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Section V

POD Values: Reflections from the 1993 Conference

The 1993 conference theme, “Unveiling Inherent Values, Invigorating Values Inquiry in Classrooms, Curricula, and Campus Life” was addressed in the three plenary sessions at the conference. Johnella Butler’s, “Report Card on Diversity,” is included in section II of this volume. Bill Berquist’s and Kathleen McGrory’s presentations were so intimately related to the audience at the conference that I have included them here in that personal, spoken format.

Bill Berquist, who served for one hour as the first executive director of POD, began his remarks by refreshing our memories about the beginnings of POD. He talks about the planning of an early 1970’s conference at Wingspread which brought together professionals involved with faculty, instructional, and organizational development. The conference participants formed a new organization, the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, and elected Joan North as the first “real” executive director.

In his further remarks Berquist describes four academic cultures all or several of which may exist in an institution. Berquist goes on to unveil the unconscious values embedded in each of the cultures which helps us to understand the interactions among those cultures within an institution. He suggests that we create dialogues from the discussions around equity and social justice in our institutions, that we “practice what we preach by listening more carefully and attempting to understand and more fully appreciate the rich and complex values associated

with each of the four cultures of our contemporary colleges and universities.”

Kathleen McGrory, Executive Director of the Society for Values in Higher Education, spent the 1993 conference listening to POD members and attending sessions to get a sense of the values of POD. In her capstone address she presented “An Outsider’s View of POD Values—and of POD’s Value to the Academy.”

I was happy to hear that Dr. McGrory found that our values, as stated in the POD Mission Statement, do match our behaviors. According to McGrory, POD’s concerns “mirror the national concerns of higher education today.” In conclusion she challenges us to, “Let the leadership of higher education know that [we] are a major institutional resource.”