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For Immediate Release
August 2007

Lilly Endowment announces continuation of Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program

More than 125 Indiana teachers, principals, guidance counselors, librarians and media specialists have spent the summer all over the world, traveling from India to Ireland, Nicaragua to New Zealand, Africa to the Arctic, Italy to Israel. Some have stayed much closer to home. But all have been on quests to pursue their personal interests, explore subjects that intrigue them and just “get away.” They are the recipients of 2007 Teacher Creativity Fellowships, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. Since 1987 the Endowment has awarded more than 1,800 grants in this popular program.

Now the Endowment announces that the program will continue next year, its 21st, giving another cadre of hard-working educators a chance to become reenergized, follow their dreams and return with new spirits to their classrooms.

The 2008 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, librarians and 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 10 projects that will improve teachers’ work with students by enhancing their knowledge and rekindling their dedication to the teaching profession.

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2008 Teacher Creativity Program
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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 10 awards to teachers and up to 10 grants to school districts. Grant activities may take place anytime between June 1, 2008, and Aug. 31, 2009.

For those receiving the \$8,000 fellowships, their six-week project must be completed by Aug. 31, 2008, but the grant period will run through May 31, 2009, so that recipients will be able to report how the grant activities have influenced their work in the classroom.

"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."

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 2001 are eligible to apply for a second award in the 2008 program.

Applications for either level of the Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program must be postmarked by Nov. 9. Notification of grant awards will be made by early March; grant payments will be made before June 30.

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 website, www.lillyendowment.org, and click on Education, then on Teacher Creativity.