

TEACHFORAMERICA
North Carolina · First Quarter Legislative Report
September 2017

“One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.”

--Vision of Teach For America

This year marks 27 years of partnership between Teach For America and the state of North Carolina. As a partner, Teach For America has committed to maximizing our contribution to the state by recruiting, training, and supporting excellent, diverse teachers and leaders and growing our number of alumni living and working in North Carolina. We are also committed to strengthening the North Carolina Teacher Corps.

In the first quarter and for the second year in a row, Teach For America, Eastern North Carolina hosted a successful summer pre-service training for our incoming teacher leaders in Kinston and Conway, North Carolina. Residency is the beginning of a life-long commitment that starts with two years teaching in a public school, partnering with children and families most acutely impacted by educational inequity. Our incoming cohort of teachers learned from master teachers, explored the community, and advanced the academic and personal growth of over 500 summer school students in Lenoir and Northampton counties.



Eastern North Carolina corps members dismissing summer residency students on the bus lot.

The Roanoke-Chowan News Herald featured the summer residency program, saying:

Djola McGowan will be teaching 7th and 8th grade science at Gaston Middle School. She’s originally from Jamaica, but grew up in eastern Pennsylvania [...] Before joining Teach For America, McGowan was a counselor at the Milton Hershey school for two years. She said she enjoyed helping students find their career paths, and that influenced her decision to become a Teach For America teacher.

While new teachers like Ragland and McGowan are thrilled about the upcoming school year, they’re not alone in looking towards the future. The Northampton County school system appreciates the partnership with Teach For America as well.

“Working with new Teach For America teachers is always exciting,” said Assistant Superintendent Douglas Miller. “They bring an energy to your school culture that youth and idealism fosters.”

Miller explained that Northampton County has had a long history with Teach For America, receiving some of the program’s very first teachers back in the 90’s.

“When Teach For America’s [teachers] partnered with existing teachers, some great things happened,” Miller said [...]

Miller went on to add that the summer residency program partnership, which began in 2016 to offer summer school for local students, was a success this year as well.

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“Teach For America brings in teachers from around the nation to give their newest teachers the opportunity to co-teach alongside veteran teachers and learn more about the communities they will serve in,” he explained of the summer program [...]

When asked about the benefits of bringing in the new teachers every year, Miller said, “their energy and enthusiasm can be contagious and spreads to the community.”¹

We are grateful that we are able to collaborate with schools like Gaston Middle across the state. We are thankful for the state’s continued investment, which allows us to find promising leaders, develop and cultivate their leadership skills and mindsets through classroom teaching, and support them throughout their lifetime. We are excited to update you on our progress in the first quarter.

Statewide Impact

Teach For America’s greatest contribution continues to be the diverse, courageous leadership force that we bring to North Carolina and support across our state. Our network of individuals continues to expand opportunity for children through working in classrooms, schools, and from every sector, field, and place where people shape the broader systems in which schools operate.

Today, 27 years since we began partnering with North Carolina, we are over 2,000 individuals strong living and working in nearly two thirds of the counties in our state. This year, we are committed to leveraging the scale and diversity of our network to make sure we are learning faster and smarter. We are mapping our alumni across the state—where they live, where they work, and the impact they are having on their community. Below is a spotlight on a few of the talented individuals in our network and the work they are leading in North Carolina.

ENC STEM

After graduating from Princeton University in 2010, Liz joined Teach For America and taught high school biology and chemistry at Northampton County High School. Along with Grayson Cooper and Dale Hammer (both Teach For America alumni as well), she created ENC STEM, an intense summer learning program focused on four low-income school districts and KIPP charter schools in North Carolina’s northeast corner. The program was founded on the belief in the power of education to transform children by bringing forth their full potential.



Liz Chen
Co-Founder, ENC STEM

The ENC STEM Program encourages independent learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics as well as a leadership segment which helps students develop resilience, grit and independent learning skills. John Parker, former superintendent of Northampton County Schools, said of the program:

“The Northampton Summer STEM Program has had a positive effect on our students. One of our students was not considering attending a four-year institution at the start of the summer. Last week, he received an acceptance letter from UNC Chapel Hill. Other Summer STEM graduates will be attending Campbell,

¹ Taylor , Holly. Small Schools; Big Dreams. Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald, 8 Aug. 2017, www.roanoke-chowannewsherald.com/2017/08/08/small-schools-big-dreams/. See Appendix A.

