures, like those in China or Greece, you might discover students who have traveled to those locations or have family who live there who could play the roles of a guest speaker or outside expert. Be open to their inclusion!

2. Identify a reason for learning through places. Each of the 423 national park units was established because they contained an important natural or cultural resource. Essentially, there is some story that each park tells, and rangers share it through educational programs. Rangers always connect their lessons to something observable or tangible, ensuring that visitor are aware that they are learning for a purpose. This kind of place-based learning is a hallmark of park education.

In the classroom: Try to focus lessons on authentic, observable phenomena or real places. Students shouldn't learn just for an upcoming test or to ensure good grades. Make class content matter to students by connecting it to the world outside. This creates better engagement,

contextualizes the reasons for learning, and ultimately helps ignite and sustain curiosity.

Try starting off units, lessons, or projects with a kickoff that sparks curiosity and gets students asking questions. A video of a rafting trip through the Grand Canyon is a great way to illustrate geologic time scale, for example. Exploring a map of geospatial data from bear sightings in Yosemite provides a real-world example of how sampling can be used to predict population numbers using statistics.

3. Create free-choice learning opportunities. Visitors to national parks learn informally through a multitude of methods. Outside of participating in ranger-led programs, there are visitor centers with exhibits, interpretive roadside panels, and cell phone-based audio tours and apps. This creates a learning ecosystem with a multitude of learning choices based on personal preference.

In the classroom: These kinds of multimodal learning experiences follow the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, creating better learning outcomes for all through greater access.

This might look like a teacher setting up a free-choice experience exploring any topic of their choosing through multiple stations that students rotate between. These stations could include *...continued on page 16*

*Make  
use of  
teachable  
moments  
along the  
way*

# Student Awards

*Tianay de Andrade, BCAEA Awards Chair*

## \$1000 Bursary Award Winners

**R**esilience, growth, and challenges overcome. These themes resonate over and over in the stories we are privileged to read as part of the application process for the awards your association distributes each year. It is always so uplifting to read about the positive changes an alternate program and its amazingly talented, caring staff can make in the life of a once-struggling student. ♦



### **Amber Fieldhouse**

Amber is a resilient and compassionate young woman with an incredible work ethic and is a strong advocate for others, encouraging them to strive for their success. In September, she will begin the Education Assistant and Community Support program at Camosun College. Her goal is to work with students who have complex cognitive disabilities.



### **Kalysta LaMarche**

As a result of family trauma, Kalysta has spent most of her childhood in Ministry care and has become a fierce advocate for children and youth in care. Kalysta's plan is to attend the University of the Fraser Valley and complete the Social Work program so that she can provide support to young people when they need it most.



### **Sasha Mattheys**

Sasha completed Gr. 11 & 12 in Alt. She has learned to manage her emotions and behaviour by taking responsibility for her choices and actions. Sasha's personal changes have allowed her to feel more empowered. She has worked hard towards her academic goals and she has been accepted by Langara where she will pursue her goal of becoming a nurse.





### **Stella Vidal**

Stella has attended ILC Broadmead since Grade 9 and has overcome a variety of challenges. A strong, independent student, Stella always creates very high-quality work. Her deep care and empathy for others will serve her well in the future as she works toward a career in nursing.



### **Mariah Weisz**

Mariah is a positive role model for others as she demonstrates the qualities of an engaged, socially conscious citizen in our school community while attaining top academic marks and living with debilitating chronic pain for the last two years. She attends school and supports herself by working full time. She'll be attending Capilano University in the fall.

## *\$1000 Liz Louwersheimer Memorial Award*

**A**warded annually in loving memory of our dear friend, Liz, to honour her many years of contributions to alternate education and your association, and her passion for mental health and other helping professions.



### **Aysiah Brewster**

Aysiah has worked hard to overcome personal and family challenges with mental health and addiction. Aysiah's time spent in Ministry care has motivated her to pursue training as a community support worker or Educational Assistant. Her career goal is to find meaningful work supporting people struggling with homelessness and addiction. .

