

National Afterschool Matters Initiative
Practitioner Fellowship
2010-2011

It provided a professional environment for the first time where I was with like-minded individuals and provided an example of the kind of reflective community that could be created. It was great to hear other people's experiences. I still draw from the Fellowship and think back to that time. -- Practitioner Fellow

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) at the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College and the National Writing Project (NWP), with generous funding support from the Robert Bowne Foundation, launched the National Afterschool Matters Initiative Practitioner Fellowship in September 2008. The first two participating cities were Philadelphia through the Philadelphia Writing Project, and the San Francisco Bay area through the Bay Area Writing Project. The Fellowship is now established in Minneapolis and is expanding to New Orleans and Seattle this year.

Traditionally, the Practitioner Fellowship Program is a professional development and leadership initiative for mid-level career out-of-school time professionals. This year we are excited to be testing a joint school and out-of-school time model in three cities while continuing the original model in Minneapolis. The new model will engage practitioners from out-of-school time and classroom teachers in an effort to find ways that schools and afterschool programs can better work together to serve their youth population. Participants in the Practitioner Fellowship are selected by application, and through a year-long process engage in activities that inform program quality and improve practice through reflection and inquiry.

Those selected for the Practitioner Fellowship:

- Become part of a community of practitioners. Fellows work collaboratively to study effective practices and investigate the structures in which effective practice happens – at the program/classroom, activity, curriculum, and individual levels using their own programs as the objects of study.
- Learn strategies to engage in program reflection and inquiry. Fellows learn approaches and strategies that will help them become better at program/classroom observation and analysis.
- Improve programs and practice. Fellows identify and investigate effective instructional strategies and bring these strategies back to their classrooms and/or out-of-school time programs.
- Engage in leadership activities. Fellows present their work to peers and administrators, parents and community members. They are encouraged to design and deliver workshops based on their work to share new expertise with others in the field.

- Disseminate program/classroom improvement strategies. Fellows create products including briefing papers, events, curriculum, as well as articles for professional journals.

Eligibility:

- Eligible Fellows must be working part-time or full-time at a school or an out-of-school time program in Philadelphia, Minneapolis, New Orleans or Seattle.
- Eligible Fellows must be in commuting distance to University of Pennsylvania, University of Minnesota, University of New Orleans or downtown Seattle.
- Eligible Fellows must demonstrate interest in reflecting upon their own teaching or work with youth, investigating, and writing about quality practices in afterschool and youth programming and schools.
- Eligible Fellows must be available for the entire Fellowship schedule. Meetings occur approximately 2x per month over the course of the academic year and significant time is needed for research, reflection and writing. Fellows are expected to attend seminars and it is required that they participate in the writing retreat and research roundtable.
- Eligible Fellows must have a Bachelor's Degree and a year of experience in the field.

Stipend:

Participants will be awarded a stipend of \$500 at the completion of the program to cover their expenses incurred during the Fellowship.

Schedule:

September 2010 – Fall 2011

- Participation in program launch meeting
- Participation in twice monthly seminars
- Participation in writing retreat
- Participation in local Research Roundtable (Fall, 2011)

Application Process:

Employer approval must be obtained (see Memorandum of Understanding). Please complete the Practitioner Fellowship application and return, along with the MOU, **no later than June 7, 2010 by e-mail, fax, or mail to:**

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
National Afterschool Matters
Practitioner Fellowship Program
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For more information contact: Karen Lachance, (781) 283-2507 or klachanc@wellesley.edu