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East Carolina, and NC State to pursue majors and careers in science and the health professions.”

RENAISSANCE WEST ACADEMY

After graduating from Spelman College, Erin Barksdale joined Teach For America as part of the 2006 Atlanta corps where she taught high school English. Erin explains that *“Teach For America has coached, supported, and developed [her] throughout all of the stages of [her] career. Every event, professional development opportunity, and coaching opportunity has shaped [her] entire career.”* More than a year ago, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools selected Erin, a Charlotte Native and Butler High School graduate, to lead Renaissance West Academy.



*Erin Barksdale
Principal, CMS
Renaissance West
Academy*

Renaissance West Academy is a unique public-private partnership with the goal of improving school outcomes as part of a broader community revitalization effort. The initiative, patterned after the success at East Lake in Atlanta developed by Purpose Built Communities, is a comprehensive approach that includes mixed-income housing, a high-quality child development center, a PreK - 8 school, and wraparound services for children and families.

The Charlotte Observer wrote about the school’s opening, saying:

“Turning the lofty vision into life-changing results won’t be easy. CMS, like districts across America, has repeatedly tried and fallen short.

But Barksdale, whose parents also graduated from CMS and who was an assistant principal at Ranson Middle School, practically sizzles with excitement at getting a chance to try. She worked for a Texas charter school and an Atlanta girls’ school before being hired to return to Charlotte.

‘It’s really cool to come home,’ she says.²”

MEDSERVE

Patrick O’Shea graduated from East Carolina University and joined Teach For America in 2008 where he taught middle school science at Henderson Middle School.

After Teach For America, he worked as a certified nursing assistant to gain active experience in healthcare. He attended the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, where he was the student body president. At UNC-Chapel Hill, Patrick helped redesign the curriculum for HPREP, a health careers pipeline program and curriculum for minority students. Patrick also graduated from Duke’s Fuqua School of Business with an MBA. He is now a pediatric resident with UNC-Chapel Hill.



*Patrick O’Shea
Co-Founder, MedServe*

² Ann Doss. Modeled after a Charter, This \$32 Million Charlotte School Sets Trends for 2017. *The Charlotte Observer*, 24 Aug. 2017, www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/education/article169076877.html. See Appendix B.

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Shaped by his time in the classroom, Patrick believes that medical education has largely been separated from the transformative work being done in smaller communities. He believes that immersion in the best of rural and other community-based primary care is a necessary step to encouraging the next generation of primary care providers. With that belief and his experiences as an Eastern North Carolina teach For America corps member, he created MedServe.

MedServe is a two-year fellowship program that places recent graduates in primary-care clinics across North Carolina.³ The mission of MedServe is to immediately improve the health of communities and vitality of primary care practices while exposing tomorrow’s most promising future providers to the great potential for community impact possible through primary care practice in “medically underserved” communities.

We are proud to share the meaningful work our alumni are leading in partnership with communities across the state. We are excited to continue to share their stories in future reports.

North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC)

Teach for America is committed to partnering with the state to inspire more North Carolinians to teach and lead as educators here. While we know great teachers exist across the nation, we believe that teachers with personal ties to North Carolina can make a unique contribution to our state, bringing a special sense of urgency and commitment to educating North Carolina’s children. This year, 42% of our first and second year teachers went to a North Carolina college or university and/or identify North Carolina as their home state. Last year, we established live contact with 310 candidates through our webinars and calls.



These Eastern North Carolina corps members will be teaching and leading in Sampson County.

We have 189 corps members who identify as part of the North Carolina Teaching Corps who are teaching in their first or second year in the classroom. One hundred and forty-seven of them graduated from a North Carolina college or university and 164 of them are North Carolina natives. Our NCTC corps members represent 28 different North Carolina colleges and universities including the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, Duke University, Davidson College, and Wake Forest. Our North Carolina connected corps members make up a diverse group of teachers and leaders across the state:

- The average GPA is 3.49
- 48% come from a low-income background⁴

³ Logueg, Grayson. A Great Match – College Grads Who Want Medical Experience and Clinics That Have Needs. The News & Observer, 28 June 2016, www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/article86470412.html. See Appendix C.

