Strategies to Solve the Shortage: Reenergizing Teacher Recruitment and Retention

When a teacher walks into a room, students’ lives change. A qualified teacher’s passion and commitment make every lesson fill the classroom. Without those teachers, the classroom is a vacuum.

To provide the best possible instruction and prepare students for both college and careers, school districts constantly strive to reduce class size and bring in the most qualified teachers for specific subjects.

However, school districts statewide are struggling with a significant teacher shortage driven by California’s economy and its impact on district budgets, potential candidates’ worries about job availability, and current teacher retirements. California’s multiyear recession also contributed to the situation because interested students feared that, ultimately, no positions would be waiting for them.

“During the recession, class sizes increased to high levels that, in many cases, jeopardized instructional quality,” explains Joan Bissell, director, Teacher Education and Public School Programs, Office of the Chancellor, California State University System. “But shortages make it difficult for districts to reduce them and often lead to classrooms staffed with teachers not fully qualified in assigned subject areas.”

Bissell says the shortage is greatest in secondary-level mathematics and science and in special education at all grade levels, across all regions.

Reversing this trend requires strategic initiatives that include recruiting new teachers; making the career choice more economically stable; investing in retention of current teachers; increasing grants, scholarships, and forgivable loans; and launching innovative programs that attract candidates from diverse groups.

The College of Education is playing an active role in each area and continues to prepare among the largest number of teachers of any other public institution in California.

“The college has an outstanding reputation, and this has resulted in increased enrollment,” says Bissell. “Its graduates are extremely well prepared and sought after by school districts throughout the region, and this has helped significantly to sustain high levels of interest in the program.”

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Encouraging Current and Future Educators

When it comes to recruitment, the college offers an early advising program for undergraduates, conducts outreach with local community colleges and high schools, and is a national leader in engaging candidates from diverse backgrounds.

By hosting the Better Together: California Teachers Summit in July 2015 and leading a three-year grant proposal to continue doing so, Cal State Fullerton has taken a leadership role within California State University that deepens its position in celebrating and enhancing the daily work of K–12 teachers.

“Better Together has already been instrumental in changing the role of higher education in recognizing, supporting, and enhancing the role of current teachers,” explains Bissell. “It has created a clear statewide message conveying higher education’s respect for teachers and the teaching profession.”

CSU also has a campaign to ensure students know about federal TEACH grants and receive assistance when applying. While the funds were once primarily available for math, science, and special education, candidates pursuing credentials for nearly all subjects and grade levels, most of which are high shortage areas, can now obtain grants of up to $16,000.

Creating a Professional Pipeline

To promote retention of current teachers and credential students, the college is exploring professional development and mentorships with local districts, the California Teachers Association (CTA), and the Student California Teachers Association (SCTA).

Cal State Fullerton hosted its first Teachers Teaching Teachers event in May 2015. Al Rabanera, a teacher at La Vista and La Sierra High School in Fullerton, led the event. He collaborated with teachers from the Instructional Leadership Corps, created by the California Teachers Association, the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, and the National Board Resource Center, in planning and delivering the well-received, one-day professional development conference.

Following that event, Rabanera contacted Aimee Nelson, director of the Center for Careers in Teaching, to connect with SCTA. The college’s SCTA members agreed to participate in the second event last September and, in return, requested the college launch a mentorship program that pairs undergraduates with current teachers.

“We launched the mentorship program in October 2015 with eight mentors and eight mentees,” says Nelson. “Now we’re discussing offering it to high school students.”

“Better Together has already been instrumental in changing the role of higher education in recognizing, supporting, and enhancing the role of current teachers.”

Joan Bissell
Director, Teacher Education and Public School Programs, Office of the Chancellor, California State University System

Mentees complete an annual minimum of 20 observation hours in the mentor’s classroom. Mentees each have a lead mentor but can complete their hours in another mentor’s classroom, which exposes them to various styles. Mentees are SCTA members and attend community service events at mentor schools while mentors attend at least one SCTA event. Mentors give mentees one-on-one time at least once per month.

