



Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title: Stretching Myself -- Yoga in the Massachusetts Berkshires.

Name: Jane Doherty

Other Team Members:

Program: EL Education Program

Trip Dates: 07/01/2011 - 07/29/2011

Location Visited: Stockbridge, United States

Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 01

Project Summary: This July I spent an unforgettable month at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts. Inspired by the benefits I was observing in my students after their Friday yoga classes with me last year -- they were more focused, less anxious, more in charge of their reactions -- I decided to pursue yoga certification at Kripalu through a Fund for Teachers fellowship. I knew that the techniques and strategies I would learn at Kripalu would have a tremendous impact on my yoga teaching, and that the resulting development of a stronger personal yoga and meditation practice would make me a more compassionate, mindful, and effective teacher for all my students and a more productive member of my school community. Two yoga classes a day and the intensive study and practice of meditation, yogic breathing, and yoga postures provided me with an immersion in yogic philosophy that was personally transformative. I was quite literally living and breathing yoga, and I have never felt healthier or more settled. I was privileged to become part of a close-knit community (eight instructors and sixty-three other yoga teachers-in-training) whose passion and diverse talents served to deepen my commitment to my own yoga practice and to bringing yoga and meditation to my school community.

Career Impact: *Studied and practiced the components of a Kripalu Yoga class

*Designed, taught, and received critical feedback on Kripalu Yoga classes

*Practiced yoga for up to six hours a day.

*Participated in posture clinics and the study of more than forty yoga poses, including their names in Sanskrit, their benefits, contraindications, and modifications.

*Studied yogic philosophy -- including Patanjali's yoga sutras and the eight limbs of yoga -- and its applications to the instruction of yoga.

*Practiced and learned to instruct meditative breathing practices.

*Developed my personal meditation and yoga practice.

Classroom/Community Impact:*Earned yoga certification.

*Filmed interviews with classmates and Kripalu staff about their yoga and meditation practice and their nutrition and self-care.

*Greatly expanded my understanding of how to design and teach a yoga class and to assist students in entering and sustaining poses.

*Developed professional contacts who will help support my yoga instruction and will serve as experts in our study of yoga, wellness, and nutrition.

*Acquired curricular materials that I will use to develop a year-long yoga course.

*Became more grounded and settled through a regular yoga and meditation practice.

Open Response: *After-school yoga and meditation club to begin in mid-October.

*Parent yoga workshops at local yoga studio to be offered several times this year.

*Yoga and meditation workshops to be offered to school staff.

*Healthy living intensive research project featuring skype and video interviews with Kripalu staff and fellow teachers.

*Collaboration with two other school staff members, also yoga certified, for on-going school-based yoga projects.

Quote: Show up fully to the newness, opening, and exploration that yoga offers to every aspect of you -- body, breath, mind, and spirit.

Photos:



63 newly minted Kripalu Yoga teachers



Half moon pose on the lawn



Practicing utkatasana (chair pose) with Devarshi



Practicing how to teach vrksasana (tree pose)



Devarshi explains utkatasana



Celebrating after the final exam



Group hug



Meditative walk during day of silence