

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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UW-Madison's Center for South Asia Awarded Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Curriculum Development

Madison, WI -- The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Center for South Asia, with support from the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program, will take fifteen K-12 educators from the State of Wisconsin to north and south India on a Curriculum Development Team. "A Passage to India," which lasts five weeks, will enable teacher participants to gain a rich, first-hand, and focused experience of India, allowing them to develop a complex and complete view of the intersections of urban and rural lifestyles, coastal and agricultural economies, multiple religious communities, and the traditional and modern landscapes of India.

One of the teachers, Mika Oriedo, of Sennett Middle School in Madison, says, "there are several reasons educators and students should learn and care about South Asia, and India specifically. It is the second largest nation with over a billion people. With this large number of people comes an amazing amount of diversity in both physical appearance and cultures. Studying different peoples, especially a place where there are so many, is an excellent way to open up the minds of students and teachers to the fact that this is a large planet and that we cannot avoid thinking about how we affect others and how they affect us." Oriedo believes that when students learn about India in American schools, they do so from a "western" perspective. "The reality is that India is currently and will be even more influential in the world and in the United States," Oriedo says. Other teachers from the Madison area are: David Piovanetti (Middleton High School), Rebecca Rosenberg (Lincoln Elementary School), Joan Shahrani (Sennett Middle School), Judith Torres (Kennedy Elementary School), and Don Vincent (West High School).

The trip will be led by the Center's associate outreach specialist, Rachel Weiss.

Participating teachers will:

- Engage in seminars and fieldtrips with Indian professionals from universities and colleges, NGO's and government programs, and private and public schools;
- Share resources and promote exchanges with Indian teachers;
- Develop interdisciplinary curriculum materials based on Wisconsin State Standards and incorporate materials and artifacts collected for use in their classrooms;
- Enhance their knowledge about Indian arts and architecture, folklore and literature, economic and socio-political issues enabling them to better meet Wisconsin's PI-4 guidelines for professional development.

In 2003, the Center for South Asian Studies received a Fulbright Hays Group Projects Abroad grant. This new award will allow the Center to continue its work as the leading Title IV outreach program in this area in the U.S. "The 2005 summer grant will allow the Center to build upon the existing on-line teacher's guide, and develop an even more dynamic network of educators across the State with an interest in South Asia," says J. Mark Kenoyer, director of the Center. "By providing exceptional professional development to educators, the Center will be able to further deepen student learning, internationalize statewide curriculum, and provide leadership in school districts statewide," he says.

For more information go to:

www.wisc.edu/southasiaoutreach

