

News and Updates Fall 2015



Fellows having fun at the House... (and spelling their favorite word, TEACH)

2015-16 Duke TeachHouse Fellows

From left to right: Shannon Potter – Jordan High School; Ashley Pollard – Pearsontown Elementary School; Mary Margaret Mills – Northern High School; Erin McInerney – Watts Montessori Elementary School; Benton Wise – Southern High School; and Dr. Scott Ellis – The Expedition School, Hillsborough, NC.

About the Work of Duke TeachHouse

Launched in fall 2015 and based out of a historic home on Holloway Street, Duke Teachhouse is a living and learning community for graduates of Duke's teacher preparation programs. TeachHouse Fellows work fulltime in the local schools and participate in ongoing professional development focused on teacher leadership, creative problem solving, and innovation skills.

TeachHouse partners and contacts: Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, Program in Education (TeachHouse Director, Jan Riggsbee), Duke's Office of Durham and Regional Affairs (Vice President Phail Wynn), Social Science Research Institute and Education and Human Development Incubator (Director Thomas Nechyba), Durham Public Schools (Superintendent Bert L'Homme), and Forward Impact (CEO Christopher Gergen).

Community Engagement and Events

August 10: Durham Public Schools Superintendent Bert L'Homme, the Fellows' first community dinner guest, shared advice, guidance, and personal stories about navigating the first years of teaching. DPS teacher workdays for beginning teachers began August 12 (traditional calendar).



Toasting the start of the 2015-16 school year with Superintendent L'Homme

August 11: Sam Miglarese, Director of the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership, visited with Fellows and provided invaluable information about the local community (history, faith community, development, and Duke's partnership).

August 13: Vice President Phail Wynn, Duke's Office of Durham and Regional Affairs, joined the Fellows for a dinner discussion focused on the importance of life balance (personal and professional) and engagement with the local neighborhood and schools.

August 17: Fellows hosted an Open House for their Holloway - Cleveland Street neighbors. Fellows met and connected with many families, and by the end of the event the House was overflowing with neighborhood children!

September 2: Fellows were joined by the Program in Education faculty, Cleveland-Holloway Street neighbors, family members and friends, community and school supporters, and a host of Duke colleagues and Durham city, school, and county officials to celebrate the Launch of Duke TeachHouse. Congratulatory remarks were given by President Richard Brodhead, Provost Sally Kornbluth, Vice President Phail Wynn, Durham Public Schools Superintendent Bert L'Homme, and Durham Mayor Bill Bell.



September 17: Former North Carolina Governor Beverly Perdue visited the House to learn more about the program and work of Duke TeachHouse fellows.

October 20: Professor Thomas Nechyba, Social Science Research Institute and EHDi director, joined fellows for a dinner and discussion about their work and goals as early career educators.

National Connections: U.S. Department of Education and Leading Educators (nonprofit)

October 25 and 26: Duke TeachHouse fellows traveled to DC for a roundtable discussion at the Department of Education (DOE) with policymakers and educators focused around their work as TeachHouse fellows and early career educators in the North Carolina public schools.

DOE attendees included Elizabeth Ross (Evaluation and Support Systems, Equity, Turnaround, Charters, and Tribal Waivers); Joiselle Cunningham (K12 Policy, White House Liaison, Diversity); Roger Nozaki (Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Under Secretary); Charlie Doolittle (Policy); Shannon Mitchell (Teacher Incentive Funds, Office of Innovation and Improvement); Vanessa Tesoriero (Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs); (Meredith Morelle (Policy -TAF); Aman Dhanda (Teacher Leadership - TAF); Mia Long and Jenese Jones (2015 Fellows, Leadership for Educational Equity Policy Advisor).

Fellows also visited DC schools to observe in classrooms and meet with school faculty and administrators to discuss teacher leadership, reform, and innovation in public education. They also met over dinner with the regional and associate directors of Leading Educators, a nonprofit focused exclusively on teacher leadership. Plans are in place for ongoing collaborative work between Duke TeachHouse and Leading Educators Fellows.



