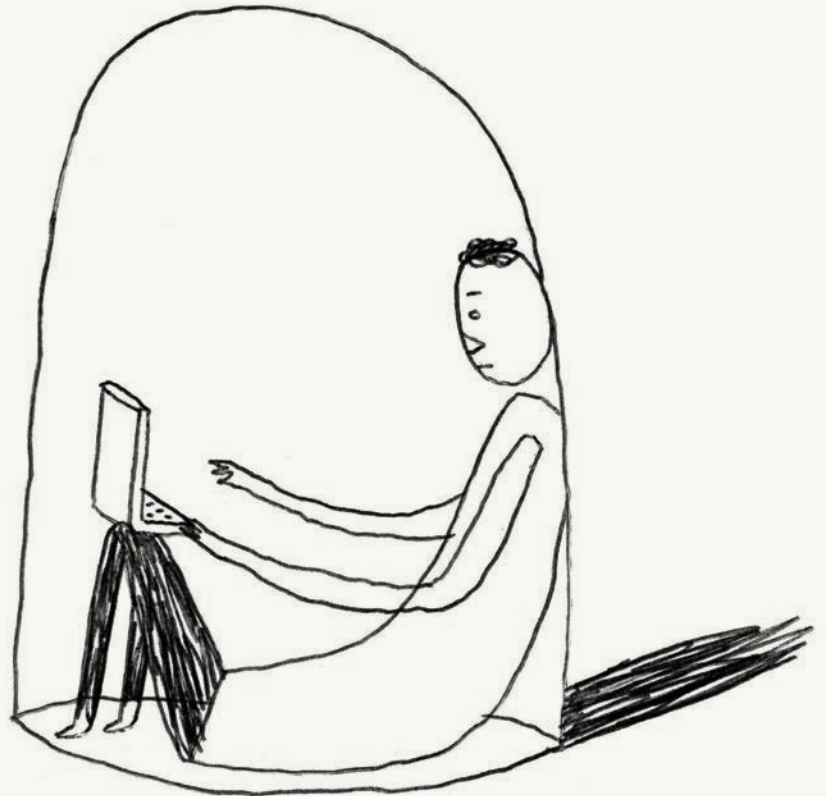


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“THIS IS NOT THE WAY  
ANY OF US EXPECTED THIS  
SEMESTER TO UNFOLD.”

THIS CHANGES  
EVERYTHING.

**Come On  
and Zoom**





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Summer 2020

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Cover illustration by Brian Rea



“On an intellectual level, I found it fascinating to think critically about stories. On a personal level, I came to understand myself better through literature.”

