

# Turkish Cultural Foundation 2013 Teacher Study Tours

## OBSERVATIONS GROUP 2

“Turkey is a beautiful, tantalizing nation filled with figs and honey, pomegranates, spice markets and passionate people. The culture is rich with emotional memories, a desire for change and innovative ideas. I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to travel across this great land with the Turkish Cultural Foundation. This trip was the most significant experience of my life. Thank you TCF.” **Mark Gabriel, Hamden High School, Connecticut**

“I was excited about traveling to Turkey but I had no idea that I would fall in love with its people and culture. The tour provided us all with a broad Turkish experience, but also a desire to learn much, much more about this rich & beautiful country.” **Shawn Santasiere, E.O. Smith High School, Connecticut**

“This was by far one of the most well rounded educational experiences in my life. There was so much that is applicable to every discipline— art, history, literature, science, mathematics— in a meaningful way. Turkey, in addition to being a country with enormous strategic importance, is a warm, wonderful place filled with warm wonderful people.” **Caryn W. Stedman, The Metropolitan Learning Center, Connecticut**

“Turkey is a land of remarkable depth and generosity. The TCF tour was a wonderful opportunity to explore Turkey in all of its richness. It’s a trip I’ll carry with me forever. Thank you!” **Ethan Cherin, St. Paul Central High School, Minnesota**

“I have admired Turkey & its history for many years but now I am a lover of Turkey, its culture, and its people. The doors opened to teachers by TCF in Turkey are invaluable. They provide access to people and experiences that cannot be obtained as a casual tourist.” **Michelle Neal, Orono High School, Minnesota**

“This study tour was first-class in every way. The tour leaders, sights, and itinerary were all amazing. Thanks so much to the TCF for making this study tour great in every way! Wow!” **James Redelsheimer, Armstrong High School, Minnesota**

“The last two weeks have been surreal. I am so happy. Thank you!” **Joanne Berry, Moore School, Montana**

“This tour was a wake-up call of amazing visual imagery that resonated in color, texture, and culture. Turkey has ignited a quest for history, understanding and connections. Thank you TCF.” **Kerry Corcoran, Bozeman High School, Montana**

“For the past two weeks I’ve been immersed in the history, geography, music, literature, art, politics and food of this most layered and complex country. But more importantly, I’ve encountered and befriended such gracious and genuine Turkish people everyday and these encounters have changed my life for the better. I look forward to coming back to Turkey someday with my whole family.” **Niki Keuch, Chief Joseph Middle School, Montana**

“Before this study tour, I worried that I might not be able to incorporate enough about Turkey into my curriculum to make TCF’s investment in me worthwhile. Now my problem will be making sure I cover the *rest*

of my curriculum. When I have taught about ancient Greeks & Romans, for instance, I have always managed to relate ancient times to their modern cultures. Anatolian history was just an adjunct to other topics with no mention of present day Turkey. Never again!! I plan to be a TCF ambassador to my students from now on.”

**Patsy D. Beaver, Windham Middle School, New Hampshire**

“How to describe this incredible experience? Every teacher should apply for this program! What a marvelous opportunity to experience this fascinating, multi-layered culture. Thank you TCF – this was an adventure I will never forget.” **Julia L. Roberts, Saint Mary Academy, New Hampshire**

“Enjoy the Wisdom Today.” **Ralph Sommese, Fairgrounds Middle School, New Hampshire**

“Having gone on several teacher study tours, I can say unequivocally that this has been my favorite trip. Turkey is a stunning, modern, multi-layered nation replete with delectable food, welcoming people, beautiful vistas and rich history. You will have an indelible experience on this 14-day whirlwind and will have copious stories to relay to your students. From the Hittites to the Persians, from the Greeks to the Romans and from the Ottomans to the Turks, you will be astonished at the multitude of contributions to world history that have been made on this treasured piece of land.” **Regina Zafonte, High School for Math, Science, and Engineering, New York**

“I know TCF primarily organized this trip to help teachers have more ideas and materials to bring to our schools, trust me that objective was achieved. Most importantly, this trip has made me a better global citizen. From here on, I will be more attentive to current events in Turkey and be sure to share not only with my school community, but with my personal community as well.” **Orah Bilmes, Alvarez High School, Rhode Island**

