

New York fellows welcomed for NASDAQ close, reception

New York City's worst blizzard could not deter the enthusiasm as Fund For Teachers' fellows joined its chairman, Fred Bohen and Robert Hughes, New Visions for Public Schools president, Feb. 13 at the close of the NASDAQ Exchange.

As the day's trading came to a halt, the combined logos of Fund for Teachers and New Visions for Public Schools screamed across NASDAQ's gigantic Times Square screen — Letting Teachers Dream.

Following the close, NASDAQ hosted a reception honoring New York's 2005 alumni.

Broadcast journalist Charlie Rose emceed the evening's program.

"If these teachers spark the imagination of one of their students, then they've changed that child's life forever," said Rose.

"They say a teacher can reach as many as 3,000 students in the course of their career. That means our 202 fellows could enrich the lives of over 600,000 New York

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TOP: New York City fellows join Fred Bohen, Fund for Teachers chairman and Bob Hughes, president of New Visions for Public Schools, at the close of NASDAQ trading Feb. 13.



LEFT: Chris Santiago, NASDAQ managing director; Bohen; William O'Brien, NASDAQ senior vice president and Hughes stand beside an image of the NASDAQ jumbotron in Times Square.

Online Discussion Board Available for Fellows

Visit www.fundforteachers.org to share your grant experience and meet other Fund for Teachers fellows. Use this platform to exchange curriculum, travel tips and passion for your profession.

Have It Your Way

Sign up for a *My Fund for Teachers* account and customize the Web site to feature content that you find most interesting. It is also a great place to make and track donations. Visit www.fundforteachers.org, and click on My Fund for Teachers.

Houston fellows host Arts Olympiad

As viewers around the world watched figure skaters, snowboarders and skiers vie for Olympic Gold, Life Skills students at Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston competed Feb. 16 in the school's first Arts Olympiad.

The event was coordinated by Jody and David Butler, 2005 Fund for Teachers Fellows, who studied ancient sculpture as it relates to the modern Olympic athlete on their trip to Greece and Italy.

Jody is a Life Skills teacher at Spring Forest Middle School, and her husband, David teaches art at Spring Branch Mid-

dle School. He is also a volunteer coach for the Rice University track team.

The night began with the lighting of the torch, and ended with an awards ceremony during which each child was presented a gold medal.

Students participated in 10 artistic events such as paint boxing, paint tip archery, wheelchair paint slalom, scooter-board rowing and footprint hurdles.

"Jody and I visited 23 art museums, met with archaeologists and visited Olympia, Greece, site of the first Olympic

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from the executive director...

Each new fellow, event, forum becomes thread of FFT tapestry

We've embraced the new year with enthusiasm and optimism.

This first quarter of 2006 has been a busy time, with grant applications pouring in. We've received over 2,000 compelling requests from teachers across the country.

Equally noteworthy, selection committees, comprised of more than 250 volunteers, are in the process of reading and scoring submissions.

Here at FFT headquarters, we are fortunate to have a unique and privileged view of the process as a whole.

Each teacher who applies and each volunteer who painstakingly reviews applications is filled with the inspiration, desire and dedication to make a difference in their school and city.

We are privileged to see the tapestry that each of these bright threads of effort and dedication compose.

Let me provide an example of one vivid "thread." In

January we launched Fellow's Forum, a discussion board/chat room for teachers to share thoughts, projects and curriculum.

Recently, I was newly ignited by this entry.

"The spectacular excitement I feel inside is something I thought was lost, maybe forever. I love what I do, but somehow I knew there were questions I needed to get answered in a very real way. That is how the grant began. The day I sent it in was the first day in a long, long time that I felt pure adrenalin running through my body and heart — like a race car at Indy. There is also a true sense of something wonderful possibly happening to me and my lifelong pursuit of never-ending personal growth. It's a magical feeling. I think it's called HOPE."

Wow!

In this issue, read about California teacher Carmelita Reyes and her incredible journey to Rwanda. Think about the lessons in civic engagement and activism from which her students now benefit.

Consider the joy of the life skills students led by 2005 fellows David and Jody Butler as they reached for gold in the Arts Olympiad.

Be amazed by the pictures of Fund for Teachers and our New York partner, New Visions for Public Schools, emblazoned on a 40-foot screen in Times Square.

Our long-time supporter, NASDAQ, hosted a hearty group of New Yorkers who braved the worst blizzard in years to

attend a celebration of the possibilities that occur when "Letting Teachers Dream."

