



Quest Service Trips 2019-2020

Quest Adventures has selected our service teams for the 2019-2020 academic year. We welcome five Quest teams: Boston Green Academy, Madison Park High School, Mary Lyon Pilot High School, Fenway High, and English High. We are fortunate to have extraordinary new and returning teachers who demonstrate such a strong commitment to their students. They developed thought-provoking and comprehensive proposals that embody Quest's mission as well as our goals for partnering with the Boston Public Schools. We hope you enjoy excerpts from their reflections.

Team Puerto Rico - Boston Green Academy

Matthew Johnston, from Boston Green Academy, holds the distinction of being our most experienced Quest teacher, having led 5 previous Boston Green Academy service trips to the Dominican Republic, Spain, Guatemala, and Puerto Rico. For his 6th trip, he will be returning to PR in 2020 in order to continue growing the collaboration between Green Academy and Nuestra Escuela in Loiza. Together the students from both schools will volunteer on renovation projects at the school and sustainable farming practices in the local community.



"By serving again with the same Puerto Rican High School, Nuestra Escuela, both teams of students will strengthen their schools' relationship and, together become empowered to be agents of change in circumstances that will challenge them not only physically but socially as well."
Matthew Johnston

Mathew's focus on building community started with his vision for Green Academy. As one of the founding members of BGA's design team, Matthew made it a priority that service learning trips would become part of their charter. He advocated for the need to establish a service learning program and annual trip that would provide opportunities for students to experience the direct connection between quality of life, social equity and sustainability. Toward this goal, He grounds his students with a comprehensive academic background so that they are fully prepared with a clear perspective about the local people and the political, social and economic issues that make service so relevant and change so crucial.

Team South Dakota - Fenway High School



"When students are able to stand back at the end of a weeklong trip and see the tangible improvement that their service has made on a community, it creates a lifelong memory and understanding of how capable they are as individuals to make a big difference"
Kirkland Ahrens

Kirkland Ahrens has been a Quest teacher for the past 4 years, leading service trips to Houston and Pine Ridge, South Dakota with Mary Lyon High. As a Fenway teacher he took students to New Orleans and will return to the Pine Ridge Native American Reservation in April 2020. Kirk has been deeply influenced by his service experiences since volunteering as a youth in the footsteps of his grandfather. He strongly believes that lessons learned while doing service have impacted him more than any class curriculum. At Pine Ridge, his team will construct bunk beds for children and protective skirting around mobile homes. The team will meet with Lakota elders, seek truth and clarity about their historical and current struggles and valuable traditions. This experience will build students' capacity to "Relate and Advocate" by creating a video of stories and experiences of the Lakota, with

resources for discussion and extension, for Fenway’s Humanities classes, in their exploration of the question, “Who Built America?”

Team New Orleans - Mary Lyon Pilot High School

Katie McGuire is a 3-year Quest teacher, having led Mary Lyon High service trips to Houston, New Bern, NC, and now to New Orleans in 2020. As a leader, Katie is passionate, organized and driven to make the most impactful service experiences possible for her students. She even resorted to tweeting local officials in the tiny town of New Bern to find partners for needed service projects, and the community rallied around her and the Mary Lyon team...building an inspiring sense of support and community spirit. Perhaps her motivation comes from her own personal experience with a lack of access to service learning trips during her high school and college years . Being excluded from those opportunities fueled her



“The goal and theme of our trip is to build young advocates of social change, especially among young people who will care, share, and fight for the future of their earth.” Katie McGuire

determination to make it happen for her students. She has created a three- year engaging theme, “Rethink, Rebuild, Reclaim”,with clear, meaningful service and advocacy for her students. This, along with building trusting relationships with her students and colleagues, is the fulfillment of a lifelong dream.

Team Dominican Republic - Madison Park High School



"This experience will set a standard of ownership among our team members and set an example of the initiative it takes to protect their own community from the negative impact of some of society's worst perils"
Brian Harris

This is Brian Harris' first year as a Quest teacher; However, it is clear from his inspiring Madison Park proposal that his students will have a life changing experience in a similar way to his own trip to India. Applying his theme, "Fair Play", He wants to provide an opportunity for his students to move beyond their comfort zone to build a home and clean up a baseball field in The Dominican Republic as well as advocate for safer, syringe disposal units around Boston children's play areas. In the process, he knows that they will discover a great deal about themselves and their own strengths. Together, the team will build their capacity to trust, communicate, support and back up each other and the local residents of

Santiago Rodriguez. Brian's ultimate goal is to help his students become leaders, gaining a sense of pride and power to stand up and protect what is important to them here in Boston and in the larger Global community.

Team Cape Verde - English High School

Andreina Ferreira, from English High School, will be leading her first Quest service trip to her native country, Cape Verde. Many of her students confess that they have never left their communities such as Roxbury, Dorchester and Jamaica Plain, or even visited local cultural or historical sites. She is



"My hope is that our students will learn that their way is not the only way or the best way and to take great joy and pride in becoming a part of another culture and serving others" Andreina Ferreira

determined to broaden their world with a new perspective.

As a Cape Verdean, Andreina plans to build excitement and context for the trip by teaching engaging lessons on Cape Verdean history as well as learning the Criolo language and valuing its culture. By traveling to another country, her students will have to face the challenges of communicating in another language and living in another culture. Through Andreina's personal contacts, her students will collaborate with community members to paint elementary schools, plant gardens with the school children, and enjoy cultural experiences together in the evenings. Andreina firmly believes that her students will return with an increased sense of appreciation for the challenges and opportunities here in Boston as well as a genuine desire to reach out, support and celebrate newcomers from around the world at English High. They will make a difference in their school community by helping to bridge the gap between races and build collaboration and friendships among EHS's rich diversity of students.



Hello Quest Supporters!

We are counting down to #GivingTuesday on December 3rd! Quest hopes that you will participate in Giving Tuesday with us by making an annual contribution to support our teams! We hope to add two more teams for 2020, and your contribution will help to fund these additional Quest service learning experiences for more Boston Public School students. Thank you so much!