“TCF has provided a rich understanding of the history and culture and the arts of Turkey. I also learned a great deal from my travel mates, who offered diverse backgrounds and perceptions, which helped augment my awareness. I am looking forward to sharing this experience in Turkey with my school, students, and community. Teşekkür ederim TCF!” **Shannon Bonner, Douglas High School, South Dakota**

“Turkey is a physically gorgeous country, but it’s the friendly, hard-working and sincere people that have captured my heart.” **Mary Johnson, Groton Middle School, South Dakota**

“Everyday I went to sleep thinking, “things cant get any better than today!” and then the next day I was surprised to be feeling the same – wondering just how many ways I could be surprised, inspired, delighted, or otherwise impressed by Turkey.” **Karen Rahn, Madison Middle School, South Dakota**

*“In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, we will understand only what we are taught.”* Baba Dioum

*“The longest journey is the journey inward.”* Dag Hammarskjöld

“My trip to Turkey greatly exceeded my expectations. It was exciting to see the many historic places in Anatolia, but even more exciting to experience the hospitality and vibrant culture this country has to offer. The reverence that the Turkeys have for Ataturk will live in my heart for years to come!” **Brandon Frederick, Bonney Lake High School, Washington State**

“Before coming on this trip, I knew very little about Turkey, which is why I wanted to come. Through this experience, I feel like I have a solid foundation to bring to my students and colleagues. Not only is my mind bursting with ideas about how I can incorporate lessons about Turkish culture into my own classroom, but I also have so many ideas for how teachers of other subject matters, from art and music, to health and science, can bring Turkey into their classes. I have developed a deeper interest in modern Turkey, not just its history,

and the current issues being faced by the people of Turkey. I am excited to teach my students about the modernity of Turkey so they can tackle the stereotypes of Turks and see the present of Turkey, not just envision it as an ancient land.” **Rebecca Nelson, Eastlake High School, Washington State**

“It’s hard to put into words what I am feeling – but I will try. I am feeling very humbled and the perspective that I have gained from this tour of Turkey is shaping my inner knowledge, which must be lived in my heart and mind. Turkey will forever be in my heart and I will share the kindness, hospitality, generosity, and humor of this wonderful country’s people and rich culture – “what I wonderful mosaic of richness.” Thank you! “SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER.” You are all an inspiration and give me strength – through your love of country and fellow citizen.” **Susan Doris Westberg, Stadium High School (old school Lincoln High School), Washington State**

“The Turkish Cultural Foundation’s Teacher Study Tour is a wonderful “Turkish Delight” that has enriched my personal and professional life. I have been blessed/fortunate to participate in eight teacher study tours in my teaching career and the TCF adventure superseded each of these – each day held amazing and educational experiences.” **Charles (Chuck) Woletz, St. Joseph’s, Washington State**

“This Study tour is a must for every teacher. If you see the application, take the opportunity to apply and then watch the enjoyment begin.” **Terry Buehner, Burlington High School, Vermont**

“This was an amazing experience! Turkey is fascinating. Getting to see important places—both old and new—with people who know the country and culture was unforgettable! Thank you TCF for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.” **Jennifer Lucey, Champlain Valley Union High School, Vermont**

“For Hagia Sophia, I am not sure words will suffice. Inside – the equivalent of fifteen stories – golden and glittering and imposing and stained glass and lamps and mosaics and balustrades and and and!! I just put my hand over my heart and tried to keep myself together as I entered that sacred space. So, Troy, I almost don’t know what to say. Everyone warned me not to expect too much because the ruins are in bad shape, but I was not going ‘to see the ruins.’ I was going ‘to be in the place,’ to be part of the story. The stonewalls that Priam touched, I touched; the battlement that Hector stood on, I stood on; the plain that Helen surveyed, I surveyed. It was absolutely wonderful moment. The Iliad was no longer a story on paper, but written in stone.” **Lisa Mobus, Riverside Middle School, Vermont**

“This experience was incredible. It opened my eyes to the wonderful and complex history of this beautiful country and its caring people. This will transfer into my curriculum units and enhance the understanding, and hopefully debunk stereotypes, of Turkey. It is a crucial country in global affairs and our students need to understand this role to help bring this world closer. Thank you!!!” **Jim Price, Colchester High School, Vermont**