

## WELCOME TO NEWEST ADMINISTRATIVE PARTNERS

Fund for Teachers welcomes its newest administrative partners, **Center for Inspired Teaching** in Washington, D.C. and the **Chicago Foundation for Education** in Chicago.

## GRANT APPLICATIONS ACCESSIBLE AT WEB SITE

It's the kickoff of the 2006 Fund for Teachers granting season. Beginning Oct. 1, teachers will discover that preparing an application is easier than ever. Apply online by visiting the web site at [www.fundforteachers.org](http://www.fundforteachers.org). Teachers will be guided through the entire application process. The national deadline for receiving applications is Jan. 20, 2006.

## GREAT HOLIDAY IDEAS FOR GIFT GIVING

With the holidays just around the corner, what could be better for gift-giving than fresh fruit from The Fruit Company? They are donating 20 percent of all gift sales made with special promotional codes directly to Jones New York In The Classroom. It is the perfect way to support Fund for Teachers. To learn more, visit [www.thefruitcompany.com](http://www.thefruitcompany.com). Enter source code FFTCLASS at checkout.

*Teachers learning new lessons*

## Husband, wife team volunteer in Nepal

"Nepal is a country I never thought I'd see," explains Jean Gennis, a Los Angeles teacher and 2005 Fund for Teachers fellow.

"It might as well have been Neptune," she adds.

Jean and her husband Steve, both special education teachers, have collaborated on several previous teaching opportunities, but nothing compares to their summer adventure in Nepal.

"When I first arrived in Kathmandu, I

was dizzied by the noise, smell, pollution and astounding poverty. I was struck by the brilliantly-colored fabrics that adorned every woman and girl, the intricate carpets and Thangkas for sale in the marketplace, the unique blend of Hindu and Buddhist icons, the cows roaming like forgotten gods through the streets, the bevy of races and skin tones and the ironic imaging of children shaded by beach umbrellas pounding stone into gravel by the sewage-ridden Vishnumati River.

"To me," she continues, "Kathmandu was where the Middle Ages had smashed into the 21st century."

The couple volunteered to teach and work with children at a Nepali orphanage for four weeks through a volunteer program developed by Global Crossroads.

While Jean admitted that her greatest fear was becoming too attached to the children and wanting "to save" them by bringing them back to America, she was surprised to discover that these children

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**Jean Gennis is shown above with some of the 36 Nepali orphans she taught during her summer trip. At right, she is shown with husband, Steve, also a special education teacher for at-risk students.**



## **xtreme** school makeovers in six cities

It's the national craze — makeovers of people, homes and now, six schools for the fall season. *Back to School, Back to Style* began with a combining of forces between Jones New York and Oprah Winfrey's *O Magazine*. Joining them was Home Depot and Laurie Smith of *Trading Spaces*. With thousands of applications received in response to a notice appearing in the magazine, five schools from throughout the na-

tion were selected. They were Burnside Academy Public School in Chicago, Bushwich School for Social Justice in New York City, Georgian Forest Elementary School in Washington, D.C., West Manor Elementary School in Atlanta and Emerson Middle School in Los Angeles. Jones, Home Depot and Fund for Teachers are doing a September makeover at Shearn Elementary School in Houston. Watch for the Winter issue of *Odyssey* for updates.

## FUND FOR TEACHERS

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### OUR MISSION

Fund for Teachers is a unique foundation whose mission is to enrich the lives of schoolteachers and students by providing recognition and opportunities for renewal to outstanding teachers. Making a difference one teacher at a time, Fund for Teachers awards grants directly to teachers to support professional development opportunities of their own design.

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### ADMINISTRATIVE PARTNERS

Boston Plan for Excellence  
Center for Inspired Teaching  
Chicago Foundation for Education  
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound  
New Visions for Public Schools  
The Public Education & Business Coalition  
The Blake School  
The Saint Paul Foundation  
The Maynard Education Foundation  
Tulsa Community Foundation

*from the executive director...*

## September means new beginnings

September is here. With it comes back-to-school rituals — feet in new shoes, sharpened pencils and organized notebooks.

