

Betsy Landers Encourages Delegates to Get Connected to Make a Difference

Betsy Landers, PTA National Secretary-Treasurer, delivered a keynote presentation to convention delegates at General Session 4 on Saturday, May 3rd, 2008.

She encouraged PTA members to seek ways to make a difference in the lives of all children. Betsy reflected on the history of PTA, when its three founders started the PTA movement before activism was acceptable and even before the women's suffrage movement. This movement for children and families not only defied cultural taboos at the time, but it has resonated with people all over this county for the past 111 years.

Betsy encouraged delegates to ponder: "If these three women created this movement in their time of prejudice and repression, can you image what five million of us can do today?"

She suggested that the compelling idea behind PTA is that you can make a difference not only in your own child's life, but in the life of every child. "If we all can become connected, we can influence our child's education policy in Washington. But more importantly, by being connected we can close the achievement gap and offer all of the children in this country the free quality public education they both need and deserve," she said.

Finally Betsy encouraged delegates to think of themselves as more than passive supporters of the movement, and more than a fundraiser or booster. "Because you are connected to the students, schools, community and the thousands of other PTA units across the country--and those connections are imperative if we're going to remain a relevant resource--our voice is going to be raised in such a way that we can create the differences we seek to make," she concluded.