

News release



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For more information:

[Mary Waggoner](#), Director of Communications, 425-385-4040

[Scott Loucks](#), Cascade High School language arts, 425-385-6000

Reading and *experiencing* in Scott Loucks' classroom

CHS students in Mr. Loucks' class have skyped with author and now will visit historic site.

Three years ago, college level English students in Mr. Loucks' class Skyped with author Jamie Ford to learn more about the craft of writing. (see article to the right which appeared in the [Fall 2012 issue of Everett Schools](#).)

This year, the students will once again get hands on experience with the novel *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* when they visit the Wing-Luke Museum, Japanese Cultural Center and the International District in Seattle in April.

"This year's trip is possible because of a \$750 travel grant from the Wing-Luke Museum which will cover all transportation costs for approximately 135 students and adults," said Loucks.

Cascade students meet award-winning author

90 students use Skype to visit with author of "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet"

Jamie Ford lives in Great Falls, Montana. However, last spring, he was up close and personal with Cascade High School college level English students in Scott Loucks' classroom.

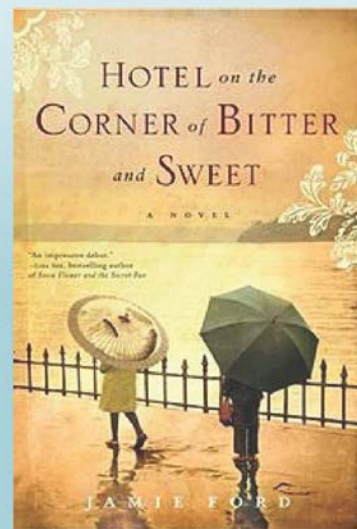
Students used Skype to interview Ford and learn from him about writing, about holding true to personal convictions, making personal memories "live" for others, the power of deliberately leaving some questions "unanswered," the agony of editing and the importance of knowing when to start all over.

The novel is a historical love story of Henry, a Chinese boy in World War II Seattle who falls in love with Keiko whose Japanese family is sent to Camp Harmony in Puyallup as part of the U.S. roundup of Japanese during the war. Its themes of love, loss, redemption, generational and cultural misunderstandings and its believable characters appealed to Loucks' students as well as to readers around the world. Northwest readers will instantly recognize the places where the story is set.

Student Melissa Le asked Ford what had inspired the story and learned that a single memory can trigger an entire novel. Ford described his own father as wearing a badge saying, "I am Chinese" so as not to be mistaken for Japanese.

Gizelle Alcantar-Soto admired Ford for holding firm against film makers offering to buy screen rights and wanting to make Henry's character a Caucasian instead of Chinese. "That wouldn't make sense," she said, "it would simplify the richness of the book."

For Christian Hardy, the Skype session was "the first time I ever met anyone famous, and he was so casual, polite and fluent. He gave us valuable advice, 'It is always better to make a choice. You cannot simply sit on a fence post forever.'"



For Dovin Carpenter the experience "...boosted my confidence. I do some writing outside of school, and will continue to work at it – especially after talking to someone who has been successful."

Skype is being used in schools in the district as a way to connect students to experts in various topics – and to other students – around the world. It is just one way that today's technology, made possible by voter approval of the 2010 capital technology levy, is expanding possibilities for students' futures.

You can watch the entire CHS Skype visit with author Jamie Ford online at <http://bit.ly/JamieFordSkype>. 📺

"Our ongoing partnership with the Wing-Luke Museum benefits all our students. We are truly honored to have received their grant, giving opportunity for every student to participate and to learn from our trip."

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