

NC State University Announces School Leader Scholarship Recipients: The Durham Principal Leadership Academy Fellows

The award winning, evidenced-based Northeast Leadership Academy is expanding to Durham, North Carolina. In Fall 2016, NC State University forged a partnership with Durham Public Schools through the Durham Principal Leadership Academy (DPLA). The founder of Northeast Leadership Academy and subsequent leadership academies, Dr. Bonnie Fusarelli, explains: "Each component of DPLA is anchored in research-based best practices in leadership preparation and is designed to meet the specific leadership needs of Durham Public Schools."



The North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development (NCASLD) Grant currently funds the program, including full scholarships for DPLA's newly admitted Fellows.

DURHAM PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



NC STATE UNIVERSITY
go.ncsu.edu/DPLA

Durham Principal Leadership Academy Applicants participated in Candidate Assessment Day, a day-long experiential assessment. The rigorous admissions process identified DPLA Fellows who are passionate, energetic, and effective educators committed to improving the performance of *all* students. Through DPLA, Fellows will earn a NC school principal license and a Master of School Administration degree. DPLA Fellows

receive a full scholarship, paid internships, conference travel, textbooks, and technology materials. Following graduation, Fellows will serve in high-need schools in Durham, North Carolina for at least three years, a post-graduation commitment.

Dr. Pat Ashley is currently the director of North Carolina State University's Educational Leadership Academy for Durham (Durham Principal Leadership Academy). Dr. Ashley has a passion for student success and is committed to ensuring high student achievement by building high-performing schools and districts. Her recent prior experience leading District and School Transformation for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction focused on data-documented school and district turnaround. She oversaw the successful implementation of the NC Turnaround Initiative as well as NC's ambitious Turnaround effort for 12 districts and 123 schools as part of a Race to the Top grant. In 2013, she received the NC Public School Forum Jay Robinson Leadership Award for exemplary leadership with a statewide impact. Before returning to her home state of NC in 2006, she was Assistant Superintendent for Instruction of Kentucky's Owensboro Public Schools—identified by Standard and Poor's as an "outperforming" Title I district where student achievement far exceeded predictive



variables. She began her career as a teacher before becoming a counselor and school psychologist. These experiences solidified her knowledge of how students learn. She was a middle school principal in an inner-city magnet school in Charlotte, NC; principal of a large comprehensive high school in State College, PA; and, after a family relocation to KY, she became the principal of an elementary school identified as low performing. Following a short period of great collaboration, this school became the highest achieving school in KY for multiple years based on statewide assessment data. Among multiple honors, the school was featured on the Today Show for educational innovation and selected as a National Blue Ribbon School. Considerable years as a principal in diverse settings developed Pat's deep understanding of the critical role a principal plays in a school success. Her undergraduate degree in history is from Duke University and her master's degree and doctorate are from NC State University. She studied in India on a Fulbright and is currently Teaching Assistant Professor at North Carolina State University.



Brenda D. Champion, Ed.D. was also recently hired to work with the new Fellows as well. Dr. Champion will serve as Executive Director of NC State's Leadership Academies. She will assist Dr. Bonnie Fusarelli and will oversee all four leadership academies – The Northeast Leadership Academy 2.0 (NELA 2.0), The Northeast Leadership Academy – District and School Transformation (NELA-DST), The Durham Principal Leadership Academy (DPLA), and the North Carolina Leadership Academy (NCLA). She earned her undergraduate degree in government from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Her studies as an undergraduate included study abroad in Strasbourg, France.

