Thursday’s Opening Keynote: Brian Housand
InSight into What it Takes to Get to Mars from the Scientists and Engineers

This morning Brian Housand took us on an inspiring journey to Mars through his experience as a participant in the NASA social program. This program allows NASA’s social media followers to learn and to tell their own stories about NASA’s missions, people, and programs. Brian decided the story he wanted to share was his observations about what it takes to get to Mars from a personality standpoint. What are the characteristics that people have who are able to accomplish this seemingly impossible feat. And by extension what traits and attributes do we need to cultivate in our students?

Brian began by talking about his early Confratute experiences where he discovered his “peeps,” educators that were as quirky and nerdy about gifted education as he was. He described how amazing it was to come to Confratute and believe that anything was possible, but also talked about the challenge of returning home where some people may not be receptive to your ideas. Throughout his talk Brian encouraged us to continue to dwell in possibility for ourselves and for our students. Brian argued that believing in impossible things will make the difference in the lives of students that we work with and the world we live in.

The four traits he observed at NASA were:

1. **Task Commitment.** Brian noted that kids often believe that being gifted means being able to do things quick and easy, but doing impossible things are not quick and easy. We need to stay on our students and celebrate their efforts.

2. **Risk Taking.** Brian detailed a variety of ways that the NASA team took risks along the way and he that while it’s easy to stay in your comfort zone, if we want to do something incredible, you have to step outside of that. He encouraged us to get our students to try new things where they have to take risks.

3. **Meaningful Collaboration.** Brian noted that everyone on the NASA team brought unique strengths that they had to combine to produce results. He explored some of the reasons why gifted kids don’t like working in teams and made the case for using cooperative games such as Pandemic and the Forbidden games to teach collaboration.

4. **Deliberate Practice.** Brian emphasized the distinction between deliberate practice and mindless practice. He said it’s about honing your skill that you are so good at something you can do it almost without thinking about it.

Brian concluded with a powerful reminder that in our classrooms each of us has the power to build dreams or crush them. We need to work carefully to build up the dreams of our students and help them to dare mighty things.
Who’s on Deck?

Lunchtime Roundtable Discussions
12:15-1:00 P.M. in the Rome Commons Dining Hall

Join us today for our last learning lunch. Today’s topics are:
—Odyssey of the Mind with Sharon Cernogorsky
—Opportunity for Grade 3 Teachers: Thinking Like a Mathematician with Stacy Hayden and Alexis Melendez.

Friday Morning: Ask the Experts!
Rome Hall Cafeteria (ROME)
8:30-9:30 A.M.

Join keynote speakers and strand coordinators for a lively discussion on a question you have over breakfast or a cup of coffee.

Commuters with lunch only options are welcome to come free of charge.

Confratute Banquet
TONIGHT at 6:00 P.M. in Rome Commons Ballroom

Dinner will be served at stations. Enjoy a meal while you mingle!

Looking for Confratute Presentations and Handouts?
Go to: https://confratute.uconn.edu/handouts_offerings/
THE END IS NEAR...

Confratute ends at Noon on Friday. Lunch will be served on Friday from 11:30 A.M.-2:15 P.M. Check out between 7:30 A.M. and 12:00 Noon.

THINGS TO DO BEFORE LEAVING CONFRATUTE:

- Return keys to the Conference Housing Desk (or pay $100 per lost key charge)
- Apply and pay for graduate credit
- Sign up to complete micro-credentials
- Pay Airport Shuttle fees
- Drop off forms or surveys
- Drop off Planning & Documentation Guide for Contact Hours

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY LUGGAGE FRIDAY MORNING IF I'M ON THE SHUTTLE?

You have the option of leaving your luggage in your room until you check out (by 12 noon) or storing your luggage. If it is raining and if you want to store your luggage, you may store it in the Rome Game Room which will be monitored by staff.

Keep that Confratute spirit with you all year long!

Don't forget to stop by Command Central to get your t-shirt and other memorabilia.

Attention Performers!

All variety show participants, you may sit in the audience during the show. Please come backstage two acts before yours via the door on the right of the stage from the audience. There is a bathroom and a Green Room, as well as a waiting area backstage. The program will be printed Thursday afternoon.
K-8 Gifted and Talented Teacher

The Norwalk Public Schools in Norwalk, CT, is seeking a certified, full-time K-8 Gifted and Talented teacher for the upcoming 2019-2020 school year. Candidates must have an understanding of SEM and gifted pedagogy, be able to differentiate, curriculum compact, co-teach, and facilitate school-wide enrichment. Qualified applicants should email their resume to Lori Leibowitz, District Coordinator of Gifted and Talented at leibowitzl@norwalkps.org.

Mathematics Teacher

Position open for teaching high school mathematics to gifted middle school students in a small private school. Must be able to teach any math between sixth grade level and high school honors calculus. Passion, enthusiasm and flexibility required. Understanding of gifted and middle school age children necessary. Understanding of asynchronous development, social/emotional needs of gifted children and ability to differentiate instruction is preferred. Certification not required. Send resume and cover letter to: Lydia Gibb, Talcott Mountain Academy, 324 Montevideo Road, Avon, CT 06001 or by email tolgibb@tmsc.org.

Interested in participating in Joe Renzulli’s School Happiness Index research project?

Contact Laurel Brandon at laurel.brandon@uconn.edu for more information.

Embracing the Impossible — Selected Quotes from Brian Housand’s Keynote Address

“It always seems impossible until it’s done.” — Nelson Mandela

“It’s kind of fun to do the impossible.” — Walt Disney

“It is not the strongest that survives, nor the most intelligent. ... It is the one that is most adaptable to change. Those that have learned to collaborate and improvise will prevail.” — Darwin