



## Teaching the Teacher

**T**EKLA AND SOPO were two of my youngest and most enthusiastic students at the public school where I taught English in Batumi, Republic of Georgia. “Miss Jenny, Miss Jenny!” they’d cry in chorus every time I posed a question to their eighth-grade class, literally jumping out of their seats in their fervor to take a stab at the answer. Animated Sopo dreams of becoming an actress, and studious Tekla wants to be a doctor (“and a lawyer, too,” she adds, “like my father.”)

Seeing faces like theirs in the classroom every day gave meaning to my work, which at times left me discouraged and frustrated. I had come to Georgia with no training or experience as a teach-

er, and though I knew that I would be confronted with problems much larger than myself—poverty, unemployment, the weight of a very heavy history—encountering the everyday manifestations of these issues in my classroom, and at home occasionally, threatened to overwhelm me.

Though I can’t be sure where Sopo and Tekla’s fates will lead them, their curiosity, passion, and joy are their greatest assets. They will remain inspirations to me.

**JENNY HOLM** taught eighth- through twelfth-grade English in Batumi in the Republic of Georgia through the Teach and Learn with Georgia program from August through December of 2010.

**YOU'RE INVITED!** We invite you to submit your photos along with a brief (approximately 200 words) description of why these images are important in your understanding of a person, place, idea, or incident from your experiences in international education. The photos could be of a simple moment on your home campus involving international students, a major event in an exotic location, or anything in between. The editors of *International Educator* will run selections on this page throughout the year. Please contact us for submission details at [elainal@nafsa.org](mailto:elainal@nafsa.org).