

Touchstones Discussions Expands to Two New DC Charter Schools



Students at Washington Latin engaging in small group work during a Touchpebbles lesson

Touchstones is taking hold in two Washington DC public charter schools, Girls Global Academy and Washington Latin Public Charter School Cooper Campus, thanks to a grant from the Jack R. Anderson Foundation. The grant provides funding for Touchstones discussion curricula, workshops, and coaching for expanded programming at Washington Latin and a pilot implementation at Girls Global. A summer PD session at Washington Latin was followed by orientation classes with new incoming students at the Cooper Campus. That included an art competition that was connected to the students' Touchpebbles discussion.

This fall, a PD session at Girls Global involved incredibly deep engagement by faculty members across all content areas, even though only two of their teachers will be using the program this year in the pilot. We are excited to watch as both schools' students and teachers grow in their knowledge and use of the program in the months ahead. Across both schools, more than 50 teachers received Touchstones training so far, and more than 400 students are engaged in Touchstones discussions this academic year! In 2024, teachers from both schools will work together at a joint-PD session designed to build community across the two school's faculties.

Touchstones Presents at the 2023 NYSEC Conference

At Touchstones, we love English teachers, and in mid-October, we were surrounded by them at the 2023 New York State English Council conference in Albany, New York. We met educators from all over the state and hosted a breakout session where they could experience a Touchstones discussion firsthand.

As a result of the conference, we expanded the number of schools using Touchstones in the state, and we connected with many people who want to focus on civil discourse. Our globetrotting staff are looking forward to education conferences early in 2024 in North Carolina, Texas, and Washington state! Stay tuned for more details in the months ahead.



Touchstones 2023 Teachers of the Year!

Our annual Teacher of the Year and Volunteer of the Year celebration will be held on December 2, 2023, in Stevensville, Maryland..

We are delighted to announce that our Teachers of the Year are Dr. Chelsie Hawkinson and Dr. Nathan Slife at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Chelsie and Nathan have introduced Touchstones into multiple courses in the College of Education at UNLV, and they have been incredible partners for their faculty and for Touchstones during that implementation. We are excited to announce that our Volunteer of the Year is Craven Engels, a longtime Touchstones advocate who has supported teachers in schools, organized events for our organization, and also serves as a volunteer in our prison

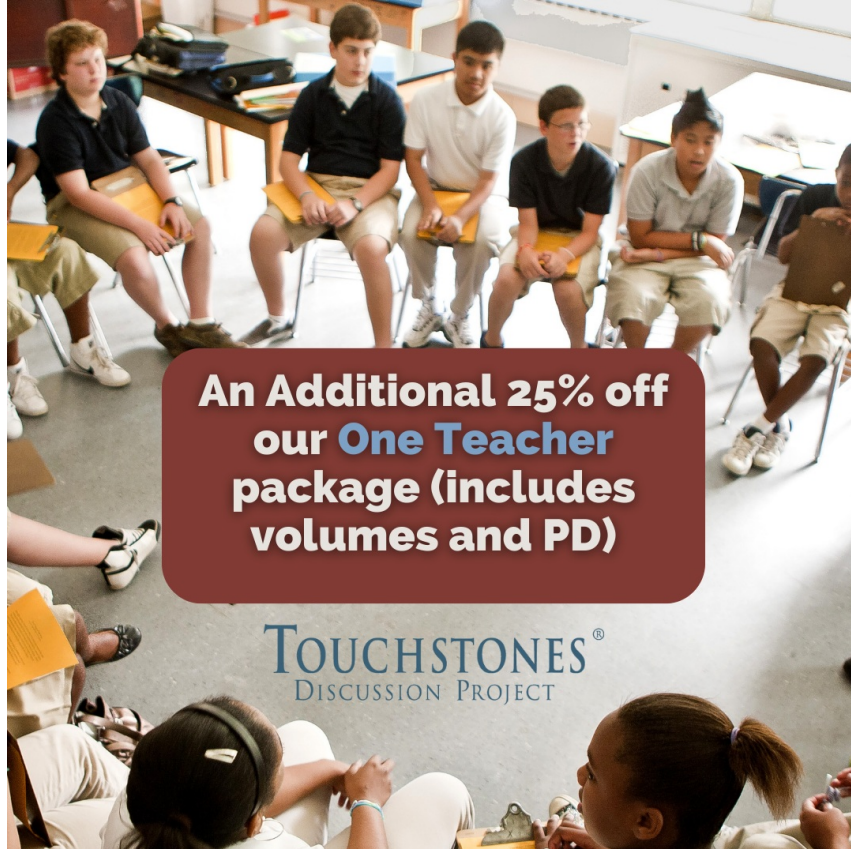
programs. Congratulations, Chelsie, Nathan, and Craven! Educators who would like to attend the event can contact [Sharon Thomas](mailto:sharon@touchstones.org) (sharon@touchstones.org).

At the event, we will raffle off *Flowers & Goblet*, (shown below), a gorgeous 30"x24" oil painting with charcoal line on canvas by Elliott Zuckerman. All proceeds raised support teacher professional development and discussion program access. Tickets go on sale on the Touchstones website on Nov. 2. Our goal is to foster Touchstones discussion skills everywhere!



To attend the event, click
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