



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: 11:30 a.m. (EDT), May 8, 2009

CONTACT: Beverly Sanford, Vice President for Communications, (609) 452-7007 x181, (609) 815-5103 cell  
[sanford@woodrow.org](mailto:sanford@woodrow.org)

### FIRST-EVER WOODROW WILSON INDIANA TEACHING FELLOWS ANNOUNCED

*Select new math, science teachers in state's high-need schools are  
"a harbinger of the future of teacher preparation in America"*

PRINCETON, N.J. (May 8, 2009) – The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation has announced the recipients of its first-ever Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowships. The 59 new Fellows begin work this summer on master's degrees to prepare for math and science teaching positions in the state's high-need urban and rural schools.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation selected Indiana in December 2007 as the first site for its new national fellowship for high school teachers. The program is intended to help overhaul teacher education and encourage exceptionally able teacher candidates to seek long-term careers teaching science, technology, and math (the STEM fields) in high-need classrooms.

"This is a very bold step by the State of Indiana which promises to have enormous impact on the number of math and science teachers in schools where the need is so high," said Arthur Levine, the president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, who led a multi-year study on needed improvements in teacher education. "And the quality of the applicant pool was excellent—better than we ever imagined. They are going to be an extraordinary group of new teachers for Indiana, and we are proud to count them among the Foundation's 20,000 distinguished Fellows. They're a harbinger of the future of teaching and the preparation of teachers in America."

Each Fellow receives a \$30,000 stipend to complete a master's program at one of four selected Indiana universities—Ball State University, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Purdue University, and the University of Indianapolis. Fellows then teach for at least three years in a high-need urban or rural school that has committed, along with the partner university, to provide ongoing mentoring.

In the inaugural Fellows class, 97 percent majored in a STEM discipline while 27 percent hold advanced degrees. Eighty-five percent are either changing careers or returning to the workforce while the remaining 15 percent will graduate from their undergraduate institution this spring.

"Indiana's students are not learning nearly enough math and science to succeed in this world," said Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels. "They need to be taught by people with true mastery of the subject matter, and in the Woodrow Wilson Fellows our kids will have America's best math and science teachers."

The announcement made today in Daniels' office at the Indiana State House follows more than a year of planning and development with the participating Indiana universities and their partnering school districts, as well as a rigorous seven-month application and selection process. The Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment provided a grant of more than \$10.1 million to support the program.

"Lilly Endowment is pleased the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation chose Indiana as the first site of this promising new approach to encourage additional talented individuals to become teachers. Indiana

students who will have these fellows as teachers will undoubtedly benefit from their subject matter expertise in the STEM disciplines and their enthusiasm and creativity,” said Sara B. Cobb, vice president for education at the Endowment.

The Fellows selected include current and recent college graduates, career changers, stay-at-home parents returning to the workforce, and retirees. (*Editor: See attached profiles of Fellows for follow-up stories.*) The program attracted more than 300 applicants from around Indiana, as well as former Hoosiers and residents of neighboring states.

All finalists were screened by a group of Indiana-based selectors, who observed sample teaching and conducted personal interviews with the candidates, as well as reviewing applications and writing samples. The selectors who led this rigorous process were:

- Carol Chen, former head of the Hoosier Association of Science Teachers, Inc. and a 28-year veteran of high school chemistry and physical science teaching;
- Don Meissner, a 33-year veteran of teaching biology who has mentored teacher candidates and conducted education research; and
- Beth Marchant, a career-changing engineer who taught high school physics and now staffs QuarkNet, an online physics resource for teachers and students nationwide.

“These are among the best teacher candidates I’ve ever seen,” said Constance K. Bond. Dr. Bond, a senior program officer at the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and former coordinator of education policy at Teachers College, Columbia University, has taught secondary school, overseen West Coast operations for Teach for America, and directed New York’s New Teacher Residency Program at Mercy College. “I am enormously impressed with the quality of Indiana’s candidates for this Fellowship, and with their genuine enthusiasm for making a difference in students’ lives.”

The Indiana Fellowship is part of a national Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship initiative. With Indiana leading the way, the program will expand into other states in the coming years, ideally reaching all 50 states. The Teaching Fellowship has the following four goals:

- **Transform teacher education**—not just for Fellows but for the universities that prepare them, other teacher candidates in the same programs, and the high-need schools where they are placed as teachers;
- **Get strong teachers into high-need schools.** Indiana has chosen to focus on attracting math and science teachers, though other states may choose different subject areas;
- **Attract the very best candidates to teaching** through a fellowship with a well-known name and high visibility, similar to a National Merit Scholarship; and
- **Cut teacher attrition and retain top teachers** through intensive clinical preparation and ongoing in-school mentoring, provided by veteran teachers and supported by able principals.

The next round of applications in Indiana is expected to open in summer 2009.

###

*The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation ([www.woodrow.org](http://www.woodrow.org)) identifies and develops the best minds for the nation’s most important challenges. In these areas of challenge, the Foundation awards fellowships to enrich human resources, works to improve public policy, and assists organizations and institutions in enhancing practice in the U.S. and abroad.*

*Lilly Endowment Inc. ([www.lillyendowment.org](http://www.lillyendowment.org)) is an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family—J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons J.K. Jr. and Eli—through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. The Lilly family’s foremost priority was to help the people of their city and state build a better life. Although the Endowment also supports efforts of national significance and an occasional international project, it remains primarily committed to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.*