Our tapestry threads in Houston look more like shoe strings.

A group of individual and corporate donors got together

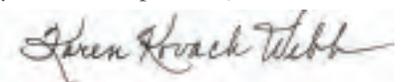
and sponsored the first Fund Run for Teachers. What a morning.

Visit the Web site to read more about it.

While you're there, notice a new port, *My Fund for Teachers*. You can self-design the way you receive information about our programs.

Collectively, when we look at the vibrant cloth that is the Fund for Teachers organization, we're looking at a group of people and companies who create a force of passionate inspiration. That force is capable of revitalizing the country and changing the world, one teacher and one classroom at a time — each "thread" tied to and enhancing the next to make a beautiful tapestry.

My sincere compliments,



Collectively, when we look at the vibrant cloth that is the Fund for Teachers organization, we're looking at a group of people and companies who create a force of passionate inspiration.



JONES NEW YORK
IN THE CLASSROOM

Fund for Teachers is proud to be partnered with Jones New York in the Classroom.

Rwanda: Country of contradictions

In 1994, reports of ethnic cleansing came from an unheard of country in Africa. Nearly one million Rwandans, roughly 12 percent of the country's population, died during four months of genocide before rebel forces led by Paul Kagame overthrew the government and restored order.

While I never forgot about Rwanda, I could not have predicted that in 2005 I would visit as a Fund for Teachers fellow.

For the past five years, I've taught humanities at Life Academy High School in Oakland, California. There, I designed a 10th grade curriculum addressing the issue of tolerance, studied through the lens of human rights violations during war.

Although pleased with the curriculum, my students pointed out a glaring omission in our course work — Africa. Rwanda's genocide was an obvious choice for study.

My students had difficulty imagining Rwanda and the events they were reading about. They wanted to know if it really looked like what they saw and read about.

I didn't know.

Arriving in Kigali, I expected to find a city destroyed by war and genocide. Instead, I found a beautiful city, largely rebuilt and cosmetically recovered. The only bullet-ridden buildings remaining are those kept as memorials to the dead.

Outwardly, Rwanda shows no signs of the tragedy.

Inwardly, it struggles daily to rebuild — emotionally, economically and politically.

The war and genocide are not far from anyone's mind. The government has launched massive education, national identity and poverty alleviation campaigns. Even 11 years later, local newspapers are filled with stories of reburial ceremonies and the need for tolerance and avoiding "thinking non-developmental thoughts."

The government, led by Kagame, a Tutsi, sends a consistent and simple message. Dictatorship, racism, poverty, colonialism and poor education are a recipe for genocide.

One of the government's most interesting positions is how it deals with race and ethnicity.

The official party line is that "Hutu" and "Tutsi" are artificial ethnic differences, created and exploited by colonialists.

The average Rwandan lacks an education. In the past, they relied on leaders who took advantage of ignorance, increased racial intolerance and who eventually, led the population to commit genocide.

Whether this explanation of history is true or not doesn't matter. The people of Rwanda need it to be true.

Today, no one is Tutsi or Hutu. They are Rwandan.

My trip was filled with soul searching. If I believe the Rwandan government, it means that inside everyone is the potential to become a murderer. An evil government has the power to tap into that potential and unleash tremendous violence. I would hate to believe this about myself.

The people of Rwanda seemed so friendly and respectful. Where did this violence come from and where did it go?

Rwandans also struggle with this question.

I interviewed genocide survivors and witnesses. The scale of the trauma was enormous.

During interviews, I was struck by how little anger survivors displayed. I was also amazed that Tutsis continue living among Hutu neighbors who had either participated in the killing or did not intervene to stop it.

Where was justice for these people?

With a population of eight million, half of whom are minors, it is impossible to conduct formal court hearings with judges and lawyers to investigate nearly one million murders.

Empowering the local population to complete this work is the only way to provide justice.

Gacaca courts, a traditional form of justice where villagers elect elders to hear evidence and

decide punishments, were created. There are no lawyers. Anyone in the village may ask questions of the accused or provide testimony. It is a solemn and respectful process.

Rwanda is a country of contradictions. A decade ago, violence of unprecedented scale and savagery overtook the population.

