

ODYSSEY

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2012 Grant Application Goes Live

The 2012 grant application goes live October 1. Under the "Apply" tab of our revamped website, teachers can check eligibility requirements and review the scoring rubric used to judge applications. Additionally, our site offers a Teacher Project Search to inspire those crafting new fellowships. Contact us at info@fundforteachers.org for a toolkit to help share this opportunity in your schools and communities.

“ *The workshop we attended at Columbia University's Teachers College was amazing and really made me feel excited to begin a new school year. I can't wait to try out all of the new things I learned and to share my new knowledge with my colleagues. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to do this. I feel like it has changed my teaching forever.* **”**

- Rebecca Birdsall, 2011 Boston Fellow

The "Reading is Learning" team from Boston's The Elliot School enter a seminar at Teachers College in New York City.



Corey welcomed at a local park in Sultanahmet, Istanbul.

Us versus Them

By Corey Pickering, 2009 New York Fellow

Millennium High School, where I teach, is located in lower Manhattan and was founded largely in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001. The Islamic Studies history elective was offered from 2007 through 2010 and many of my students in those classes have vivid memories of that day. Some were even watching from their elementary school window as the towers fell. All of my students were deeply affected by 9/11 and carried a great deal of pain and fear because of it. Unfortunately, they also carried many misunderstandings of Muslim people and cultures.

Students in my Islamic Studies class frequently referred to Muslims as "them" and believed that Islam was in some way responsible for 9/11. Fortunately, my Muslim students' courage to speak openly about their traditions and faith had a profound effect on their non-Muslim counterparts. Suddenly, we all had to face, head on, our assumptions about the "us" in the room and the "them" out there in the world who meant us harm.

After one year of teaching this course, I knew I needed to gain more perspective

and experience with the Muslim culture. Fund for Teachers awarded me a grant to travel to Turkey, study the Ottoman Empire, and photograph Islamic architecture for my classes. Turkey is a wonderful example of the broad spectrum of belief that can exist within a religious tradition. Ninety eight percent of Turks claim Islam as their faith. Yet in Istanbul, I saw traditionally dressed women strictly adhering to the customs of their faith alongside women in lipstick and mini-skirt suits ignoring the call to prayer.

My journey to Turkey was eye-opening. The reality of Muslim culture was so much more subtle and multifaceted than what I understood from my textbooks or news media. As a result of this experience and other work for the course, I had to face my own misconceptions and prejudices. If I was going to ask my kids to look at their beliefs and assumptions honestly, I had to do the same.

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From the Executive Director



Successful corporations invest in their employees, facilitating the acquisition of skills to improve individual performance and advance the overall bottom line. Similarly, teachers are required to keep their practice current by attaining the latest methodologies. Unlike other professionals, however, teachers’ professional development is less about advancement and more about impact. Teachers are in the business of impacting the future.

I believe that making a positive and lasting impact on students hinges on the continued learning and development of teachers. In July, I met with industry and philanthropic leaders and a contingent of FFT Fellows to discuss how a more progressive version

of teacher training, both pre-service and in-service, begets a more passionate professional educator. Anemic, “one size fits all” professional development does not engender greatness, nor can it satisfy scholarship and curiosity. Fund for Teachers fellowships do both.

“What was fresh yesterday was fresh yesterday.”

- Sam Seidel, author of *Hip Hop Genius*

The single biggest influence that impacts student growth is the quality of the teacher standing in the front of the classroom. People remember their favorite teachers for a lifetime because great teachers impact lives. These memorable teachers start with common standards, then add dimension and innovation to build curiosity. They encourage students to make observations, solve problems, appreciate music, culture, art, and to imagine; in other words, to act as scholars.

Fund for Teachers gives educators the opportunity to pursue their own scholarship. We open the doors to inspiration that consequently creates impact.

Tomorrow’s leadership, innovation and long-term success can be seen today, sitting in classrooms, just waiting to be impacted. It starts with an inspired teacher. And a teacher gets inspired by a Fund for Teachers fellowship. FFT fellowship: Inspired teacher: Impact. We invite you to be part of the equation with your financial support. Then, you make an impact, as well. Visit www.fundforteachers.org to learn more.

Karen Kovach Webb
Executive Director

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.





Back in the Classroom

Authentically presenting the Black and Latino cultures to high-poverty students in central Wisconsin challenged the teaching team of Emily Grams, Abby Miller, Nancy Lanyon and Julie Olsen. But what they lacked in personal experience and knowledge, they made up for in motivation. Using a \$10,000 FFT grant, the team spent one week during June 2010 living and learning in Harlem, NY. Their goal: Develop culturally relevant curricula to better engage students and their families in the school experience.

