



The Episcopal Academy

## For Immediate Release

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### **Teaching Teachers – Episcopal Academy Faculty Member Works with Teachers in China**

**Merion, PA – Episcopal Academy has initiated a number of programs over the past two years to put teachers in touch with other teachers, to share techniques, to relay experiences, and to openly discuss current issues. In 2003, Episcopal hosted a national conference on Islam, which brought educators of secondary and college-level institutions together to share information and insights on a religion and culture ever more present in the classroom and our communities.**



This summer, Episcopal invited local teachers to a Summer Technology Initiative, a multi-day workshop to learn new techniques for integrating technology into the classroom and to build skills. In 2005-2006 Episcopal, in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania, will launch a national High School Bioethics Consortium (HSBC), which will work to develop and promote a curriculum and associated resources for bioethics learning across all subjects.

Episcopal's efforts to put teachers in touch with other teachers doesn't always include a large group, however. This summer, Episcopal Middle School English and history teacher Sue Cannon, of Narberth, ventured to China to instruct Chinese teachers in American methods of teaching English. Sponsored by China's Jiangsu Provincial Educational Authority and the California State University at Fullerton, Cannon's summer program was based in Jiangsu province, near Shanghai. Mrs. Cannon spent the first two weeks working with Chinese middle school students in Yangzhou (see photo), a warm up for the adult audience to follow.

Working with teachers in the districts surrounding Rugao Normal College (a 100-year old teacher training school), Cannon and her three U.S. counterparts were revered as "honored foreign experts" spending their days sharing teaching techniques used in the U.S. Chinese students begin studying English in third grade. The Chinese teachers learned to identify learning styles in their students (auditory, visual, kinesthetic), to use classroom games like *Bingo* to teach new vocabulary, to use photographs as writing prompts, to help students better read passages for understanding, and to structure work in cooperative groups to stage skits and to improve oral proficiency. Chinese classrooms average 30-50 students per class, so the U.S. teachers were also

working with teachers to structure these new learning ideas for large groups. Classroom discipline was also discussed. Cannon observed, "I was quite impressed that one young teacher brought this problem up publicly to the entire class when she introduced herself, by saying, 'I love teaching, but there are a few young boys who misbehave, and then I don't like teaching so much.' Teachers particularly enjoyed learning some of the strategies I employ to achieve positive discipline with misbehaving students."

The experience has been fulfilling and fun for Mrs. Cannon. "In classes in each city, my middle school students and the teachers shared their hopes, dreams, and wishes for themselves, their families, their students, country, and the world. Happiness, health, success, kindness, cooperation, freedom from discrimination, freedom from poverty, long life with loved ones, no air pollution, no war, world peace--isn't this what we all want? They are moved that I will be sharing their hopes and dreams with my American colleagues, students, family, and friends. At this time, when China is becoming a major player on the world stage, I felt like an ambassador to those who will shape the next generation of Chinese citizens and leaders. It has been a life-changing experience, one that will influence my teaching and my own students for years to come. I truly believe that it is this type of exchange that promotes 'cultural competence' and peaceful co-existence among nations."

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

Episcopal Academy Middle School English and history teach Susan Cannon (center) works with Chinese middle school students in Yangzhou, China as part of a teacher enrichment program sponsored by California State Univeristy at Fullerton. Cannon lives in Narberth, PA.

**For more information, call Michael Letts, director of communications, at 610-617-2248.**

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Founded in 1785, The Episcopal Academy is an independent college preparatory school for more than 1,100 boys and girls from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade in four units: Lower School at Devon and Lower, Middle, and Upper School in Merion, PA. Founded by the Right Reverend William White, first Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Academy is affiliated with the Episcopal Diocese of Philadelphia and governed by a 32member self-perpetuating Board of Trustees. For more information, visit [www.ea1785.org](http://www.ea1785.org).

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