TEAMING UP
Educators Enhance Teacher Prep
Hope Street Group (HSG) National Teacher Fellows (NTFs) are classroom teachers and instructional coaches who serve as local and national spokespersons, trained to explore their state’s education policy efforts and engage their peers in solutions-based conversations. The 2015 NTF cohort ambitiously entered a Year 2 of their Fellowship, self-designed for personal action and localized implementation of the 2016 “On Deck: Preparing the Next Generation of Teachers” report recommendations. Each of these teacher leaders – representing multiple states and a variety of expertise in education – worked to further key discussions about teacher preparation at the school, district, state and even national levels, and they teamed up to take action.
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TEACHERS
TEAM UP AND
TAKE ACTION
TO ENHANCE
TEACHER
PREPARATION
Fueled by demonstrated interest in their teacher-led, teacher-sourced research project that produced “On Deck: Preparing the Next Generation of Teachers,” Hope Street Group National Teacher Fellows (NTFs) ambitiously entered a Year 2 of the Fellowship in 2016, self-designed for personal action and localized implementation of the report recommendations. Forging strategic new partnerships and building upon existing relationships with peers and decision-makers, each of these teacher leaders – representing multiple states and a variety of expertise in education – detected the most fertile ground for showcasing the “On Deck” findings and furthering key discussions about teacher preparation at the school, district, state and even national levels, and they teamed up to take action.

Synthesizing real perspectives of almost 2,000 American classroom teachers from 49 states and the District of Columbia on their own pathways to certification and their ideas for enhancing the preparation of #TeachersOnDeck, the Hope Street Group (HSG) NTFs’ 2015 action research presumed that teachers know best what the teaching profession needs. With policy recommendations directed toward the U.S. Department of Education (USED) and the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), “On Deck” was a great conversation starter in teacher voice, especially in conjunction with recent publications like Learning Policy Institute’s “A Coming Crisis in Teaching?” (2016), Transforming Teaching’s “From Quicksand to Solid Ground” (2015), The Center for American Progress’ “Smart, Skilled, and Striving” (2015) and CCSSO’s “Our Responsibility, Our Promise” (2012).

Strengthening the teacher pipeline – from recruitment to preparation, through induction and with the goal of retention – is a priority that transcends geography, class and political party. The ways teachers are prepared, placed and supported career-long have implications for not just the millions of adults working in education, but indeed for all student learners in the United States, as well.
Several areas for enhancing the experiences of preservice teachers, echoed by Hope Street Group survey respondents and focus group participants in 2015, indisputably point back to the need for **more time in actual classrooms during preparation programs**, **learning with and from knowledgeable practicing teachers**.

One in two teachers reported they did not receive preservice instruction related to **serving in areas of high-need and/or persistently low-achieving populations**. With new, inexperienced teachers often placed in schools with students considered “at risk” or high-need (including English Language Learners), they simply must have frequent and structured training with master teachers in such classrooms before launched into managing their own.

In fact, teachers also said they wish they’d had (more) **training in classroom and behavior management**, as well as coursework on and **hands-on opportunities for differentiating instruction** with diverse learners.

With the implementation of college- and career-ready standards varying from state to state, teacher preparation programs are no doubt challenged to keep up. But with more teachers reporting they learned about these standards through in-service professional development than in their preservice programs, institutes of higher education (IHEs) should seize opportunities to partner with districts and charters and expand the points at which educators learn how to design and deliver instruction according to these rigorous standards: to cover material with “more depth and less breadth,” and to cultivate the critical thinking skills vital to students’ success beyond K-12. This, too, needs to be shown in action and not just taught to our future teachers.

Recognizing this overwhelming need spanning teachers in urban, suburban and rural areas – and teachers prepared through traditional and alternative certification programs – several HSG National Teacher Fellows chose to examine locally or regionally how their educator peers are prepared to serve all students through **robust preservice training in schools with strong teachers**. See the Year 2 work streams of Danielle Brown, AZ, p. 9; Jill Cullis, CO, p. 13; David Edelman, NY, p. 15; Robyn Howton, DE, p. 21; Tabitha Pacheco, UT, p. 25; Freeda Pirillis, IL, and Lauren Stuart, CA, pp. 27-28, 36; and Stephanie Johnson, SC, p. 23.
Other NTFs noticed gaps between educators’ preparation and expectations of them in that crucial, whirlwind first year teaching, and have therefore offered actionable suggestions for improving induction and mentoring programs in schools and districts, like John Clark, FL, p. 11; and Amanda Ward, WA, p. 29.

Connecting elements of adequate preparation with the ongoing career development of successful teachers and education advocates, NTFs have also honed in on network-building and peer engagement training for preservice teachers to underscore the value of community support across the education spectrum, like Meghan Everette, UT, p. 17, 35; Sarah Giddings, MI, p. 19; and Amanda Zulllo, NY, p. 31.

After launching their Year 2 projects by designing action plans in a daylong workshop Powered by Teach to Lead, the 2015-2017 NTFs have thoughtfully executed additional educator preparation research, collaborated in crafting education policy, and spurred measurable improvements to teacher preparation, induction and advancement. What unifies these different plans, and connects the wide range of NTF accomplishments in a single school year, is the **bold leadership that demonstrates (and, truly, demands) experienced teachers have a seat at the table and a trusted voice in the complex discussions about education in America**.

To that end, this report reflects the past, current and future-forward work of exemplary educators who are poised to further influence the teacher pipeline and student learning, and to meet specific needs identified in their schools, communities and states.

They welcome your support in these endeavors, as their Fellowship draws to a close mid-2017, but these efforts to impact the next generation of teachers are ongoing and ever-important.

