



Troops to Teachers Educator, Tom Beall, Awarded Bonus at Paul Cuffee High School

On the eve of opening the new Paul Cuffee High School in Providence, Captain Tom Beall, a ninth grade mathematics teacher and retired U.S. Naval Captain, was awarded a \$10,000 bonus from the Troops to Teachers program in partnership with SchoolSpring.

Troops to Teachers is a U.S. Department of Education and Department of Defense collaborative program designed to help eligible military personnel begin new, important careers as teachers in public schools and public charter schools. This program enables the retired veterans to apply their skills, knowledge, expertise, and experience in schools that will best benefit from their admirable abilities.

Veterans with qualifying service who secure employment in “high need” schools—as determined by their percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch—are eligible to receive bonus money from the Troops to Teachers program and are recruited by SchoolSpring. Because of Mr. Beall’s commitment to Paul Cuffee School, he has received his first bonus payment from Troops to Teachers during our recently held ceremony, which was attended by all his colleagues at the High School, his principal, Ms. Becky Coustan, his head of school, Mr. Michael C. Obel-Omia, and other guests and friends.

“By targeting our financial assistance toward high need public schools, we increase these kinds of schools ability to retain highly qualified teachers,” said Troy M. Gipps, Regional Coordinator of the New England Troops to Teachers program. “Veterans who receive our bonus money incur a three-year teaching obligation; however, many schools issue teaching contracts on an annual basis, so we break up our bonus payments over three years. For every annual installment a veteran receives, he or she agrees to teach for an additional year.”

One of the primary goals of the Troop to Teachers is to place veterans in teaching positions where they will remain for an extended period of time, ensuring that their impact will be substantial. The retention bonus is a key piece of this program, but matching the prospective teacher with a community and culture that will enable the veteran to best utilize his or her skill set is equally critical. To that end, SchoolSpring comes into play. Mr. Beall secured his position through SchoolSpring.com, an innovative education-focused job matching service, whose mission is to provide an efficient, cost-effective and expanded method of connecting educators with jobs by finding the most diverse and appropriate candidate pools. School District use this organization to recruit and hire excellent educators, such as Mr. Beall.

“By working with SchoolSpring we are able to reach more veterans who qualify for our program and its financial incentives,” quipped Gipps. “As a result, school districts are better positioned to

retain these high quality teachers and students benefit greatly from the knowledge, experience, and dedication of some of nation's finest citizens.”

As a former Navy Master Training Specialist, Mr. Beall has a philosophy of strong leadership, self-discipline, and selfless dedication that propelled his decision to teach at Paul Cuffee after his retirement from the Navy. “While the bonus is generous, and I am grateful for it, I decided upon teaching as a second career because of my desire to continue serving my community...I accepted the position because I was attached to the School's values and philosophy of education,” noted Mr. Beall.

Paul Cuffee School teaches students to value personal initiative and social responsibility. It seeks to accomplish this through an academic program that fosters discovery, stretches thinking, and demands excellence. We strive to be a community that respects each individual and responds to the needs of others. This quality of life together is central to our mission.

Michael C. Obel-Omia, the Head of School, welcomed and congratulated Tom with the following words: “I am grateful that Tom Beall will be teaching our students. His unique experience will engage the students and inspire them, as he has already shown them the purpose of a good education: to serve his fellow man. Tom has served our nation admirably, and for that all of us are grateful; we are safe and we have our opportunities because of his sacrifices. Now, Tom will serve our children, and for that I am grateful.”

He continued, “Joan Countryman, the former head of Lincoln School here in Providence, interim head of the Oprah Winfrey Academy in South Africa, and a board member here at Paul Cuffee, opined in a recent piece, ‘education is our tomorrow.’ Tom has wonderfully served yesterday and now he will make many tomorrows for the children of Providence.”