“If we introduce students to teaching early in their educational journey, offer a mentorship, and connect them to additional supports along the way, I believe these students will be fully ready for the credential program, will successfully complete it, and will thrive as teachers,” says Nelson.
Engaging Culturally Diverse Candidates

On the recruitment front, the College of Education is also making a strong effort to attract teachers from historically underrepresented backgrounds, especially African-American and Hispanic men.

Cal State Fullerton is one of 10 universities nationwide chosen to participate in a prestigious Networked Improvement Community with the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. The program’s goal is to recruit and retain 25 percent more African-American and Hispanic men in the profession by 2017. Because of its participation, the college is developing a second set of mentees, modeled after the program that grew out of Teachers Teaching Teachers.

“We believe that connecting students to teachers like themselves, in this case African-American and Hispanic males, will allow them to build networks in the teaching community early on and provide them with support they would not normally encounter,” explains Nelson.

Nelson says this program has helped the college better identify students in these underrepresented groups who’ve expressed an interest in teaching.

“Focusing on recruiting from a variety of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds is extremely important because our teachers should be representative of the students in their classrooms,” says Nelson. “If students see teachers who look like them, it is more likely they will see teaching as a potential job opportunity, thus keeping the teaching pipeline alive and strong. A richly diverse teaching community will also give students access to cultures they may not otherwise experience.”

Identifying Promising Possibilities

In 2015–16, California’s schools have more than 20,000 teacher vacancies. Many of these positions are filled by substitutes, out-of-field teachers, and others who may not be fully credentialed, according to Ken Futernick, California State University teacher recruitment coordinator.

“These misassignments have a devastating effect, virtually guaranteeing that students won’t learn as effectively or diminishing their desire to learn,” explains Futernick. “Poor and minority students are most affected because teacher shortages tend to hit their schools the hardest. This inequity is a significant contributor to the state’s persistent achievement gap.”

Though the recession had a major impact on students’ interest in the teaching profession, a recovering economy means most districts are hiring, layoffs are unlikely, and salary and benefits packages are more attractive.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
Master’s Program Gets Seal of Approval

The College of Education’s online master’s program in educational technology earned the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Seal of Alignment for Coach Standards. It is the first master’s program to receive this honor.

“The Seal of Alignment recognizes ours as a program that provides students with experiences that help them gain proficiency in the ISTE Standards for Coaches,” says Tim Green, professor of educational technology and teacher education. “Students graduate our program as educators who are change agents capable of assisting schools and districts in building and maintaining 21st century learning environments.”

According to the ISTE Standards for Coaches, technology coaches must:

• Exhibit visionary leadership to promote excellence and support transformational change.
• Assist teachers in effectively using technology for instruction and assessment.

CSU has launched a number of systemwide teacher recruitment initiatives to increase the diversity and number of applicants entering its teacher preparation programs.

One of these initiatives, coordinated by Futernick, is being piloted at the Fullerton, Fresno, Long Beach, Dominguez Hills, and Sacramento campuses. Education leaders at each of these campuses will ask undergraduate professors to identify five students they believe are promising teaching candidates. If a quarter of the nearly 900 full-time CSUF faculty members respond to this request, it will produce more than 1,000 prospects.

“This select group of individuals will receive personalized invitations to Celebration of Teaching events designed to inspire undergraduates through interaction with K–12 teachers and students, engage them in informal conversation about teaching as a possible career choice, allow for honest and frank discussions about teaching to acknowledge and address questions about the profession, and inform them about financial aid options and job opportunities in the region,” says Futernick.

Following these events and before their applications, undergraduates will receive ongoing support from advisors; interact with credential students, professors, and teachers in the field; and engage in early field experience.

“If this recruitment initiative is as successful as we think it will be, the CSU system will soon be producing significantly more teachers for California’s public schools,” says Futernick.
Accreditation Review:
What is it, and how was COE reviewed?