For 486 Fund for Teachers fellows from 47 states and 316 schools, September means returning to classrooms with summer experiences acquired in 60 countries and across the United States.

They return with a shared message for their students — the distance to your dreams is never too far to travel.

Great teachers unlock imaginations, curiosity and minds. They establish a “connect” between studies, lessons and the intense times in which we live. Education happens in a context. These teachers have redefined that context.

Our mailboxes have been filled with fabulous postcards, letters and pictures.

I have enjoyed “traveling” along with our 2005 fellows like Richard Beyer who retraced the *On The Road* path that Jack Kerouac’s character, Sal Paradise took on his journey from New Jersey to San Francisco and Mohsen Behdashti, who spent the summer living and learning in Mexico.

Read about Jean Gennis who traveled and worked in Nepal and Joy Reeves who measured and recorded environmental variations at the Arctic Circle.

Visit [www.fundforteachers.org](http://www.fundforteachers.org). Share the adventures of more of our fellows

through postcards, pictures and press releases.

Fund for Teachers reaches our nation’s classrooms with the assistance of our administrative partners. We have recently completed an extremely successful annual planning meeting.

Our goal is to stay connected to cities through these important partnerships, sharing wisdom and communal expertise.

We are pleased to welcome the Chicago Foundation for Education and the Center for Inspired Teaching, based in Washington D.C., to the team.

Watch as we participate with Jones NY’s In the Classroom campaign — *Back to School, Back to Style*. This event provides makeovers for classroom and teachers across the country.

The web site is going through a growth cycle of its own. For teachers, online applications are available Oct. 1. Visitors will be able to customize their experiences thanks to the innovations of Papilia.

We welcome your input. Feel free to call or e-mail me.

Happy beginnings.



**Karen Kovach-Webb**  
Executive Director

## *Fund for Teachers pioneering state-of-the-art individualized contributor communication system*

Are you aware that approximately 50 to 70 percent of people who make a donation to a nonprofit organization never make a second gift?

It is often due to contributors never having a good sense of how their gift was put to use, and the results it yielded.

For nonprofit organizations, until now, it has simply been too labor intensive and costly to communicate directly with individual donors.

Fund for Teachers is pioneering a new promise — allowing donors to know the impact of their contribution.

Fund for Teachers is among the world’s

first organizations to implement an innovative one-to-one supporter communications system built by Papilia.

The system, for the first time, enables Fund for Teachers to provide a highly personalized level of stewardship, recognizing that meaningful and relevant information back to their supporters is critical in building lasting partnerships.

Soon, donors can expect the launch of My Fund for Teachers. With the click of a mouse, they can see their gift at work.

Contributors will also be able to easily update contact information, track previous gifts, print tax receipts and more.

# Annual planning provides interaction, goals for 2006

Fund for Teachers convened its third annual Administrative Partner Planning Meeting Aug. 3 and 4 in Houston to mark the approaching 2006 granting season.

Participants included representatives from Boston Plan for Excellence, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, Public Education and Business Coalition, The

Saint Paul Foundation and Tulsa Community Foundation. Also on hand were members of the Fund for Teachers staff, its public relations representative and Fred Bohem, chairman elect.

Just as Fund for Teachers values the field expertise and role in the communities served by its administrative partners, staff

members also place great weight on the insight and feedback provided by partners.

Highlighting past successes and challenges, the annual planning meeting is a forum for consensus and change.

This year's meeting resulted in improved application materials for teachers, additional public relations opportunities, a renewed focus on identifying the program's impact on classroom teachers and increased communications.

Less tangible than the achieved results, the meeting is an excellent fellowship opportunity for the organizations and individuals. This improves the program's work and enhances the professional relationships.



Group discussions and presentations highlighted this summer's planning sessions for Fund for Teachers and its administrative partners.