⁴ As identified by receiving a full or partial PELL grant

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- 52% are people of color
- 51% are teaching math or science
- 32% are the first in their families to graduate from college
- 4 served in the military
- 19 were taught by a TFA teacher when they were in grade school

Over the summer, we held a cross-functional retreat in Durham where we brought together members from our three North Carolina regional teams and representatives from our Teach For America national recruitment team to brainstorm ways that we can continue to iterate and innovate on our successful local recruitment model. Our North Carolina Teacher Corps initiative is continuously cited as a model for the entire organization, and we remain committed to improving our program year over year. Our strategies for the upcoming year include:

- **Alumni Outreach:** We will strategically match our North Carolina alumni callers with final round applicants based on their interests and career paths. Alumni will use these calls to inspire applicants to choose to teach in North Carolina rather than choosing to teach out of state.
- **NCTC Webinars:** We will host webinars specifically for North Carolinians moving into final round of interviews. These webinars will highlight stories of current corps members, alumni, and students with North Carolina ties who choose to lead in our state.
- **Strategic Stewardship:** Our staff will call all applicants with North Carolina ties who are rated as the most competitive and highly likely to be admitted to the corps. These applicants often have competing offers and we plan to use these calls as an opportunity to share more about the education landscape in North Carolina and why their leadership is needed in our state.
- **Statewide Calendar of Events:** We are building a statewide calendar of events across our regions that will be shared with our national recruitment team. This will allow recruiters to easily advertise our local events to prospective applicants.

Our first recruitment window begins in October. We are excited to share our results in our next quarterly report.

Regional Updates

- **North Carolina Piedmont Triad**
In their fourth year of operating, the North Carolina Piedmont Triad is seeing excellent results across Guilford County. Since the region was founded in 2014, there have been five North Carolina Piedmont Triad Corps Members named Rookie Teachers of the Year (of their respective schools) during every academic year; totaling 15 teachers. One corps member from 2016-2017 school year advanced to the district level. Rookie teachers of the year are selected by school administration and a panel of teachers.

Since forming in 2014, our alumni population in the Piedmont Triad has grown by 48%. Ninety one percent of our alumni in the region work in roles impacting education or low-income communities.



North Carolina Piedmont Triad corps members prepare for the first day of school.

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- **Eastern North Carolina**

In an effort to connect corps members, alumni, donors, and community stakeholders, the Eastern North Carolina team has started hosting a monthly series called “Coffee and Conversation” where alumni share their perspectives on the state of educational equity in North Carolina. September’s conversation was in Halifax County and was an exclusive conversation on entrepreneurship, equity, and the arts in rural Eastern North Carolina, led by Katie Ammann.

Originally from Southern Illinois, Katie Ammann was a 2009 Eastern North Carolina corps member and music teacher at Northampton West STEM High School West. In 2011, she founded The Music School of Roanoke Rapids in order to extend musical opportunities to adults and children across the region.

Rob Lucas led the conversation in August. Rob was a 2003 corps member in Eastern North Carolina and returned to the state after getting his Masters in Education from Harvard and his PhD in History from Stanford. Rob now works in Research Triangle Park, where he writes History curriculum for IXL Learning. He presented on the history of education in North Carolina.

- **Charlotte**

The Charlotte Agenda published its annual 30 Under 30 List for 2017. Three Charlotte Teach For America alumni were on the list.⁵

Upon graduation from UCLA in 2011, Kevin Poirier joined Teach For America and moved to Charlotte where he taught high school science. Kevin has been instrumental in bringing laptops and wireless hot spots to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools students, and a tireless public advocate for CMS, attending and speaking at board meetings.



Kevin Poirier, technology facilitator at West Charlotte High School, speaks at a CMS board meeting.