With two elementary education courses taken in the summer of 1986, her teaching career in NYC began that fall. After three years of teaching, feeling a desire to be a student again, she took a leave of absence for one year and received a Master's Degree in Education in Administration, Planning and Social Policy from Harvard University. Her love of learning compelled her to obtain a second Master's Degree of Science in Elementary School Science and Environmental Education from Brooklyn College. After which she held various positions at both the school and district level in NYC. Finally in 2004, she decided that she wanted to make an impact as an instructional leader and applied to the NYC Leadership Academy and was accepted as an Aspiring Principal. Upon completion of the program, she became the principal of a middle school with a large student body (1400) in Brooklyn where she remained for 8 years. During her tenure as principal the urge to study came once more. She earned her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania. Understanding that change is inevitable and can present new challenges as well as opportunities, she joined NCDPI as a School Transformation Coach and has supported principals and their school communities in Halifax County.

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE
THE DURHAM PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY'S FELLOWS:**



Jamel Anderson-Ruff

Jamel earned her Bachelors of Arts in English from Fayetteville State University in 1998 after graduating from The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in 1994. Her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction was conferred in 2007 from University of Phoenix. While her career in education is in its 17th year, her experiences have taken her to multiple levels and sectors of education. These levels and sectors include elementary, middle, and the collegiate level as well as the public and private sectors. Jamel's love of learning is only surpassed by her love of the integration of play, technology, and the arts to engage learners. She has served her school community as Literacy Committee Chairperson, School Improvement Team Chairperson, and currently serves as 8th grade level chairperson and grade level lead support for English Language arts teachers throughout the Durham Public Schools district.



Michael Bloom

Michael earned his undergraduate degree in history, with a minor in social sciences, and a Master's of Education from D'Youville College in Buffalo, New York. As of 2017, Mike will have spent a decade teaching 8th grade social studies at Rogers-Herr Middle School in Durham, N.C. Additionally, he serves as the Social Studies co-department chair, the 8th grade team leader, and the Explorers team leader. Mike is also a part of the Media and Technology Committee and the Continuous Improvement Team. Outside of school, Mike works at the Emily K Center where he is a counselor to four students in the Scholars to College program. Lastly, Michael worked for the Technical Outreach for Public Schools Program through NCDPI, and for North Carolina State University creating questions for the N.C. Social Studies Final Exams.



Tiffany Boss

Tiffany earned an undergraduate degree in Family and Consumer Sciences with a concentration in Child Development and Family Relations from North Carolina Central University. She began her teaching career as a lateral entry teacher, and later completed her K-6 Elementary Education licensure at North Carolina Central University. She earned a Master of Education degree in K-12 Literacy from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is currently a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Facilitator and State and Local Testing Coordinator at Pearisontown Year-Round Elementary School.



Joshua Gibson

Josh earned an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education in History and a Master of Science degree in K-6 Literacy Education from Alfred University. After completing his degrees he attended Le Moyne College and received a third certification in Special Education for grades 7-12. Joshua teaches seventh grade social studies at Neal Middle School. He currently serves as the department chair and holds several other leadership roles such as Capturing Kids Hearts Process Champion team, teacher mentor, seventh grade PLC lead and team leader.



Matthew Hickson

Matt Hickson earned a BS in Business Administration from the Kenan Flagler School of Business at UNC Chapel Hill. He is the reigning Durham Public Schools Beginning Teacher of the Year and the founder/director of Bull City Schools United. He started his path to working toward education equity as a teenager volunteering to register voters on the west side of Charlotte, North Carolina. After years of witnessing the deep social and economic inequities of our state and nation as an activist, he went to work as a teacher and advocate with Student U Durham before becoming an 8th grade science teacher at Neal Middle School in East Durham.



Annette Johnston

Annette earned an undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Education and Pre-Law from Clarion University of Pennsylvania. In North Carolina, she is certified to teach Elementary Education K-6, Middle School Mathematics 6-8, and Middle School English Language Arts 6-8. She has taught various grade levels since her 2011 graduation. Currently, she serves in various school leadership positions including MTSS Facilitator, Academic Coach, Mentor, Instructional Leadership Team Member, Testing Coordinator, Read to Achieve Facilitator, CERT Team, SIT Representative, AdvancED Accreditation Representative, and Kangaroo Math Center Manager. Annette is currently a School Improvement Specialist at Bethesda Elementary School.



