

## **Great Decisions Teacher Institute 2006**

The Great Decisions Teacher's Institute brings together high school educators from around the country to gain a greater perspective on international affairs and to help them acquire tools for teaching about the world. Participants in the Teacher's Institute receive background briefings from influential policymakers and experts on U.S. foreign policy in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. They also become familiar with materials that will help their students better understand the world, including the Great Decisions briefing book, Teacher's Guide and other Great Decisions resources.

Participants in the Teacher's Institute are nominated by World Affairs Councils across the country. David Fawcett of Columbus Alternative High School represented the Columbus Council on World Affairs in 2006. In addition to his regular teaching duties, he is also the International Baccalaureate Coordinator at CAHS. Read his reflection:

### **David Fawcett, Columbus Alternative High School**

*I had the good fortune to spend the better half of the last week of June in lower Manhattan at the Foreign Policy Association's Great Decisions Teacher Training Institute. Last summer there were 23 of us in the group; a half dozen were from within commuting distance on Long Island, 2 others from Anchorage, Alaska and the rest from everywhere in between.*

*Our week opened on Monday evening with a welcoming dinner hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York at which we had the privilege of hearing remarks from H.E. Omer Onhon, Consul General of the Republic of Turkey, who was the evening's guest of honor. Mr. Onhon spoke primarily about Turkey's application for membership in the European Union and about Turkey's unique position as a geographical and cultural crossroads with ties to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.*

*Full day sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday were held in the historic Woolworth Building in classrooms used by New York University's Center for Global Affairs, a co-sponsor of the institute. On each day we receive three different in-depth background briefings from NYU faculty members and other influential policymakers on current issues of global importance. Topics included the situation in the Middle East--both the war in Iraq and nuclear issues with Iran, Sudan and the war in Darfur, the emerging economic giants in Asia: China and India, and U.S Energy Policy. In addition, we had the opportunity during breakout sessions to hear about the FPA's Great Decisions curriculum materials and to share ideas and practices for teaching students about global issues.*

*I took the opportunity to use flex time before and after the midweek sessions to explore lower Manhattan. I have been to the City many times but had never spent concentrated time in this "downtown" area. As in other parts of the city, the downtown landscape is dominated by its incredible, monumental architecture. Despite the time that has passed, the emptiness created by the tragic loss of the twin towers is palpable. I enjoyed walks on the Brooklyn Bridge and in Battery Park, and visits to old Trinity Church and its ancient graveyard.*

*On Thursday, our final day, we met in midtown at the UN where, after a tour of the major assembly areas, we were treated to a farewell lunch with the new President of the UN General Assembly, who is also the Foreign Minister of Sweden, H.E. Jan Eliasson. Mr. Eliasson spoke to us at some length about his vision for the United Nations and its necessary and important role as a leader in global policy making.*

*The institute was a great learning opportunity for me and a chance to become acquainted with the resources of the Foreign Policy Association. The FPA has a keen interest in connecting with and supporting secondary education. I would encourage interested teachers to visit their website at [www.fpa.org](http://www.fpa.org).*

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