



Transcript of Award Acceptance Speech by
Ellen Moir, Executive Director, New Teacher Center
at Full Circle Fund's annual event

Forum 2007: You've Got the Power!

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Watch the video online at <http://www.fullcirclefund.org/event.php?id=106#EllenMoir>
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Photo | [Daniel Lunghi](#)

It's a great pleasure to be here. I know you've been sitting a long time and we've all been listening to amazingly passionate and inspirational speakers.

And let me just say to you as you think about and we think about "full circle," education is at the heart of transforming this country. There is no way that kids, kids in poverty, kids of color sitting there with teachers who are reading these scripts to kids, telling them to fill in the bubbles. We're gonna increase the education gap even more.

It's going to be such that the wealthy kids in this country can think and the poor kids are filling in bubbles. We must transform public education. Education is the foundation of this democracy and anything short of ensuring that every child,

regardless of their race or social class gets the best teachers. That's what the New Teacher Center is focusing on. *[applause]*

It is a privilege to be here tonight with all of you to be able to be at this podium, I'm calling my mother and father too - they're 90 years old and they're still fighting the fight to help to create a better society.

To share this podium with Van and with - I think "President Gore" - and with Richard Goldman and with all of you is about reigniting our passion and focusing in an honest and ethical way and telling the truth about what matters most.

Well I'll tell you, now that I've had this chance to be all over the country, we dump new teachers. First of all, we go and try to recruit teachers - we go to the Philippines and to Spain and all over the world to recruit teachers. We can't even keep the ones we get here. We lose 30-50% of all new teachers within the first three to five years. What a tragedy to be recruiting smart, talented people and then to lose them within the first years of their teaching.

The New Teacher Center started, as you heard, 10 years ago as an organization at the University of California that's *driven* to change and to transform not only the way we recruit teachers but most importantly the way we support them in their career. We built a mentoring model - it sounds quite simple: you find excellent teachers - and they're everywhere - and you recruit them, you support them, you prepare them, and you say to them, "Your job is to teach new teachers how to teach." Instead of just giving these new colleagues a key and letting them just sink or swim, we're there with a safety net to support them at every step of the way and to help create the next generation of brilliant teachers who are passionate with kids, everyday, who can hardly wait to make a difference.

Being connected to Full Circle Fund has been an absolute treat and I say this to you in all sincerity. I got this call one day when I was sitting at my desk from someone named Revell Horsey, now, what would you think when you heard that name? *[laughter]*

And I'm thinking, "Who is this" and Full Circle Fund, "What are they doing?" And Robin Joy, Revell and Robin Joy, and I'm thinking, "What is this?"

And it's like, "Well, we found your organization. We think you're doing amazing work. Would you come up to the Mission District and meet with us in our office?" And I remember driving up there and before I left some of my colleagues said, "What are you doing? You're gonna go sit down and talk to these people about the Center, who are they?" I said, "Don't worry, let's go for this. They told me it's not about the money. It's about building human capital. It's about tapping talented resources in the community.

And off I went and I met these two people who had fallen in love with our organization and our mission before I'd even had a chance to meet them. And it was amazing to me the kind of due diligence and research they had done about the New Teacher Center. In fact, they had put together this amazing PowerPoint about our work. I'm like, "Can I have that?" *[laughter]*

As we built out this journey together, they have taught our organization so much, they have really lifted us. They said "What is it you'd like to focus on?" I said, "Look, we've got the academic side, we know about teacher learning and teacher development. We need help on the business side of this organization."



Photo | [Daniel Lunghi](#)

We decided to work together on a communication plan. And that communication plan went from us being reactive and rather sporadic to being really strategic and to looking about how our stakeholders perceive us, what they want from us, what they need, all the way to my Full Circle team meeting with focus groups, upwards of 100 educators to listen to them.

And then to finally completing and delivering and developing with us a communication plan, with an emphasis, they said, on policy. And I was struck by that. But I realized, our organization has amazing programs, but if we can't reach the policy makers in this country to change the way that we organize education, we're never gonna make a difference.

So, I'm happy to say, that as a result of their encouragement, we now recently received a \$750,000 from the Joyce Foundation specifically to focus on policy. *[applause]* And we just returned from Washington, DC, from the nation's capital, where we held a policy briefing on the importance of supporting new teachers. We had 125 people from across the country, we had policy makers, and all the legislative aids, and at the end of the day, everyone there was saying, "We're finally talking about what matters. We must be able to recruit really smart, talented people into our profession, and help them reach their dreams."

And, in working with Full Circle Fund - so, we've got these four colleagues who've worked with us steadily for over a year and - it's almost like having a critical friend, not only do they have the expertise and delivered product and worked and worked with us. But I can call any of them any time to



talk about issues that come up and because of their knowledge of communication and marketing and business, they have been an invaluable resource.

But, perhaps the thing that has just really been the greatest joy is that they're as passionate about new teacher development as we are. And it has really been a phenomenal opportunity to work with the Full Circle Fund team.

In closing, let me just say, there's a lot of issues we need to face and education has to be at the heart of that kind of work. Our teachers in America come to school every day and we need to make sure that the poorest kids, no matter where they are, are greeted by someone who's gonna help them, help every child reach his or her dreams. It matters.

And we - and you! - can make a difference. Thank you very much Full Circle Fund.