## \$200 Student Achievement Award Winners

**A**lternate programs can bring about change for the better in students enrolled in them. Every year we award fifteen deserving students \$200 to recognize the positive changes they are making in their lives. This year's crop of winners are, once again, exemplary examples of what alternate does best. ♦



### **Alabama Andrews Bianchin**

Alabama is a hard-working, thoughtful, creative and kind student who has consistently participated in a variety of extra-curricular activities at ILC such as Queer Club and arts and crafts afternoons. They are an excellent artist, drawing and wearing bold and colourful outfits, and are a thoughtful contributor to classroom discussions.



### **Desiree Berry-Tilley**

Desiree was raised by her Grandma from a young age and life was not always easy. She has overcome traumatic events by using the supports and coping skills she learned in Alt. She has remained focused on her goals to graduate on schedule and attend a post-secondary school for music production.



### **Lola Borland**

At first, Lola was hesitant to come to alternate because of the change of environment and not knowing anyone, but has grown to embrace this new experience and is meeting, and even exceeding, many of the academic goals she set. Lola enjoys feeling a new connectedness towards school and has the long-term goal of studying marine biology.



### **Mattias Ceron**

Mattias Ceron is a goal-oriented grade 11 student. He was able to finish his regular classes by the end of January in order to enter a Metal-Mechanical program in the winter and finally a Welding program at North Island College in September. He is a hard worker with a lot of drive and determination. He is also an avid snowboarder.



### **Jamie Charlie**

Jamie came to our school having experienced significant trauma in his childhood. His earlier school years were wrought with frustration, leading to shutting down and eventually nonattendance. After completing a variety of our trades programs, Jamie blossomed in his self-assuredness, his attendance and his academic progress.



### **Isaiah Chiles**

Isaiah Chiles is a grade 12 student at Highland Secondary. His mechanical aptitude has allowed him to spend his second semester starting an Automotive Technician program at North Island College in Campbell River. In his spare time, he works alongside his uncle who is a Red Seal auto mechanic, and goes dirt biking.



### **Will Ezekiel**

Will Ezekiel is a resourceful, resilient grade 11 student at Highland Secondary. He works incredibly hard at both school and any part time jobs he secures. He is an avid fisherman and downhill skier. He is completing a Trades Sampler this semester and hopes to eventually pursue a career in construction.

## \$200 Student Achievement Award Winners

*(Continued from previous page)*



### **Melissa (Saturn) Guerra Alva**

Melissa experienced anxiety and periods of self-isolation due to difficulty relating to and communicating with their peers. School life was a frustrating struggle. After a few years in the quiet, self-paced alternate education environment, feeling accepted and respected, Melissa found the courage to cross-enrol in the neighbourhood high school.



### **Violet Habing**

Violet is a strong, independent student. Because of her love of animals, she hopes to work as a wildlife rehabilitator, on a wildlife preserve, or breed and train services dogs after finishing school. Violet also has a strong love for music and will use the award to purchase a violin and learn to play.



### **Rey Laferriere**

Rey Laferriere began attending the ILC in search of a less overwhelming education setting to support them with their learning and personal needs. Not only is Rey focused on earning their credits, but they have also been striving to improve on their mental health and mindset. Rey is a classroom leader and has made tremendous strides.



### **Olivia Martinez**

Olivia is a dedicated and well-rounded student who is involved in many extra-curricular activities and hobbies including playing guitar, art and social groups at school including the Queer Club at ILC. Since starting at ILC, Olivia has worked hard to persevere through personal challenges and with her academic goals.



### **Ivan Osadchiy**

Ivan started elementary school as an English Language Learner. After elementary and middle school, Ivan enrolled in New West's alternate programs (RCAP and then POWER Secondary). Ivan works hard to achieve the high standards that he sets for himself. He has taken a range of courses including Pre-Calculus, Chemistry, and Physics, while maintaining an 86% average.



