



(Note to reporters/editors: 2007 will be the 20th year for this popular program. Virtually all educators in your area probably will be interested in these fellowships.)

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For Immediate Release
Sept. 5, 2006

Lilly Endowment announces 20th year of Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program

A popular program that honors K-12 educators' desire for personal renewal and intellectual revitalization will mark its 20th anniversary next year. Funded by Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc., the Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program has awarded almost 1,700 grants to teachers, principals, guidance counselors and librarians in Indiana public and private schools since 1987. While the guidelines and grant amounts have changed slightly over the years, the major purpose has remained the same: personal renewal and individual intellectual growth.

The 2007 Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program will offer up to 120 awards of \$8,000 each for K-12 licensed teachers, principals and assistant principals, guidance counselors and librarians/media specialists to support creative projects that will take place during six weeks next summer.

A second level of funding is available for "distinguished fellows." These grants offer up to \$25,000 per individual and will support up to five projects that will improve teachers' work with students by enhancing their knowledge and rekindling their dedication to the teaching profession.

(more)

2007 Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program
Add 1

If the teacher will need to leave the classroom or school for a period of time to engage in these projects, the Endowment may award additional funding up to \$25,000 directly to the teacher's district to cover all or part of the costs of a replacement teacher. In this round the Endowment will approve up to five awards to teachers and up to five grants to school districts. Grant activities may take place anytime between June 1, 2007, and Aug. 31, 2008.

For those receiving the \$8,000 fellowships, their six-week project must be completed by Aug. 31, 2007, but the grant period will run through May 31, 2008, so that recipients will be able to report how the grant activities have influenced their work in the classroom.

The \$8,000 fellowship recipients for 2006 have gone all over the country and around the world to study Greek pottery, volcanoes, archaeology in the Middle East, Scandinavian fairytales, cowboy towns in the American West, Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, lighthouses on the Pacific coast, humpback whales in Alaska, chocolate-making in Switzerland, Seneca Indian ancestry, ancient stone carvings in Scotland, Indiana author Jean Stratton Porter, Russian icon painting – and more.

"Distinguished fellows" this year are living in Mexico for five months to study language and culture, hiking the entire Appalachian Trail and creating a Web site to communicate with students, studying monarch butterfly sanctuaries in the mountains of Mexico, and studying at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts to produce a video documentary so students can learn to operate a mini-Shakespeare dinner theater.

"The sky's the limit for these teachers," says Sara B. Cobb, the Endowment's vice president for education. "We are constantly amazed and gratified by the enthusiasm they bring to these projects, the lessons they learn, the people they meet, and the excitement they bring back to the students in their classrooms.

"The Endowment believes that engaged K-12 educators help produce engaged students, and this popular program has certainly validated this belief."

(more)

2007 Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program
Add 2

All applicants must have at least three years of professional experience to be eligible for this competitive program. Also, former Teacher Creativity fellows who received their award before 2000 are eligible to apply for a second award in the 2007 program.

Applications for either level of the Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program must be postmarked by Nov. 10. Notification of grant awards will be made in early March; grant payments will be made after March 15.

For specific questions about the program, application procedures or grant-writing tips, please contact the Endowment by e-mail, info@teachercreativity.org, or consult the Endowment's Web site, www.lillyendowment.org and click on Education, then on Teacher Creativity.