## Nepal

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had a greater sense of family than the majority of her students back home.

"They took care of each other," Jean said. "They watched each others' back. They belonged."

The couple was also surprised to discover that while some orphanages were better managed and others worse, this particular orphanage was clean and provided a relatively loving environment.

"We got to know these children as our own," said Jean. "There was 15-year-old Milan, the consummate diplomat. There was the brooding Khesab, masquerading as a four year old. There was Spsara, whose name means little angel, and she was one.

"There was beautiful Namuna, who insisted that I was the beautiful one and that I accept her gift of a green floral scarf and a

precious plastic orange clip for my hair."

Jean's greatest realization was that these children had little hope without vast emotional and monetary support.

The most profound experience was when the couple was asked to informally assess the appropriateness of placing a 12-year-old girl in a school for mental retardation.



They discovered that her problem was a learning disability and great emotional trauma. Before leaving, they were able to begin a program with a Nepali woman for special students. They planted a seed.

Returning to the classroom, they bring a

passion for fully integrating and giving full value to their students' cultures, identities and experiences as part of the learning experience.

"We believe this trip allowed us to become more culturally sensitive and better equipped to meet the educational and social needs of at-risk students."

They no longer depend on typical teaching behaviors, patterns and methods that have previously been used. They now learn from their students, and recognize cultural perspectives and biases.

That realization provides for a more creative and innovative form of instruction — especially with English language learners, students with disabilities and at-risk students.

Jean is initiating a "sister school" program, including correspondence and fund-raising. This, in turn, enhances the schools' cultures by creating global awareness and sensitivity through a service learning opportunity that entwines experiential learning and community service on a global level.

# Chicago teacher goes to Arctic's edge

'I gained an immense appreciation for the commitment field researchers have for their work.'

Joy Reeves, a Claremont Academy school teacher in Chicago, arrived at the Churchill Northern Studies Centre in Manitoba during July for 10 days of work, fun, new friends and making a difference.

As a 2005 Jones Fund for Teachers Fellow, she was joined by volunteers from New Zealand, Great Britain and the United States.

Five of the eight involved in the program were teachers and two were students.

The expedition, led by Dr. Peter Kershaw, focused on measuring and recording environmental variations resulting from climate change across the Arctic treeline.

Reeves, along with the other Earthwatch volunteers, set small mammal traps and monitored them twice daily.

They also tested soil samples for nitrogen and phosphorus, and built thermocouples used to record weather data, both above and below ground.

They planted and photographed seedlings on the tundra, the tree islands, the burned forest and the white spruce uplands.

"We worked long hours and it was demanding," explains Reeves, "but it was for a good cause. Our labor allowed more data about current conditions to be gathered. Now, future changes can be more correctly evaluated."

While whale watching, polar bear view-

ing and caribou sightings added excitement, the most memorable part of the trip was the opportunity to see and touch the permafrost, the frozen base of the Arctic.

"I gained an immense appreciation for the commitment field researchers have for their work," continues Reeves.

"If the permafrost thaws, it would release carbon dioxide and methane, the two most important greenhouse gases.

"Dr. Kershaw has dedicated years of research to monitoring the environmental factors of the ecosystems."

Would she spend her summer on another Earthwatch trip?

"Absolutely, yes," she said. "Without a doubt. This trip made me see firsthand

how important and how fragile the balance of nature is. I am so appreciative of Earthwatch and Fund for Teachers for



giving me this opportunity — not only to visit the Arctic's edge, but to add to the information available about climate change."

Earthwatch Institute is a world leader in the field of experiential education, providing opportunities in the field and online for volunteers to broaden their understanding of sustainability and support conservation research. For information about Earthwatch, visit [www.earthwatch.org](http://www.earthwatch.org).

*A teacher inspires us to learn — Learning inspires us to dream — Dreams come true!*

[www.fundforteachers.org](http://www.fundforteachers.org)



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