

## What is Courage to Teach?

Courage to Teach (CTT) is a professional development series especially designed for K-12 teachers, support staff, and administrators. Twenty-five to thirty educators will be selected to participate in five quarterly weekend sessions, beginning Friday evenings and ending Sunday afternoons:

- **Nov 19-21, 2004**
- **Jan 28-30, 2005**
- **April 22-24, 2005**
- **June 24-26, 2005**
- **Sept 30-Oct 2, 2005**

Groups will be formed with diversity—of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and experience—a key consideration.

Through CTT, educators will experience teacher formation, a process rooted in the belief that good teaching flows from the identity and integrity of the teacher. In an atmosphere that encourages honesty and compassion for themselves and others, they will be invited to make use of personal stories, reflections on classroom practice, and insights from poets, storytellers, and various wisdom traditions. Rich metaphors of the seasons are used as a way of exploring vocational and life questions.

Educators pay 25-30% of the cost of the series. CUNA Mutual Group Foundation provides a cornerstone of the funding; the remainder comes from organizations and individuals in our community who are committed to investing in educational excellence in our county. We value, encourage and invite your support and contributions! For more details, contact either of the facilitators.

## What is the impact of Courage to Teach?

According to an outside longitudinal evaluation done three to five years after 113 educators participated in the first series of CTT two-year programs, educators were profoundly affected by the experience. The evaluation revealed:

\*100% rated the series as the most valuable professional development they had experienced;

\*100% said that it altered and improved their classroom practice;

\*90% said they had developed the habit of reflective practice (shown by research to improve quality of teaching and lead to higher student achievement);

\*68% said their experience led them to initiate more collegial relationships at their school (shown by research to be related to teacher satisfaction);

\*100% believed that teacher formation could lead to enduring and vital improvement in American education.

Source: Sam Intrator, Ph.D., Smith College, and Megan Schribner, Courage to Teach Longitudinal Program Evaluation, March 2000.

## From recent Madison/Dane County CTT participants:

For the past several years, before I started CTT, I felt that my teaching fire had almost gone out. CTT has taught me a lot about rebuilding that fire. What a difference it has made! My students are blooming. We're building a wonderful community together. They feel safe and respected and heard. It's still challenging, but I feel that I'm teaching from who I really am. CTT has made all of the difference. (Elementary school teacher, 18 years' experience)

In the face of an emergency, flight attendants insist that you put on your oxygen mask first before helping others. CTT has been my oxygen. Receiving this oxygen has restored, nourished and revived my spirit so that I may give my best self to others. Teaching can feel so overwhelming and even scary. CTT doesn't administer the oxygen, so much as it teaches you how to use your own equipment and save yourself. (High school teacher, 7 years' experience)

The people here have given many gifts to my teaching, but not through any sort of advice or technique. It has all been given through a process of patient faith. Faith in me, faith in my pain, an embracing of my angry, hurt places until those fires burn themselves out, and what is left behind is a silent, gentle unfolding. The unfolding of wings. (Teacher for 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders, 8 years' experience)

I came to this program questioning my future as an educator, but the CTT community has gently guided me in finding my way back to joyful, meaningful teaching as a part of a joyful, meaningful life. (Elementary school teacher, 16 years' experience)

## Facilitators

**Barbara Hummel** coaches leaders and consults with organizations to help design collaborative methods for improving work and work environments. Clients span corporate, public, and non-profit sectors. She teaches part-time for Edgewood College's MBA Program.

**Bonnie Trudell** teaches in the school health education program in UW-Madison's Department of Curriculum & Instruction. She has been involved in health education for over thirty years, including thirteen in teacher preparation and student teacher supervision. She has taught in both middle and high schools, and consulted with local districts, CESA, and the DPI.

Both are part of a national facilitators network prepared by The Center for Teacher Formation.

Courage to Teach is a national effort happening in twenty-two states and Canada. For more information and resources, go to The Center for Teacher Formation's website: [www.teacherformation.org](http://www.teacherformation.org)

**Applications for the 2004-2005 Madison/Dane County CTT series will be accepted until October 8. To receive an application or to learn more about Madison/Dane County Courage to Teach, contact:**

- ❖ Barbara Hummel, [bhummel@chorus.net](mailto:bhummel@chorus.net), 233-7400
- ❖ Bonnie Trudell, [bktrudell@juno.com](mailto:bktrudell@juno.com), 274-2834

## Comments from recent Madison/Dane County CTT participants:

Within the Courage to Teach community, my heart is found again. I am given space to reflect, insights to reflect upon, opportunities to share. It is a community that makes it possible to believe again in teaching, to recreate the passion, the fire I have for teaching, to nurture and restore the worn out parts of me that make me the best teacher I can be. (Elementary school teacher, 5 years' experience)

What has the CTT community meant to me? Everything. Courage to Teach is more than a community to me. It is a family. It is a family that honors everyone. The example we practice helps me to go back home and find new ways to communicate. (Middle school teacher, 15 years' experience)

CTT gave me the gift of time to examine my work of teaching and actually keep me in teaching. Professionally I have grown in being able to listen more deeply and ask better questions. (Instructional resource teacher, 25 years' experience)

Through this slowed pace and relaxed environment, the stress of endless responsibilities and nurturing of students slips away, and my emotional, physical and mental batteries begin to recharge. When finally, after our weekend work is complete, I am standing tall, back to full strength and a little more prepared to handle the chaos of teaching with grace and optimism. (Elementary school teacher, 8 years' experience)



**COURAGE**  
*to*  
**T E A C H**

A professional renewal series  
for educators in  
Madison and Dane County  
in conjunction with  
**Edgewood College and  
CUNA Mutual Group Foundation**

\*The question we most commonly ask is the "what" question—what subjects shall we teach?

\*When the conversation goes a bit deeper, we ask the "how" question—what methods and techniques are required to teach well?

\*Occasionally, when it goes deeper still, we ask the "why" question—for what purpose and to what ends do we teach?

\*But seldom, if ever, do we ask the "who" question—who is the self that teaches? How does the quality of my selfhood form—or deform—the way I relate to my students, my subject, my colleagues, my world? How can educational institutions sustain and deepen the selfhood from which good teaching comes?

Parker Palmer, [The Courage to Teach](#)