

## **Steiner Teacher Awarded Prestigious Klingenstein Fellowship**

Marisha Plotnik, high school physics and math teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School of New York City, has been awarded a prestigious Joseph Klingenstein Fellowship.

Starting in the fall, Plotnik will attend Teachers College to take courses and to complete an independent study project. “Fellows are asked to investigate issues that have particular relevance to their sponsoring schools as well as to their own professional interests,” explains Plotnik. “My research project is “Beyond Mentoring: Developing the Teacher's Art through Peer Collaboration.”

She has long been interested in the relationships and differences between “mentoring” and “collaboration” in the area of teacher development.

“I was one of the original participants in the Young Waldorf Colleagues conferences, an initiative supported by the North American Pedagogical Section. The experience sparked my interest in how teachers work together to deepen their teaching. I chose my project topic as a way to discover and describe instances of peer collaboration in Waldorf schools and beyond.”

Recipients of the Klingenstein Fellowship prepare for or strengthen their careers as teacher-leaders. Each year, up to five teachers and administrators internationally are awarded fellowships that bring them to Teachers College for a renewing challenge of study, reflection, personal growth, and camaraderie. Plotnik emerged as the sole fellowship recipient for the 2008-2009 academic year. The fellowship grants a tuition allowance to Columbia University, which she will use to pursue an M.A. degree in Private School Leadership at Teachers College, as well as a stipend for the year. During the year she will also participate in internships in public and private schools.

Marisha Plotnik, a graduate of the Toronto Waldorf School, has taught physics and mathematics at the Rudolf Steiner School since 1996. With an academic background in physics, her first interest was in the region between physics and mathematics which she explored by teaching Chaos theory. Over the years, her interest in pure mathematics has deepened, and this year her teaching has been inspired by the Being of Multiplication, in all of its Real, Imaginary, and Vector forms. She is looking forward to studying topics in pure math at Columbia next year.

Plotnik has served as College Chair, and she currently chairs the Child Study group at her school. She is a co-founder of the Advanced Studies Initiative. She looks forward to the upcoming year of professional renewal and to sharing the wealth of this experience when she returns to Steiner *in fall of 2009.*

*Winslow Eliot*