

Dream it! Do it!

By Chris Dong

“Have you ever had a dream?” The answer is obviously, “Yes.” However, if I further asked you, “Have you ever made your dream come true?”, the answer could be different, “Yes”, “No” or “Not yet” and so on.

According to Dr. Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, dream is the subjective experience of images, sound/voice, thoughts or sensations during sleep. Fear, desires and emotions that we are usually unaware of make themselves known through dream. Every action and thought is motivated by your unconscious mind.

In our daily life, we always have a great deal of dreams about our family, career and everything as we move through life. We can usually make our dreams come true to some extent. In my point of view, our success originates from our dreams; furthermore, we should put our dream and idea into action step by step until they come true. Just like John B. Herrington, a former NASA astronaut, put his dream into action successfully.

Recently, Mr. John Herrington, who is the first Native American astronaut, had a special presentation at Vancouver Community College as part of a series to celebrate Year of Science in B.C. His speech “Living Your Dream” told us his amazing story. During his teenage years, his father, who had a small plane and was an excellent pilot, affected him greatly. When he looked up at the stars, his mind flew higher and higher in the blue sky and planted a seed of dream into his heart. From that time, he put his dream into daily actions and paved a way to his dream achievement. From 1984 to 1996, he was designated a Patrol Plane Commander Mission Commander and was selected by NASA. In November 23, 2002, he achieved his dream by becoming a member of STS-113 Endeavour at the International Space Station. During the 14-day mission, he performed three walks in outer space for a total of nearly 20 hours, so he has gotten a few special honors.

John Herrington’s glorious career did not stop when he left NASA. His dream successfully transferred from astronaut in sky to education on Earth. On August 13, 2005, he embarked on a 4,184 kilometers bicycle ride from northwest to southeast USA. His dream is still on the move in order to propagate doctrines of his new passion and mission, which are to promote and encourage students’ participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Herrington said, “The generation that grew up in the age of the Apollo program and the journey to the moon was motivated by the excitement of space. The possibilities to explore the unknown and make new discoveries still exist.” Furthermore, he especially pointed out more important things that we should do *now*. “We must motivate students to learn and have a way to connect what they learn to what they do on a daily basis.”

At the end of his presentation, Herrington quoted a well-known American writer Henry David Thoreau: “Dreams are the touchstones of our character (...). Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. (...) if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams and endeavors to live the life he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.” Based

on his goal and action, Herrington is doing his PhD. Yesterday, he built a successful career; today, he must make his new dream true.

It is becoming a serious social issue when there are more and more teenage dropouts at the present. All of us should pay attention to it and find out effective solutions. Herrington has a great passion to inspire students who have a fantastic dream to seek out exciting opportunities, make an effort and take action, both mental and physical, to accomplish their goals.

In terms of John Herrington's glorious dream and successful career, you and I, who are new immigrants, are in a whole new environment in Canada. Before we came here, we had a good career, respected reputation and high level of social status. However, nowadays we have to rent an apartment and bargain with the landlord about gains and losses, and we use our poor English to talk with the bank officers about complicated financial statements. We are always in the doghouse when we misunderstand their intentions. We have no background, no co-workers, no relatives, and few friends and acquaintances. We go back to square one, and we go in circles. We ask ourselves, "What will my next step be and where is my future?"

It is a big problem for us. As far as I am concerned, your life is in your own hands. Herrington's successful career encourages students including me. When I landed in Canada, it was like turning a new leaf rather than a nightmare. I should turn a big challenge into a good opportunity. I have the same dream as before. Even though I could have made it in my home country, I can reach my goal again in Canada. I should do my best to learn English well and then find a suitable job that matches my education and experience; furthermore, I must have well-being and a happy life in future.

I once read an article titled "Many Stories, One Story". It said that from the past to now, there have been great deals of immigrants who have landed in Canada. They came from all over the world and had different backgrounds, experiences and stories, but in the new land, all the immigrants have the same goal. They want to have success and a better life. Before Columbus found the new land, all Europeans thought there were paths of gold and good luck everywhere. "The American Dream" was a goal that all of the pioneers and immigrants looked for in their whole life. Successful pioneers told us: "Just do it! Do your best." Just like American president Barack Obama, who is the first African-American of second immigrant generation in the United States, reclaimed the American dream in his marvelous speech. He said, "This is our chance to answer that call. This is our moment. This is our time to reclaim the American dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth. We will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes we can."

Yes, I can! Yes, all immigrants can! We have enough courage to pursue our dreams in Canada.

A dream is a seed ! Action is the key to turning that seed into a blossom! As time flies, our dream goes on; our action is moving on toward the dream.