Also on the list were Mario Jovan Shaw and Jason Terrell. In 2012, Mario graduated from the University of Cincinnati and Jason graduated from Furman. They met as Teach For America corps members in Charlotte and, shaped by their experiences in the classroom, went on to found The Profound Gentleman. The Profound Gentleman works to support black male educators, keeping them in the classroom and impacting the lives of vulnerable students. Through their program, the social entrepreneurs are reaching more than 1,800 students across Charlotte, Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Washington, D.C., and Memphis.

⁵ Dunn | September 6, 2017 Views:, Andrew. “Meet the Charlotte Agenda 30 Under 30 Class of 2017.” *Charlotte Agenda*, 6 Sept. 2017, www.charlotteagenda.com/102672/meet-charlotte-agenda-30-30-class-2017/. See Appendix D.

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Financial Reporting

Teach For America is steadfast in maximizing the state's investment through fiscal responsibility and investing donors in our important work in North Carolina. In 2016 (the most recent data available), we earned a perfect four-star rating from Charity Navigator for the fourteenth straight year for exemplary financial health (see appendix E). Less than one percent of all nonprofits nationwide have received this many consecutive four-star ratings, putting us in the 99th percentile among all nonprofits. We remain grateful for the state's investment and are committed to making every public and private dollar work hard for students across our state. We look forward to updating the state on our progress in our December quarterly report.

APPENDIX A

Small schools; big dreams

By [Holly Taylor](#)

[Email the author](#)

Published 2:56 pm Tuesday, August 8, 2017

JACKSON – They come from different areas of the country, but for the next two years at least, they'll call this area home. Teach for America (TFA) is bringing several new teachers to Northampton County for the upcoming school year.

Takeem Ragland, who grew up in New Jersey, will be teaching 8th grade English at KIPP Gaston College Prep. He'll also be an assistant coach for the school's football team.

Ragland received his undergraduate degree in communications from Delaware State University and his masters degree from St. Joseph's University. He lived for a while in Concord, NC and worked occasionally as a substitute teacher, which played a factor in his decision to join TFA.

"I really wanted to take this teaching thing to another level," said Ragland. "I wanted to dive into teaching full-time."

Ragland also explained that he believed in TFA's mission to provide an excellent education to all students. He wanted to help make that a reality.

In July, Ragland participated in TFA's summer residency program at Conway Middle School and said he had a "really great time" and "built nice relationships" with his students. He said he enjoyed learning their personalities as the students opened up day by day, and he said he wished the program had lasted longer.

"I'm really happy with my decision," Ragland said on relocating to teach in the Eastern North Carolina region.

Djola McGowan will be teaching 7th and 8th grade science at Gaston Middle School. She's originally from Jamaica, but grew up in eastern Pennsylvania. She earned her degree from Messiah College.

Before joining TFA, McGowan was a counselor at the Milton Hershey school for two years. She said she enjoyed helping students find their career paths, and that influenced her decision to become a TFA teacher.

"There's so much to be offered in a smaller community," McGowan said, about relocating to the area.

She's also looking forward to the warmer weather compared to Pennsylvania's colder winters.

McGowan participated in TFA's summer residency program as well and said "the students were the best part," adding that they asked a lot of awesome questions every day and were always full of energy.

While new teachers like Ragland and McGowan are thrilled about the upcoming school year, they're not alone in looking towards the future. The Northampton County school system appreciates the partnership with TFA as well.

"Working with new TFA teachers is always exciting," said Assistant Superintendent Douglas Miller. "They bring an energy to your school culture that youth and idealism fosters."

Miller explained that Northampton County has had a long history with TFA, receiving some of the program's very first teachers back in the 90's.

"When TFA's [teachers] partnered with existing teachers, some great things happened," Miller said, citing the electric car project that was a staple of Northampton County High School for years as one example.

The electric car project was the result of a collaboration between a TFA teacher, Eric Ryan, and Miller's father, Harold, who was an automotive teacher with the school. The story of their partnership was featured in a book called "Electric Dreams" by Caroline Kettlewell.

Miller went on to add that the summer residency program partnership, which began in 2016 to offer summer school for local students, was a success this year as well.

"TFA brings in teachers from around the nation to give their newest teachers the opportunity to co-teach alongside veteran teachers and learn more about the communities they will serve in," he explained of the summer program.