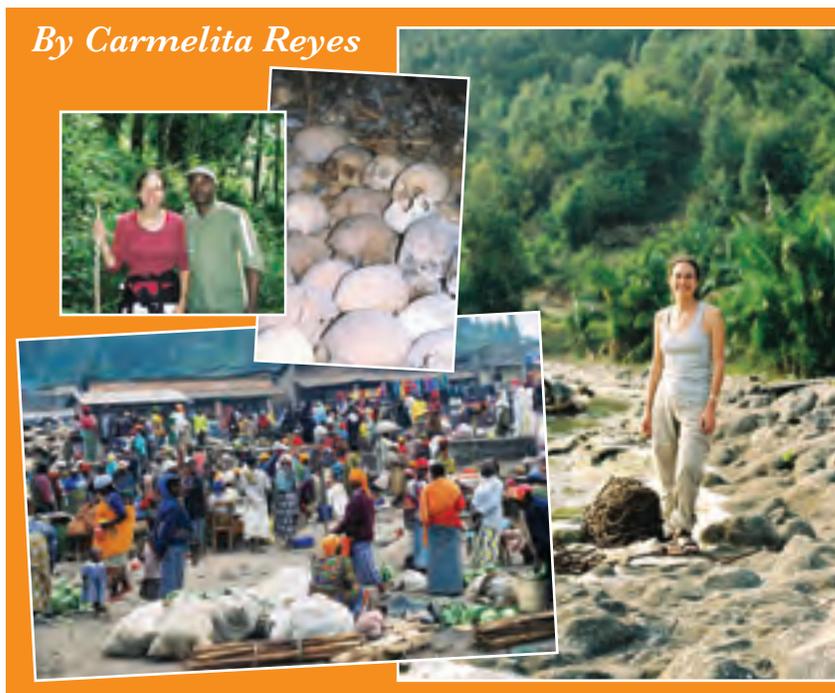
Today, it is one of the most peaceful and safest African countries. It challenges the visitor to examine the human condition and the capacity for violence, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Because of the FFT grant I received, my curriculum has been enhanced and my students enriched. Our study provides students with a platform to examine the affects of colonialism, the abuse of government power and the role and responsibilities of the international community.

They learn that, to some degree, race and ethnicity are artificially created, and differences between ethnic groups can be amplified in order to create division and dissension.

More importantly, they realize that intolerance, racism, hatred and genocide are created by man, and mankind has the ability to identify genocide and the responsibility to stop it.

By Carmelita Reyes



Reception honors fellows

Continued From Page 1

City students.”

Ben Metzger, who used his grant to study flamenco guitar with Marija Temo, opened the event with a performance featuring six of his students.

The NASDAQ, a long-time supporter of Fund for Teachers, was represented by Chris Santiago. He explained how teachers need this program to renew their passion for teaching and learning.

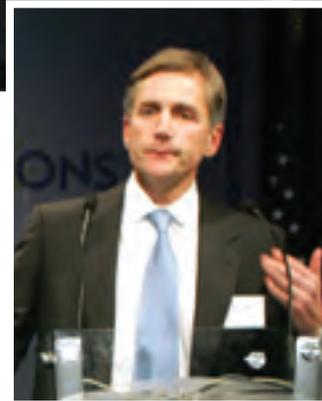
As the husband of a Chicago teacher, Santiago publicly thanked Raymond Plank, FFT founder, for connecting his successes to teachers who positively impacted his life.

Peter Boneparth, CEO of Jones Apparel Group Inc., made a powerful appeal to corporations to join together in supporting Fund for Teachers.

Through Jones New York in the Classroom, Boneparth worked with Fund for Teachers in 2005 to provide 50 additional grant opportunities for teachers in New York City, Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. The partnership continues.