"We stayed in the neighborhood, became familiar with the ebb and flow of Harlem days and nights and gathered materials on local artists, musicians, heroes, and activists, both current and past," explained Emily. "We also lived our students' daily reality: What it feels like to be a minority in a majority culture."



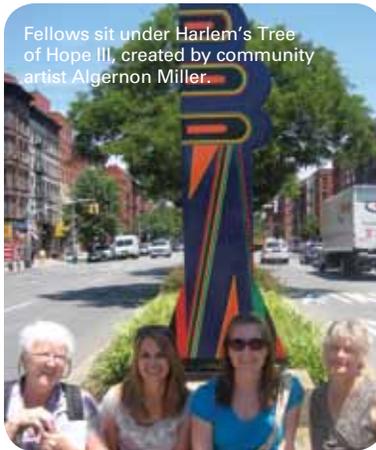
Hawthorne student finishes her tile depicting a day in the life of her neighborhood.



Students portray jazz icons in "We Haz Jazz!"



A tile mosaic on 125th Street in Harlem.



Fellows sit under Harlem's Tree of Hope III, created by community artist Algernon Miller.

Highlights of the week included stops at The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Harlem Heritage Center, Harlem Children's Zone, and the Apollo Theatre, where Nancy won the Soul Train Audience Dance Contest. Neighborhood tours, unexpected encounters and unplanned interviews spawned multiple cross-curricular units back at Hawthorne Elementary, including a musical production and a community-wide art project.

Hawthorne's music teacher led students in the production of "We Haz Jazz!", an exploration of the history of jazz featuring student performances of Fats Waller, Cab Calloway, Benny Goodman, and Billie Holiday classics. In preparation for the performance, students researched jazz artists in computer class and, in art class, created posters sharing what they learned. These posters decorated the gym for the show attended by the superintendent, school board members and parents.

Replicating mosaics adorning public spaces in Harlem, each Hawthorne student also made a clay tile depicting unique aspects of their school or neighborhood.

"This project developed a life of its own and enabled us to strengthen relationships between everyone in the neighborhood and school," said Julie, who also hosted Community Art Nights at school during the summer. The tiles were assembled into a kiosk which includes a Plexiglas display box for neighborhood and school notices in English, Hmong, and Spanish.

"Our fieldwork in Harlem served as a springboard, enabling us to form stronger bonds with students and families," said Emily. "The fact that we went to Harlem with eyes and ears open showed our students and their families that we care about them and equipped us with powerful experiences to bring back to our classrooms."

*Sheet music, CDs and a teacher's edition of "We Haz Jazz! (Exploring the History of America's Own Music)" are available online.

Additional Teachers Now Eligible

Teachers in Chattanooga/Hamilton County, TN, and Texas' Permian Basin region are now eligible for 2012 FFT grants. With the support of the Public Education Foundation and founding sponsor Apache Corporation, a summer learning experience is within reach of thousands of additional PreK-12 teachers. If you are interested in extending the FFT experience to teachers in your community, please contact us at info@fundforteachers.org.

"Teachers are dynamic professionals interacting with live data — kids."

- Merredith Portsmore, Tufts University's Center for Engineering and Education Outreach, during FFT's 2011 Institute for Innovation in Education.

In July, representatives of industry, education and philanthropy joined FFT Fellows from the past decade for our second annual Institute. Participants discussed characteristics of teachers' ideal professional development and how FFT can continually strive to empower teachers with such experiences.



Institute participants surround FFT Founder Raymond Plank.

Introducing our revamped site: fundforteachers.org



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JONES NEW YORK
IN THE CLASSROOM

Ripple Effect of Learning

Robert Frost said, "I am not a teacher, but an awakener." Similarly, Fund for Teachers grants are not checks, but catalysts. Every dollar invested in teachers' summer learning experiences matures exponentially into improved skills and authentic experiences that make learning come alive for students.

Fellows are required to submit a Plan for Implementation one year after their fellowship to demonstrate their grants' impact in the classroom. Pulled from those plans, we share some examples of student work. Following the learning from teacher to student demonstrates the ripple effect created by one FFT grant and positions America's students as beneficiaries of FFT grants, as well as their teachers.

All students live and learn through their teachers' FFT fellowships; however, few have returned with their teacher to a fellowship site. Beth Mowry raised funds to take six students and two teachers back to the Wyoming Dinosaur Center in Thermopolis, WY, as a reward for their participation in a paleontology class she started at the Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies. Students dug for dinosaur bones in the same quarry Beth excavated on her fellowship two years before, prospected for new fossil sites with two professional paleontologists, and worked in a paleontology lab cleaning and preparing fossils for research. Beth's students documented their "field trip" at bcsurbanpaleontologists.blogspot.com.