Grateful for your partnership and proud of all we can accomplish together,

_Celia S. Gregory_
National Education and Mobilization Manager
Hope Street Group
@CeliaSGregory
K20 COLLABORATION
Amanda Zullo (NY) is fostering and highlighting mutually beneficial PK-12 and higher education collaboration. @Chemteach201

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE
Tabitha Pacheco (UT) is working with the CEEDAR Center on collecting research on the clinical experiences of the 10 Utah IHE teacher prep programs. @tabitha_pacheco

#TeachersTeamUp
ADVOCACY & EDTPA
Meghan Everette (UT) is conducting national research to determine the role of advocacy in teacher preparation programs and its influence on educators throughout their careers and also working with Athens State University to research professional competencies developed through the edTPA program. @BamaMeghan

FEEDBACK TOOL
Freeda Pirillis (IL) and Lauren Stuart (CA) are working with the University of Kentucky to develop a new competency-based feedback tool. @fpirillis, @laurenpstuart

TEACHERS-IN-TRAINING
Amanda Ward (WA) is implementing a comprehensive induction program in her district to assist teachers in making the transition from teacher-in-training to beginning teacher. @amwardnbct

ESSA & SOCIAL MEDIA
Sarah Giddings (MI) is working with the Michigan Department of Education on their ESSA plan, focusing on teacher preparation for educator and leader quality, and is also working with Eastern Michigan University surveying preservice teachers on their use of social media tools for educators and conducting workshops on the importance of being a connected educator. @sarahyogidds

RURAL EDUCATION
Danielle Brown (AZ) is conducting research in rural Arizona to better understand teachers needs post preparation programs and how Title II can provide support. @TeachDB17

EDUCATION EQUITY
Stephanie Johnson (SC) is leading a project aimed at recruitment and retention of African American males into the teaching profession in South Carolina. @mssmjohnson

VETTING MENTORS
David Edelman (NY) is working with preparation programs so they can use vetted teacher leaders and highly collaborative schools to support student teaching. @DaveEdleman

TEACHER SHORTAGE
Jill Cullis (CO) is working with the county workforce to create an industry profile to close the gap of teacher shortage and also partnering with institutes of higher education to connect preservice teachers to trained mentors in her district. @JillCullis

TEACHER INDUCTION
John Clark (FL) is evaluating local teacher induction programs and served as a Teacher-Leader Fellow on Teacher Preparation with AFT. He is supporting a college to classroom pipeline project developed by the University of South Florida. @JohnedwClark

RATING SYSTEMS
Robyn Howton (DE) is conducting an open response survey of second- and third-year teachers to better understand Delaware’s ratings systems, as well as conducting a survey of first-year teachers to evaluate alignment of teacher preparation programs and classroom realities. @RobynHowton
NTF ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION
Danielle Brown  
Arizona  
Kindergarten

As a teacher on a rural military base, Danielle is especially interested in a teacher pipeline that places skilled educators in rural districts who are prepared to work with those populations. Through her vast network in Arizona, Danielle has engaged other educators in rural districts to learn about preservice curriculum and experiences they would have preferred from their preparation programs. This peer-sourced data will be used to inform institutes of higher education, as well as leadership organizations like the Arizona K12 Center and the Arizona ASCD affiliate, about how to meet the ongoing needs of these professionals and these schools. On the webcast Education Talk Radio program in July 2016, Danielle discussed with fellow NTF Robyn Howton (p. 21) her plans for this research and implications on rural educators in Arizona.

**CHALLENGES CITED BY RURAL EDUCATORS**

- “Rural communities are often isolated. Coursework does not prepare you for this.”
- “We don’t have the resources bigger cities have. We also have to travel for everything, which then costs more money.”
- “There’s a lack of access to other districts, teachers and ideas.”

As an Emerging Leader and Influence Leader with ASCD nationally, Danielle presented with NTF Meghan Everette (p. 17) in July 2016 at the Leader to Leader Conference, and a poster session at the Empower17 conference in March 2017 on their work in teacher preparation. As a Board Member for AZ ASCD, she is currently working on planning and hosting a Powered by Teach to Lead summit in Tucson in June 2017.

Danielle attended an all-Teacher Fellows Hope Street Group convening in Chicago in September 2016, where she deepened her knowledge of designing standards-based professional development for peers with Learning Forward, and also represented her state and the National Teacher Fellowship program in a video emphasizing the value of teacher networks.
Danielle continues to engage in work with networks both locally and nationally. She is currently participating in a NEA pilot mentoring program of Early Career Teachers, in which she virtually coaches them through a problem of practice.

In her home state of Arizona, Danielle routinely blogs for the AZK12 Center’s Stories from School AZ, covering teacher preparation, curriculum design, classroom management and more. You can find all of her stories here. In addition to blogging, she advises National Board candidates as a candidate support provider. Danielle is also a member of the AZ Teacher Solutions Team, working with other teachers around the state focusing on solutions-oriented action.

She is excited to connect with teacher leaders in the new Hope Street Group and AZ K12 Center Arizona Teacher Fellowship, recruiting its first cohort this spring, and then presenting on her state and national advocacy work during a Teacher Leadership Institute in June 2017.

With ASCD colleagues and NTFs Meghan and Lauren Stuart (p. 28), Danielle has pursued education advocacy research among hundreds of teachers nationwide, spurred by a Teach to Lead project launched in September 2016. How are teachers finding ways to grow throughout their careers, and can their experiences in preparation support them wherever they teach (including rural areas)? The findings of this research project are outlined at www.hurdlesandhopes.com, as well as p. 35.

“The state of our profession, the engagement in advocacy, and the opportunity to have a voice in decisions is something I am willing to make time for.”

— Danielle Brown, Stories from School AZ Blog
John Clark  
**Florida**  
*High School Physics and Chemistry*

John’s advance of the findings in the “On Deck” report has led him to a collection of projects with the focus of improving new teacher success through better preparation and induction.

John’s administration added him to the new teacher induction team at Deltona High School, based on his training and learnings on teacher preparation. In that role serving the New Wolves program, he has helped to coordinate professional development that supplements existing offerings for first-year teachers, better acclimating them to their new roles and ultimately reducing turnover. John delivered the opening presentation in School Year (SY) 16-17 on “The Potential of Generation Z,” regarding the students currently enrolled at his school, and teaching to and with a growth mindset. The long-term goal of John’s involvement in the New Wolves program is to measure induction program enhancements, and if effective, propose their scalability across the Volusia County Schools district, especially in high-needs schools with major teacher shortages. These efforts may eventually be paired with a student teacher mentoring component, facilitated in partnership with one or more teacher preparation programs.