RANDY RIBAY, ED.M.'10

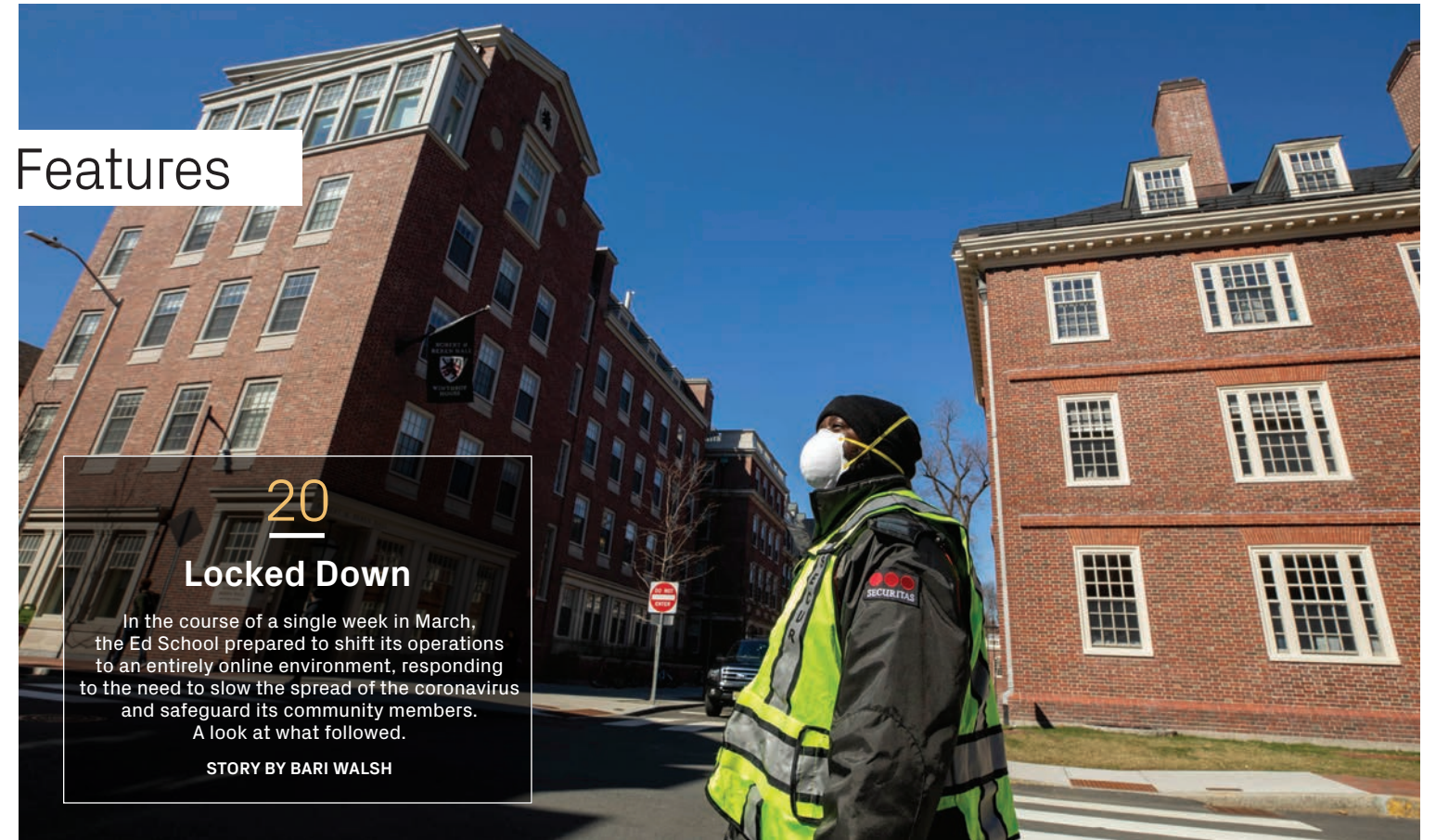
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# Convo.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: SEND YOUR COMMENTS  
TO [LETTERS@GSE.HARVARD.EDU](mailto:LETTERS@GSE.HARVARD.EDU)








## Behind the Cover

Lory Hough, Editor in Chief

WE WERE WELL INTO this issue of Harvard *Ed.* magazine when Harvard President Larry Bacow made the announcement on March 10 that the university would be transitioning to virtual instruction for all classes because of COVID-19. Students moved home, staff started working remotely, faculty geared up for teaching in a new way using Zoom, and on March 18, all buildings on campus were officially shuttered. ¶ This became Harvard's new normal — a normal that has forced us all to find a new rhythm to the way we work, the way we learn, the way we parent, and the way we stay connected while physically distancing ourselves from one another. ¶ Here on the magazine, we wondered: Should we keep this issue's content mostly as is, or scrap the whole thing and focus on coronavirus coverage? It's not easy for a magazine with a long production schedule to cover the news in a timely way so we decided to do both. We replaced the original cover story but kept most of the existing content, with tweaks. Our goal is to look back in a more thoughtful way in the fall. Stay tuned and please, everyone, stay well.

ROSE LINCOLN/HARVARD GAZETTE

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# Intro.

NEWS + NOTES FROM APPIAN WAY

“Sometimes the difference  
between a successful entrepreneur  
and one that gives up is the  
people who believe in them.”

HETAL JANI, SPEAK MENTORSHIP



## Because They're Worth It

ALUM STARTS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR IMMIGRANT GIRLS

STORY BY LORY HOUGH

Last December, **HETAL JANI, ED.M.'12**, was standing on a stage in New York City, ready to receive a “Women of Worth” award from L’Oreal. It was a surreal moment for her. Not only was she being honored, but the person about to hand her the award was a famous Oscar-winning actress: Helen Mirren.

It was also a telling moment. Just as Jani was discussing the work she was doing to support immigrant girls through SPEAK Mentorship, the non-profit she started in 2015, she herself was feeling supported by Mirren and L’Oreal’s president, who spoke at length with her at the event.

