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## Courage to Teach program serves as 'catalyst' for alum

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After earning his Master of Science in Education degree from Dominican in 2012, Jim Fish arrived at a crossroad in his teaching career. His path led him to the Courage to Teach® program at Dominican.

Beginning its ninth year on August 11, [Courage to Teach](#) is a professional development opportunity that offers retreats for the personal and professional renewal of teachers and administrators from pre-kindergarten to college. A record 30 educators were registered to attend *Courage to Teach's* summer retreat, one in a series of seasonal retreats held at the Santa Sabina Center adjacent to the Dominican campus.

Fish is very familiar with it.

“*Courage to Teach* gave me courage to be myself and teach my way, with a real clarity about the whys and hows of serving the real growth of each student,” he explains. “I’ve been attending *Courage* retreats for four or five years now, and each one serves as a benchmark for my career and spiritual growth, and a new catalyst for the coming adventures.”

Fish, who now teaches mathematics and sciences to middle and high school students at [Fusion Academy of Marin](#), was teaching at-risk students at another school when he considered becoming a full-time [artist](#). A *Courage to Teach* retreat reaffirmed his chosen profession, and helped him to re-connect with his passion for teaching.

“I really liked the idea of taking the time to reflect on my teaching calling in a quiet low-pressure retreat,” Fish says. “The *Courage* retreats helped me keep my balance and clarify for myself what nourishes me and what I can do to make a difference.”

Fish was inspired to attend a retreat by Margaret Golden, whom he called his “fearless leader” during his teaching certification years. Golden, a professor in [Dominican’s School of Education and Counseling Psychology](#), directs *Courage to Teach*, the only retreat series of its kind in Northern California which focuses on renewing the inner lives of professionals in education.

“I believe that Jim figured out that as a teacher, he excelled in a one-on-one teaching environment. He had been a tutor prior to getting his teaching credential, and although he really wanted to work in a low-income public school, the work he has done in the *Courage to Teach* program helped him to realize that he was better suited for a place like Fusion,” Golden says. “After attending an introductory *Courage to Teach* retreat, he decided to join the seasonal retreat series while he completed his Master's degree and began his teaching career. It proved to be a very supportive and instructive experience for him while he pursued his career goals.”

*Courage to Teach* helped guide Fish into a dream job.

“In opening up that surrender, life then led me to my perfect job teaching from my true vision in my ideal school setting,” Fish says. “Go figure!”