“Many colleges of education are expanding in-classroom interning experiences for their students and beginning them as early as freshman year. If afforded a do-over, I would prefer a program that started internships early and continued them in different settings as a major part of my 4-year teacher education – beyond the pedagogy.”

— John Clark, AACTE’s EdPrepMatters Blog
At the district level, John was selected by his local union to be part of the initial cohort of a new national teacher-leader program sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers. In this one-year Fellowship, he will learn how to effectively impact education policy conversations and complete an action research project on teacher induction and retention.

At the state level, John was elected as a Union Delegate to the Florida Education Association Annual Assembly where he joined the standing committee on science education, was appointed as the FEA’s representative to the 100k in 10 initiative to add 100,000 new STEM teachers in 10 years, and is working with state leadership on ways to add his teacher prep expertise to their work in that area.

Representing Hope Street Group and his state nationally, John was invited by the U.S. Department of Education to serve as a team facilitator called “Critical Friend” for the first topical Teach to Lead summit on Teacher Preparation. Over the two-day program in Washington, D.C., John supported the program development work of a team from the University of South Florida, with which he continues to stay in contact. Their project is scaling up a mentor program in partnership with a local school district to more intentionally prepare mentor teachers to oversee student teachers. Reflecting upon this collaborative process, John blogged for Teach to Lead, and also guest blogged about the value of mentoring for the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) in late 2016.

During the summer of 2016, John spent six weeks at Penn State University on a research team looking into new RF antenna designs for use in MRI research. He is passionate about collaborations between K-12 and higher education institutions and looks forward to continuing this work in Florida and elsewhere, for the betterment of teachers and students.
Jill’s principal and the Aurora Public Schools (APS) Director of Educator Effectiveness are supportive of her proposed improvements to the student teacher placement process in APS, with productive conversations throughout School Year (SY) 16-17 and preparations to pilot a program in SY 17-18. The greater goal is to affect the entire teacher pipeline in partnering with one or more nearby institutes of higher education, to match student teachers with master teachers in the district for more robust preservice learning and mentoring, and to encourage those teacher candidates to work in APS full-time after earning certification. Said Gateway High School Principal Dackri Davis, “Jill is a determined leader devoted to changing the pipeline of teacher preparation programs to support the hiring processes in local school districts, with the expectation that highly qualified teachers are recruited, retained, and thrive!”

“Jill’s work with Hope Street Group has been valuable for our discussions in Human Resources. Teacher preparation plays a pivotal role in retention and student achievement, as a well prepared new teacher is directly related to their coursework and preparation at the University as well as the quality support and feedback provided by their cooperative teacher.”

— Erin Brophy-Lindo, Director of HR, Educator Effectiveness at Aurora Public Schools
Jill met with more than a dozen different people in APS as she worked to build rapport and a solid foundation for her project, writing a white paper outlining the proposed pipeline project and producing a PowerPoint presentation for pitching her project to additional decision-makers in her district. She looks forward to next steps for designing mentoring modules as professional development for master teachers in APS who will host and support preservice teachers from various preparation programs. Her outlined ideas for this mentor curriculum are here.

Discussions for improving teacher preparation in Colorado have thus far included Deans of Education at Metropolitan State University, Colorado State University and Colorado Christian University, as well as representatives of the Colorado Department of Higher Education. She is also in frequent contact with Colorado State Senators Nancy Todd and Kevin Priola, who are passionate about public education and engage in constructive conversations about preparation, recruitment and retention. Sen. Todd delivered a keynote at the NTF Re-Orientation in June 2016.

With guidance from the Aurora Chamber of Commerce President Kevin Hougen, and in collaboration with Vice President of Colorado Education Association Aime Baca-Oehlert, Jill consulted the Arapahoe-Douglas County Workforce Board in drafting its first industry profile for Education. With K-12 employment projected to grow 27% in the next 4 years, exceeding 34,000 school jobs in those two counties, it was deemed necessary that Coloradans and potential teacher transplants to the state have an accurate picture of teaching opportunities in this large metro area. Currently working on marketing materials that feature real teachers’ testimonials to working in the profession, the Workforce Board’s comprehensive first draft of this industry profile can be found here. Combined with a social media campaign upon its release, this effort aims to “make teaching cool again” and ultimately close the gap in teacher shortage in Colorado.

In March 2017, Jill joined Hope Street Group Tennessee State Teacher Fellow Diarese George in Oklahoma City to advise the state teams of CCSSO’s Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP) in the creation of communications materials on their teacher prep work. “Taking away even more than [she] gave,” Jill is energized to consider best practices of other states with her many partners back home.
David Edelman

New York

Peer Collaborative Teacher (Instructional Coach and Classroom Social Studies Teacher)

David’s theory is this: if pre-service teachers gain exposure to teacher leadership initiatives—and the skills of Peer Collaborative and Model Teachers—early on, the next generation of teachers will experience education’s collaborative nature, see and seize opportunities for professional advancement, and receive support from teachers most qualified to lead adult learning. David’s aim for thoughtful student teacher placements in the country’s largest school district aligns with the “On Deck” report, which highlights that teachers wish they had more hands-on collaborative learning experiences. David has leveraged NYC Department of Education’s (NYCDOE) existing teacher career pathways, to meaningfully identify highly collaborative environments and schools with vetted and trained teacher leaders to serve as schools for preservice work. Hunter College and Touro College, two of NYC’s largest providers of teacher prep, have collaborated with David to help ensure student teachers are benefiting from educator-led learning.

“I believe that the successful preparation of new teachers requires investing in experienced teachers to lead adults in learning opportunities that highlight collaboration.”

— David Edelman, National Teacher Fellow

David met with administrators at Touro College, Hunter College and the NYC Department of Education to ensure that teacher preparation programs are knowledgeable of NYC’s teacher career pathways and can access district data of primary and secondary schools to identify highly collaborative environments and schools with staffed teacher leaders for student teacher placements. In that same spirit, David hosted administrators from Touro College at the Washington Irving Educational Campus to highlight the benefits of strategic student teacher placement, including enhanced learning for student teachers and staff recruitment efforts for schools. Direct outreach to
preservice/student teachers at Touro has included creating a survey and facilitating webinars to discuss career and learning opportunities with preservice teachers. This summer, thanks to David’s bridging of K-20 programs, several NYC Teacher Leaders are poised to co-teach summer education classes at Touro focused on specific areas identified in “On Deck,” such as working with high-needs populations, special education, behavior management, differentiating instruction, and child and adolescent development.