Beth excavates dinosaur bones in the "Something Interesting" quarry on her fellowship.



Beth's students explore travertine deposits in Hot Springs State Park, WY.



Beth shares FFT with a local in Santiago de Cuba.

What does math have to do with the Salsa? Spoken poetry with social justice? High schoolers at Boston Student Leadership Academy found out when their lessons took on a Caribbean flair following Beth Lambert and Megan Baird's fellowship. With their FFT grant, the colleagues observed the culture of Havana and Santiago de Cuba to infuse math and English curricula with performance art.

As a result, Megan's math students explored the connection between Cuban rhythms and math. Recreating Salsa rhythm on Cuban percussion instruments Megan purchased on the fellowship, her students then used online Rhythm Wheels to create those rhythms, employing least common denominators to do so.

Beth's English students studied revolutionary poetry of Cuban nationalist José Martí by analyzing themes of social justice, independence and equality through poetry. Students then shared their work in a school-wide exhibition judged by teachers, peers and community members. Beth's students also explored Spoken Word poetry by writing – then performing – pieces expressing discontent with injustices in their lives. This unit culminated in a compare/contrast exercise between students' work and Nueva Trova, a movement in Cuban music that combines traditional folk music with progressive and politicized lyrics.



Students use the online Rhythm Wheel to create music using polynomial expressions.

Responding to students' request for more information about their Hispanic heritage, Tanya Roger traveled through Panama (including the Canal) on her fellowship, returning with maps, photos, and first-hand accounts of Central America. Inspiring students to dig deeper, she collaborated with colleagues at Hoover Elementary in Tulsa, OK, to create an interdisciplinary "Bridging Cultures" unit. Students developed research skills and used materials collected during her fellowship to create *The ABC Book on Panama*, which they presented during a new literacy unit Tanya developed with the school librarian.

Tanya travels through the Panama Canal.



Students use Tanya's stories and artifacts to create the "P" page for their classroom book.

By making casts of a woolly mammoth's tooth, Dawn Staples-Knox's students at Searsport High School in Maine got a taste of her fellowship excavating, recording, and preserving Mammoth bones in Hot Springs, SD. "I say to my students regularly, 'You are going to be a scientist: Work like a scientist, think like a scientist and document like a scientist,'" said Dawn.



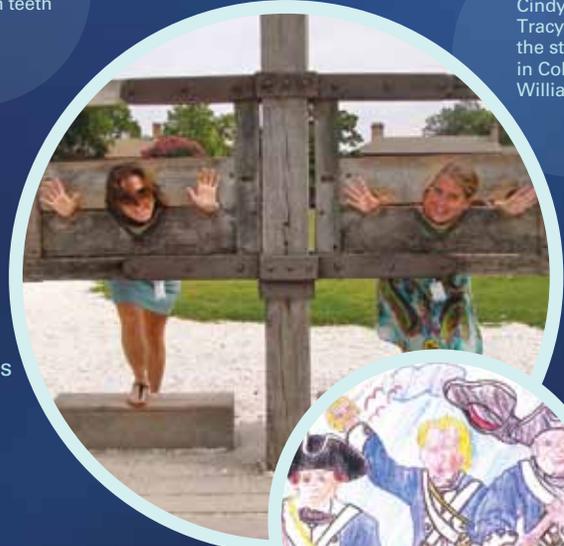
Dawn measures mammoth teeth with a caliper to determine the age at the Mammoth Site of Hot Springs, SD.



Dawn's students prepare casts of mammoth teeth in class.

Using primary sources gathered by Tracy Teetaert and Cindy Cassidy during their fellowship to Virginia's Historic Triangle, Minturn Middle School students in Colorado wrote and published historical fiction stories based on characters in the American Revolution. The teaching team created "Triangle Trunks" of artifacts acquired on their fellowship to support students' character development and add historical accuracy to the stories. Read more about their students' work at vahistorictriangle.blogspot.com.

Cindy and Tracy sample the stockades in Colonial Williamsburg.



Mary hikes to Alaska's Exit Glacier.



Mary's students apply papier-mâché and tempera paint to their "cool globes."



One student's original art work graces the cover of his historical fiction story.

Mary Trichel escaped the heat in Humble, TX, by exploring Alaska's unique ecosystems to teach students about geography and global warming concerns. Her video journals, artifacts and photos gathered enriched lessons for Atascocita Middle School sixth graders. Assuming the roles of world-renown environmentalists presenting at an international conference, students used globes they created to demonstrate proposed solutions for human consumption's impact on the global environment.

