

Contact: Carrie James | Teach For America
415.271.2000 | carrie.james@teachforamerica.org

TEACH FOR AMERICA ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF FIRST-EVER ALUMNI AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Ten Alumni Teachers Recognized for their Extraordinary Leadership and Commitment to Expanding Educational Opportunity in the Classroom

NEW YORK CITY, May 17, 2012 — Coming out of National Teacher Appreciation Week, Teach For America today announced the winners of the inaugural Teach For America Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching, which recognizes alumni who are exemplary classroom teachers for students growing up in low-income communities.

From an alumni teaching base of more than 7,000, 240 alumni were considered for the award. After multiple rounds of review, the pool was narrowed to 31 finalists from which ten award recipients were selected. They are:

- **Edward Chambers (Eastern North Carolina Corps '92):** 9th, 11th and 12th grade English teacher at Columbia High School, Columbia, SC
- **Taylor Delhagen (New York Corps '06):** 10th Grade Global History and Global Citizenship teacher at Achievement First Brooklyn High School, New York, NY
- **Eric Diamon (New York Corps '04):** 5th Grade Literature teacher at North Star Academy: Vailsburg Middle School, Newark, NJ
- **Candice Frontiera (Hawai'i Corps '07):** 7th and 8th Grade Math teacher at Kalakaua Middle School, Honolulu, HI
- **Sanee Ibrahim (Bay Area Corps '05):** 8th Grade Language Arts teacher at Renaissance Academy, San Jose, CA
- **Laura Kretschmar (Greater New Orleans Corps '95):** 5th and 6th Grade Math and Science teacher at Lighthouse Community Charter School, Oakland, CA
- **Belzie Mont-Louis (New York Corps '04):** 7th Grade Reading teacher at Orchard Gardens Pilot School, Boston, MA
- **Jennifer Pennell Tan (New York Corps '07):** Pre-Kindergarten teacher at CS 211, New York, NY
- **Isaac Pollack (Greater Philadelphia Corps '06):** 9th Grade Biology teacher at Sci Academy, New Orleans, LA
- **Lavinia Rogers (Greater Newark Corps '01):** 10th -12th Grade French teacher at TEAM Charter Schools: Newark Collegiate Academy, Newark, NJ

"We are so excited about this group of educators and what their sustained impact on students' lives can teach us and others in the field about what is possible in the classroom," said Wendy Kopp, founder and CEO of Teach For America. "I am hopeful that this award and

the opportunities that come with it will provide an additional platform for them to share their experiences and to learn from other educators across the country and the world.”

To be considered for the award, Teach For America alumni submitted a comprehensive application, which was reviewed by a panel of education leaders from within and outside the organization. Recipients were selected based on several criteria: they demonstrated dramatic impact on the educational outcomes of their students and broader school community, exhibited an unwavering belief in the potential for all students to succeed, and expressed a long-term commitment to teaching as a way to combat educational inequity.

Recipients will be publicly honored by Teach For America in New York City on July 27, 2012, receive a monetary prize, and be invited to participate in an award ambassadorship , which includes an international trip focused on excellence and challenges in educational systems abroad.

Steven Farr, author of *Teaching as Leadership* and Teach For America’s chief knowledge officer, was on the selection committee for this year’s awards. “Going through the process of selecting our top alumni educators will undoubtedly inform the ways in which we develop and train our corps members moving forward. We are excited to use the insights from so many of our strongest alumni teachers to refine our understanding of highly successful teacher strategies that promote student learning,” said Farr.

The Teach For America Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching have been very generously underwritten by the Seedlings Foundation, with the vision of recognizing and learning from our alumni teachers. In addition, the Amgen Foundation – Teach For America’s Founding National Math & Science Partner – will support one Award to an alumnus who has demonstrated significant impact and commitment to strengthening math and science education in underserved communities.

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 [our website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

###