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# UD social studies experts joins Kalmar Nyckel Foundation education team

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The Director of the Delaware Social Studies [Education](#) Project at the University of Delaware, Fran O'Malley, has agreed to lead the Program Development Committee of the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation. This announcement signals the Foundation's commitment to educate students of all ages and to offer enhanced educational programs.

Fran O'Malley spent more than two decades teaching high school and middle school students, first at Padua Academy and later in the Brandywine School District. For the past eight years, he has worked on the Delaware Social Studies Education Project and Democracy Project at University of Delaware's Delaware Center for Teacher Education and Institute for Public Administration. His primary role for the projects has been to improve the quality of social studies instruction in the state in various ways, including exposing K-12 teachers to the resources available to them, a responsibility that indirectly led to his considering doing more to promote the Kalmar Nyckel to [educators](#) around the state.

While project director on a Teaching American History grant, O'Malley and a group of [teachers](#) sailed on the Kalmar Nyckel on the Christina River, an outing that made clear to him the potential in the ship and her story. He and many teachers around the state know of the Kalmar Nyckel, but experiencing the ship and learning while aboard is an opportunity not enough teachers take, O'Malley said, for a variety of reasons he hopes to address in his new role volunteering for the Foundation.

"That kind of experience is very, very exciting," O'Malley said. "What we're going to do is develop a curriculum around it, a standards-based curriculum, so teachers in Delaware can make better use of the resource."

Sam Heed, Senior Historian and Director of Education for the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation said the new Program Development Committee that O'Malley has agreed to lead will help the Foundation reach more people and deepen its educational offerings. O'Malley's career as a [teacher](#) and a social studies advocate in the state convince Heed he is the right choice for this new initiative.

"Fran has a wealth of experience developing first-rate social studies curriculum and designing it in such a way as to make a real difference in the ways teachers teach and kids learn," Heed said. "His experience and wisdom gives me great optimism about our ability to meet the goal of our mission — 'preserving and promoting the cultural and maritime heritage of Delaware for the education and enrichment of all.'"

More information about O'Malley's background and achievements is available at <http://www.ipa.udel.edu/directory/homepages/omalley.html>.