### **Stephen Peterson**

Stephen has engaged in many of the opportunities at ILC here such as a leadership group, cross-enrolment with a neighbourhood school, and the trades foundation (TASK) program. Stephen has also recently applied for the Education Assistant and Community Support training program (a VIU and district partnership).



### **Johnny Sylvester**

Johnny has been a student at ILC since 2018, and during that time has worked hard to further his personal growth and development. Johnny has participated in the TASK trades foundation program, an Indigenous youth leadership group, and accessed many of the supports and opportunities available through our school.



### **Eric Walter**

Eric has made tremendous strides in strengthening his focus and emotional regulation skills. He continues to display an incredible ability to make strong connections with staff members and utilize the supports available to complete his core course work. He is a kind, energetic soul.

# Sharing Resources With Your School Community

Vivian Hernandez

**T**his past school year a lot of educators tapped into their professional learning networks (PLNs) for help with things like figuring out how to make distance learning work or how to make students feel comfortable at school during a time of intense upheaval. A lot of this help came in the form of teacher-created videos or other online content. Creating these resources can be a valuable way to help your school community and fellow teachers going forward.

Now you may be thinking, “But that YouTube video or website I found online is so much better than the video or site I can make.” While the production values may be different, the one irreplaceable thing that those fancy resources cannot compete with is you. Students, parents, and peer teachers are more willing to listen to someone they trust than a stranger. Individuals that are in a community will be able to produce the overall best materials because they know and understand the needs of their own.

There may be hesitation in how to get started and comfortable in either video or audio recordings. My best advice is, don't be afraid to be vulnerable. Making mistakes is part of the process. Once I embraced that reality and read a few articles, such as “7 Tips for Teaching With Videos,” I started to feel more confident. The simple answer to getting started is to be yourself, practice a few times, and then do the best you can.

When I was a career and technical education business teacher, I built a very simple Google Site to share information with the parents about what would be taking place in the classroom. A Google Site is a free website platform for beginners with templates. Little did I know, but other educators were checking out my site and were inspired to reach out to me for help as they were moving into the classroom. I was happily surprised and wanted to help anyone I could. This initiative helped expand my own PLN.

From there, I decided that I would continue to create web content for my school communities. The platforms I use to build connections with others are a combination of Google Sites, a YouTube channel, and a Wakelet, along with other ed-tech tools.

## **Three ways to share resources with your school community and beyond**

**1. Google Sites:** Google Sites is my starting-off point because it easily works with the whole Google Suite and it's free. Adding Google-based slide presentations, sheets of data, and documents is simple when you use Google Sites. You can embed videos into the site itself along with PDFs, images, and buttons for easy navigation. You can make your site completely public and accessible to everyone or choose to make it private and accessible to only a few people.



Don't  
be afraid  
to be  
vulnerable

# Unity and Beyond

**2. YouTube:** I love posting videos on YouTube because I can create a YouTube playlist with one link that has all of the videos someone may need. For example, I have a “tip of the week” and a troubleshooting tech playlist. Whether your videos are public or unlisted, it’s easy to share them. You don’t need to worry about special permissions. A public video is open to anyone on YouTube that may come across the channel, while an unlisted video will be seen only if you give the viewer the direct link to it.

If you are into app smashing, or the collaboration of ed-tech tools working together, then YouTube is definitely the way to go. Edpuzzle and Screencastify have partnerships with YouTube to make posting videos easier and faster while also being able to embed questions to check for understanding. After I upload my videos to YouTube, I have the ability to share the videos through various means such as linking or embedding the video on a Google Site, a learning management system, or Wakelet. I also have the option to show the video during live sessions. When I was learning how to use YouTube, I used the YouTube Help Center for guidance.