An accreditation review is the process of analyzing a college or university to determine how well it is serving its students through instructional offerings, support services, and other programs. Last fall, a joint accreditation team representing the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) visited Cal State Fullerton for an on-site review of all Professional Education Unit programs.

“The NCATE team not only recommended full accreditation across all six standards, but for Standard 5 (Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development), we received the highest possible rating,” says Claire Cavallaro, dean of the College of Education. “This is remarkable, and very unusual, since Standard 5 has the largest number of criteria. The NCATE team chair noted that in her many years as a member of the Board of Examiners, she has never before seen this rating given to an institution.”

What was the final outcome of the review?

At the conclusion of the on-site review, the NCATE Board of Examiners (BOE) made its recommendation for full accreditation to the Selected Improvement Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

“In its report, the BOE highlighted the college’s ‘extensive availability of recent technology for faculty to model instruction and for candidates to conduct research and practice use of technology in education,’” says Cavallaro. “They were particularly impressed that these resources are provided not only for tenure track faculty but equally for adjunct faculty. They also noted ‘an array of high-quality support services for candidates of all programs through counseling, advising offices, caring faculty, and processes such as the Student Success Teams.’”

After careful consideration of the BOE findings and recommendation at its spring meeting, the Commission made the final decision to continue NCATE accreditation of the College of Education at initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels. On May 17, the Commission notified Cal State Fullerton President Mildred García of this decision.

The CTC team also recommended the college receive full accreditation for all 180 program standards after reviewing its professional education credential programs.

“Each program has a set of standards that must be met in order for us to receive full accreditation,” explains Teresa Crawford, professor in the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education and director of Accreditation and Assessment. “For the unit’s 17 credential programs, the CTC determined that all 180 program standards were met, which is the highest possible rating we could earn.”

The CTC’s Committee on Accreditation met Jan. 28 and made the final decision for accreditation across all programs with no areas of concern.

“All standards were met and full accreditation granted. There were no recommendations for improvement made by the CTC, which demonstrates that we are a strong team with strong programs,” says Crawford. “We’ll continue to abide by and fulfill all CTC accreditation requirements as we move through the next seven-year cycle toward our next full review.”

In what areas was COE assessed?

NCATE reviewers assessed the college in candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions; collection and analysis of data regarding applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performances, and unit operations; field experiences and clinical practice; exposure and proficiency working with diverse populations; faculty qualifications, performance, and development; and governance and resources.

College of Education Sweeps Accreditation Standards
Hazel Miller Croy Nieces Continue Family Commitment to Reading Education

Hazel Miller Croy was a visionary and a pioneer in preparing reading specialists during every one of her 15 years at Cal State Fullerton. The legacy of this professor of education, who retired from CSUF in 1975, included the founding of the university’s reading education program. In 2011, her influence was still so potent that the College of Education chose to name its reading center in her honor. Yet she was not the first, or last, Miller family member to hold education in the highest regard.

“It really goes back to our grandmother, Aunt Hazel’s mother, who was a schoolteacher in the days when they actually had to live with the families they taught,” says Cynthia Miller, Croy’s niece. “She went on to teach in a one-room schoolhouse in Washington and instilled in her children and grandchildren the importance of education. All of my grandmother’s granddaughters were teachers. Aunt Hazel was also a big inspiration, as she was very sincere in wanting everyone to learn to read and feeling that training teachers was the key.”

When Miller’s older sister, Carolyn Miller Hockett – a longtime educator in Ridgecrest – passed away a few years ago, she left her younger siblings an inheritance. Miller – a longtime supporter of the college – and her sister Kathie King have chosen to donate that inheritance – a total of $55,000 in the form of a charitable gift annuity – to the Hazel Miller Croy Reading Center Endowment. Charitable gift annuities simultaneously provide a charitable donation, an income tax deduction, and a guaranteed lifetime income stream.