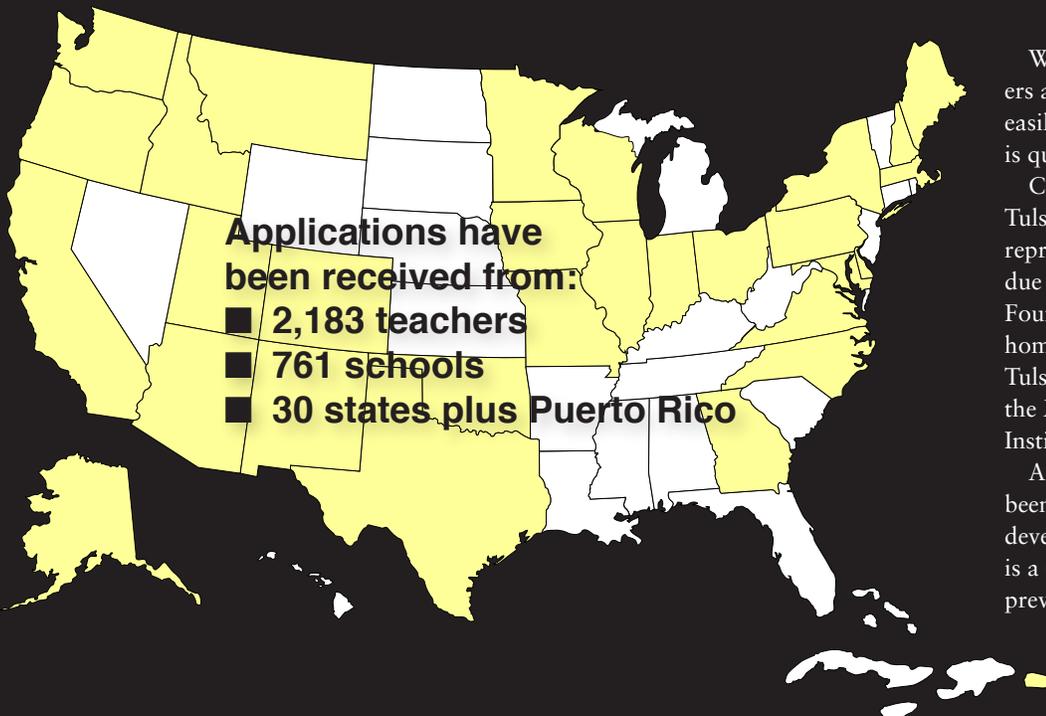
A presentation from Matthew Roberts, a teacher at South Brooklyn Community High School, was one of the evening’s highlights (See page 5.)

New Visions for Public Schools is selecting its 2006 Fund for Teachers fellows in March.



Charlie Rose, host of a nightly Public Broadcasting System talk show, left top photo, introduces 2005 Fellow Ben Metzger. On the left, Peter Boneparth, CEO of Jones Apparel Group Inc. appeals to corporations to join together in supporting Fund for Teachers.

Applications Indicate National Growth Rate



With this year’s Fund for Teachers applications submitted, it is easily discernible that the program is quickly sweeping the nation.

Chicago, New York City, Tulsa and Oakland/San Francisco represent the greatest growth, due to partnerships with Chicago Foundation for Education, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, Tulsa Community Foundation and the Marcus A. Foster Educational Institute.

A total of \$7,014,092 has been requested for professional development this summer. That is a 60-percent increase over the previous year.

你们好 Ni Men Hao!

Matthew Roberts, a 2005 FFT fellow, prepared these remarks for presentation Feb. 13 at the New York celebration.

Ni men hao!

That is “hello to all of you” in Chinese.

That phrase is one of many things I learned last summer during my Fund for Teachers experience in China.

Wo si lao shi means I am a teacher.

Teachers are greatly respected, so I took pride introducing myself with that phrase.

Pronunciation and tone are extremely important.



Said incorrectly, which I did more than once, wo si lao shi means I am a mouse.

I grew used to the quizzical looks and snickers as my new friends took a good look at the tallest mouse they'd ever seen.

In New York, I teach global history and geography at South Brooklyn Community High School. It is a school for students who have been truant or dropped out.

Our mission is to bring them back, re-engage them and help them graduate.

The student body is mainly African-American and Hispanic. Most qualify for free or reduced lunch, and each student arrives with his own set of skills, strengths and attitudes about school.

Each also comes with a unique background of knowledge to share, and great curiosity about the world.

The teacher's job is to engage curiosity. If

we engage students, there is no limit to how much they will learn. When we fail, the barriers go up and learning is limited.

The challenge is bringing lessons to life, which comes from knowledge and passion. Fund for Teachers instills a new passion for teaching.

Last year, I proposed teaching English in An Shang village.

My students carried stereotypes about Asians — rooted not in malice, but in a lack of knowledge.

As Mark Twain said, “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.”

During my visit, I stood in Tiananmen Square, passed Mao's preserved body, walked

through the Forbidden City, climbed the Great Wall and toured the Summer Palace. Each has directly contributed to my lessons.

Teaching was a time of growth. Chinese teachers came to improve their English and learn new teaching methods.

They left homes and family to attend a summer program, hoping it would make them stronger teachers.

We engaged in discussions about topics directly relating to curriculum I teach — the one-child policy, Tiananmen Square Massacre and Taiwan.

