

ODYSSEY

Volume 6, Summer 2010

A PUBLICATION OF FUND FOR TEACHERS

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2010 Grant Awards

452 teachers
270 schools represented
24 states
\$1,756,164 awarded

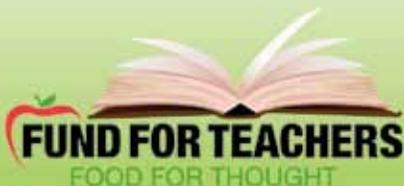


Food for Thought Luncheon

Gregory Maguire, former teacher and internationally acclaimed author of *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West* (basis for the Broadway musical), headlines FFT's second annual Food for Thought luncheon event. Please mark your calendars and join us:

Friday, October 8, 2010
Hotel Zaza - Houston
Event Chair: Danielle Ellis
Honored Guest: Dr. Kelli Cohen Fein, community leader and teacher

For information, visit
fundforteachers.org/events/ffthought



Beth looks for trilobites and trace fossils in the Cambrian (500 million year old) Gros Ventre formation in Wind River Canyon.

Brooklyn Dinosaurs

Beth Mowry, 2009 ELS Fellow, began her fellowship enrolled in a course at the Wyoming Dinosaur Center and ended the summer leading one. During those weeks, she learned how to make molds and casts of specimens; excavate bones; catalog, record and store data and specimens; and clean fossils with specialized tools. The Center's lab manager, a paleontologist, was so impressed with Beth's curiosity and skills that he invited her to bring dinosaur specimens back to her classroom, making the Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies (BCS) one of only three locations nationwide with specimens borrowed from the Center's collection.

Bringing 150 million year old dinosaur bones to Brooklyn afforded Beth the opportunity to craft a high-level, semester-long course on the paleontology of dinosaurs. "When Beth returned from her FFT fellowship, I noticed a fundamental change in her teaching," said Scott Henstrand, fellow science teacher at BCS. "She gave her students the chance to engage in the same research she had experienced, allowing them to work with real specimens and gather data for analysis." The curriculum's hands-on approach and Beth's infectious enthusiasm are impacting student engagement.

Students like Michael. Entering Beth's class announcing, "I have no people skills," Michael had a track record of

unruly behavior and a disengaged attitude. Additionally, he had yet to pass the requisite science exit exam. School administrators scheduled him for Beth's "Digging for Dinosaurs" class and the rest is paleontological history.



Michael cleans, prepares and collects evidence from a sauropod rib.

Michael exceeded all expectations, Beth explains, "completing all of his work, even staying during his lunch to make up work missed because he was sick. He asked thoughtful questions, showing developing habits of a scientist. He was eager to do research, so I offered him the opportunity to be the teacher's assistant for the class — helping me with lab prep, photo documentation, etc. — to earn an "honors" designation. He replied that he'd do it even without the honors because he loved the topic, and asked if he could put his email address on the board in case students had questions."

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From the Executive Director

We're celebrating.

Over the past 10 years, working jointly with a network of partners, Fund for Teachers has championed thousands of teachers working in hundreds of schools across the country to improve teaching and learning for American students.

Our first decade has been dedicated to developing a program model and refining the delivery of the opportunity we offer via that model, directly and through partnerships, to teachers. Our next phase of development will include demonstration of the impact produced by the opportunities we fund: We will endeavor to provide teachers with a new, well articulated structure and the tools to better translate their experiences into student learning.

We're committed.

The FFT Invitational, in June, is our first step into this next phase. The purpose of the Invitational is to gather and work with a select group of our Fellows who have moved their summer sabbaticals into learning opportunities for their students. We'll drill down and find commonalities that may serve as models for other teachers and the group will collaborate to build tools that can help future fellows in the process. In doing so, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of what actually *happens* to a teacher during a fellowship. This insight will inform the development of new materials for all of our constituents and provide the seeds for a new section on our website, "FFT In The Classroom," highlighting students' learning.

One in four Americans is in a school building daily. Research proves that teachers make schools successful. And Fund for Teachers' success in this equation is our unique mission and program. We give money directly to teachers for the work that they know will most directly impact their efforts. We have been successful in bringing education reform groups from New York City, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and other places together in collaboration around our mission and granting program to foster teacher growth and learning and, thereby, student growth and learning. The definition and scope of "community" grows exponentially through the constructive exchanges around our "table" — teachers and students benefit immediately.