“We all believe children need to learn to read to be successful in whatever they hope to do in life,” says King. “It’s so important to instill some enthusiasm. When a child can suddenly read, a lightbulb just turns on over his or her head and it’s such a great feeling. Cyn got me started on this, and it’s such a great way to carry on the family name and mission. I hope my grandmother and aunt would be very proud.”

The Hazel Miller Croy Reading Center operates under the college’s Reading Department and provides a variety of services to meet the needs of educators, parents, and community members through individualized tutoring for students in grades K–12, as well as adults. Endowment funds support these programs and student scholarships in the graduate degree program in reading.

“Supporting education is in our DNA. We had such good examples in our grandmother, aunt, and other family members. And we were raised to think of other people first and to try to help them as much as possible.”

Cynthia Miller
Migrant Education Programs
Focus on Offering Opportunities

The ranches and farms in the Orange County region employ more than 10,000 adult migrant workers annually. These workers and their families, sometimes referred to as “invisible neighbors,” often lack services and educational opportunities available to those nearby. The Cal State Fullerton faculty is addressing this disparity.

Cal State Fullerton High School Equivalency Program

Last summer, the U.S. Department of Education awarded the university nearly $2.4 million to develop a free 5-year high school equivalency program (HEP), which offers an array of community- and campus-based instruction and support services, as well as a transition-to-college component, to serve students and families from migrant and seasonal backgrounds in Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.

Pablo Jasis, associate professor of elementary and bilingual education, is the principal investigator, and Patricia Feliz is the director.

“The average school achievement for this population is about sixth grade,” says Jasis. “These families are in need of tailor-made educational programs that address their needs for social mobility, as well as their unique socioeconomic and cultural context.”

At six locations, participants receive an educational assessment, accelerated high school equivalency instruction, computer literacy training, and support services, such as childcare, instructional materials, transportation, and exam fees.

“I believe CSUF-HEP has strengthened academic and community partnerships that are providing our farmworker families and communities with new educational opportunities that did not exist before in our area.”

Pablo Jasis

Comprehensive Needs Assessment of San Diego County Migrant Education Program

Orange County schools have a significant migrant student population. To improve their living situations and access to education, they need supplemental instructional services, health services, and financial assistance. Migrant education programs provide this supplemental support, which has a direct impact on students’ academic performance.

In September, Maria Estela Zarate, associate professor of educational leadership, and Patricia Perez, associate professor of Chicana and Chicano studies in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, received a $135,000 contract to conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment for the program within the San Diego County Office of Education.

“The state is looking to revise statewide outcomes for this federal grant program so they have allocated funds to every region to conduct a regional needs assessment,” says Zarate. “I hope this work will align statewide benchmarks and program outcomes more closely to the work that actually takes place.”

Zarate and Perez’s research agendas deal with the educational trajectories of Latino/a students in the United States.

“Migrant students are a subgroup of Latino students that often go undetected,” she explains. “In improving the services these students receive, we hope they are in a better position to enroll and persist in college when they finish high school.”

Migrant Summer Leadership Program

Last summer, Cal State Fullerton hosted the Migrant Summer Leadership Program (MSLI) for 100 California high school students. They learned about environmental sciences, statistics, ethnic studies, biliteracy, art, and college readiness.

Miguel Zavala, associate professor of secondary education, and Melba Castro, director of educational partnerships, led last year’s programs. Fernando Rodríguez-Valls, associate professor of secondary education, began leading this program in August.

“CSUF is already a trailblazing institution searching for the best practices and equality for migrant students and their families,” says Rodríguez-Valls. “I would like for all educators working with migrant students and their families to value and embrace the cultural and linguistic richness migrant students and their families bring to teaching and learning in thousands of schools across the nation.”

“CSUF is already a trailblazing institution searching for the best practices and equality for migrant students and their families.”