The focus on being a leader and reaching out are important aspects of the Teach for America program overall.

When asked about the benefits of bringing in the new teachers every year, Miller said, "their energy and enthusiasm can be contagious and spreads to the community."

The school district plans to keep working with TFA to continue the summer residency program as well as placing teachers in classrooms throughout Northampton County.

"We do try and recruit teachers who would be in the profession longer, but the truth is we have trouble finding enough teachers for our district," Miller said, explaining why it's important for the program to continue.

Miller said they are welcoming seven new TFA teachers who will be at their district schools this year. Central Elementary and Gaston Elementary will receive one new TFA teacher each, Curry Lovell and Mary Brodeur, respectively. Djola McGowan and Ryan Carroll will be teaching at Gaston Middle, while Conway Middle will receive three new teachers: Katelyn Suchyta, Jack Cox, and Daniela Jaramillo.

The Teach for America organization recruits young people with strong leadership skills to teach for a minimum of two years in low-income sites across the country with the goal of providing a more equitable education to all.



Meet the principal of the new CMS Renaissance West STEAM Academy 0:59

EDUCATION

Modeled after a charter, this \$32 million Charlotte school sets trends for 2017

BY ANN DOSS HELMS
ahelms@charlotteobserver.com

AUGUST 24, 2017 11:41 AM

When about 360 students walk into Renaissance West STEAM Academy Monday morning, they'll see the future of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

The \$32 million building, which will eventually house up to 1,000 preK-8 students at the site of the demolished Boulevard Homes housing project, could serve as a demonstration of what to look for in the school year that begins Monday:

CMS is part of a public-private team that has worked together on a vision – and pooled money to provide extras for students and families.

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A successful charter school serves as the model for Renaissance West, exactly the kind of innovation spillover that school choice advocates celebrate. The new CMS superintendent, Clayton Wilcox, touts partnerships and creativity as the key to competing in the public education market.

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The new school is the district's latest effort to provide top-flight education to the black, Hispanic and low-income students who traditionally trail their more advantaged peers. Renaissance West will serve them in their neighborhood, despite its high concentration of poverty, rather than assigning them to more diverse schools.

And the building is designed for high-tech, project-based learning, where students will find a lab with robotics kits, arts classrooms full of natural light and furniture that can be moved and written on as groups brainstorm. CMS hopes to persuade voters to approve \$922 million in bonds Nov. 7 to build similar new schools and upgrade old ones across Mecklenburg County.



Renaissance West STEAM Academy, built as part of a community partnership, opens Monday at the site of the demolished Boulevard Homes housing project.

Nell Redmond

On Monday the back-to-school trickle becomes a deluge, as most of North Carolina's 1.5 million public school students return to class. In CMS alone, almost 1,100 buses that have been crawling around the county on practice runs will start real pre-dawn pickups.

With only a few days left before the doors open at Renaissance West, Principal Erin Barksdale stood in the sunny atrium gazing at inspirational quotes she chose to greet everyone who walks through the door.

One, from African-American poet Audre Lorde, talks about daring to be powerful and using one's strength in the service of vision. The other, from Mexican-American activist Cesar Chavez, tells students to "learn to think and act for themselves – and be free."

"Who we want our kids to be and who we want our community to be lives in those two quotes," she said.

“

WHEN I DARE TO BE POWERFUL, TO USE MY STRENGTH IN THE SERVICE OF MY VISION, THEN IT BECOMES LESS AND LESS IMPORTANT WHETHER I AM AFRAID.

Poet Audre Lorde

Opening day at Renaissance West brings life to plans laid before some of the students were born.

In 2009 the Charlotte Housing Authority unveiled a proposal to replace the 40-year-old crime-plagued housing project with a revitalized community. The housing authority, the federal government, the city of Charlotte and private donors all kicked in to create a site that includes mixed-income housing, a senior citizens center, a neighborhood school and a child-care center.

The governing partnership, now known as the Renaissance West Community Initiative, studied two national models for groundbreaking urban education: The Harlem Children's Zone in New York City and the Drew Charter School, part of a community revival project in Atlanta's East Lake neighborhood.

They zeroed in on the latter, which had turned a perennially low-performing area into an academic success story. Seventeen years after its founding, the charter school draws visitors from around the country.



