

International conference of the 5th festival “TO TEACH IS TO BUILD“ Appreciating the Earth

On Friday, October 4th 2019, we have successfully concluded the 5th festival “TO TEACH IS TO BUILD” to honour and tribute the teaching profession.

The “**TO TEACH IS TO BUILD**” Festival has become an **international conference**. This year, as many as **141 excellent practical presentations** were given.

We had the honour to host participants from 86 different institutions: 43 primary schools, 39 different secondary schools and 4 institutes from **8 countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain.**

»Nature is a unique system we have received from our fathers and will pass to our grandchildren. Therefore, the young generations need to get the knowledge and skills not only for the best possible use and management of natural resources but also for a healthy life. “**Appreciating the Earth**” is the main topic of this year’s (fifth) festival “To teach is to build”. This theme has been chosen in accordance with social circumstances, related questions and new learning environments schools have to adapt to.

Climate change, depletion of natural resources, extensive material consumption and constantly growing social inequalities are the topics, which need to play an important role in educational institutions. What is the way to implement a change in awareness and value systems? What is the way to encourage learning environments that enable a constant development in symbiosis with nature and environment as well as with the community we live in?”

This was affirmed also by our plenary speakers dr Lučka Kajfež Bogataj and Urška Zgojznik.

“I am certain that the biggest changes can be made in education by a teacher who is aware of the importance of sustainable development.

Young generations need to be directed towards recognising the values in nature and potential environmental risks in order to find the appropriate solutions.

School environment has to stimulate a contemporary teacher to be able to face constant social changes and to impart not only the knowledge, skills and values but also the technologies pupils need to separate the wheat from the chaff. Only an excellent teacher or mentor can successfully overcome the challenges schools are confronting.”

To teach is to build. To build knowledge, relationships, personalities, ideas ... To build communities and social capital.

The already established themes the participants have chosen and written about, have this year been enriched with the theme **Sustainable development**.

My appreciation goes to our our honorary patron of the conference the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport as well as our plenary speakers: dr Marijan Pogačnik, Director of Biotechnical Centre Naklo, dr Stanka Preskar, Assistant Director of the National Education Institute, Ivan Meglič, mayor of the municipality of Naklo and dr Miha Lovšin, Director of the Human Resources Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

All the best in your future endeavours.

Andreja Ahčin, Biotechnical Centre Naklo – Secondary School, principal