

Erin Towns

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Profile

High school educator with significant experience teaching and creating experientially based interdisciplinary opportunities for high school students combining social studies, environmental science, and visual arts with a strong emphasis on development of polar knowledge, global competency, cultural collaboration, and geographic, scientific and technological literacy. Valued advisor to administration and teaching peers in curriculum development with a proven track record in leading local, state, national, and international professional development.

Work Experience

Edward Little High School

2000-Present

Department Head and Social Studies Teacher responsible for classroom and human resource management. Designs interdisciplinary strategies in areas of history, environmental science and visual arts specializing in Arctic Studies.

Androscoggin Valley Education Collaborative

2004-Present

Currently serve as facilitator for the gifted and talented Contemporary Issues Program that includes students from five area high schools that study local, state, national, and international topics.

Camden Conference in the Classroom Program

2015-Present

Teacher Ambassador to the Camden Conference Education Committee advising local and state educators in areas of foreign policy studies curriculum implementation.

Polar Educators International Advisory Board Member

2021-Present

Advisory Board member collaborating with educators and scientists to increase implementation and inclusion of Polar Studies in classrooms around the world. Representative responsible for outreach and presentations about polar education pedagogy at local, state, national, and international workshops and conferences.

Education

University of Maine Orono

2022-2024

Graduate Student Assistant School of Earth and Climate Sciences. Areas of focus: Earth and Climate Sciences, Interdisciplinary Education, Visual Science Communication.

Teachers for Global Classrooms Program

2012-2013

Completed a one-year professional development to develop skills for preparing students for a competitive global economy and bring international perspectives to school through targeted training, experience abroad in Kazakhstan, and global collaboration.

University of Maine Farmington

1996-2000

Received a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education Social Science with a double minor in American History and World History.

Awards and Fellowships

Field Research Project 2020: PolarTREC Program: Greenland Subglacial Tremor Project. Awarded by the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS). Member of a team studying glacial hydrology on the Western Greenland Ice Sheet.

Award 2018: Maine Department of Education Teacher Leader in Social Studies Education. Awarded by the Maine Department of Education Social Studies Division.

Fellowship 2018: National Geographic Grosvenor Teacher Fellow Program: Southeast Alaska and British Columbia
Awarded for commitment to geographic education. Field experience studying environmental sustainability and polar climate change.

Fellowship 2018: Education in Germany 2018: Regensburg, Germany: Awarded by the German-American Fulbright Commission to study the impact of refugee crisis on the German education system.

Award 2017: Kristin Alvarez Memorial NCGE President Scholarship: Awarded for commitment and service promoting Spatial Literacy, Geographic Education, Pre-service Teacher Education, GIS Technologies, and online geospatial teaching and learning.

Fellowship 2017: Fulbright-Hays Groups Project Abroad: Sodo and Addis Ababa Ethiopia. Awarded by the US Department of State & University of Pittsburgh. Collaborative project with Ethiopian and American educators about indigenous knowledge.

Award 2015: Maine Department of Education Teacher Leader in Social Studies Education. Awarded by the Maine Department of Education Social Studies Division.

Fellowship 2014: Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad: China. Awarded by the US Department of Education and the National Committee on US-China Relations. Field study about urbanization and impacts in Beijing, X'ian, Chongqing, and Shanghai.

Fellowship 2013: Teachers For Global Classrooms Program: Kazakhstan. Awarded by the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Fulbright Program. Field experience studying political, educational, social, and religious life in northern Kazakhstan.

Fellowship 2008: Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program. Awarded by the Government of Japan. Field experience studying peace education and economic collaboration.

Skills and Extracurricular Activities

Professional digital and drone photographer with experience using Adobe Lightroom. Genres of interest include polar landscape and life, documentary, and portrait photography. Open water swimmer and long-distance Nordic skier.