In December 2016, David published a blog detailing his work and connections to the USED teacher preparation regulations for Data Quality Campaign. Ongoing, as an Instructional Coach, David has advised teacher leaders and collaborated with Principals around the process of including student teachers in learning walks, lesson studies and team meetings to ensure student teachers have access to learning opportunities that extend schoolwide. Said NYC teacher leader Nikita Hunter: “David coached me on strategies to collaborate effectively with all teachers in various stages of their careers. The relationships I have built with staff and the experience providing 1:1 coaching as a teacher leader has allowed me to find meaningful ways for student teachers to participate in our work to improve project based learning.”

**LESSONS LEARNED**

**Think Small:** Partnerships began by sharing teacher leadership placement data and asking teachers to think how they might include student teachers in school-wide learning opportunities.

**Think Leveragable Strengths:** How can a school’s strengths serve as opportunities for student teachers to see and reflect on schoolwide learning initiatives?

**Think Win-Win-Win-Win:** Schools benefit from extensive exposure to student teacher candidates for hiring, higher ed wins by having purposeful placements for student teachers, student teachers win by receiving strong adult learning at collaborative schools and students benefit from having teachers most equipped to serve students.
Meghan Everette  
Utah  
Math Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)

Meghan—who relocated from Alabama to Utah between Year 1 and Year 2 of the National Teacher Fellowship—served as lead for a Teach to Lead team that included two other NTFs, Danielle Brown (p. 9) and Lauren Stuart (p. 28), and ASCD Influence Leaders. Their project aims to develop effective educator advocates in order to promote more educator voice in local and national policy decisions. Learn more about his collaborative project at www.hurdlesandhopes.com and on p. 35.

Meghan has also partnered with Andrea Whittaker from portfolio assessment issuer edTPA and Rosemary Hodges from Athens State University in Alabama to examine professional competencies necessary to teacher candidate success. Specifically, the team analyzed pre- and post-program self-assessment data from university students completing the edTPA process, and that of students who were not involved in the reflective portfolio building. Combined with outside research, the results will be used to inform the pilot process for edTPA through the Alabama Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (ALACTE) and provide guidance on developing skills within teacher preparation programs.

Constantly advancing her own skills and fine-tuning her practice, Meghan has earned micro-credentials through Hope Street Group and Learning Forward. Designing and Facilitating High Quality Professional Learning can be accessed by all via Bloomboard. Meghan also blogged about this opportunity for Digital Promise.

This year, Meghan participated in the ASCD Government Relations Influence Leader program to promote educator advocacy and involvement at all levels of decision making. She developed and facilitates monthly the #EdAdvBecause Twitter chat curating topics and moderators to promote educator advocacy and best practices.

“Low-income schools need access to exceptional teachers that receive continual growth in PD & coaching.”  
— Matthew Stensrud, #EdAdvBecause
Meghan and NTF Danielle Brown (p. 9) presented “Leading from Where You Are” at the ASCD Leader to Leader conference in July 2016, using the Hope Street Group presentation model. In January, Meghan participated in the Leadership Institute for Legislative Advocacy (LILA), meeting with U.S. Senators, Congressmen, and their education staffs to discuss current issues in education and upcoming Higher Education Act policies. In March 2017, Meghan and Danielle presented a poster session at the Empower17 ASCD conference on the national research revealed in “On Deck,” their Teach to Lead project on educator advocacy (p. 35) and the collective work of NTFs this year. Meghan will be featured as an educator advocate in the summer 2017 edition of Education Leadership magazine.

Meghan blogs regularly for Scholastic, Inc., and other outlets. Some published works this year include:

**Teacher Leader: Ease Mobility, Elevate the Profession with License Reciprocity**
AACTE EdPrepMatters Blog

**Teacher Preparation: Real Advice from Real Teachers**
Scholastic Top Teaching Blog

**Supporting Teacher Success: Don’t Wait for Reform**
Edge.ascd.org

**Teachers: Become an Education Leader**
Scholastic Teacher Magazine
Sarah Giddings  
**Michigan**  
*Advisor, Instructor and Curriculum Coordinator*

Named to the Michigan Department of Education’s (MDE) Teacher & Leader Quality Action Team for implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Sarah facilitated teacher voice in establishing focus areas for Title II funds in her state, and engaged other teachers for feedback on the draft plans. She also wrote on behalf of the department for their Proud MI Educator campaign.

Sarah’s work with MDE has also dovetailed with her work as a Teacher Champion for the Collaborative for Student Success. Sarah will be collaborating with the MDE in April for the Governor’s Economic and Education Talent Symposium to share a session entitled EdPolicy 101, how to be informed on the issues of education and use social media and other networks to engage with policymakers and those in the legislature.

Successfully partnering with Dr. Wendy Burke, Professor and Director of Student Teaching in the educator preparation program of nearby Eastern Michigan University, Sarah has infused her Hope Street Group professional learning, National Board Professional Teaching Standards and her own experience growing and sustaining a digital Professional Learning Network (PLN) into the design and execution of the ConnectingEd sessions and professional learning for teacher candidates at EMU. The sessions consist of one-hour presentations centered around the program goals along with ongoing engagement on various social media networks discussed in the sessions for elementary-specific and secondary-specific strands. The sessions are interactive, highly engaging, and full of practical strategies and discussion.

Sarah built a ConnectingEd team filled with other Michigan teacher leaders to deliver training on network-building and founding an alumni group on social media for peer support. She also conducted technology needs pre- and post-assessments for preservice teachers. As for results, Sarah measured great satisfaction among EMU students, and this successful offering sparked interest among other Michigan teacher preparation programs. Sarah’s proposal about her EMU work was recently accepted for the
Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning’s annual spring conference - the largest educational conference in Michigan - where she presented in March 2017.