Fernando Rodríguez-Valls
Lessons Taught Through Travel

Several Cal State Fullerton students recently had the opportunity to travel abroad and work with people from different cultural backgrounds to learn about the educational challenges they face and their unique approaches to addressing these issues.

“By working with different cultures, students from each college are able to apply these new perspectives to their future careers,” says Melinda Pierson, chair and professor in the Department of Special Education. “Understanding historical backgrounds, cultural differences, and unique perspectives, our CSUF students are more empathetic and sensitive to events and issues that affect all types of people.”

CSUF undergraduates in several related education majors collaborated with students from Germany last fall on an online research project before visiting the country for an in-depth analysis of educational attitudes and practices.

“Faculty provided frequent and constructive feedback to support undergraduate student collaboration in this international research,” says Pierson. “This addresses the high-impact practices of interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters and opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real world applications.”

Through the Puerto Rico International Education Program (PRIE), students spent two weeks on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, to learn about low-income high school students’ views of the importance of higher education through dialogue and cultural immersion.

“Research has proven that study abroad experiences heighten personal and professional flexibility and enhance appreciation of cultural diversity, awareness of global issues, and development of general cultural competencies,” says Julian Jefferies, professor in the Reading Department and director of PRIE.

He adds that international field experiences give students the opportunity to conduct their own research, another high impact practice. And while first-generation students do not usually participate due to cost and time commitments, the PRIE program has raised scholarship funding and created a Learning Community to make these opportunities possible.

Examining Educational Priorities and Practices

Two of the participating students – one in the College of Education, the other a health sciences major – say they learned a lot during the time they spent studying differing cultural approaches and attitudes to special and higher education.

Tabitha Espineli, Special Education Credential Program, Final Semester

Tabitha Espineli’s time in Germany was well-spent. She interviewed special education staff, taught English lessons, and participated in an inclusion research project with students from five international universities.

“I met wonderful people and participated in conversations that wouldn’t have been possible if we hadn’t traveled halfway across the world,” says Espineli. “I was able to grow as a friend, educator, and citizen of the world with people who shared my passion for education.”
Espineli, her classmates, and the headmaster of a secondary school discussed educational practices, differences between the German and U.S. educational systems, and the state of special education in Germany. The group also presented special education topics to students at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt.

“As a future educator, this trip made me realize that I am on my perfect career path,” she says. “I learned a lot about the kind of teacher I want to be and observed practices I will implement in my own classroom.”

Sheila Samperio, Health Sciences, Senior

Sheila Samperio heard about PRIE as a freshman in Professor Julian Jeffries’ READ 290 course.

Samperio participated in last summer’s program to determine if her global health concentration suited her and to take advantage of an opportunity she never thought possible as a first-generation college student.

In Jeffries’ READ 360 course, “Literacy Education for Social Change,” she learned the intricacies of Puerto Rico culture and economic realities. Jeffries’ students then collaborated with Professor Ivelisse Rivera from the University of Puerto Rico, Humacao, to uncover the barriers keeping high school students in Vieques from higher education.

During interviews, Samperio discovered females wanted to attend college or vocational school and then move to the United States. Most males, she learned, wanted to bypass college and head to the United States to work.

“There’s a lot of potential for economic and educational growth on this island, but many students have given up because of low employment, limited entertainment, and a lack of services,” explains Samperio, who believes future student researchers will focus on ways to remove these hurdles.

Expanding Cross-Cultural Experiences

A new partnership with the University of Port Au Prince in Haiti is now in the works, and Pierson hopes to take up to 10 students there in October. The online international project will continue each summer and fall, engaging pre-service teachers from Poland, Bulgaria, Japan, Spain, and Germany. The college also hopes to expand its partnership to Sebastian Kolowa University in Tanzania.

CSUF students involved in the Germany study abroad experience recently presented at the CSUF Research Day and raved about the incredible impact the trip had made on their perspectives, according to Pierson. They said their teaching will be strengthened because of these new experiences working with diverse students from around the world.

