

'Booking' it worldwide

Teaching abroad increases in appeal, two Lexington High School educators planning to go overseas

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In tough economic times, educators are looking for new horizons.

Teachers, locally and nationally, are starting to find appeals in instructing abroad.

Teach Away, an agency that sends American teachers overseas to teach English, is growing in popularity. During the 2008 economic crisis, Teach Away saw a 400 percent increase in applications in one month.

David Frey, a Teach Away correspondent, credits many factors for the recent increase in American teachers instructing overseas.

"Economic reasons have caused a lot of cuts and layoffs in education across the board. Teaching abroad is great opportunity for educators to find new

work. There is also an increased interest in learning about international culture," Frey said.

Several factors characterize whether or not a teacher can effectively instruct outside of the U.S.

"A good instructor must have the right international perspective and a certain degree of open mindedness. It makes or break a teacher across the seas," Frey said.

Such a teacher is Sara Weekes. An English and IB teacher at Lexington High School, Weekes has plans to instruct overseas with Teach Away.

"I've wanted to teach abroad since my early 20s. This is a good time right now and a great opportunity for me," Weekes said.

Weekes will be teaching 11th and 12th grade English in the United Arab

Emirates and is excited about the different aspects of her job.

"My job is two fold: to prepare students for university-level work and to also make them proficient in English since most of them are not," Weekes said.

As Weekes gears up for her new job, she is feeling a range of emotions.

"I am more excited than nervous. My husband and I have been looking into this opportunity since September, so by the time I was asked for an interview, I knew what I was getting into," Weekes said.

In addition to her interest in traveling, Weekes has decided to teach abroad to expand her teaching repertoire.

"It will be nice to experience a different culture. It also will be a very different challenge from the type of teaching

that I do here. I like a challenge; it appeals to me," Weekes said.

In addition to Teach Away, Search Associates is a similar agency that sends teachers abroad to instruct. Coach Chee Lee, a physical education teacher and varsity volleyball coach at Lexington High School, will be teaching PE in Tokyo, Japan.

"I want to teach abroad to experience adventure; I have always had an adventurous spirit and have been wanting to do this for years," Lee said.

Lee is very excited about his new job and is aware of the impact teaching overseas has on his life.

"It is a huge decision, similar to getting married or having children, but I think I have prepared myself for the past decade with a lifestyle that is conducive to taking a job abroad. I am totally convinced that this is my path," Lee said.



Coach Chee Lee



The White Palace in the United Arab Emirates; Lexington High School English teacher Sara Weekes will be teaching abroad in the UAE.