CONNECTINGED RATIONALE & RESULTS

Program Description

Key Findings:
• Out of 231 preservice EMU teachers surveyed, 97.5% said they were moderately to very interested in the educational benefits of social media for professional growth.
• Over 80% saw value in using social media for professional growth, professional learning communities, and to connect with peers and colleagues.

Preservice teacher reflections on ConnectingED:
• “I now plan to use social media to connect with educators all over the world. I never realized how big the social networking was when it came to benefitting the educational community.”
• “I think that my understanding of PLNs and Twitter will be useful in developing autonomous learning strategies past graduating.”

As a TeachStrong Ambassador with the multiorganization movement for elevating the teaching profession, Sarah moderated a June 2016 Twitter chat on the Teacher Preparation principle (#TeachStrong) and also served as virtual panelist in a September 2016 Twitter chat co-hosted by Hope Street Group and TeachStrong, speaking more specifically to teacher prep’s relationship with diversity and student equity (#EdEquity).

Sarah is also using her various platforms and networking to write about the unique teacher leadership and content delivery models of her program through blog pieces with EdReimagined and Teacher-Powered Schools. She was recently asked to serve as a school ambassador for the Teacher-Powered Schools collaborative.
Robyn Howton
Delaware
High School English Department Chair
and AVID Coordinator

Tapping into her strong relationships within Delaware’s education community, Robyn’s School Year 16-17 research project – largely qualitative, shooting for the peer-solicited candor found in the “On Deck” report – is producing a deeper look into the story behind how new (first-, second- and third-year) teachers rated their teacher prep experience on a survey deployed by the Delaware Department of Education in 2016. Howton met with representatives from the major Delaware teacher preparation programs at University of Delaware, Wilmington University, and Wesley College to get input into the research project. She announced plans for this study on the web broadcast program, Education Talk Radio, in July 2016 with Arizona-based NTF Danielle Brown (p. 9).

The Delaware Department of Education supports this project and is one recipient of her aggregate research findings. The Rodel Foundation of Delaware has also assisted in designing and promoting her data collection, as well as facilitating focus groups (Rodel Teacher Council members were trained to help with this peer research). In 2017, Robyn will meet with the Delaware AACTE chapter to share the results of her research. Additionally, Robyn is hoping to present at the Policy and Practice Institute sponsored by Delaware Academy of School Leadership (DASL), meet with members of the Education Committee in the Delaware State Legislature, and share data with each of the Delaware teacher prep programs specific to their alumni.

FEEDBACK FROM SECOND- & THIRD-YEAR TEACHERS

• Over 90% said they wish their student teaching experience had been longer.
• Putting into action with students and a mentor teacher what they learned through coursework is what best prepared new teachers to lead their own classrooms.

Based on her previous work with Hope Street Group and the Rodel Teacher Council, Robyn was asked to serve on the leadership team for the newly formed TeachDE (modeled after TeachNY, with which fellow NTF Amanda Zullo served, see p. 31), an initiative spear-headed by the University of Delaware’s Public Policy Institute. She is co-chairing the working group focused on aligning the major Delaware teacher prep programs with the needs of Delaware’s public schools. Her hope is the research she is conducting as a Year 2 NTF will provide baseline information to her working group.
Robyn is also a member of the Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council (TAC). This affiliation gives her the chance to continue to participate in a national conversation about the future of education with 50 other teacher leaders from across the country, including NTFs Lauren Stuart (p. 28) and Danielle Brown. As a member of the working group on equity and advocacy, Robyn hopes to take part in finding ways to increase the number of minority teachers – specifically African-American male teachers – coming into the education field. As an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) coordinator, Howton also strives to represent the voice of her students in all education conversations.

Robyn shared what she has learned with 100+ educators by chairing the February 2017 ECET2-Delaware convening hosted by the Rodel Teacher Council. In preparation for this event, she blogged for Rodel encouraging the participation of a diverse group of teachers. She also reached out to teacher prep programs to invite student teachers to spend the day learning alongside current classroom teachers at this teacher-led summit. Robyn serves as a clinical educator and hosts a student teacher each school year, allowing her to continually implement and practice some of the recommendations from her research.

“The work Robyn Howton has done as a NTF with Hope Street Group prepared her to take on a teacher-leadership role in Delaware’s continuing work to improve Educator Preparation Programs in our state. She has the policy knowledge and practical experience to bridge the gap for all stakeholders. Her exposure to what is happening in other states along with her voice from the classroom perspective provides a perfect opportunity as we prepare our newest educators for the critical work of teaching.”

— Angeline Rivello, Delaware Department of Education Associate Secretary, Teacher & Leader Effectiveness
Stephanie Johnson
South Carolina
2nd Grade

Stephanie’s follow-up research project aimed to engage South Carolina male educators of color to learn of their motivations for entering the profession, the effective training and encouragement they received throughout their preparation programs, and possible improvements to recruitment, preparation and retention efforts that will ensure future generations of diverse student learners are taught by a more diverse, highly skilled workforce of educators, as well. Her short survey was deployed to African American male teachers in SC beginning February 2017, and the research is ongoing.

This state-based data collection was supported through Stephanie’s leadership in the South Carolina Education Association (SCEA), through which she’s also serving on an ESSA Implementation Team this year, and blogged about the opportunities for student achievement through the new education law. Through ESSA town halls, convening state leaders and educators representing South Carolina schools and students, Stephanie has made connections with individuals and organizations that share her goals for attracting diverse teachers and improving equity in SC schools. This exposure provided her the opportunity to be selected to serve on a taskforce to review educator preparation standards for The South Carolina Department of Education. The primary focus of this work is to examine licensure/certification policies, educator preparation policies and procedures, and data collection, analysis, and reporting for continuous improvement in the K-20 setting.

“[ESSA] offers a doorway for students like me – students who are sometimes overlooked...who have the potential for success but can slip under the radar.”

— Stephanie Johnson, Lily’s Blackboard Blog
A Horace Mann Award for Teaching Excellence recipient, one of just five public school teachers in the country to receive the honor in 2017, Stephanie attended the NEA Foundation’s Salute to Excellence in Education awards gala in February 2017, and was profiled by the Foundation in this video.