I was surprised at their willingness to share opinions, listen and debate.

We took walks together, sang Karaoke, played cards and spent long evenings sharing stories.

One teacher told of a brave young woman after the birth of her daughter. Her in-laws were disappointed that the baby was not a boy, and demanded she send her to the countryside to live with relatives.

She refused. Her daughter's love was

more powerful than her in-law's animosity.

My Brooklyn students heard her story as we studied the one-child policy.

I left behind new friends. I came home with new passion.

I begin class with “Ni men hao, class.” Students know this class will not be boring, for this teacher is excited and passionate.

That is because of Fund for Teachers, and the positive impact is clear.

The passing rate on this year's Regents Exam was the highest ever. Essays were filled with images they learned in class.

The Great Wall, opium wars, last emperor and the Communist Revolution became part of my students' knowledge because they were part of my passion.

Beyond test results, I see evidence that stereotypes are beginning to crumble.

Students' eyes and minds are opening. As they learn,

stereotypes are less relevant.

The An Shang school was surrounded by a wall.



On it was written in Chinese and English, “It is education, and education alone, that is the only way for the farmers to break down the circle of poverty.”

For Chinese farmers and Brooklyn students, the truth in that statement cannot be debated.

Fund Run nets \$150,000

More than 500 Houstonians arrived at Sam Houston Park Jan. 21 to support teachers at the inaugural Fund Run for Teachers.

Approximately \$150,000 was raised for the Houston program — the equivalent of

awarding 33 individual grants.

“Through your participation in the Fund Run, you truly are showing your heart for Houston school teachers,” said Bob Peebler, president of Input/Output and chairman of the Houston Chapter of Fund for Teachers.

“Support from people like you helps keep education in the public eye, and for that we thank you.”

Andrea White, wife of Houston Mayor Bill White, also applauded Fund for Teachers for doing its part to shed Houston of its



Sponsored by Miles, London.



0 for Houston program

“fattest city” image.

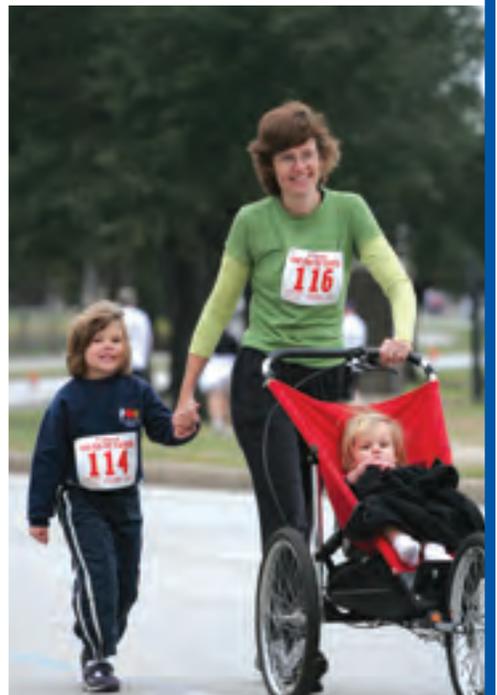
The morning’s event provided an excellent opportunity for FFT fellows to reunite and share their experiences.

Many of the fellows participated in post-race activity booths, by showcasing

crafts and activities related to their summer sabbaticals.

“The run was an awesome accomplishment. I am so proud to be a part of this organization,” said Michea Carter, a 2003 Fellow.

From babies in strollers to seasoned marathon runners, the first annual Fund Run for Teachers brought the Houston community together for the sole purpose of rewarding, renewing and enhancing its teachers.



Sophie, Joshua, Josiah, Zoe





Eric Thomas, center, joins Jody and David Butler at the Arts Olympiad. Thomas is a Houstonian and two-time Olympian.

OLYMPIAD

Continued from Page 1

Games,” said Butler.

“We decided to hold our own Arts Olympiad as the culmination of our Fund for Teachers grant.”

The events combined both art and athletics.

“We chose Olympic events and added an artistic twist,” said Jody.

“We chose activities not requiring fine motor skills so all students could participate.

“During the event, I looked around and wished the world was like this. No one felt different or excluded.”



Paint swimming was one of many events the children participated in, combining both art and athletics.



Life Skills students participate in Scooter Board Rowing competition.



Students assisted in a volunteer capacity to ensure the evening's success.

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

www.fundforteachers.org



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