

Six KSTF Teachers Awarded National Board Certification

Six KSTF Teaching Fellowship alumni have earned certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

These early-career educators teach science and math in high schools in California, Colorado, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Washington.

Moorestown, NJ, January 3, 2013 — Six of the Knowles Science Teaching Foundation (KSTF) Teaching Fellowship alumni have earned the highly prestigious certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). All six are early-career educators who teach science and math in high schools in California, Colorado, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington. Achieved after a complex, rigorous assessment and testing process, the NBPTS Certification is the nation's highest benchmark of teaching knowledge, skills and practices. The six KSTF alumni join six other previously Board Certified high school teachers who are part of KSTF's nationwide teacher network.

"The National Board Certification is a tremendous achievement akin to the medical or legal board. Earning this advanced teaching credential validates the standard to which these highly accomplished teachers hold themselves and their teaching practice," said Dr. Dina H. Portnoy, Director, KSTF Alumni Program. "This success is an indication of what happens when teachers are empowered as leaders and supported by a strong network of like-minded colleagues."

"The National Board process forced me to focus on my day-to-day instructional choices and how they fit into my vision of teaching as a whole," said Rosalind Echols, KSTF alumna and physics teacher at the Science Leadership Academy in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "When so many schools and districts are telling teachers what to do, this process of thinking about our professional choices is very important for me, my students and the entire teaching profession."

A voluntary program, the NBPTS certification process can take the better part of a school year and involve hundreds of hours of work beyond the regular demands of teaching. Teachers complete a comprehensive portfolio with written and video

entries on classroom practice and discourse, instruction and content knowledge, and work with parents and the wider community. Over 97,000 teachers were Nationally Board Certified as of 2011, representing approximately 2.7 percent of the 3.7 million-strong US teacher force. By contrast, six percent of KSTF Fellows and alumni have been Nationally Board Certified to date. By encouraging teachers to hone their practice, the certification directly impacts student performance and achievement, as well as ongoing school-wide improvement.

“Students need and deserve teachers who are always going to question what they do, why they do it, and whether all of this is good enough for their success. Going through the Certification process is a

structure for doing that,” said Jessica Uy, KSTF alumna and mathematics teacher at Fremont High School in Sunnyvale, California.

An advocate for new teachers and the teaching profession, KSTF encourages its Teaching Fellows and alumni nationwide to apply for the National Board Certification. The KSTF teachers’ resources include the professional and leadership development and peer support they receive from the KSTF network during the five years of their fellowship program and beyond. KSTF also provides financial assistance to cover application and assessment fees, as well as video and other equipment to aid with the process.

“KSTF was an enormous source of support. The portfolio which we had to do every year of the KSTF Fellowship helped me prepare for the rigor of the NBPTS process,” said James R. Town, KSTF alum and mathematics teacher at Redwood Academy in Ukiah, California. “In some ways, the KSTF portfolio was harder than the NBPTS portfolio since it asked for evidence of growth in my practice whereas NBPTS focused only on evidence of good teaching and student understanding at a snapshot in time.”

The 2012 Nationally Board Certified KSTF teachers are:

Emilie Cross, physics, chemistry and earth science teacher at Smoky Hill High School in Aurora, Colorado

Chris Davis, mathematics teacher at Lewis and Clark High School in Spokane, Washington

Rosalind Echols, physics teacher at the Science Leadership Academy in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Alison Espinosa, mathematics teacher at A.C. Flora High School in Columbia, South Carolina

James R. Town, mathematics teacher at Redwood Academy in Ukiah, California

Jessica Uy, mathematics teacher at Fremont High School in Sunnyvale, California

In 2012, an additional ten KSTF Fellows completed the Take One! professional development opportunity that is based on the National Board Certification assessment program.