Looking to our next decade, Fund for Teachers will remain focused on achieving our goals and vigilantly measuring our progress. We aspire to be a full-scale national program, making self-designed learning opportunities available to *all* professional preK-12 teachers. I am confident that Fund for Teachers' community table will expand and grow in positive, inspiring ways. Without doubt, more students will benefit from teachers who have explored their own curiosity and deepened their own scholarship.

We are honored and privileged to work with you, invite your guidance and welcome your support.

Happy summer,



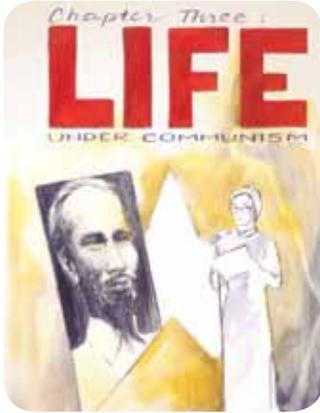
Karen Kovach Webb
with 2010 Fellows.



Our Mission

Fund for Teachers enriches the personal and professional growth of teachers by recognizing and supporting them as they identify and pursue opportunities around the globe that will have the greatest impact on their practice, the academic lives of their students and their school communities.

Oakland Teacher Named 2010 National Plank Award Winner



L: A sketch from Thi's graphic novel, which she began on her fellowship.

R: Thi with her students after accepting the Plank Award from FFT representative Leo Lammana.

Thi Bui's 2005 fellowship led to Vietnam, with her mother as her guide, to research her family's experience from World War II, through the American conflict, to their escape and resettlement in America. Encouraged by the enthusiasm of her students and her own natural curiosity, Thi has continued to pursue opportunities for personal growth connected to her fellowship, as well as learning that supports and enriches her work in the classroom. In recognition of this dedication, Thi was selected as FFT's 2010 National Plank Award Winner in May.

The Plank Award is given annually to Fellows who demonstrate inspired implementation of their fellowship in the classroom. Fellows submit applications and supporting materials to our local partners; regional winners are then considered for the national recognition and a \$1,000 prize.

Thi used her fellowship experience to create a graphic novel, and to design and teach a high school art and history course titled "Comics as Oral History." Last year, Thi adapted her course for English Language Learners at a high school for recent immigrants. Together, students produce a graphic novel representing their own immigration stories. Thi's Oakland International High School students' work has earned mentions in the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Oakland Tribune*, and *The Oakland North*, helping to build support for the school's mission to provide quality education for recent immigrant students.

Thi credits her fellowship with rekindling hope for life-long learning. Since her fellowship, she enrolled in summer courses at Expression College of Digital Arts and UC Berkley's Summer Scholars Program. Her recent art and writing were featured in a text book on teaching art through history, leading to an additional book opportunity about her students' immigration stories project.

"I applaud the work that Fund for Teachers has done on behalf of education: the innovation of its methods and the generosity of its scope," said Thi. "I feel tremendously successful in my own goals to learn and grow through my fellowship and hope that I have been successful in passing on what I have gained to the schools and students with whom I work."



L to R: Nancy Hess, Marilyn Sandler, Whitney Stafford, Allison Harkavy Lash, Shannon Hillman, Cleopatra Warren, Margaret Samp.



FFT representatives surprised local winners with an award and a \$500 cash prize: Nancy Hess (Houston), Marilyn Sandler (Chicago), Whitney Stafford (Oklahoma), Allison Harkavy Lash (New York), Shannon Hillman (ELS), Cleopatra Warren (Atlanta), and Margaret Samp (Boston). You can read about their fellowships and inspired implementation in the classroom at fundforteachers.org/plank_fellowship.html.

Gates Foundation Research Validates Need for Teacher Professional Development

Teachers' need for relevant professional development was underscored by landmark survey results released by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in March. In a blind survey of 40,000 K-12 public school teachers entitled "Primary Sources: America's Teachers on America's Schools," more than 80 percent reported professional development that is relevant to personal and school goals is absolutely essential or very important for teacher retention.