Networking at the U.S. Department of Education



Connecting with regional leaders of Leading Educators

*The best part of traveling to the Department of Education was sitting in a room of policymakers and educators who respect how large of an impact teachers have on students in the classroom and in turn, do as much to include teacher voice within the process of policymaking... As a new teacher I felt valued as a professional, included in a national conversation, and challenged to innovate within my profession to increase student achievement. **Benton Wise***

*My experience opened my eyes to the number of nonprofits and government programs devoted to teacher leadership, innovation, and development, and I look forward to continuing our dialogue as we strive to bridge the gap between policy and teacher voice. **Scott Ellis***

*The trip... invigorated my spirits and helped me view my profession from a new lens. Before, I considered the teaching and learning that occurs in my classroom to be relatively isolated compared to the larger scale decisions made at the federal level. After our meetings with policy makers and teacher leaders, I came to realize that those working on larger scale education initiatives have the same hopes and dreams for K-12 children as I do. **Ashley Pollard***

November 3 and 10: Laurie Calvert (Teacher Liaison with the Department of Education) and Nikki Diamantes (Regional Director of Leading Educators) will lead virtual seminars with Duke TeachHouse and Leading Educators fellows to include a debrief of the DC experience, brainstorm of ongoing collaborative work, and discussion of teacher leadership and teacher impact on policy.

Coaching and Mentoring Support

Peer mentoring within the house occurs naturally and informally throughout the day... during dinner, walking to the car for the commute to school, planning lessons at the dining room table, and having coffee on the porch.

The current cohort of fellows includes four first-year teachers and two fellows with teaching experience (one in the second year of teaching and one in the eighth year). The experienced teaching fellows serve as mentors and are currently drafting guidelines and expectations for their mentoring role.

Regular and ongoing reflective sessions led by the students and facilitated by director, Jan Riggsbee are an integral component of the work of TeachHouse and typically occur weekly on Tuesday evenings.



Sharing challenges, offering support, problem-solving, and celebrating achievements

In the News

WRAL <http://www.wral.com/unique-durham-house-helps-new-teachers-succeed/14887863/>

Duke Today <http://today.duke.edu/2015/09/teachhouse>

Duke Chronicle <http://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2015/09/150911-zhong-teachhouse>

Upcoming: GIST Magazine (SSRI), WUNC Radio, and ABC 11

Partner Support

Thanks to the support of our contributing partners, the fellows have new equipment and resources in the House to support their day-to-day work in K-12 classrooms, including a copier, laminator, and cameras. To provide life balance, each fellow has funds to inspire and nurture his/her own personal development. In addition, funds for programming provide opportunities for professional/career development and include dinners with leading educators and community members, educational retreats, networking and conferences, and workshops.

In the Works: Collaborations with Girija Mahajan, Duke College Advising Corps and Emily Chávez, The Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University

Student Connections

November 4: Professor David Malone and Education 240 students visited the House and participated in a lively Q&A session with Fellows focused on the schooling process, policy and practice, and opportunities and challenges as early career educators and TeachHouse fellows.

In the Works: Fall and spring visits with teacher preparation students

2015-16 Duke TeachHouse Fellows



Dr. Scott Ellis

BA Psychology, Duke University, 1993
DMD, Tufts University School of Dental Medicine
Licensure Area: Elementary Education K-6
School Assignment: The Expedition School, Hillsborough



Erin McInerney

BA, Classical Languages; Minor: Education and Classical Civilizations
Duke University, 2015
Licensure Area: Elementary Education K-6
School Assignment: Watts Montessori Magnet Elementary School, Durham



Mary Margaret Mills

Master of Arts in Teaching, Duke University, 2015
BA Political Science; Minor: History and Education, UNC-CH, 2014
Licensure Area: Secondary Education 9-12, Social Studies
School Assignment: Northern High School, Durham



Ashley Pollard

BA Public Policy; Minor: Education, Duke University, 2015
Licensure Area: Elementary Education K-6
School Assignment: Pearisontown Magnet Elementary School, Durham



Shannon Potter

BA English; Minor: Education, Duke University, 2015
Licensure Area: Secondary Education 9-12, English
School Assignment: Jordan High School, Durham



Benton Wise

Master of Arts in Teaching, Duke University, 2014
BA Public Policy; Minor: Education, Duke University, 2013
Licensure Area: Secondary Education 9-12, Social Studies
School Assignment: Southern High School, Durham