

Biographical Sketch for Teacher of the Year Press Release

Christopher Poulos, Regional School District No. 9's 2006-2007 Teacher of the Year, has worked extensively in the fields of Spanish education and community development. Chris is a full time Spanish teacher at Joel Barlow High School in Redding, CT. At Barlow he also advises the Student Council, mentors beginning teachers and has been involved in world language curriculum design and implementation. His contributions have served as the catalyst for a shift into a new paradigm of immersion-based instruction, progressive oral assessment strategies, service learning and the fusion of technology into all world language curricula. In addition, he works as an adjunct professor of Spanish at Fairfield University and has served on the staff of the Rassias Foundation's Accelerated Language Programs at Dartmouth College. As an undergraduate student at the University of Richmond, Chris earned a BA in Leadership Studies and a double minor in Spanish and Business Administration. Chris' undergraduate work included a focus on leadership in community and volunteer organizations. He also spent a semester abroad through the New York University in Spain program in Madrid. After college, Chris joined the United States Peace Corps as a volunteer in Honduras, Central America. Throughout his 27 months of service he worked extensively in the fields of community development and environmental education. After returning from Central America, Chris enrolled in the State of Connecticut's Alternate Route to Certification Program (ARC) and later earned an MA in the Teaching of Spanish at Teachers College, Columbia University. His Masters research focused on foreign language teaching methodologies and immersion-based models for second language instruction. Subsequent to his Masters work, Chris independently founded and currently serves as the Director of a language-training program centering on community service and cultural education. This undertaking has involved the development and putting into practice of an immersion-based curriculum, which maximizes language acquisition over a short period of time. Chris has been teaching for 7 years and is currently enrolled in the University of Connecticut Administrator Preparation Program (UCAPP). While Chris has no firm plans of becoming an administrator, he believes the coursework for his sixth year and internship at an elementary school have made him a better teacher.