



SEATTLE GIRLS' SCHOOL

Rosetta Eun Ryong Lee  
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Christine Wieland  
Education Director and Program Manager of Youth Take Heart  
The Hope Heart Institute  
1380 112th Ave NE, Suite 200  
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January 28, 2010

Hello Chris,

I wanted to express my gratitude for the continued availability of the Youth Take Heart curriculum kit for my classroom. I was one of the teachers on the original curriculum development team, and my school has accessed the kit for every year it has been available. As a teacher in a small independent school with limited lab facilities and supplies, I am thrilled with the ability to deliver so many engaging hands on activities without purchasing expensive equipment or spending hours of curriculum development. The lessons and materials have been refined so well that the kit is extremely user-friendly, an additional benefit for this extremely busy and sometimes harried teacher!

Furthermore, as a female science teacher at an all-girls school, I am passionate about finding curriculum that makes science my 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls become engaged with and excited by science. The Youth Take Heart is one of my staple resources – my girls rave year after year about the Circulatory System Runaround activity, the Fats and Sugars in Fast Foods exercise, and the heart dissection. As one of my students enthusiastically said, “[The Runaround activity] was more hands on than sitting in the classroom, and you learned the material in more depth.” Another student said, “The Fat Packet activity so fun and so gross– I still have my packets in my cupboard at home.”

Thank you again for your hard work in making this wonderful resource available to teachers. I hope more teachers (and therefore more children) get to access these fantastic materials and learning!

Sincerely,

Rosetta Eun Ryong Lee

February 1, 2010

Matthew John Brewer  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher  
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To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of Youth Take Heart (YTH), a curriculum funded in part by the Hope Heart Institute and the University of Washington Department of Bioengineering.

I have been using the YTH curriculum three consecutive academic years. Each year, I use the YTH curriculum as a supplement for the district provided Human Body Systems Science and Technology Concepts for Middle Schools (STC/MS) kit published by Carolina Biological Supply Company.

YTH provides several invaluable opportunities to students: hands-on sheep heart dissection, kinesthetic modeling of the circulatory system, an in-depth look at scientific career choices in the field of bioengineering, and complex topics such as artificial blood vessel construction and stem cell research as it pertains to heart health.

The combination of these opportunities provides real-life experiences that many students may not have the chance to repeat until they enter a college level biology class. In many ways, my favorite day of the year is when students dissect the sheep heart. Students often begin the day with a visceral aversion to the lab but finish the day with their hands and fingers following each and every vein and artery to enter and/or leave the heart. Their level of understanding increases when they are able to internalize the size, shape, and function of the heart.

During my first year working with the program, I worked closely with Chris Wieland, project founder and curriculum developer, to create a Powerful Classroom Assessment (PCA) aligned with state standards and Washington State Assessment of Learning (WASL) types of questions. I use this "Artificial Blood Vessel" PCA to measure and monitor student progress in a few ways: (1) as a summative understanding of application of bioengineered products; (2) as a formative assessment of students' understanding of the scientific method — identifying variables and writing a solid conclusion; and (3) and as an opportunity to further inform my own teaching practices based upon student results.

Again, I am writing in strong support of Youth Take Heart (YTH) curriculum. Without the use these resources I believe that students would not experience a deep understanding of the complexity of the human body system. Moreover, I believe the curriculum provides students with methods to engage and debate complex ethical questions in the medical field through current research in the bioengineering field.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

  
Matthew John Brewer,  
7th Grade Science Teacher Eckstein Middle School



Emerson High School

227 North 4th Street  
Post Office Box 217  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

*Building strong commitment, creativity, and character since 1976*

Christine Wieland  
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Scott Adams  
Emerson High School  
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Mount Vernon, WA 98273

February 5, 2010  
Dear Chris,

I am happy to write a letter of support for the Youth Take Heart (YTH) program. My students really enjoy the program and learn much more compared to my standard curriculum.

Emerson High School is an Alternative High School run by the non-profit organization, Youthnet. Donations and other community resources support our curriculum and the YTH program is a great aid to our school. My school is ethnically diverse. We are 62% Hispanic, 30% Caucasian, 2% African American, 1% Asian, and 1% native American. Also 60+% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Emerson serves students from the Mount Vernon School District, who for a variety of reasons are at risk of dropping out of high school. Our students like doing hands on and inquiry projects.

I have been using YTH for three years and my experience has been positive from the start. The program started with a superb week of training for teachers on how to use the YTH program. Each lesson was carefully explained so that I left feeling confident that I could implement the program in my school. The manual that supports the program outlines the materials



A support network for our youth.

needed from the kit for each lesson and provides key information on how to teach each lesson. Teachers have been sent emails to update the program over the years. I am the only science teacher in my school but because of the support I have been able to teach the lessons.

The YTH manual has a section where the Washington State Grade Level Expectations for each lesson are listed. Therefore it is easy to see how the YTH program supports Washington state standards.

Because of my school funding I would not be able to conduct the same lessons without the YTH program. I use the program to support our health class. I also use the first three lessons to improve my biology class, by learning the structure of the heart and conducting a dissection of a sheep's heart. The YTH program allows me to go into more depth than just using our standard curriculum.

Even though the program was developed for middle schools, I recommend the Youth Take Heart program to all high schools that have a health class and human biology class.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Adams".

Scott Adams  
Math and Science teacher  
Emerson High School



# COUPEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 204

...Dedicated to the Continuous Learning, Personal Excellence, and Integrity of all Students

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Teacher

## Web Site

[coupeville.k12.wa.us](http://coupeville.k12.wa.us)

Dear Hope Heart Institute:

I am writing a letter of support for your wonderful Teen Take Heart (TTH) and Youth Take Heart programs that you offer to teachers. Last summer, I took the summer workshop with Chris Weiland and learned a great deal about heart and health issues. We also gained valuable experience working in professional labs and learning from professional scientists. Chris and her colleagues spent time with us teaching us about the various lessons that go with the kits and also asked for our feedback on them. I really felt well prepared to teach this unit using the kits afterward.

This is my second year using the Teen Take Heart kit and I really enjoy using it with my 8<sup>th</sup> grade science students. Coupeville Middle School is a rural school situated in Central Whidbey Island. Our population is about 95% Caucasian, and our free and reduced lunch program services about 23% of our students. We have about 260 students currently and enrollment in our district is declining slightly every year.

The curriculum fits nicely with our Washington EALR's, is easy to use and really engages student interest. Curbing childhood obesity is such an important subject and of national interest. The models, posters, and videos are a big plus. My students love learning about themselves and how their bodies work. I am the only 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher in the district and the human body is part of our curriculum already, so the TTH curriculum fits in nicely.

Teachers have limited budgets, so buying these "extras" would be out of the question for us normally. Being a small school, our grade-level budget is small for science. I only get about \$300/year for supplies. It was a tough decision to continue using the kit this year since the Hope Heart Institute asked teachers to rent the kits for \$200, but my principal and I decided it was well worth the cost. Having the kit available free last year was very nice. I received a little grant money from a local foundation to defer the cost of the kit. I hope in the future, the program and kits will be available to teachers. It's a valuable resource and we love using it! I whole-heartedly recommend this curriculum and kits to other teachers.

Thank you for offering all of this to teachers!

Terry Welch  
Science Teacher, Coupeville Middle School  
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