Stephanie is a National Board Certified teacher in Early/Middle Childhood Literacy who provides training and support to educators across South Carolina. Her passion and dedication to education in South Carolina has led to working with the University of South Carolina Center for Educational Equity for African American Students on creating culturally relevant lessons through research and a trip to Sierra Leone in 2011.

Stephanie’s plan for the remainder of School Year 16-17 is to continue work in education policy and help bring diversity to the classroom through culturally relevant lessons, also enhanced through her experience in the National Education Association Foundation Global Learning Fellowship.

“You can hear it in her responses and see it in her body language, the compassion that Stephanie has for being an educator.”

— Bernadette Hampton, President of The South Carolina Education Association
Tabitha Pacheco  
Utah  
*Special Education Instructional Facilitator*

To inform her CEEDAR Center state-based workgroup exploring best practices and potential modifications to teacher preparation in Utah, Tabitha is conducting research of the 10 educator preparation programs (all colleges or universities) in the state and their clinical offerings and requirements.

This may also feed into her committee work in aligning preservice teacher evaluation (and those observational indicators of success) to teacher evaluation systems currently utilized in K-12 schools across Utah. Additional ongoing opportunities for Tabitha to exert teacher leadership and offer insight include service on a review committee for the American Institutes for Research (AIR) Center for Great Teachers and Leaders and its work on equitable access supports for states, plus participation in focus groups with the Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP) in Cohort Two of this Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) aligned action network.

**WHAT IS CEEDAR?**

Since 2014, the CEEDAR Center has been providing technical assistance in Utah through the formation of its State Leadership Team (SLT) with representatives from the Utah State Board of Education; faculty from Utah State University (USU), the University of Utah (U of U), and Weber State University (WSU); local practitioners; and other stakeholders including the Utah Parent Center. The SLT collaborated to develop a state vision and mission that is aligned with other state initiatives to ensure sustainability of efforts. Through CEEDAR support, those institutes of higher education are reforming their teacher preparation programs by analyzing and revising their course syllabi and course sequences to better reflect mathematics content and pedagogy delivered through a multi-tiered system of support framework (MTSS). Faculty are also engaging in collaborative partnerships with local districts to provide a continuum of support for candidates, practicing teachers, and their mentors. The CEEDAR efforts in Utah are supported by state leaders in general and special education and are grounded in aligning professional development, teacher preparation, and other state initiatives to ensure pre-service and in-service teachers are improving educational outcomes for all students.
Also with CCSSO, Tabitha participated as the teacher representative on a vertical team of four education stakeholders from UT (two State Education Agency members, a Principal, and a Teacher) in the Leading Educator “State Teacher Leadership Convening: Opportunity for States to Build, Advance, and Sustain Teacher Leadership” in February 2017. The Utah team used the increased flexibility from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to advance their approach to teacher leadership. The State Teacher Leader taskforce worked on assessing opportunities at the state and district level for teacher leader roles, development, and career pathways. They also used current state rules and upcoming legislation to define teacher leader roles that increase instructional expertise and student achievement.

Tabitha has had several opportunities to blog for organizations such as The Fordham Institute and CCSSO. She also started her own blog, The Utah Teacher, which focuses on local education policy and emphasizes teacher leadership and elevating the profession.

Tabitha was an executive member on the ECET2SLC planning committee, bringing the first of these regional teacher-led summits to Utah. The January 2017 ECET2 event hosted 80 teachers representing 11 districts, and Tabitha led a well attended breakout session on “Leading from the Classroom.”

“Today is a day that, when I look back, I will point to and say, ‘That was the day that changed everything for me.’ I went to a conference that answered every prayer in my heart for the future of education.”

— Riley Hanni, ECET2SLC attendee

Hope Street Group in partnership with the National Network for State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY), and with full support from the Utah State Board of Education, has launched a Teacher Fellowship in the state of Utah, and Tabitha will be serving as the State Director of this program. The first cohort of Utah Teacher Fellows will be recruited in spring 2017 and begin convening in the summer.
Freeda Pirillis
Illinois
1st Grade

Throughout 2016 and 2017, Freeda has advocated for key provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) by leading peer discussions and co-writing letters to stakeholders with Educators4Excellence (E4E). Also with E4E, Freeda took part in revising the organization’s Declaration of Teachers’ Principals and Beliefs, which was unveiled in Washington, D.C. on February 10, 2017. There, Freeda spoke about educator preparation, teaching to rigorous standards and designing PD with and for teacher peers on a panel discussion moderated by former Chancellor of DC Public Schools, Kaya Henderson.

Additionally, her former role in the first National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) Teacher Advisory Group positions Freeda as a continued resource to NCTQ on expanding educator engagement in their data collection and reporting.

Throughout School Year 16-17, Freeda partnered with NTF Lauren Stuart (p. 28) and the University of Kentucky to design a robust feedback tool for student teachers. Learn more about this collaborative project on p. 36.

“We all advocate for our students every day. But in terms of advocating for the profession, we [teachers] don’t always recognize that we have the potential to use our voice to impact policy at multiple levels... It’s about helping teachers understand those entry points.”

— Freeda Pirillis, E4E Educational Excellence Panel
Lauren Stuart  
California  
8th Grade English

At the launch of the Fellowship Year 2, Lauren was accepted to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council (TAC), a national cohort of just 50 teachers recruited to research and develop the foundation’s education strategies, and their implications in the field. On the teacher preparation subcommittee of the TAC, for a two-year term, Lauren is exploring how to incorporate teacher voice into educator preparation, and aims to make local/regional impact in California through this work, as well.

Through advocacy organization TeachPlus, Lauren is building an action team of teachers in her state and training them to be advocates for their profession, as well as drafting legislation in partnership with California congressmen. As a Teachers for Global Classrooms Fellow, she is studying ways to bring global education to her students through an exchange program abroad and online coursework.

Compelled by election year discussions about immigration, Lauren also wrote this piece for Education Post’s Head in the Sand blog: How I learned to be a better teacher from my immigrant students.

“"As educators, we are uniquely positioned to improve the lives of not just our immigrant students, but all of our students. Meeting them at their reality is crucial, and can change their lives."

