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TEACHFORAMERICA

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TEACH FOR AMERICA LAUNCHES SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD

Winner Morgan Dixon and Three Finalists Receive Funding for Pioneering Ventures to Impact Educational Outcomes in Low-Income Communities

NEW YORK, April 2, 2012—Teach For America today announced the winner of the inaugural Teach For America Social Innovation Award, which recognizes bold ideas to close the education gap in low-income communities. Winner Morgan Dixon (Metro Atlanta Corps '00) and co-founder Vanessa Garrison received \$125,000 to launch [GirlTrek](#), a national nonprofit organization that supports tens of thousands of black women and girls to work together to develop healthy habits, redefine cultural traditions and contribute to broader conversations about health in America.

“This award will provide essential support for GirlTrek’s work in partnership with tens of thousands of black women and girls who have committed to living their healthiest lives,” said Dixon, co-founder of GirlTrek. “We are humbled by this acknowledgment and eager to grow our support of walking teams, launch a campaign to promote real women and girls as healthy role models, and train more local leaders to advocate for healthier communities.”

Teach For America recruits, develops, and supports top college graduates and professionals who commit to teach for two years and become lifelong leaders in the movement for educational equity. The new Social Innovation Award is designed to provide critical early-stage financial and material support to Teach For America alumni to jump-start their highly promising idea or venture.

Finalists Zeke Berzoff-Cohen (Baltimore Corps '08), Kriste Dragon (Los Angeles Corps '98), and Toni Maraviglia (New York Corps '05) each received \$10,000 for their startups. Berzoff-Cohen’s [The Intersection](#) works to foster leadership and shift career and life expectations for at-risk young people in Baltimore by training them in community organizing. Dragon’s [Citizens of the World Charter Schools](#), based in Los Angeles, is a national network of schools that offer an interactive, rigorous learning experience with students from all

backgrounds. Maraviglia's [MPrep](#) enables low-income students in Kenya without access to books or technology to review for their exams and receive teachers' feedback using mobile phones.

"Given the magnitude of educational inequity and its consequences for children and communities and our country, we must speed up the pace of change," said Wendy Kopp, chief executive officer and founder of Teach For America. "Our Social Innovation Award aims to do just that by recognizing and fostering entrepreneurial leadership among our alumni to tackle the root causes of the problem and pioneer innovations that will accelerate progress."

To be considered for the award, Teach For America corps members and alumni submit an application, which is reviewed by a panel of education and entrepreneurship experts from within Teach For America and other organizations. Recipients are selected based on several criteria, including a foundational idea that is demonstrably new or different, a clear vision and personal commitment to meeting the venture's goals, and the venture's potential to dramatically impact educational outcomes for low-income students.

The Teach For America Social Innovation Award is sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Doris & Donald Fisher Fund, and Joyce and Larry Stupski.

About Teach For America

Teach For America works in partnership with communities to expand educational opportunity for children facing the challenges of poverty. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding individuals of all academic disciplines to commit two years to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the movement to end educational inequity. Today more than 9,000 corps members are teaching in 43 urban and rural regions across the country, while nearly 24,000 alumni are working across sectors to ensure that all children have access to an excellent education. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).