



For Immediate Release

Contact: Carrie Pillsbury 713-296-6776

Nebraska Teachers Awarded Fund for Teachers Grants for Global Summer Learning Odysseys

Will spend summer in 8 countries/5 continents to model lifelong learning for students

HOUSTON (May 3, 2011) While America's educational system navigates budget cuts resulting from state shortfalls, 18 Nebraska teachers will navigate the world on [Fund for Teachers](#) fellowships this summer. These preK-12 educators proposed their ideal professional development experiences to Fund for Teachers through an online application and, fueled by \$5,000 individual and \$10,000 team grants, will now embark on their self-designed odysseys to eight global destinations.

"My students and I have been working with organizations in Madagascar on the design and improvement of cooking materials to reduce consumption of rainforest materials. Now I will be able to visit and actually *help* with the projects we've been organizing here in Omaha," explained Lee Kallstrom, teacher at Omaha North High Magnet.

Additional Nebraska teachers awarded Fund for Teachers grants include:

- Elizabeth Rutten-Turner (Yates Education Center - Omaha) and John Rutten-Turner (Central Park Elementary - Omaha) who will visit refugee camps in Bhutan and Nepal under the guidance of Nepal's Cultural Orientation Resource Center to better understand the culture and expectations of immigrant students and families resettling in Omaha;
- Denise Pederson, Geri Pagel and Keri Ekberg (R.J. Barr Middle School - Grand Island) who will observe the peaceful co-existence of the Christian Bansa and Muslim Fulani peoples in Cameroon, Africa, to create an integrated curricular unit promoting global citizenship; and
- Eric Bell and Brent Frauen (Lexington High School – Lexington) who will attend the International Society for Technology in Education's conference in Philadelphia to learn new ways of integrating technology in the classroom while also gathering resources for an American History unit.

Fund for Teachers partnered with the [Malaika Foundation](#) to locally administer the selection process.

-MORE-

“Nebraska teachers have received more than \$175,000 in FFT grants over the past two years,” explained Karen Kovach Webb, FFT executive director. “These fellowships catalyze a ripple effect of inspired learning for the teacher, their students and school community. Our goal and expectation is that teachers, when empowered as lead learners, will deliver better instruction to more engaged students.”

In total, 430 teachers across America received \$1.7 million in Fund for Teachers grants to travel this summer on their own self-designed learning odyssey. A complete list of these teachers’ project descriptions and destinations, including [every Nebraska recipient](#), is available at fundforteachers.org.

About Fund for Teachers

A national, donor-supported organization, Fund for Teachers makes an important contribution to America’s educational conversation by expanding the definition of teacher professional development. By investing \$15.9 million in 4,500 educators over the past ten years, Fund for Teachers inspires teachers’ pursuit of meaningful, self-designed work that translates into skills and scholarship directly impacting student learning. For more information, visit fundforteachers.org, facebook.com/fundforteachers, or twitter.com/fundforteachers.

About the Malaika Foundation

Founded in 1997, the Malaika Foundation, a 501(c)3, offers Nebraska primary and secondary teachers global educational resources and travel opportunities. Malaika is a partner with the Nebraska Department of Education which supports all initiatives to increase the international focus of our teachers. For more information, visit malaikafoundation.org.

###