**3. Wakelet:** Wakelet is a newer ed-tech tool that allows you to make a collection of resources from different places in one set location. You can build collections with videos, tweets, links, Flipgrids, PDFs, and so much more. It’s very similar to a Google Site. However, I have used Wakelet Col-

lection on my Google Site to showcase resources in a unique way that’s different from a hyperdoc. Sharing your Wakelet Collections with others is so easy that you can even embed your collection into your learning management system, such as Schoology. My favorite thing is, as I update my Wakelet Collection, it updates it wherever it was embedded as well.

All the tools mentioned are great starting-off points for anyone looking to share their resources with others. If your school or district has a digital learning coach or instructional technology specialist, reaching out to them would be another great step, as they would be happy to help with advice. If you’re a self-learner, you can also use free resources such as the Google for Education Teacher Center and the Microsoft for Education Teacher Center.

This past year I actively created videos and resources called digital learning sites for parents and students, with another version for teachers. I have received many compliments from the community because they can access the help all in one place on their own time. I learned that your resources do not need to be perfect to build connections with others or to be seen as valuable. The real value comes from your genuine care for your community and your willingness to help others. ♦

*Real  
value  
comes  
from your  
genuine  
care*



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*Originally published June 4, 2021 © Edutopia.org;  
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## Teach Like a Park Ranger

*[continued from page 7]*

videos, interactive websites, readings, or teacher-led lessons. While each station differs in design, focus remains on the learning goal so that students come away having built the same knowledge while still having their preferences addressed.

4. Invite students into learning. Ranger programs are just one of many activities available to park guests, and participation is optional. A guest can leave at any time, meaning that rangers need to hook their audience and keep them interested or they might end up teaching chipmunks instead. To incentivize participants to stay, rangers use dialogic methods of teaching that begin with easy-to-answer, low-stakes invitations into learning and progress to more challenging discussion-based questions. This

approach ensures that the “asks” of the learner increase gradually, inviting further engagement and participation.

In the classroom: Begin challenging lessons or projects with low-stakes activities or ice-breakers where everyone will be successful. Collaborative games or watching a short video combined with a See-Think-Wonder protocol can serve as invitations into more difficult or challenging aspects in a gradual, scaffolded way. This also builds a supportive culture where once student confidence is built up, teachers can challenge students with activities requiring critical thinking or collaboration to complete. ♦

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## President's Message

*[continued from page 2]*

our method to other schools in the district which started their own alternate programs. We had incredibly tight-knit groups of students each year. The excitement was palpable as students learned that they could be successful in school if only the school adapted to meet their needs. We had many students earn the Principal's List of Distinction.

Over the decades the wonderful memories kept piling up. Like the year I turned 40. I could tell the students were up to something on my birthday, I just couldn't figure out what. Unusually, I saw a few of them hanging around as I walked to my truck in the staff parking lot at the end of the day. Imagine my surprise to find the cab filled with 40 balloons, as the perpetrators jumped out from behind parked cars and shouted. "Happy Birthday!" A colleague had "borrowed" my truck at lunch in order to let them stuff the balloons in the cab.

Or like when, fifteen years after she graduated, one of my first students came back to town to look me up, thanking me for never giving up on her, for making a difference in her life, and catching me up on what she had done since grad. I am not ashamed to say she made me cry in Starbucks!

Or like when my wife, who at the time was a Bencher with the Law Society, did the swearing in ceremony for a former student as he became a lawyer and was called to the bar.

Over the years I have had teaching partners who have made a fun job even more so, and to them I owe a debt of gratitude for putting up with my foibles and idiosyncrasies. A shout-out to Russ Medland, Al Southward, Sharon Francis, John Grain and my current teaching partner, Christine Thygesen. All of them have made the job immeasurably more rewarding. I am blessed to still go to work each day with a smile on my face, put a really bad dad joke on the board, and try to figure out how best to help this year's crop of kids on their journey towards grad. It never gets old.