“The continuation of study abroad programs is imperative for CSUF students so that they have an additional avenue for gaining these world views that can be directly applied to our diverse Southern California community,” she says.
Message from the Dean

In the face of a statewide teacher shortage caused by years of economic and professional instability, the College of Education has sustained its outstanding reputation for preparing teachers to take on any classroom challenge. With strong institutional support, the College of Education has maintained its capacity and continued to prepare more educators than any other public institution in California.

This continued capacity for growth, as well our outstanding outcomes following the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) visits this past fall, reflect the tireless work and innovative thinking of our faculty, staff, students, and supporters.

In the last year, we’ve introduced new study abroad opportunities to open our students’ minds to what education means around the world. Our faculty have led inspirational programs that provide education and critical services to the families of migrant workers. Our alumni have continued to impress us in the K–12 realm with their dedication to building special education and STEM programs designed for maximum student success. And we’ll soon be able to deliver our Hazel Miller Croy Reading Center services to additional deserving students thanks to a generous gift by the nieces of its namesake.

As I plan for my retirement this fall, I have every confidence that the College of Education will continue to prepare innovative and transformative educators and connect with the broader educational community to help the teaching profession reach its full potential.

Claire Cavallaro, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education

Thank You,
Dean Cavallaro

After a decade of distinguished leadership as the first permanent dean of the College of Education and 34 years with the California State University (CSU) system, Claire Cavallaro will retire in fall 2016. The college is grateful for her tremendous service and forward-thinking leadership.

In her first two years at the helm, Cavallaro helped the college launch the first independent doctoral program at Cal State Fullerton, which has since awarded 128 doctoral degrees. She led the college to receiving an overwhelmingly positive review and reaccreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

Cavallaro has guided the establishment of several innovative programs and centers, including the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking, the Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership, the Catalyst Center for the Advancement of Research in Teaching and Learning Math and Science, the Center for Maximizing Teacher Impact, and the CSUF Center for Autism. And, in a continuing effort to train and retain California’s top teachers, she led CSU in bringing more than 14,500 teachers to the July 2015 “Better Together: California Teachers Summit” to share strategies and best practices for implementing California Standards.

Post-retirement, Cavallaro will continue to lead the California Teachers Summit and help the college develop future teacher education initiatives. We wish her all the best.
Lisa Kirtman, associate dean of the College of Education, has been selected as our new dean, effective August 16, following a national search.

Since joining the Cal State Fullerton campus community in 2000, Kirtman has been a committed, highly respected member of and leader in the College of Education. She has served as associate dean since 2014 and previously served as chair of the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education, acting chair of the Department of Reading (now Literacy and Reading Education), and program coordinator for both the Multiple Subject Credential Program and the Intern Credential Program.

In each of these positions, she has supported faculty and staff in program improvement efforts; fostered growth in technology, math, the arts, engaged scholarship, clinical experiences, and community partnerships; strengthened cross-divisional collaborations; and assisted with fundraising efforts for community organizations.

Kirtman has also cultivated and supported multiple projects and collaborations that advance 21st century teaching and learning and promote community partnerships.

These include the iSTEM program and Technology Boot Camp, which strengthen digital literacy and technology tools within the Multiple Subject Credential Program; a collaboration between the SchoolsFirst Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking and the Segerstrom Center for the Arts to increase art integration in the curriculum; the 21st Century Teaching and Learning professional development workshop series; and the co-teaching model of clinical practice now used in multiple-subject, single-subject, and special education credential programs.

And Kirtman co-led the college’s successful state and national accreditation visit in fall 2015.