“Helen made me feel seen, and she really listened to what I do at SPEAK,” Jani says. The three of them “had a long conversation about what needs to be done to make sure the potential of girls doesn’t get stopped short.” That kind of support, she says, is important. “Sometimes the difference between a successful entrepreneur and one that gives up is the people who believe in them and have the power to just share their journey and spread awareness of their mission.”

Jani’s mission started when she was in high school tutoring other students, including Laura (name changed), a high academic achiever at the top of her class. When Laura was 12, she got her first 80 on a test and her father wasn’t at all happy.

“Because of his disappointment, he threatened to send Laura to Guyana to get married,” Jani says. The next day, Laura and her mother visited Jani. The mother, upset, felt she had not been a strong role model for her daughter;

Laura worried about being perfect. The mother thought that Jani, with her East Indian roots, would understand.

"It stayed with me that if the mothers couldn't be strong role models for their daughters, maybe other women could," Jani says, "and maybe it was true that I could understand and guide Laura and her family simply because our cultures were similar and I had overcome similar situational barriers."

The idea for SPEAK Mentorship was formed. Working with schools with large immigrant populations in three cities, the nonprofit now pairs high school girls (and more recently, boys) with three adult mentors each, including one who is culturally similar. Mentors offer support around college and career goals, as well as culture.

"Girls like Laura and others have so much incredible potential that never gets met because they're constantly facing these conflicts as a result of straddling two cultures and questioning their own worth," Jani says. "What are we losing as a society when the little girl who wants to be a CEO, a doctor, or an artist doesn't get encouraged to pursue a career because the cultures that their families come from still have extremely gendered expectations for their daughters? I want them to take the dreams and goals they have and have the people in their lives help them figure out how to get there while still acknowledging their own unique perspectives being from diverse cultural backgrounds."

Most of SPEAK's mentoring is done virtually at school, and now at home while school's are closed (27 sessions in total), allowing for more flexibility and buy-in from parents.

"Parents put a lot of trust in the schools, especially parents from certain communities," Jani says. "If the school is providing the program and the girls don't have to incur any additional cost of money or time, we found the sessions are more likely to occur."

Jani says she didn't have these kinds of opportunities growing up but wished she had.

"Having one woman who could understand my bicultural experiences, my career interests, and my strengths would definitely have set me up for success much earlier in life," she says. "I had to make a lot of mistakes and U-turns and prove myself, even to myself, because I didn't really know what I wanted, let alone how to pursue it. I've realized how important social capital is to get ahead in life, and a lot of what I've accomplished has been because of who I know and how they've helped me along the way."



LEARN MORE ABOUT SPEAK: [SPEAKMENTORSHIP.ORG](https://speakmentorship.org)

WISE WORDS

**"At times it feels like the sky is falling. We're gonna be okay."**

Dean **BRIDGET LONG** addressing the community virtually on March 11, about the coronavirus situation.



## A Charter Member

AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL MOVEMENT

STORY BY LORY HOUGH

**S** ARAHTANTILLO, ED.M.'91, didn't intend to write a book about charter schools. Her education consulting practice was going well, and she was already publishing books related to her field: literacy instruction. But after becoming involved in the charter school world, she knew there were many fascinating stories to tell about the movement. "I didn't want those stories to be lost," she says, so she wrote what would become *Hit the Drum: An Insider's Account of How the Charter School Idea Became a National Movement*. Now managing director of humanities at the Great Oaks Legacy Charter Schools network in Newark, New Jersey, Tantillo talked to *Ed.* about her involvement and why she thinks charters have persisted.

**You were a high school teacher who became involved with charters in 1996. Why?**  
It was a combination of factors. Being a policy geek, I had been following the chartering idea obsessively: I was excited at the potential for innovation, and I

believed that charter schools — by offering parents, students, and educators more options and more autonomy in exchange for accountability — could help improve public education overall. Also, I had reached a pain point in the district where I was teaching: the interdisciplinary humanities course I'd taught was going to be cut because of logistical problems that even the superintendent could not solve. In 1996, when New Jersey's charter school law passed, I was ready to get involved.

**Why highlight individuals who have started charter schools?**  
These chapters reveal how challenging the work is and how important it is for people to be deeply committed to it. From the earliest days, I was very aware of how specific individuals were having a large impact on the field. Most of them were not household names; they kept their heads down and kept digging into the work. Over the course of several decades, their efforts have changed the lives of millions of children. I

wanted people to feel inspired by them, to know the potential we all have to make a difference.