— Lauren Stuart, Head In The Sand Blog

Beginning September 2016, Lauren collaborated with National Teacher Fellows Danielle Brown (p. 9) and Meghan Everette (p. 17) to design and execute a Teach to Lead research project around educator advocacy. Their project design and initial findings can be found at www.hurdlesandhopes.com and on p. 35.

Throughout School Year 16-17, Lauren partnered with NTF Freeda Pirillis (p. 27) and the University of Kentucky to design a robust feedback tool for student teachers. Learn more about this collaborative project on p. 36.
Amanda Ward  
Washington  
Instructional Coach

Already a trusted teacher leader in Washington state’s Bainbridge Island School District (BISD), Amanda positioned herself as an advocate for improved teacher recruitment, induction and retention using the national findings in “On Deck,” and in so doing gained the open ears (and eventually supportive resources) of decisionmakers and funders in her community. Near the end of School Year (SY) 15-16, Amanda served as panelist at a Bainbridge Schools Foundation town hall meeting discussing “The State of Education on Bainbridge Island,” which was recorded in this podcast. She also blogged for Stories from School about the shared responsibility in training new teachers.

Beginning in SY 16-17, Amanda has led efforts to boost teacher placement and strengthen teacher leadership within BISD via a hybrid position (Teacher Support Specialist). In collaboration with a stakeholders advisory group of beginning teachers, mentors, administrators, association leadership and a Special Education representative, she developed the district’s first comprehensive teacher induction program. This program welcomed the more than 40 new educators across BISD through a thoughtful Orientation and by pairing beginning teachers with the yearlong support of trained mentor teachers. These mentors are selected based on state standards and trained in adult learning and coaching to conduct monthly observations and track new educators against first-year goals. New educators also participated in a fall Learning Walk focused on classroom learning environment and a spring Learning Walk differentiated for each new educator based on their interests and needs. One new teacher blogged about the value of her mentor relationship for the U.S. Department of Education’s HomeRoom blog.

In March 2017, Amanda and colleagues from BISD participated in a panel discussion about the Learning Walks at the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (CSTP)’s Teacher Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) Colloquium, and there shared the significant shifts they’ve made in collaboration through Learning Walks.

Further goals of this Teacher Support Specialist position include investigating alternative certification program for teachers on Bainbridge Island in order to create a pipeline for teacher recruitment, as well as increased support for National Board certification to retain
accomplished teachers. (Amanda helped the district start its first National Board cohort and the number of teachers pursuing National Board certification in her district increased by 800%) “I really like pulling dreams and ideas together, marshalling resources and then following up on implementation – it’s so gratifying. BISD educators are eager to have the chance to participate in teacher leadership and to help the next generation,” said Amanda.

“One of my biggest take-aways from today is a reminder of how beneficial exposure to other teacher’s classrooms is. Teaching is a paradoxically isolating job. Getting to watch colleagues is re-focusing, re-affirming and re-juvenating. Not only does a Learning Walk like this leave me with new ideas from the amazing professional colleagues I have, but it also prompts me to be self-reflective and examine my own practices more thoughtfully.”

— New BISD Teacher after Learning Walk

INDUCTION PROGRAM TOOLKIT
Access Amanda’s huge cache of resources to help (re)design your district or school induction programming!

• Sample agenda for orientation
• Sample support plan for new educators
• Mentor job description
• Sample agenda for monthly induction meeting
• Sample Beginning Teacher Observation form
• Sample Learning Walk forms
• Sample weekly emails to mentors and new teachers
• Sample mentor meeting agenda
Amanda’s Year 2 in the fellowship was centered around increasing and strengthening relationships between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education (IHEs). While her ideas align with CAEP accreditation Standard 2, she is diving deeper with a focus on fostering mutually beneficial K-12 and higher ed collaboration leading to collective impact for both levels. In speaking with numerous institutions of all sizes and locales, Amanda learned about challenges facing institutions with actively engaging alumni and K-12 educators. She then researched and developed strategies to navigate these challenges, focusing with multiple schools of education on engaging their alumni and other local educators to incorporate practitioner feedback into future program enhancements. Increasing attention on professional development, teacher leadership, and developing a sustainable career continuum for educators is a strong priority. Amanda also presented her alumni/educator engagement strategies to member institutions at the fall 2016 NYACTE conference. Growing from Amanda’s presentation at NYACTE is a new collection of digital resources: k12higheredpartnerships.com.

Amanda works with area IHEs by presenting within their classes. She presented Tips and Tricks for success to students at SUNY Plattsburgh and SUNY Potsdam. She shared resources on integrating POGIL activities along with teacher reflection that will eventually help with National Board Certification with students at Clarkson University.

As a part of her Year 1 work, Amanda shared “On Deck” with many groups in New York, including state and federal legislators, plus New York State Deputy Commissioner D’Agati and heads of the State University of New York (SUNY). After her initial meeting at SUNY Amanda was asked to serve on SUNY’s TeachNY Steering Committee for Phase II of the initiative’s ambitious statewide “uplift” of the teaching profession and redesign of teacher preparation. During TeachNY Phase II, Commissioner Elia and SUNY’s Chancellor Zimpher conducted a listening tour of 20 events ranging from speak-outs and town halls. In regional engagement sessions, Amanda worked with institutions to design questions that would provide insight to more localized issues such as preparing educators for the stress of rural classrooms and maintaining high standards for entering educators as the number of education graduates decreases statewide. The voices of over 1,000 K-12 and higher education practitioners provided perspective on policy recommendations designed to impact educator recruitment, preparation and professional learning. As a TeachNY steering committee member, Amanda was involved in conversation analysis where emergent themes were prioritized to develop the TeachNY policy, which was recently presented to the SUNY Board of Trustees in March 2017.
Additionally, Amanda serves as a candidate support provider for teachers within and surrounding the Adirondack Park pursuing National Board Certification, where she has increased the awareness of teachers and administrators about certification and its impact on student learning, especially assisting NY science teachers engaged in the process. She also serves on the 100K in 10 and National Council for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) Teacher Advisory boards.

