



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Reading and Writing Summer Institute      **Name:** Denise De Santos  
**Other Team Members:** Cristina Navarro  
**Program:** Los Angeles Program  
**Trip Dates:** 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001      **Location Visited:** Columbia University  
**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 02

**Project Summary:** This summer our team attended a two-week seminar at the Reading and Writing Institute at Columbia University's Teacher's College in New York City. It was our goal to attend an institute that had a distinct approach and pedagogy, while fostering student independence and creativity. While at the Institute, we learned how to help our students bring their life experiences, personal histories and interest into their own reading and writing. Thereby, developing their identities as readers and writers. We also learned how to best support our struggling students and help them develop stronger reading and writing skills. During our fellowship, we were inspired to create rich learning environments where our students would also be inspired to be creative with their writing and synthesize their reading. We were taught how to provide our students with organized learning environments where our students could use various tools to keep track of their reading and writing through their development. We were also taught to create reading and writing areas full of different types of tools, and resources. We provided them with: post-its, magnetic letters, markers, pens, different colored paper, pocket folders, sheet protectors with graphic organizers, word lists, tape and scissors. The variety of paper provided was to encourage students to write and record, and organize the work that they do as readers and writers. We were also inspired to continue on our learning trajectory so that we may best support and collaborate with our colleagues to share with them what we have learned. We purchased professional materials and shared our notes, resources and our learning experiences with our colleagues.

**Career Impact:** Some of the challenges we faced during this fellowship were similar to many of the challenges our own students face on a daily basis with regards to reading and writing. We were, as our students, individuals trying to get our thoughts, passions and goals expressed via writing. As most second language learners do, we needed to confront a fear of writing and overcome this fear by sharing our writing with other people. In the early stages of our fellowship we had several colleagues read our proposal and use a rubric to evaluate each part of our proposal. This process was challenging, as we had to expose our writing, which can be a very private and intimate thing. It was a challenge to hear feedback and critique of our writing. We realized then, that we ask our students to do this often without preparing them and setting up a classroom culture that will nurture and encourage them to take this risk as they share their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. In addition to the unique experience of writing a grant, we had to create our own writing pieces and experience the writing process first hand. We had to share our writing pieces with other institute participants and also participated in a w

**Classroom/Community Impact:** Our fellowship has influenced our school and classroom communities as we have started to share what we learned during the Reading and Writing Institute. We have opened lines of communication cross grade level, as we have shared our units of study, and strategies we learned to launch the workshop model. We have been able to share information with Kindergarten through third grade, as we collaborated with colleagues and shared information while in New York. Our fellowship has also motivated new leadership roles as we shared information of grant possibilities through Fund for Teachers and teacher growth. Some teachers have taken the initiative to search for opportunities for grants, and teacher professional growth. For example, a group of teachers received a technology grant and have brought Smart boards, and I Pads for student use. Others have reached out to free book organizations, and another has organized a group of teachers that will apply for their National Board Certification. We have also begun to plan a writing committee still in it's early stages; where we can continue to grow in our understanding of reading and writing. Our fellowship has also influenced the use of authen

**Open Response:** We plan to present what we learned one on one or in small groups. We previously presented our fellowship to a group of teachers as an open invitation after school to share the information on Fund for Teachers. We also used this time to collect information and take questions from our colleagues prior to the institute that we could investigate while at the institute. We will also provide time to hear from those teachers that received the shared information from the institute. We plan to share some data collection strategies we learned and the conferring tool kit that may help teachers organize their findings. We plan to work with our administrator to present an overview on the reading strategies one day and the writing strategies on another day. We also plan to have a volunteer, interest-based lesson study group of teachers who want to pursue growing together as educators to understand the process of reading and writing. In our classrooms we plan on having our students present their published works at a writing celebration we will organize upon completing our first narrative writing unit. Our plan is to invite the parents and school staff to come hear the life experiences and pers

**Quote:** "All teaching and learning is always political and social." -Jeffrey Wilhelm Keynote Speaker

Photos:



Buddy Reading



Writing Workshop



2nd Grade Buddy Reading



2nd grade Reading Workshop



In Front of Teachers College



Using our new materials



Columbia University



1st grade Reading Workshop