**Charters were initially thought of as R&D labs, trying out new ideas that district schools could then implement. Why didn't this way of thinking stick?**

I think the original analogy was not quite right. Companies set up research and development labs to help their own companies, not to help competitors. Because some portion of the per-pupil funding follows students into charters, districts have viewed charters as competitors, so they haven't tended to ask charter leaders for their ideas, and some have been downright hostile to charters and have filed lawsuits in an effort to get rid of them.

**But charters *have* had a positive impact, in your opinion.**  
Charters have definitely had an impact on the field, and in Part IV of my book, I examine some of the ways in which their roots have taken hold. For example, the notion that schools should

be held accountable for their performance, as charters are, has become widely accepted. ... I think the story of the impact of charter schools is still unfolding, and it's exciting! It could be a sequel.

**Your reaction when you hear people criticize charters?**  
First, I listen to try to understand their perspective. Sometimes their concerns are based on misconceptions or misinformation, and I can help clarify the facts. I fully acknowledge that not all charter schools are great, and I support accountability as much as autonomy. We should close any schools — district or charter — that are demonstrated failures. In this powerful country, there's no reason why any child should receive an inadequate education. One thing that burns me up is when people who can afford not to live in struggling districts argue against charters: They already have choice, but they don't want parents and children trapped in those districts to have it?

## KURT FISCHER 1943–2020

When Kurt Fischer, professor emeritus, passed away in March of this year, Professor Howard Gardner found the perfect word to describe his longtime friend and collaborator: visionary.

During Fischer's long career in education, including nearly three decades at the Ed School before his retirement in 2015, he had become an internationally known expert in neuroscience and learning, and consulted extensively with schools around the world, as well as with the Children's Television Workshop, UNICEF, the Social Science Research Council, and with various media outlets, such as *Time* and NPR's *All Things Considered*.

But perhaps Fischer's greatest vision in education came in 2002, when he pioneered the creation of a new master's degree program focused on the brain and learning that was badly needed in the education world.

"The problem was that educators have wanted to connect an understanding of the brain with learning, but they haven't known how to — and scientists have tried to tell educators what to do without understanding what goes on in the classroom," Fischer said in a 2004–05 *Ed.* story about why he helped create the Mind, Brain, and Education Program (MBE) at the Ed School, along with others such as Gardner and Professors David Rose, David Perkins, and Ann Brown. "We realized that we already had graduates who were working in this area; in fact, it was clear that we'd already trained some of the leaders in the field, even though we didn't have a program."

It only made sense to formalize training between the lab and the classroom, he said.

"If you take physics and leave out the engineers, you can't build bridges," he said. "In the same way, you can't go from biology to education without the education researchers."

READ MORE ABOUT FISCHER AND HIS LONG CAREER:  
[HTTPS://HGSE.ME/REMEMBERS\\_KURTFISCHER](https://hgse.me/remembers_kurtfischer)





Photograph by Timothy Archibald

# The Patron Saint of Writing What You Know

YA AUTHOR, NOMINATED FOR A NATIONAL BOOK AWARD,  
TEACHES BY DAY, WRITES BY MORNING

STORY BY LORY HOUGH

The news came as a total surprise. **RANDY RIBAY, ED.M.'10**, a high school English teacher living in San Francisco, was browsing Twitter on his phone at the orthodontist's office last September when he saw he was tagged as a semifinalist for the 2019 National Book Award.

"I didn't know when the list was dropping since it wasn't even on my radar," he says.

Turns out Ribay's latest book, *Patron Saints of Nothing*, which had only been out for a few months and was initially rejected by several editors, was one of 10 on the longlist in the Young People's Literature category for the prestigious award, often referred to as the Oscars of American literature. (In October, the list was narrowed to five finalists and again included Ribay and *Patron Saints*.)

It was an honor Ribay never would have seen coming as a kid. He had moved to the United States from the Philippines when he was a baby, a couple of years before the People Power Revolution ousted President Ferdinand Marcos, and although he loved books and comics (and movies, TV, and video games) to an "obsessive extent," he says these things were just entertainment. It wasn't until he took an English course his first year in college (he was an aerospace engineering major) that he really came to

understand the important role stories play in shaping our world and ourselves.

"On an intellectual level, I found it fascinating to think critically about stories. On a personal level, I came to understand myself better through literature," he says. "It wasn't long after that I changed majors and developed both the desire to help kids appreciate stories in this way and to tell my own stories."

