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### **Fund for Teachers Sends 28 Boston Public School Teachers on Summer Learning Odseys**

National Non-Profit in Tenth Year of Awarding Grants for Professional Development Experiences

BOSTON (April 20, 2010) – Trusting that teachers are wise in knowing how to engage and energize their students, Fund for Teachers in partnership with the Boston Plan for Excellence and Boston Public Schools recently awarded 28 Boston PreK-12 teachers with fellowships for self-designed professional development totaling approximately \$128,000. Each fellowship is as unique as the teacher who designed it; and regardless of the destination or discipline, these newly named Fellows will return to 16 Boston public schools this fall inspired by their pursuit of ideas, terrains, and cultures in 18 countries.

Examples of Boston Fellows and their summer itineraries include:

- Craig Ruitter (Boston Day and Evening Academy) will work with the Hoga Island Marine Research Station in Indonesia on a reef ecology conservation expedition that will reinvigorate current curriculum units ;
- Johanna Mendillo (John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science) will visit astronomical sites in California and across the Southwest to teach the most current information on space science to astronomy and physics classes;
- Paul Faircloth (Boston Community Leadership Academy) will attend the International Conference on Origami in Science, Mathematics and Education in Singapore to learn new strategies for teaching special needs students, and;
- Wendy Hale and Angela Gentile (Boston Latin Academy) will retrace the steps of Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel through visits to historically significant Jewish sites in Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Italy and Greece so students gain a deeper understanding of the authors' works .

“The reason we’re so happy to be associated with Fund for Teachers is because this is tremendously motivating for educators,” said Ellen Guiney, Executive Director of Boston Plan for Excellence. “Fund for Teachers gives teachers a sense that we are listening and responding to them and helps them realize the opportunity to do something they would never otherwise have the opportunity to do. I often hear, in reference to Fund for Teachers, ‘People just don’t DO this for teachers.’ Fund for Teachers makes a real contribution to how teachers feel about their profession.”

Teachers’ need for relevant professional development, as provided by Fund for Teachers, was underscored by the landmark survey results released by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in March which found that, of the 40,000 teachers surveyed, more than **80 percent reported professional development that is relevant to personal and school goals is absolutely essential or very important for teacher retention.**

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Fund for Teachers strives to keep teachers inspired by empowering them with the freedom to design a professional development experience that most impacts their lives, their profession, and their community. The Fund for Teachers fellowship application becomes available online each October, with an application deadline in January. Awardees are notified in April and fellowships take place during the summer.

“We recognize that the teacher is the decisive factor in students’ learning,” said Karen Kovach Webb, executive director of Fund for Teachers. “We are deeply committed to the growth of teachers through strategic investments in their own areas of personal and professional interest. We’ve seen firsthand the impact Fund for Teachers fellowships have as a transformative resource for teaching and learning.”

Since 2004, 268 Boston teachers received more than \$943,000 in Fund for Teachers’ grants to experience summer learning odysseys that continue to transform learning for themselves and the 160 schools they represent. Click [here](#) for a complete list of Boston teachers traveling the world this summer with Fund for Teachers grants made possible by generous corporate and individual donors.

#### **[About Fund for Teachers](#)**

**Fund for Teachers** is a national, donor-supported organization celebrating its tenth year of awarding fellowships for self-designed professional growth to teachers who recognize the value of inquiry, the power of knowledge and their ability to make a difference. For more information about Fund for Teachers, visit [fundforteachers.org](http://fundforteachers.org)

#### **[About Boston Plan For Excellence](#)**

The Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools is a local education foundation established in 1984 to support the city’s schools in raising student achievement. As a local education fund and nonprofit, the Boston Plan works from the “outside in,” acting as both an ally and critical friend to the Boston Public Schools — seeking and supporting innovative solutions to the toughest problems faced by Boston’s students, their teachers, and the school district as a whole.

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