She has received numerous awards recognizing her teaching, service, and scholarship, including the CSUF Teacher-Scholar Award in 2002, 2005, and 2008; the CSUF Outstanding Service Award in 2006; and the Distinguished Faculty Marshal Award from the College of Education in 2014. She currently serves on the President’s Commission on Equity and Inclusion, the Academic Master Plan Committee, the Student Success Team Steering Committee, and the Information Technology Committee. Furthermore, she is an active and engaged member of the wider educational community, having served as a board member for the California Council on Teacher Education, the Westerly School of Long Beach, and, currently, the Fullerton Education Foundation.
Over the past 11 years, the College of Education’s “Honor an Educator” event has recognized impactful teachers, administrators, and educational staff and raised funds for CSUF student scholarships. Teacher Created Materials sponsored the event for the fourth year in a row to recognize these honored educators.

Cal State Fullerton alumna Rachelle Cracchiolo founded the presenting sponsor company, which produces innovative educational materials by teachers for teachers and students. Teacher Created Materials recently contributed more than 900 backpacks and essential resources to students and teachers at Rio Vista School as part of the iSTEM partnership between the K–5 Anaheim School and Cal State Fullerton.

“From providing students meals and books to offering teacher-to-teacher support, the organization fulfills critical needs in the educational community, and we are elated they have sponsored this event for the last four years,” says Claire Cavallaro, dean of the College of Education.
Recognizing a Visionary

Michael Matsuda, superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD), who received this year’s Visionary Leadership Award, stands with Claire Cavallaro, dean of the College of Education, at this year’s Honor an Educator Event.

Michael Matsuda, superintendent of Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD), received this year’s Visionary Leadership Award. He co-chaired the California P21® Partnership for 21st Century learning coalition, which promoted legislation that led to California joining the national P21 movement and embedding 21st century skills into the state curriculum. And he worked with Californians Together to create the Seal of Biliteracy that was adopted by several school districts, including AUHSD, before it became Department of Education policy.

Matsuda and AUHSD science educators also helped establish the Cal State Fullerton K–12 Sustainability Showcase and partnered with CSUF for a National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded Mathematics Teaching Fellows and Master Teacher Fellows (MT2) programs and the Transforming Academic and Cultural Identicidad Through Biliteracy (TACIB) project.

Recently recognized as one of the nation’s 13 most exceptional district-level leaders in Education Week’s 2016 Leaders to Learn From, Matsuda was honored for his leadership in services for English language learners. Matsuda’s district, AUHSD, earned the Education Excellence Award. AUHSD has long partnered with CSUF on initiatives like Titan PRIDE, an innovative co-teaching residency project designed to strengthen teacher preparation. And another CSUF/AUHSD joint venture, GEAR UP, actively engages students, parents, teachers, faculty, and administrators to infuse a college-going culture throughout junior high and high school campuses, and others.

To find more information on the Honor an Educator event, visit ed.fullerton.edu/alumni/awards/honor-an-educator-awards/

A Q&A with Alum-inary

Oscar Delgado (M.S. ’12)

Spanish Teacher / Student Case Manager / AIMS Mentor at Santa Ana High School

Q. Why did you decide to pursue a special education concentration?

A. I worked at Santa Ana High School as a paraprofessional and felt a calling to help students with different learning abilities succeed and graduate.

Q. Congratulations on being named Santa Ana High School’s Teacher of the Year! What was your reaction to that honor?

A. For me, it was a moment I’ll never forget. My students congratulated me and were also very happy. I was nominated with two other great teachers. One of them, Carah Reed, has helped me since high school, when she was a credential student at CSUF. Because of her, I left a company and came here as a paraprofessional, earned my bachelor’s degree at CSUF, and applied for the credential program. She provided a level of support I hope to offer my students.

Q. How did the College of Education help prepare you for this career, and what advice would you give other students pursuing the special education credential?

A. Credential classes offered real-life experiences and teaching strategies to help all learners. Teaching students with different learning abilities is rewarding and difficult. It is a job within a job to motivate them and make them realize that education is the key to success.
Congratulations to our 2016 Carr Fellows

Our Edwin Carr Fellows, selected by their departments for exemplary scholarship and service, have made significant contributions to the education profession.