“Wish You Were Here”



So say FFT Fellows on hundreds of postcards that stuffed our mailbox this summer. While we couldn't accompany the 430 teachers who learned in 116 countries, we did enjoy living vicariously through their correspondences. Here are just a few.

I'm leaving Washington DC tomorrow with a deep gratitude for my fellowship and all the opportunities it afforded me. My head, heart and hands are full with the resources I now have to share with my students, school and community. Gratefully,



Linda Richmond (Wilson Middle School – Tulsa, OK)

Walking into the Shoah Memorial, this is the first thing that you see. It is a bronze cylinder evoking the chimneys of the extermination camps, many of which I've been able to visit. I was immediately struck with the necessity of the lessons to be learned from the intolerance shown and the hatred acted upon. So thank you for giving me this opportunity to learn for the children.”



As we follow Germany's Fairy Tale Road, our minds are planning for the wonderful teaching and experiences we'll implement with our students this fall. We thank you FFT for this profound educational learning opportunity. Sincerely, with gratitude,



Wanda Kern and Jodie Kadonsky (Jefferson Elementary – OshKosh, WI)

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for this opportunity to learn and grow. In a brief period of time, I've visited museums and schools, immersed myself in the culture, and met teachers whose passion inspires me to be a greater educator. As I write and reflect, I can't help but cry because you allowed me to experience so much and grow as a teacher and, most importantly, as a person! Thank you,

In Paris taking in all of the scenes, sounds, culture, and, especially, immersing myself in French in a way that can't be done in Cincinnati. This is so important for my students. A huge thanks for the grant, the support, the encouragement. Sincerely,



Madeleine LaJeunesse (Walnut Hills High School – Cincinnati, OH)

I just wanted to say thank you for this once in a lifetime opportunity. I'm only through Krakow, Berlin and Dresden on my trip and have experienced so much. These places have already changed how I will teach for years to come. Thanks for making this possible!

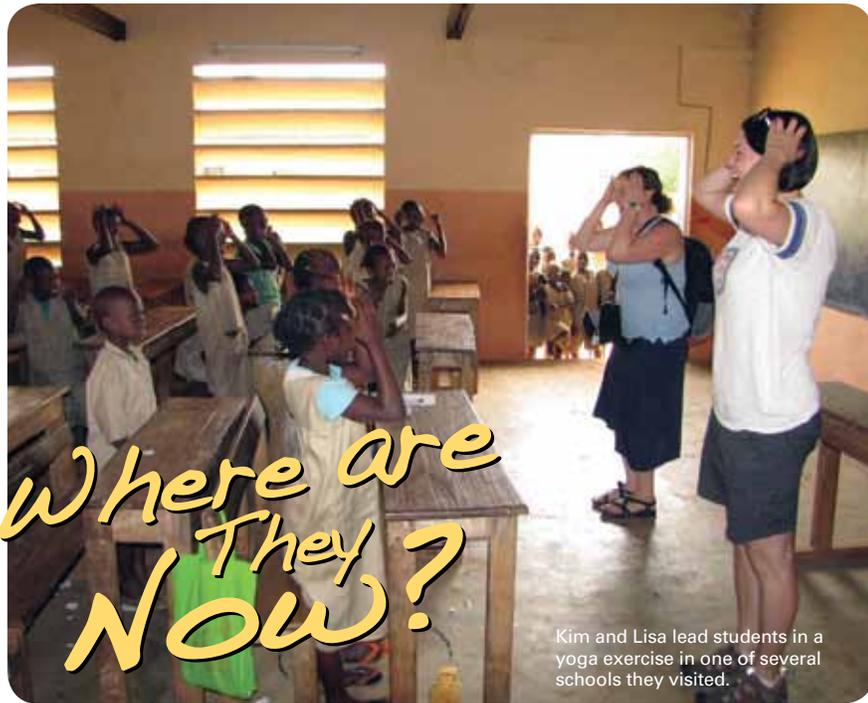


Bill Cataldo (Walt Disney Elementary Magnet School – Chicago, IL)

It's only day 2, but I've already seen so much that I teach to my 12th graders. I'm soaking it all in, taking lots of pictures and filming videos in order to take my experience back to my students. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to grow as a teacher! Sincerest thanks,



Aimee Whitescarver (Valley Springs High School – Valley Springs, AR)



Kim and Lisa lead students in a yoga exercise in one of several schools they visited.