Mack McDonald, CEO of the Renaissance West Community Initiative, discusses the new Renaissance West STEAM Academy that opens Monday.

Nell Redmond

“They’re learning skills that I learned once I graduated from engineering school. It’s really amazing to see,” says Mack McDonald, CEO of the Renaissance West Community Initiative.

The group at one point planned to create its own charter school, but decided instead to work with CMS, which could build a neighborhood school that would be the default option for all the community’s students. CMS, in turn, signed an agreement to work with a panel of community and nonprofit leaders and to pattern its education strategy on Drew’s. CMS works with Purpose Built Schools, a nonprofit that supports expansion of the Drew model.

“We’re the first public school they’re working with,” Barksdale said, referring to non-charter schools.

It’s a bit like a small-scale version of Project LIFT, the \$50 million public-private partnership that began running West Charlotte High and its eight feeder schools in 2012. Project LIFT is winding down this school year, even as the Renaissance West counterpart ramps up.

More than a year ago, CMS tapped Barksdale, a Charlotte native and Butler High graduate, to lead the yet-unopened Renaissance West. Outside money helped pay for her to spend a year planning, including study visits to Drew Charter School.



Principal Erin Barksdale demonstrates how a roll-up door in the middle school art class lets students out into a sunny yard that will eventually include a soccer field.

Nell Redmond

She also got to help shape everything from the four-story building – the first designed from the ground up to serve 4- to 14-year-olds – to the school colors and mascot.

She’s particularly proud of the Soaring Eagles logo, a stylized eagle head created by Antonio Livingston of the CMS graphics department. In the past, when CMS has merged middle and elementary schools, the mascots have sometimes had the cartoonish look appropriate for younger students. This design is “a little sleek, almost collegiate,” she said.

This school year Renaissance will house only elementary students, with one grade level being added each year as the classes move up. A separate wing, with a full-size middle school gym and all facilities sized for bigger bodies, will be ready when that happens.

The first year will focus on building basic skills, especially reading. The Drew curriculum includes an extra daily session for students who are behind on reading or pre-reading skills, such as recognizing letters and the sounds they make. In addition to the traditional music, art and physical education classes, students will spend time doing hands-on engineering and robotics as part of the STEAM theme (that's science, technology, engineering, arts and math).

Starting in 2018-19, Renaissance students will work on a central theme, such as "How do we create healthy communities?" Every class will explore the question in a different way, incorporating art, engineering, design and field trips with all the academic standards.

“

STUDENTS MUST HAVE INITIATIVE; THEY SHOULD NOT BE MERE IMITATORS. THEY MUST LEARN TO THINK AND ACT FOR THEMSELVES – AND BE FREE.

Activist Cesar Chavez

The goal is to create a cradle-to-career support system for students and their families, ultimately helping break the invisible shackles that often keep children of poverty from becoming prosperous adults. The Howard Levine Child Development Center is scheduled to open this fall. Students who used to be zoned for Reid Park, Berryhill and Westerly Hills will attend the new school, eventually moving up to Harding, West Meck or Phillip O. Berry high schools, Barksdale said. And CMS hopes to add a high school at the Central Piedmont Community College Harris campus, which is within walking distance of the preK-8 school.

Turning the lofty vision into life-changing results won't be easy. CMS, like districts across America, has repeatedly tried and fallen short.

But Barksdale, whose parents also graduated from CMS and who was an assistant principal at Ranson Middle School, practically sizzles with excitement at getting a chance to try. She worked for a Texas charter school and an Atlanta girls' school before being hired to return to Charlotte.

"It's really cool to come home," she says.

Ann Doss Helms: 704-358-5033, @anndosshelms





Erin Barksdale, principal of the new Renaissance West STEAM Academy, says an abundance of natural light is one of the strengths of the new four-story building. **Nell Redmond**

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Program matches college grads with clinics that have needs 1:25

EDUCATION

A great match – college grads who want medical experience and clinics that have needs

BY GRAYSON LOGUE
glogue@newsobserver.com

JUNE 28, 2016 4:40 PM

RALEIGH — At a time when a majority of medical students are forgoing primary-care careers for specialties, Jiyun Chang is choosing a different path.