Department of Special Education
Sunae Anika Mendoza-Deller, M.S. Education, Concentration in Special Education
Mendoza-Deller leads her district’s special education program and collaborates with two other preschool teachers to support students with disabilities. She is the district’s certified Pro-ACT (a behavioral program) trainer, and she participates in Santa Clara County CARES Plus, a statewide professional development program designed to improve early learning programs. She plans to obtain an administrative credential, followed by a doctoral degree, as she would like to be a program specialist or principal.

Department of Secondary Education
Anna Stevenson, M.S. Education, Concentration in Secondary Education
Fourteen years into her career, Stevenson strives to continuously improve to better serve students – a factor that motivated her to pursue a master’s degree. She has served as a member of Orangeview Junior High School’s leadership team, department chair for the history/social science department, and chair of her school’s site council. She is also a master teacher. Stevenson is working on her culminating master’s project examining the effect of blogging on students’ perception of learning and achievement.

Department of Educational Leadership
Alyssa Hernandez, M.S. Education, Concentration in Higher Education
Hernandez has been academically successful throughout her master’s studies, led the Maywood Education Fair, conducted research on “College Experiences of Former Foster Youth,” and worked on violence prevention in the CSUF WoMen’s and Adult Reentry Center as well as cross-cultural initiatives in the Office of Student Life at Chapman University. She plans to work in first-year experience or TRIO programs to increase retention rates for underrepresented students.

Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education
Edward Gonzalez, M.S. Education, Concentration in Educational Technology
Gonzalez has taught middle and high school students how to use technology to express themselves in language arts, history, math, and science. From coordinating learning experiences between classes hundreds of miles apart to facilitating project-based learning for high-risk students, Gonzalez finds ways to convert barriers into bridges. His students have introduced math and history technology at an elementary school, demonstrated narrative writing through a hoax news site, and created ancient world architecture in virtual reality.
A Q&A with Alum-inary Susanna Meza (M.S. ’13)

Math Teacher / Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Instructor at Valadez Middle School

Q. Why did you decide to pursue STEM fields, specifically mathematics, in your undergraduate and graduate programs?

A. Math has always been my strong suit. I wanted to change people’s views on and relationships with mathematics. As I was finishing my undergraduate degree, the College of Education’s MT2 (Fullerton Mathematics Teacher and Master Teacher Fellows Project) was recruiting. It allowed me to pursue my teaching credential and pushed me to obtain my master’s degree in teaching mathematics at the secondary level.

Q. What are the most rewarding moments of your job?

A. I love the “Aha!” moments when students realize they can do something and have the desire to move forward. In my AVID class I’ve had the opportunity to see students blossom from sixth to eighth grade. Our students have represented the speech and debate team, received scholarships, and competed at national rocketry competitions.

Q. What kind of impact has CSUF’s College of Education had in preK–12 education, especially in your own school district?

A. The college has played a significant role in preparing teachers through its rigorous courses and by sending us out to local communities and creating partnerships with phenomenal teachers. Students are graduating trained not only in their specific fields, but in technology and classroom experience, as well.

Q. What impact do you hope to make on your students, and what advice would you offer future teachers in the College of Education?

A. I hope I inspire my students to be lifelong learners and to continue pushing forward despite any obstacles or hardships they may encounter. For new teachers, don’t be afraid to explore and introduce new ideas. Find a way to revolutionize teaching.
Please note: If recipient is no longer at this address, please contact Bex Conran-Dunham at rconran-dunham@fullerton.edu or call 657.278.4021.

Stay Connected!

Keep up with the College of Education on our website and social media, where you’ll find our latest news and program information, upcoming events, award announcements, and professional development opportunities. We invite you to share your photos, comments, and insights too, which will help make the college an even better place.

UPCOMING EVENTS:
Better Together: California Teachers Summit | CSUF Titan Gym | July 29, 2016, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
College of Education Week | TSU Pavilions | November 14 – 16, 2016

REMEMBER:
Share your thoughts and stories and keep your contact info current! Send an email to rconran-dunham@fullerton.edu.

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