For ten years, Fund for Teachers has given teachers the opportunity to design their own professional development. "Being trusted to articulate, plan, and carry out what we need to do as professionals is the beauty of Fund for Teachers," said Lorraine Theroux (2007 Boston). "Many other opportunities define for us what we have to do and make us prove our worthiness. But the opportunities with Fund for Teachers are limitless. The resulting diversity of teachers' fellowship experiences speaks for itself."

Allison Bibbler Stormont and Rosa Aguirre (2006 Oakland) hosted Manzanita Community School's annual Passport Day on April 16th. Inspired by their travel experiences in Cambodia, Allison and Rosa created this event to provide a taste of various countries' cultures through food, crafts, pictures, and music.



Michael Bourquin (2007 Houston) proudly led Sylvan Rodriguez Elementary School's young artists in producing their new exhibition, "Houston-Urban Landscapes in Watercolor", to benefit MoSRA, the school's art museum. Students led gallery tours and auctioned their work to benefit the museum.



Fund for Teachers is a proud partner of



POINTING STUDENTS TOWARD INSPIRED LEARNING

After navigating the globe this summer on FFT fellowships, 452 teachers will return to classrooms energized with experiences and insights only attainable by “being there.” Beginning in May, our Fellows embark on odysseys to six continents, pursuing their passions to then pique student engagement. Here’s a quick snapshot of their plans; you can also follow their footsteps on our Facebook Fan page throughout the summer.

“*A teacher is a compass that activates the magnets of curiosity, knowledge, and wisdom in the pupils.*”

- Ever Garrison

Programs	Grants Awarded	Teachers Involved	Schools Impacted
Atlanta, Georgia	9	10	9
Boston, Massachusetts	20	28	15
Chicago, Illinois	22	34	21
Expeditionary Learning Schools	19	36	15
Houston, Texas	39	55	38
Los Angeles, California	13	29	12
Minneapolis, Minnesota	8	9	7
Nebraska	18	23	18
New York City, New York	43	52	38
Oakland, California	10	11	9
Oklahoma	39	68	38
Rural School and Community Trust	12	14	11
Saint Paul, Minnesota	11	12	10
San Francisco, California	8	16	8
The Blake School, Minnesota	4	4	1
Washington, DC	4	8	4
Wisconsin	15	43	13



North America

108 Fellowships

Europe

77 Fellowships

Asia

43 Fellowships

Africa

20 Fellowships

South America

20 Fellowships

Australia

10 Fellowships

Countries

Argentina	Czech Republic	Israel	Peru
Australia	Denmark	Italy	Philippines
Austria	Dominican Republic	Jamaica	Poland
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Japan	Russia
Botswana	Egypt	Kenya	Rwanda
Brazil	England	South Korea	Singapore
Cambodia	France	Malaysia	South Africa
Cameroon	Germany	Mexico	Spain
Canada	Ghana	Mongolia	Sudan
Chile	Greece	Morocco	Tanzania
China	Guatemala	Nepal	Thailand
Colombia	Iceland	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Costa Rica	India	New Zealand	United States
Croatia	Indonesia	Norway	Vietnam
Cuba	Ireland	Panama	

Fellowships by Subject Area

Language/Cultural Immersion	45
Visual/Performing Arts	44
Science	44
History/Social Studies	44
Literature/Writing	33
Other	23
Literacy	17
Math	15
Social Justice	6
Advanced Education/Leadership	6
Kinesiology	1

Continents

North America	108
Europe	77
Asia	43
Africa	20
South America	20
Australia	10

Local Partner Spotlight

New Visions for Public Schools (NVPS) is dedicated to ensuring that all New York City public school students, regardless of race or economic class, can fully participate as citizens and economic actors nationally and internationally. Working intensively with 76 schools serving more than 34,000 students, NVPS supports a network similar in size to some of the nation's largest school districts and is committed to proving what no urban district has yet to realize – that large numbers of urban students can graduate on time and be successful in college and in the workplace.

Since 2003, NVPS has partnered with Fund for Teachers to award 550 New York City teachers more than \$2.4 million in fellowships.

"Fund for Teachers offers tremendous opportunities for teachers," said Robert Hughes, president of NVPS and FFT board member. "It's such a magnificent way to help educators expand their professional skills, increase cultural awareness, and enhance their understanding of learning around the world. We look forward to hearing about and benefiting from their experiences."