These days, he gets up early, writing nearly every weekday from 5–6:30 a.m. before heading (now online) to the high school in California where he teaches English. When he's on deadline, he adds in writing time after work and on weekends, and sometimes in the summer. He says he writes "fairly slowly," getting down about 500–1,000 words each morning on a good day.

"And I type everything because I'm just too used to writing on the computer now. I'm constantly editing and revising as I go, and I type much faster than I handwrite," he says. "Working at this pace, I produce a first draft in about three to four months. But that's just the beginning. After that usually comes one to two years of revision."

That "fairly slow" pace has produced three books in the past four and a half years, including *Patron Saints*, which is about a Filipino American high school

boy who travels to the Philippines to find out the real story behind a cousin's death.

Although Ribay didn't work on any of the books while at the Ed School, his time at Harvard had an impact on his writing.

"I did take an undergrad creative writing poetry class while I was at HGSE, and I started writing book reviews for the *Horn Book Guide* after taking a class on YA lit with Lolly Robinson and Christina Dodd," he says. "Those were both valuable experiences, and it was a year later when I started working on my first novel," *An Infinite Number of Parallel Universes*, followed by *After the Shot Drops*.

Does he agree with the wisdom that you should "write what you know"? With 14 years of teaching to draw from, including literacy tutoring at an alternative high school and middle school English language arts before moving to his current high school, he says absolutely.

"It helps me understand how context might change some aspects of being a teenager but other aspects stay the same," he says. "But more than anything, it helps me appreciate their depth and their intelligence."

DISCOVER MORE AT:  
[WWW.RANDYRIBAY.COM](http://WWW.RANDYRIBAY.COM)

# Turning the Tide II

NEW REPORT ADDRESSES ETHICAL CHARACTER,  
NOT JUST ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

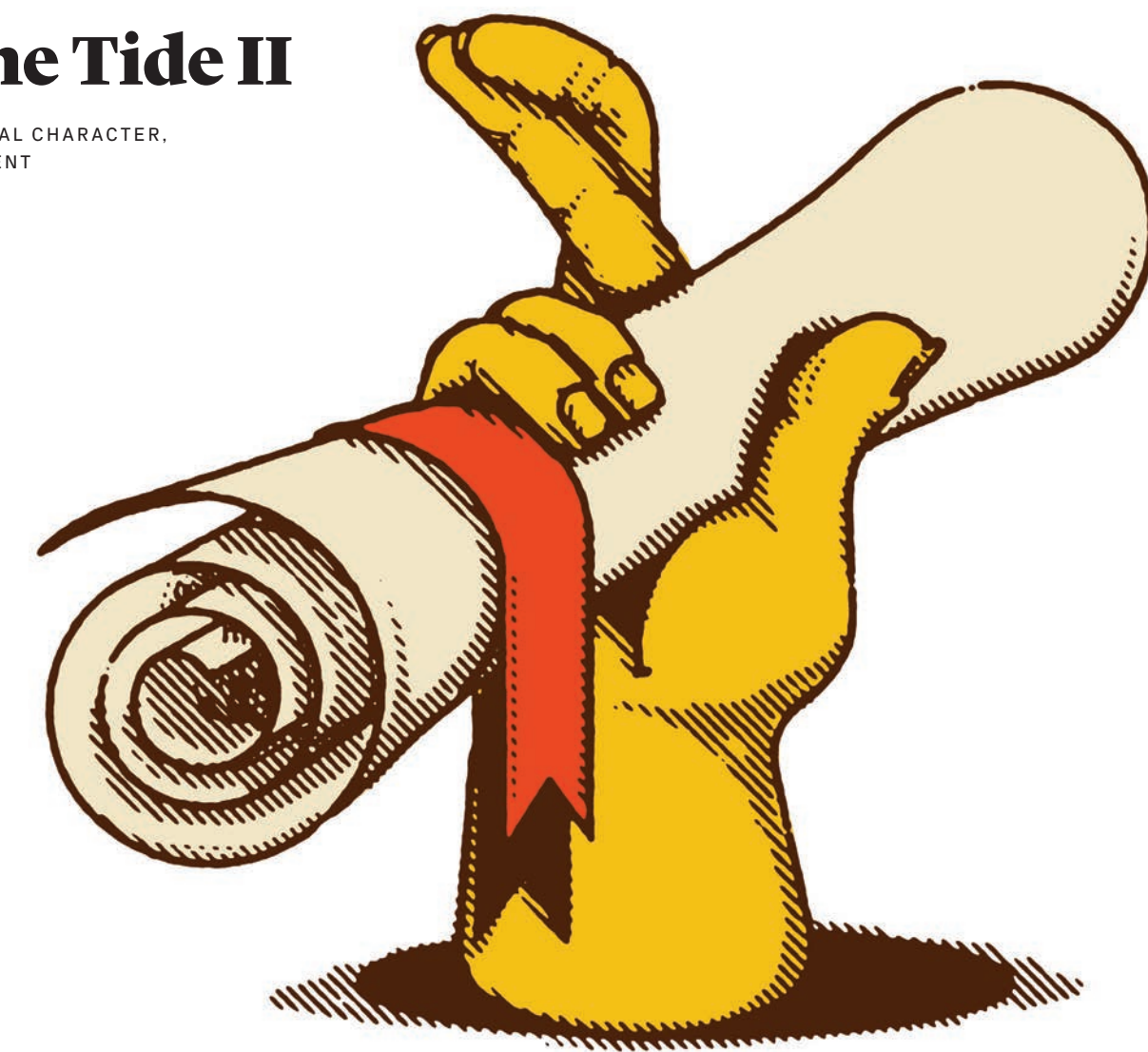
STORY BY [ANDREW BAULD, ED.M.'16](#)