“To strengthen the teaching profession, P-20 Collaboration is essential. Preparing teachers requires practice working with students, and current research and learning standards...These partnerships are mutually beneficial as the school setting will help faculty remain current with the changing needs of students and families, serving as hubs for research and developing a network of practitioners who can enrich course work.”

— Annette Romano, Director of National Board Council New York

As a TeachStrong ambassador, Amanda oversees the New York State group focused on utilizing the TeachStrong principles within districts across the state to modernize and elevate educators one school at a time. She has written on strategies for recruitment, retention and renewal, and also blogged for Hope Street Group on the topic of multiculturalism in her rural school.

Through her work as an America Achieves fellow, Amanda wrote policy proposals. Her proposal on increasing funding for New York State Teacher Centers directly ties into fostering K-12 and higher education collaboration by utilizing teacher centers as a conduit for professional development for educators at all levels. Amanda also worked on a policy proposal for increasing the ways a science teacher can be certified in multiple science subject areas, a place where New York greatly differs from other states. This topic
sprang from conversations she’s shared with SUNY’s [New York State Master Teacher Program](#) for STEM educators, which has noted many districts seek teachers with multiple certifications or are otherwise cutting programs.

As a New York State Master Teacher, Amanda has been a key organizer of high-quality professional development days for her regional group. She has connected the STEM teachers in the Master Teacher Program to professors whose interest aligned with the concepts for the day. Activities she’s organized include: [STEM to STEAM](#), [Literacy in the Classroom](#), Appropriate Use of Technology to Increase Student Learning, and Opening the Door for Inquiry.

Amanda was also appointed to [New York State’s Professional Standards and Practices Board for Teaching](#) by the New York State Regents. This group serves as an advisory board to the commissioner and regents who set education policy in New York. They have worked on creating guidance documents for teacher leadership within schools.

Amanda was awarded the [Empire State Excellence in Teaching Award](#) from the New York State Governor’s Office, an honor for P-12 educational leaders who exemplify the professional work of thousands of outstanding, progressive teachers and innovative educators striving to attain New York standards and success for all of their students. Teacher Ambassadors are career learners and education leaders who are eager to represent the accomplishments and professional work of their colleagues, share their craft, advise policymakers, and continue learning. She was also awarded the [Presidential Award of Excellence in Math and Science Teaching](#) for New York State, the nation’s highest honor for teachers of mathematics and science (including computer science). The award recognizes those teachers who develop and implement a high-quality instructional program that is informed by content knowledge and enhances student learning.
NTF COLLABORATION
The idea of teacher leaders has permeated the education landscape, and one of the underlying ties throughout teacher leader definitions is the use of advocacy to drive change locally and nationally. Creating a plan to advance educator voice, NTF Meghan Everette served as lead for a Teach to Lead team that included fellow NTFs Danielle Brown and Lauren Stuart, along with ASCD Influence Leaders. In September 2016, the team met in Long Beach, California and developed a multi-year logic model. The team then researched current trends in teacher leadership and educator advocacy, resulting in a national survey conducted in February 2017. Findings from this survey not only provide information about the role of teacher preparation programs in developing educator advocates, but will also serve as the foundation for developing national learning labs to help train and promote new advocates. View the full report and findings at hurdlesandhopes.com.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**CONDUCTED**

**FEBRUARY 2017**

- **544** EDUCATORS
- **9000+** COMBINED YEARS IN EDUCATION
- **16** DIFFERENT ROLES REPRESENTED

**ADVOCACY SKILLS**

TAUGHT IN TEACHER PREPARATION

- Writing for Ed Advocacy
- Talking to State or National Policymakers
- Using Social Media for Ed Advocacy
- Other Specific Guidance or Activities
- Talking to Local Stakeholders and Policy Makers
- Advocate for Effective Instruction
- Talking to Parents
- Advocate for Students with Special Needs or Exceptionalities

Educators instructed on how to talk to state or national policy makers are 1.7 times more likely to participate in legislative advocacy.

**EDUCATORS PARTICIPATING IN LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY**

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<th>Participating in Legislative Advocacy</th>
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<td>63% of Educators with Teacher Preparation Training</td>
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<th>Participating in Legislative Advocacy</th>
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<td>37% of Educators with No Teacher Preparation Training</td>
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In the first collaborative, multi-state project of the NTFs’ Fellowship Year 2, Lauren Stuart and Freeda Pirillis partnered with the University of Kentucky’s Assistant Dean of Program Assessment, Gerry Swan, who commissioned them to design a competency-based feedback tool to be used by both student teachers and their cooperating teachers to track teacher candidates’ skills across three domains indicative of teacher success. Based on their classroom experience and research around teacher preparation, Lauren and Freeda wanted to work directly with a student teaching program to provide critical feedback and co-create a dynamic evaluation tool for student teachers. Their cross-state collaboration was informed by their work with teachers at the local, state, and national levels, illustrating the impact current teachers can have on the preparation of the next generation of educators.

In the Spring 2017 semester, Dr. Swan piloted this tool with student and cooperating teachers in Kentucky schools (and other educators across the country via NTFs) with the goal to gather educator feedback on its functionality, revise with other stakeholders at UK this summer, and deploy a second version during School Year 17-18. Ultimately, through this thoughtful collaboration, Gerry, Lauren and Freeda hope to replace the student teaching evaluation currently used in Kentucky with this more robust tool, which will better prepare preservice teachers for leading their own classrooms. In March 2017, Freeda and Lauren presented on this project at the spring CAEP Conference, before higher education professionals at accredited schools of education and those in the process of accreditation.

“I’ve enjoyed collaborating with Freeda and Lauren and appreciate the contribution they’ve made to my job of moving us forward on our quality assurance work.”

– Gerry Swan, Assistant Dean of Program Assessment, University of Kentucky

Keep up the conversation and tell us ways #TeachersTeamUp to enhance preparation, induction and retention in your school system!

Tag in your local, state and federal decision-makers with these ideas for mutually beneficial partnerships linking experienced educators with #TeachersOnDeck, strengthening the teacher pipeline and elevating the profession.
Hope Street Group is a national organization that works to ensure every American will have access to tools and options leading to economic opportunity and prosperity.

www.hopестreetgroup.org