

School News & Notes

Independent School Teachers Pursue Adventure, Learning

(NAPSA)—A growing number of teachers are using the summer break to pursue research, travel and other professional development opportunities to expand their skills and enhance the classroom experience of their students.

For example, Balazs Dibuz journeyed to India in search of the spirit of “Ramayana,” one of the most important literary texts of South Asia. Andrew Shaw conducted hands-on research in a remote corner of the Peruvian Amazon. Julia Russell and Kate Coon built adobe houses on a Cheyenne reservation in Montana. Lucie Calvin immersed herself in Chinese and Japanese history.

When the school year starts, these five educators—and many of their peers—will weave the knowledge and experiences they’ve gained during the summer months into their course curriculum, giving students a unique, first-hand perspective into different cultures, real-world scientific research and countless other subjects.

Summer professional enrichment is particularly common among teachers at independent schools. These institutions are distinct from other non-public schools in that they are independently governed by a board of trustees and are primarily funded through tuition, charitable contributions and endowment income.

“Teachers at independent schools go the extra mile to build their skills as educators,” says Patrick F. Bassett, president of the National Association of Independent Schools. “Many take advantage of summer months while school is out of session to further develop their skill sets.



Teachers bring new knowledge, enhanced skills and enthusiasm to the classroom following summer professional development and research projects.

Not only are our teachers gaining invaluable knowledge, but the students are rewarded with a curriculum enriched by the materials and skills collected throughout those experiences.”

Independent schools frequently encourage teachers to explore professional development opportunities, often providing financial support for research, travel or coursework. Funding varies from school to school, but often includes tuition reimbursement, a stipend for each teacher per semester, or a specific budget allocation for the entire faculty and staff for the year. Many teachers also apply for grants to help finance their professional development pursuits.

“Professional development opportunities offered by independent schools help to attract and retain high-quality teachers,” Bassett says. “Many teachers say they chose to be independent school teachers because it provides them with the opportunity to pursue their dreams.”

To learn more about independent schools, visit www.isadvocacy.org/parents.