



**Welcome Message
from
Dr. Jennifer GIDLEY
President World Futures Studies Federation**

*“Tomorrow's young leaders expect our knowledge
and wisdom to help create a better world for them.”*

I am very happy to introduce the first session in the 2012 Videoconference Series for the WFSF Iberam Chapter, in collaboration with the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).

Firstly I want to thank the organisers of this Videoconference series, and especially Professora Guillermina BAENA PAZ for inviting me to speak to you and for her key role in organizing this event.

As President of the World Futures Studies Federation I am very proud of the activities of the WFSF Iberam Chapter in the Latin American region. The World Futures Studies Federation Iberam Chapter based in Mexico is a very big success story for the Federation. They have gathered together Federation members from several countries in the South American and Central American region and have created a dynamic forum for discussions about the futures of the region and also bigger issues of perspective for the world.

As a psychologist, educator and futurist my main research interests are: educational futures, futures of thinking, and *futures* of futures studies itself. So this seminar on the “Future of Future” is of great interest to me. Later ... I will be presenting to you some of my research on the importance of new ways of thinking for higher education—about what kind of thinking we need for tomorrow and how we can introduce this new paradigm thinking into higher education?

The 19th century factory model of education is past its “use-by date” and so is the thinking that created it. *We cannot solve tomorrow's problems with yesterday's thinking!*

With all the advances in technology over the past 20-30 years, how can we make sure that we are not just repackaging old thinking in new technologies, a bit like putting old corked wine in new bottles?

Children born in the last 10-15 years in affluent countries have never known a world without computers, the Internet, mobile phones and now “social networking.” As a result of globalization these technological inventions are increasingly available across the globe, yet most of us are sleepwalking, oblivious to how dehumanized we are becoming as a result of the hyperinformation bombarding us every day, compelling us to buy the next upgrade of everything.

How often do we see young people today, out and about in social groups, and rather than converse face-to-face with those they are with, instead they anxiously check their mobile phones to send and receive messages to virtual friends, or to check how many “new friends” they have on face-book?

The great futurist, Marshall MacLuhan, told us decades ago that every advance in technology is an **amputation** of an earlier ability. When we think about the rapid advances in technology today, we must also think about what we are losing: socially, culturally and psychologically.

In this series we really need to think about the following question: **What kinds of new thinking are needed to create really new futures: socially, environmentally, psychologically, not just technologically?**

I am sure that in the coming months we will have some very interesting presentations and discussions in this series.

Once again, *Thank you and Welcome to
“The Future of the Future: Technological and Social Convergences.”*