So welcome to Tianay de Andrade as the incoming Acting President. After stints on the Executive as Treasurer, Awards Chair, and Vice President, she is more than capable and very well-suited for performing the job of President. She will do us all proud.

This isn't really goodbye. You will still see me at the Challenge & Change Conference, likely behind the registration desk, or helping out nearby. Look for the tall guy with the much greyer moustache than it once was.

In the meantime, now that the pandemic seems to be becoming endemic [fingers crossed!], resuming travel beckons. My wife and I plan to get out more in our fifth wheel, see more of the kids and granddaughters in Antigonish, Nova Scotia and Cranbrook, explore more of this wonderful world, and continue to practice our Spanish in Mexico.

iHasta pronto! ♦

## Out of Their Heads

[continued from page 3]

Never give  
up on your  
dreams

pressure was let off". Jet echoed sentiments: "I liked being outdoors better than a classroom. I really enjoyed physical challenges. "Another student who was new to Advantage and struggling enormously at school was thrilled with tubing. Derek noticed, "We bundled together going down. I made a new friend".

Our last trip in the spring will be an overnight canoe trip in May. Never give up on your dreams. At some point the stars align and they come true. ♦

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**Michele Genge** teaches in the Advantage Program at Highland Secondary in Comox. She is also the BCAEA Secretary.



# Generational Trauma

(continued from page 5)

cally about your information sources. Set up time limits on how much news you take in per day to avoid burnout or overwhelm. There's a happy medium for staying connected and informed. Too little, and you can worry you're unaware of restrictions or start believing sources that aren't credible. However, too much overwhelms your stress response, and you can find yourself in a pandemic panic.

If you're struggling with the stress of the pandemic and want help, or you're worried about your kids and would like additional support, I'm always here to help. Reach out and connect with me for clinical help. Additionally, pick up a copy of *The*

*Dolphin Parent* or *The Tech Solution* to get valuable insight on how to help your child navigate stress and build resiliency in the modern world.

Please visit [www.dolphinkids.ca](http://www.dolphinkids.ca) for more information. We have counsellors who specialize in alternate education and do not have wait lists. ♦

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**Dr. Shimi Kang** is an Award-winning, Harvard-educated, Psychiatrist, Scientist, Bestselling Author, and Speaker. Using principles of neuroscience and over 20 years of field experience, Dr. Kang develops science-based methodologies that help improve innovation, leadership, wellness, and resilience.

There's  
a happy  
medium  
for staying  
connected

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# The Last Word

*Sean Blake*



I hope this newsletter reaches you well, and you are all enjoying the spring weather. I always relish this time of year when the successes of our students really come into focus, and all the hard work they have done really pays off. It has been an interesting few years, and although we came up with some creative solutions to graduation, I could not be more excited to celebrate it in-person this year. Our students are some of the most resilient individuals I have ever met, and no one deserves a celebration more than they do.

Thinking about this in-person celebration only reminds me just how long it has been since we have been able to connect with any of you and leads me to my next point.

One conversation that keeps coming up among our executive committee is how we can best support our members and what format of communication would have the greatest reach. Without an in-person conference for the last two years, it has become more apparent that our newsletter does not have the reach that it used to. We have noticed that fewer and fewer of

you have opted for a physical copy of the newsletter and even less are opening and clicking on the digital link we send out via MailChimp.

So we are wondering if there is a better format we could implement. With that in mind, I am hoping to get your input as our valued members. What platforms (Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook) are you using? Would you like a more interactive forum for sharing resources and stories? What other ideas do you have for the Association?

I would love to hear from anyone who has suggestions to help get a sense of what ways we could best serve you. Please feel free to email me at [editor@bcaea.com](mailto:editor@bcaea.com) with any questions, concerns, suggestions, or praises! Everything we work so hard on is for our members, and we hate to think we are not reaching as many of you as we could be.

Have a wonderful end of the year! ♦

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