And a pioneering project in North Carolina is helping her do it.

“I think primary-care doctors have this really unique relationship with their patients, who can afford to be really vulnerable with them,” said Chang, a recent Harvard University graduate.

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Unlike 88 percent of medical students, she wants to be a primary-care doctor. She is now taking part in MedServe, a new program that seeks to inspire interest in primary-care and community-based health careers for high-potential college graduates who are on track for medical school.

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A two-year fellowship program, MedServe places the recent graduates in primary-care clinics across North Carolina. Chang is one of two fellows in the program to be placed in the Raleigh area, where they will be working with the homeless and in low-income communities.

Anne Steptoe and Patrick O’Shea, dual medical and MBA students, co-founded MedServe, which is in its pilot year and has 13 fellows.

Roughly half of the fellows hail from in-state schools such as Wake Forest University, UNC-Chapel Hill and East Carolina University. The others come from universities such as Harvard, Yale, Brown and Brandeis. Nearly all have significant ties to North Carolina, either growing up in the state or spending their college years here.



THEY’RE SEEING SOMEBODY WHO’S GOTTEN ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PROCESS, WHO’S HEARD ALL OF THOSE REASONS NOT TO GO INTO PRIMARY CARE, WHO’S DONE IT ANYWAY, AND WHO HAVE BEEN INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL IN DOING SO AND ARE DOING THESE AMAZING THINGS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Anne Steptoe, co-founder of MedServe program

This week, the fellows are completing training at UNC’s School of Medicine to give them the practical skills and knowledge to help in their clinical roles. From there, they will disperse across the state, matched with primary-care physicians and clinics that reflect their passions and interests.

Steptoe, a Brown medical student and Duke University MBA student, said fellows will be paired with “rock-star” primary-care providers.

“They’re seeing somebody who’s gotten all the way down the process, who’s heard all of those reasons not to go into primary care, who’s done it anyway, and who have been incredibly successful in doing so and are doing these amazing things in their communities,”

▲						
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MedServe developed from Steptoe’s frustration with traditional medical school routes.

“This checklist view of what it takes to become a doctor, going through that process and being successful in it,” Steptoe said, “it became very easy for that passion and vision to get lost in the shuffle.”

Fellows will be helping with direct care at clinics as well as working in the communities, improving health literacy and learning more about local medical systems and the problems they face.

The program offers fellows a bridge between college and medical school that allows students to explore their passions and purpose.

“If we’re anything, I hope MedServe is a place where people’s purpose can grow in medicine, and they have that inspirational experience so they see the long-term vision of what a doctor can be,” Steptoe explained.

Chang, for one, is passionate about the opportunities that MedServe offers to aid the vulnerable in underserved communities.

During her time at Harvard, she shadowed doctors in Boston but found that some lacked empathy for their patients, she said.

“I sort of got frustrated with these specialties that still do incredible work for people but wouldn’t know if I asked, ‘How do you feel when a patient can’t afford your services?’ ” Chang said.

Grayson Logue: 919-829-8922



MedServe fellow Allison Draper, left, listens in as fellow Adelina Cato practices taking vitals on fellow Spencer Bell during training at the Medical Education and Clinical Skills Center at Berryhill Hall at UNC's School of Medicine Wednesday, June 22, 2016. **Ethan Hyman** - ehyman@newsobserver.com

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Meet the Charlotte Agenda 30 Under 30 class of 2017



By [Andrew Dunn](#) | September 6, 2017
Views: 25,791

presented by



[OrthoCarolina](#) would like to extend our sincere congratulations to the 30 Under 30 class of 2017. Cheers to the young innovators making things happen and pushing Charlotte forward!

As Charlotte booms, young people are leaving their marks on the city like never before.

For the second time, Charlotte Agenda set out to recognize 30 leaders age 30 or younger who are impacting the city they live in. It wasn't hard to find them. Winnowing the list down to 30 — that was the hard part.

This year's impressive class runs the gamut — encompassing startup founders, politicians, fitness moguls, artists, doctors and business people.