Professional Presentations & Activities

Icebergs In Maine, University of Maine Orono's PolarSTEM Conference, Juneau Alaska, August 2022

Arctic Engagement, Interdisciplinary Opportunities and Strategies, National Science Teaching Association National Conference Chicago, July 2022

Global Teaching Dialogue, Polar Education in the Classroom, US Department of State, July, 2022

The Greenland Subglacial Tremor Project, Ice School, US Ice Drilling Program, March 2022

Arctic Circle Assembly, Maine Delegation, Iceland, November 2022

Integrating Polar Studies into Maine Classrooms Using Visual Arts, Social Studies, and Environmental Science, Maine Teacher Leader Series, March 2021

The Art of Visual Storytelling, Maine Department of Education Teacher Leader Series, 2020

National Geographic Teacher Certification, Maine Council for Social Studies Annual Conference, October 2019

Global Professional Development Programs, Maine Department of Education Teacher Leader Series, 2019

360 Photography in the Classroom, Maine Department of Education Teacher Leader Series, 2019

Teaching About Place in Ethiopia Using GIS Technologies, 98th National Council for Social Studies Annual Conference, December 2018

Is This China's Century, AVEC Contemporary Issues Program, 2018-2019

National Geographic Geo-Inquiry Process, Maine Council for Social Studies Annual Conference, October 2018 Education in Germany: Migration and Refugee Impact, Camden Conference, September, 2018

Using Technology in US Classrooms: 360 Photography & Film: Maine Refugees, St.-Wolfgang Mittelschule, Regensburg, Germany, June, 2018

Global Professional Development, Keynote for the Global Education Conference, Chicago, November 2017

Teaching About Place in Ethiopia Using GIS Technologies, Maine Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference, October 2017

Refugees & Global Migration: Student Solutions, Camden Conference Teacher Training, September 2017

"Come on - Let's see what you can do!" - The power of providing students real opportunities to apply content knowledge and

skills, Maine Laptop Technology Initiative - Apple Computers, March 2017

Refugees in Maine: Migration, Assimilation, and Educating Youth - AVEC Contemporary Issues Program, Bates College, November 2016

The Paperless Classroom: Google for the 21st Century Learner, Auburn School Department Professional Development Day, October 2016

Teaching with GIS: Introduction & Practical Strategies for the 21st Century Classroom, Maine Department of Education's Laptop Initiative Summer Conference, July 2016

Promoting International Economics - Diplomacy Education in Maine Classrooms, Speech to Maine business leaders, July 2016

Using GIS: A Workshop for Maine Teachers - GIS/Educator Conference, February 2016

Using GIS in the Maine Classroom, Apple Computers: Leverage Learning Conference, October 2015

Missing Diplomacy: The Plight of Maine Teachers: Teaching Diplomacy in Maine Schools, July 2015

The Role of Immersion in Proficiency Based Education, Building Language Proficiency and Global Competence, The Foreign Language Association of Maine Conference, March 2015

Classroom Abroad: Global Competency and International Civic Participation, 94th National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference: November 2014

Teacher Abroad China: School & Culture, Auburn School Department School Committee, September 2014

Teacher Abroad China, A Cultural Perspective, Wayne Carey Memorial Library – September, 2014

Teaching in American Schools, Chongqing Municipal Qijiang High School, Chongqing, China, July 2014

Teacher Abroad: Global Education for the 21st Century Learner, Maine Education Association Spring Conference, April 2014

Teacher Abroad: Global Education for the 21st Century Learner, Teaching and Working in a Diverse World Conference, University of Maine Farmington, March 2014

Technology: Using Social Media in The Classroom, Maine Technology Learning Initiative Jumpstart iPad & MacBook Conference, Apple Computers, November, 2013

Kazakhstan & Teaching Global Competency, Auburn City Hall, Auburn, ME USA, November 2013

Actuality of Reading in American Schools, Gorky Gymnasium, Kostanay, Kazakhstan, April 2013

Peculiarities of Teaching in American Schools, Presentation to City English Teachers, Lisakovsk, Kazakhstan, April 2013

Content Integrated Learning, Kostanay Regional Education Department, Zarechny, Kazakhstan, April 2013

American Educational Assessment & Evaluation, Kostanay State Pedagogical Institute, Kostanay, Kazakhstan, April 2013

Importance of Global Interaction, Chelyabinsk State University, Kostanay, Kazakhstan, April 2013

American Impressions of Kazakhstan, Televised Interview, April 2013, The Morning Show, Kostanay, Kazakhstan

Using Technology in The Classroom, Learning Team Facilitator, Edward Little High School, 2012

Technology: Introduction to Pinterest As an Education Tool - Edward Little High School, November 2012

What Is Global Competency, Edward Little High School, December October 2012

Rewriting World History Curriculum, Maine Council for the Social Studies Conference, October 2011

Connecting Cultures in Curriculum: Japanese Culture and Education, Auburn School Committee February 2009

School in Japan, Wayne Elementary School, March 2009

American Teaching Methods, Minamisoma High School, Minamisoma, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan, October 2008