



CASEA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Ottawa, Ontario – June 1, 2015

MARGARET HAUGHEY MASTER'S THESIS AWARD COMMITTEE REPORT

The Margaret Haughey Master's Thesis Award is presently annually by CASEA to the author of the best master's thesis, report, project, or graduating paper completed in the area of educational administration and leadership completed at a Canadian university during the previous year. The purpose of the award is to recognize superior research and writing by master's degree students working in the area of educational administration and leadership.

Committee Members

Dr. Donald Scott, University of Calgary (Chairperson)

Dr. Shelleyann Scott, University of Calgary

Dr. Charles Webber, Mount Royal University

Review Process

The call for submissions was made on the CASEA Listserv in December, 2016 and the Awards section of the CASEA website was updated. Six nominations were received by the January 22nd deadline. All three committee members reviewed each of the nominations on the basis of five criteria: significance of the topic to the field, methodological design, quality and articulation of the theoretical or conceptual framework, significance and coherence of the conclusions, as well as writing quality and organization of the work. The Committee met on April 25th, 2015 to make a decision on the award.

Award Recipient

The Committee's selection for this year's winner of the Margaret Haughey Master's Award is Ayodeji T. Osiname. Mr. Osiname's thesis entitled: *The Effect of the School Principal in Creating an Inclusive School Culture During Times of Change and Challenge* was supervised and nominated by Dr. Helen Armstrong, Emeritus Professor, Faculty of Education at Brandon University, Manitoba, Canada.

The Thesis

The study explored the leadership styles utilized by five principals to encourage and sustain inclusive school cultures in schools in southwestern Manitoba. A critical, inclusive praxis framework underpinned this research which encompassed culture, change, leadership, inclusion, and challenges in leading in complex school contexts. The data were collected through interviews with school principals to explore their lived experiences and patterns of behavior related to leading inclusion. Findings indicated that collaboration and dialogue were key in building positive relationships and fostering safe and caring environments. Principals created positive cultures where stakeholders felt valued, safe, respected, and included while also adopting a growth mindset.

In reviewing this thesis, the committee was impressed with the importance of the topic given how many educators and leaders are struggling to create positive and productive inclusive school environments. This student's methodology chapter was clearly written and well-supported by current literature. His attention to methodological detail was exemplary and his explanations were clear. The presentation of the case studies and then the major emergent themes was interesting and well aligned with interpretive approaches. The findings were clearly articulated and made for easy reading. The summary and conclusion chapter presented a seamless discussion of the findings that wove together findings and key points from the literature. His final chapter provides an unambiguous set of lessons learned that others can utilize in their pursuit of establishing positive inclusive environments. On a final note, the attention to detail with APA referencing and his scholarly writing capacity were exemplary and was particularly impressive given that Mr. Osiname is an international student. His fluent style made the thesis easy to read and follow.

On behalf of CASEA, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Shelleyann Scott and Dr. Charles Webber for their careful work in reviewing the six nominations and helping to select the 2016 Margaret Haughey Master's Thesis Award winner.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Scott', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Donald E Scott (PhD)
Chair, Margaret Haughey Award Committee