[Did you miss last year's inaugural 30 Under 30 list? [Check it out here.](#)]
Now, here are the Charlotte Agenda 30 Under 30 for 2017.

Kevin Poirier

Kevin has been instrumental in bringing laptops and wireless hot spots to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools students, and a tireless public advocate for CMS as well.

Title: Technology Facilitator, West Charlotte High School

Age: 27

Neighborhood: Paw Creek

Favorite Charlotte restaurant: La Shish Kabob

What book do you recommend to other young leaders? “Man’s Search for Meaning,” by Viktor Frankl

What advice would you give your 21-year-old self?

Quit being so afraid of failure and so afraid of not knowing something. As a 21-year old, I had a fixed mindset about my own skills and my abilities. When I started recognizing and believing in my own capacity to grow and develop through my failures and mistakes, I improved exponentially as an educator, as a leader, and as a person.

What local Charlotte leader do you look up to? Dr. Timisha Barnes-Jones, principal of West Charlotte High School



Mario Jovan Shaw and Jason Terrell

Mario and Jason are supporting black male educators, keeping them in the classroom and impacting the lives of vulnerable students. Through their program, the social entrepreneurs are reaching more than 1,800 kids across Charlotte, Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Washington, D.C., and Memphis.

Mario Jovan Shaw

Title: Chief Impact Officer at Profound Gentlemen

Age: 28

Neighborhood: Starmount

Favorite Charlotte restaurant:

Viva Chicken and Fahrenheit

What book do you recommend to other young leaders? “You Are A Badass,” by Jen Sincero.

What advice would you give your 21-year-old self? Be your most authentic self and take risk. I don’t want anything in my life that isn’t meant for

me to have. So, I must align myself to the thing that are true of me. I wish I would have grasped that concept earlier.

What local Charlotte leader do you look up to? James Ford at the Public School Forum and Dr. Chance Lewis at UNC Charlotte.



Jason Terrell

Title: Executive Director at Profound Gentlemen

Age: 26

Neighborhood: East Charlotte

Favorite Charlotte restaurant: Price’s Chicken Coop

What book do you recommend to other young leaders? “Rules of the Red Rubber Ball,” by Kevin Carroll.

What advice would you give your 21-year-old self? Keep your head in the clouds and keep your heart on the mission! Take your time, strategize, and have fun, and make a bunch of mistakes. Your mistakes will be the driver of your impact.

What local Charlotte leader do you look up to? Willie Brooks





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October 1, 2016

Elisa Villanueva Beard
Teach For America
25 Broadway
12th Floor
New York, NY 10004

Dear Elisa Villanueva Beard:

On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Teach For America on attaining the coveted 4-star rating for demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

The nonprofit sector is advancing and expanding. As our organizations evolve, so do the desires and interests of our supporters. Astute donors are yearning for greater accountability, transparency, and for concrete results from us. With more than 1.5 million American charities, Charity Navigator aims to accentuate the work of efficient and transparent organizations. The intent of our work is to provide donors with essential information to give them greater confidence in both the charitable decisions that they make and the nonprofit sector.

Based on the most recent information available, we have issued a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Teach For America has earned our fourteenth consecutive 4-star rating. This is our highest possible rating and indicates that your organization adheres to sector best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way. Attaining a 4-star rating verifies that Teach For America exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in your area of work. Less than 1% of the charities we evaluate have received at least 14 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Teach For America outperforms most other charities in America. This exceptional designation from Charity Navigator sets Teach For America apart from its peers and demonstrates to the public its trustworthiness.

Forbes, *Business Week*, and *Kiplinger's Financial Magazine*, among others, have profiled and celebrated our unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. We evaluate ten times more charities than our nearest competitor and currently attract more visitors to our website than all other charity rating groups combined, thus making us the leading charity evaluator in America. Our data shows that users of our site donated more than they planned to before viewing our findings, and in fact, it is estimated that last year Charity Navigator influenced approximately \$10 billion in charitable gifts

Your achievement and the 4-star rating will enhance your organization's fundraising and public relations efforts. Our favorable review of Teach For America's financial health and commitment to accountability & transparency is now visible on our website.

We wish you continued success in your charitable endeavors.

Sincerely,

Michael Thatcher
President and CEO