Don Jones

Don earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Penn State University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Duke University. He is a National Board Certified Teacher, has coached men's and women's varsity soccer, and is a Duke Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) mentor teacher. He has been recognized as Teacher of the Year and has been a recipient of both Gilder-Lehrman and NEH grants. Don is currently the Social Studies department chair at Jordan High School.



Rhonda Kaye

Rhonda Faircloth Kaye, a North Carolina Teaching Fellow, graduated from UNC-Asheville with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Language and Literature and Education (1997). She went on to become a Master Teacher Fellow at Wake Forest University, earning a Masters of Arts in English Education (1999). She is a National Board Certified Teacher and earned her AIG certification from Duke University. Rhonda served as a middle school English Language Arts teacher and Technology Specialist in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and Durham Public Schools (DPS) for 13 years. During that time, she was awarded Teacher of the Year at Lowe's Grove Middle School (2005) and served in a variety of leadership roles, including ELA Department Chair (2007-2012), DPS district curriculum writer (2009-2012), and School Improvement Team member (2010). In 2012, she moved into a district leadership role as an English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist where she authored and led the implementation of the DPS middle school ELA curriculum for the newly adopted Common Core State Standards. Rhonda currently serves as a Professional Development Specialist in the DPS Department of Leadership and Professional Development. She is the mother of an eighth grader and a fourth grader.



Eric Lockard

Eric earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the Virginia Military Institute. He began his teaching career as a Fellow of the lateral entry program NC INSPIRE. He currently teaches 7th Grade Science at Neal Middle School in Durham. Additionally he serves as Department Chair, SIT team member, and coach of the Science Olympiad and Lacrosse teams.



Otis Maben

Otis earned a bachelor degree in Elementary Education from North Carolina Central University. He also earned a Master's Degree in Education from Liberty University Lynchburg, Virginia. His teaching experience includes a year in 5th grade and five years in 3rd grade. He began his career at Pearsonsontown Elementary School in Durham teaching 5th grade. He later transitioned to Wake County and taught 3rd grade at Walnut Creek Elementary School and Wilburn Elementary. He currently teaches 3rd grade at Wilburn Elementary School in Raleigh, NC where he also serves as grade level chair.



Kristin Morocco

Kristin earned an undergraduate degree with honors in elementary education as well as a degree in history from the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She received Academically and Intellectually Gifted add-on licensure from Duke University. She serves as the grade level chair and is a part of various school committees including the school improvement team and Durham's Leadership Learning Network. Currently, she teaches fifth grade math and science.



Titus Pollard

Titus earned his Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee. He was a Tennessee Teacher Corps alum, and a former member of the Music Educator's National Conference. He currently serves as a 3rd-5th grade Interventionist at Hope Valley Elementary in Durham, and is the PBIS chair, and a School Improvement Team (SIT) and Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC) member.



Marcus Saunders

Marcus attended East Carolina University and earned a Bachelor of Science in Family and Community Services. He earned teaching certification in Elementary Education from Elizabeth City State University. He then received a Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Concordia University in Portland, Oregon. Throughout his experience in education he has served as: teacher assistant, tutor, substitute, and student services coordinator for the GEARUP Program. He taught first and third grade, with one class of only male students. He also served as Vice President for his school's PTA and currently serves as Co-Chair of the School Improvement Team, and Chair of the Cafeteria Climate and Control Committee.



Pachette Sellers

Pachette earned an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from NC State University. She was selected as Teacher of the Year in 2016. She was also one of the six finalists for Teacher of the District for Durham Public Schools. Pachette is a member of the Superintendents Teacher Advisory Council for Durham Public Schools. She has been grade level chair for three years, a mentor teacher and cooperating teacher. Pachette currently teaches third grade at Eastway Elementary where she also serves as the Beginning Teacher Coordinator.