No paparazzi waited outside Kim Goldsmith's classroom after *Yoga Chicago Magazine* published her article. But an admiring fan did. Lisa Bracker, a Chicago special needs teacher and yoga devotee, read about Kim's 2009 FFT fellowship observing yoga's role in educating students with autism in India. Eager to see how Kim applied her learning at William J. Bogan Computer Technical High School, Lisa asked for a classroom visit. What she saw inspired Lisa to craft her own FFT grant, which she used to attend "Yoga for the Special Child" training in New York City in July 2010.

Their shared profession and passion ultimately led them to sub-Saharan Africa in April. The Global Autism Project contacted Kim (who enlisted Lisa) to present at its inaugural West African International Autism Policies and Practices conference in Accra, Ghana. Kim and Lisa accepted, arranged the trip around Spring Break, and shared with an international audience how students with autism are educated in America, India, and Japan. After their presentation, Kim and Lisa visited three private schools for students with autism and mental disabilities.

Their FFT fellowships continue to impact Chicago students. "I use yoga every day with my students and wrote my Master's thesis on yoga as a context for teaching academics to students with autism," said Kim. "I've also become a partner of AACTION Autism, which helped me establish a classroom exchange last year with the Guyana Greenheart Autistic Society." In August, her new class embarked on another service learning project, this time with a Nigerian school and a teacher whom she met at the conference in Ghana.

After her fellowship in New York, Lisa introduced the practice of yoga to Chicago's Northside Learning Center (NLC), a school serving more than 300 students with moderate cognitive disabilities. "Now, when you walk through the halls of NLC, you'll likely see students deep breathing, stretching and relaxing to optimize their learning experience," said Lisa. "It's amazing to watch students with extremely limited range of motion attempt to balance on one leg in Tree Pose. But the biggest reward is seeing students with limited language adding 'yoga' and 'Namaste' to their vocabulary and yoga's practice to their lives."



Conference organizer Casey McFeely welcomes Kim (L) to Ghana and the conference.

It's a Small World After All



One teaches math in Houston, TX; the other teaches science in Newport, VT. But on July 21, while pursuing separate FFT fellowships, they ran into each other on the same street in Reykjavik, Iceland. "It's amazing how quickly one bonds with another person when traveling far from home and sharing a similar experience," said Chris Shaffer, teacher at North County Union High School in Newport. Kristie Long, teacher at Houston's Johnston Middle School, added, "Thank goodness Chris was wearing his FFT hat or I would have missed him!"

Us versus Them

(Continued)

The more we discussed and learned about Islam back in our classroom, the clearer it became that the perpetrators of September 11th do not represent the roughly 1.4 billion Muslims in the world. My students concluded that Muslims are not people to be afraid of or hated. By the end, we were all much more aware of who we refer to as "us" and who we refer to as "them." When we challenge ourselves to be honest and develop skills such as analysis, objectivity and contextualization, my students and I discover that our fear-based assumptions are just that. Reality, for better or worse, is far subtler and more complicated than we imagine.

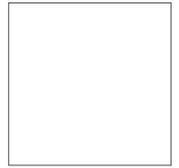
Additional teachers, prompted by 9/11, also pursued Islam-related fellowships. USA Today featured these stories the week leading up to the tenth anniversary of 9/11 on usatodayeducation.com/ctelounge.

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Alumni Updates

Shakera Wilson (2007 Boston) was one of 16 teachers selected from 750 candidates to serve as a Teaching Ambassador Fellow for 2011-12 school year. As a full-time employee of the Department of Education and headquartered in Washington, D.C., Shakera will learn about national policy issues in education and contribute her expertise to those discussions.

Matthew McConn, teacher at Houston's Memorial High School, won Spring Branch ISD's Teacher of the Year award and was named a Region 4 finalist.

Julie Yick (2010 San Francisco) enjoyed her fellowship in Puerto Rico so much that she returned this fall to teach English at the Universidad del Este, saying, "My Fund for Teachers experience empowered me to follow my life dreams and had such a huge impact on me. I thank Fund for Teachers for everything amazing they enabled me to do."

Three of the 11 teachers selected as Boston's 2011 Educators of the Year were FFT Fellows: **Ingrid Roche** (2003), **Fernadina Chan** (2011) and **Alison Galanter** (2011).



Mary Patterson and **Doreen Jarvis** (2011 Houston) returned mid-July from their fellowship at the 2011 World Congress in Intelligent Control and Automation in Taipei, Taiwan, and Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Academy. Two weeks later, they leveraged these experiences to lead a week-long robotics camp for students. Campers learned advanced computer programming skills to operate self-made robots.

Students adjust their robot's wheels to successfully accomplish a task during Robotics Camp.



Fellows and FFT friends joined host Deborah Duncan (center) and the studio audience for a taping of Great Day Houston's "Back to School" show in August.