"Our partnership with NVPS is one of our longest and has served to model relationships with subsequent local partners," explained Karen Kovach-Webb, FFT's executive director. "This organization's continuing efforts to work with teams of school leaders and teachers to strengthen skills and strategies that increase student learning are nationally recognized. Our collaborative effort with NVPS, along with our other partners, is to identify emerging challenges and construct solutions: We are all dedicated to the process for ensuring continuous national FFT program improvements that augment the efforts of each partner in their own locale."



To learn more about NVPS, visit www.newvisions.org.

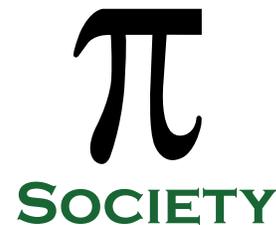
Fund for Teachers is a proud partner of



First Class of π

Tapping funds raised by corporate leaders for FFT's π Society, 21 Fellows in our 2010 class will pursue math-related fellowships this summer. An additional 153 math teachers, as members of cross curricular teams, will also bring fellowship experiences back to their math classrooms. Among FFT/ π Society Fellows' destinations and disciplines:

- **Paul Faircloth** (Boston) will attend the International Conference on Origami in Science, Mathematics and Education in Singapore to learn new strategies for teaching students with special needs;
- **Javier Velasquez** (Chicago) will bicycle from Oregon to Missouri to create a real-life model for mathematical and scientific problems for classroom study;
- **Rebecca Brink** (Wisconsin) will attend a conference on History and Epistemology in Math Education in Vienna, Austria, followed by an exploration into the lives of early mathematicians in Athens, Greece; and
- **Richard Saxer** (Nebraska) will observe geometry's relevance and application in pre-historic sites, and architectural designs and art displays throughout England and Ireland.



We look forward to following our first class of π Society Fellows this summer and back in their classrooms as they energize the teaching of mathematics and inspire students.

10th Anniversary Celebration



Houston Fellows Rhonda Goldmann, Andrea Plato, Shana Steinhardt, Lisa Frase, Christina West, and Jennifer Velasquez celebrate Fund for Teachers' 10th anniversary at an orientation meeting in April.

Ten years and \$14.5 million in fellowships – a cause for celebration as we send our 4,000th Fellow on the learning adventure of a lifetime this summer.

"In its own way, Fund for Teachers is as potentially significant as a 21st century Educational Peace Corps," said John Gulla, FFT board chair and head of school at The Blake School. "For a decade now, teachers from throughout the United States have traveled worldwide pursuing projects and dreams as big as their generous hearts and usually beyond the means of a modest teacher's salary. Boundless is the influence good teachers can have on their students; equally unlimited is the payoff when someone invests in a good teacher."

To join our celebration, please visit the 10th anniversary site on our homepage to leave your sentiments on FFT's milestone, contribute to a "Top Ten" list of the highlights experienced through a fellowship, and read thoughts from our founder.

Where are
They
Now?



Gail photographing the rugged west coast of Iceland.

The tragic earthquake in Haiti and volcanic eruption in Iceland hit particularly close to home this spring for two FFT Fellows. Susanna Stringer (2008 Boston) and Gail Gant (2009 Houston) personally felt the significance of the global events, having traveled to these destinations on FFT fellowships. Consequently, their students' learning gained added relevance.

"I teach seventh grade Earth Science and we were learning about volcanoes in early March. Students took their volcano test one afternoon and the next morning I woke up to news that the Eyjafjallajokull volcano was spewing ash," said Gant, teacher at St. John's School. "I showed kids photos of the glacier and the bridges we rode over, now strategically destroyed so melted ice floods could travel more readily to the coast. I'm so glad I went last year because this year, the beautiful sites I saw are covered with ash and workers are digging out the road. My experience helped students gain valuable perspective on the location, the impact and its relevance to them."



Susanna in front of San Souci Palace, built from 1810-1813 as the residence of Haitian revolutionary and subsequent king, Henri Christophe.



Port au Prince after the earthquake in 2010.

A large number of Stringer's students at El Centro's Boston Public School Alternative High School Program share Caribbean identities, which is why she chose to spend her 2008 summer exploring Dominican-Haitian culture and literature in the border region between the two countries. Her teammates enjoyed a reunion shortly before the 7.0 level quake, which claimed the life of a colleague soon after.

