

# High school teachers join nursing school staff

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Teachers from throughout the metro will spend eight weeks of their summer vacation at the University of Kansas Medical Center and School of Nursing.

KU Medical Center and School of Nursing placed 10 area teachers in summer externships through the TeacherTech program.

Kansas City-based mentor organization YouthFriends piloted TeacherTech last summer. The program gives teachers the opportunity to work in a different career setting during the summer.

The goal is for teachers to apply their summer experiences in the classroom, said Paula Baum, a spokeswoman for KU Medical Center.

Last year KU used two TeacherTechs. Baum said the medical center decided to use more TeacherTechs this year because they proved to be assets.

"It's a great way to get the medical center's name into the community," Baum said.

Organizations using TeacherTechs pay \$8,500 per teacher. TeacherTechs receive a \$6,400 stipend for their work and the rest of the funds go to administrative costs.

TeacherTech program funds come from the departments that use the externs, Baum said.

TeacherTechs started at the beginning of June and will work 40 hours a week in their externship position.

Teachers Penny Fenning, Olathe South High School, and Steven Frager, Truman High

School, are TeacherTechs for the KU School of Nursing.

“I wanted to make sure what we were doing (in the classroom) was being mirrored in the career world,” Fenning said.

During the school year, Fenning teaches American literature to high school juniors. Her role as a TeacherTech involves many duties.

Fenning researches information about electronic health records, edits and revises manuals, and discusses teaching techniques and grammar with nursing professors.

Fragar teaches biology. As a TeacherTech, Frager updates the Web sites for University of Kansas Health Partners and Silver City Health Center.

Fenning and Frager said they will be able to apply the experiences they receive at KU in the classroom.

Fenning said she wants to partner with science and computer classes for an experiment based on what she learned about electronic health records.

“Collaboration is so important,” Fenning said.

She said she plans to have her English students write a technical report.

Fragar said this opportunity showed him additional career options within health care that his students can pursue, such as computer technology.

“A lot of students don't like science,” Frager said.

Students who do not like science classes such as chemistry or biology might be interested in computer careers, Frager said.

TeacherTechs receive a \$600 grant to fund activities inspired by their TeacherTech experiences.