Two years after her fellowship, Susanna's curriculum continues to include a gallery of Haitian artifacts about which students' research and craft a local form of poetry, as well as a reading of Edwidge Danticat's *Children of the Sea*. Naturally, students' curiosity about the country's socio-political context intensified in light of the earthquake. "I hope that the curriculum inspires students to think critically about the role we all have in preventing natural disasters from resulting in the type of tragedy that has happened to the Haitian people," said Susanna. "The history of Haiti and its people have so much to teach all of us."



2010 volcanic eruption in Iceland.

FFT Invitational Launches in June

Our first decade was dedicated to inspiring and engaging teachers through summer learning experiences; our second starts by focusing on enhancing the transfer of those experiences into deeper student learning. This next phase begins in June, when Fund for Teachers, in partnership with Expeditionary Learning Schools, hosts the inaugural FFT Invitational at Ucross, Wyoming.

The FFT Invitational will gather a select group of Fellows from the past ten years who demonstrated a particularly successful transition of their fellowship experience into student learning opportunities. Goals of the event include: Creating tools to help understand the wide range of ways in which FFT fellowships enrich student learning; and building visually compelling documentation of student learning inspired by fellowships. Through this work, we hope to help guide the work of future Fellows and increase public understanding of the value of FFT fellowships.

"The positive impact of FFT fellowships on student learning can be profound, often in ways that are not fully appreciated," says institute leader Ron Berger, chief program officer for Expeditionary Learning Schools. "This institute marks the beginning of an important effort on the part of FFT to document the many ways in which transformational teacher growth can catalyze transformational student growth."

Brooklyn Dinosaurs

(Continued)

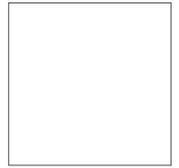
In her urban, high-poverty school where many students will be the first in their families to go to college, let alone consider a career in the sciences, Beth is making great strides. "I am eager to show my students how I am both a teacher and a scientist," Beth says. "Through my passion for teaching this subject, I am showing my students that they can be scientists, too, especially girls who may share the "girls can't do science" mindset that kept me from pursuing the subject in college."



Students use a stereoscope to observe sedimentary rock grains in preparation for their own research.



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Alumni Notes

Trey Thames (2009 Houston) and his students received one of 22 world-wide Exemplary School Program awards from the Association of Christian Schools International for the on-campus simulated archaeological dig site inspired by his fellowship in Israel.

Judith Blake (2009 Oklahoma) received the Marshall Gregory Award in the Professional Division, Video Coverage, for a documentary she produced as part of her fellowship to South Africa.

Leon Sultan (2008 San Francisco) will travel to Colombia this summer with the American Federation of Teachers, which recently named him a Civic Voices Fellow.

Kathy Millar (2009 ELS) received a State Department grant to teach and assist school staff in Bangladesh for two weeks in April.

Holly Calica (2008 San Francisco) developed fellowship-inspired curriculum upon returning from her fellowship to the Philippines that resulted in a collaborative school project's inclusion in the de Young Museum's "Young at Art" festival this spring.

Liz Hale (2007 Boston) published *Crafting Writers, K-6* after her fellowship to the Spoleto Writing Symposium. She enters Harvard University's graduate doctoral program this fall.

Terre Hradnansky (2007 Los Angeles) earned national board certification as an Exceptional Needs Specialist with a concentration in Early Childhood.

Brian Jacobs (2006 Los Angeles) received a Fulbright Award and a National Endowment for the Humanities grant.

Molly Last (2007 Oakland) will spend the summer studying mosaic making in Italy, followed by archeology fieldwork in Bulgaria — expanding on her fellowship experience pursuing ceramic restoration and archeology in Florence.

Lynn Gerbode (2002 and 2007) will participate in the Japan-U.S. Teacher Exchange Program for Education for Sustainable Development, hosted by Fulbright Japan this summer.

Aaron Reedy (2008 Chicago) received a Golden Apple award, given to 11 Illinois teachers who strive for excellence and inspire their students.

Kathryn Elkins (2009 Oklahoma) was named Teacher of the Year for Sapulpa Jr. High School.

Share your updates: info@fundforteachers.org.