Where we go to college is one of the most important decisions in a teen's life, and parents will do almost anything to get their child into their dream school. In fact, last year, the college admissions scandal revealed the astonishing lengths some affluent parents would actually go to. Dozens of parents were charged by the U.S. Department of Justice for their role in cheating their children's way into college.

But while the admissions scandal shone a light on the indiscretions of the 1%, many parents fail to be ethical role models for their children by allowing a range of smaller transgressions. A new report from Making Caring Common (MCC) hopes to make the admissions process a more ethical endeavor.

*Turning the Tide II*, authored by MCC faculty director [RICHARD WEISSBOURD, ED.D.'87](#), is aimed at making the college admissions process healthier for young people by elevating the importance of cultivating ethical character. The report makes the case that an intense focus on academic achievement has squeezed out serious attention to ethical character, especially among middle- and upper-income communities.

While it's easy to point to major indiscretions like in the admissions scandal, Weissbourd says that overshadows the smaller but no less meaningful ethical lapses parents are guilty of.



"There are parents doing outrageous things, but it's a small fraction," Weissbourd says. "We're finding the much bigger problem is minor forms of ethical lapses. Letting kids fudge about community service hours or helping on essays or paying money for an SAT tutor without thought of equity and access — these are things a much larger number of parents are involved in."

The report, a followup to the initial 2016 *Turning the Tide* report, offers actionable ways high schools and parents can develop strong ethical capacities in teens during the admissions process, including keeping the focus on what's best for teens and encour-

aging parents to follow their own ethical GPS, to encouraging families to expand the scope of colleges they apply to.

The report also marked the first time in history that a broad coalition of college admissions offices joined together to encourage students to focus on meaningful engagement.

"It became clear once we got into the thick of the work that the admissions process is a puzzle with many pieces," Weissbourd says. "Colleges play a role, high schools play a role, and parents play a role. If we're going to fundamentally shift the system, we need to work at different places within it."

Needing to reach all three stakeholders, high schools have proved to be an important network for reaching students and parents. Many high schools are beginning to implement recommendations from the report into their admissions program.

At the Hewitt School, an independent K-12 school in New York City, their college guidance process has incorporated the *Turning the Tide* reports into their work with families, and the reception has been positive according to head of school Tara Kinsey.

"Parents have found the report compelling and appreciate its actionable recommendations for countering the toxic levels of

pressure and anxiety faced by high-achieving students," Kinsey says. MCC's resources are also used to coach students on resisting narrow definitions of success.

*Turning the Tide II* also features a deans' commitment letter. Endorsed by nearly 140 college admissions deans, the letter is a response to the skepticism some high schools shared, fearing that colleges weren't actually following suggestions issued in the first report. In the letter, the deans lay out the kinds of contributions they value and will consider in addition to traditional benchmarks like standardized test scores and grades. They also pledge to weigh factors like a student's family commitment or honoring a school's curriculum that offers few AP courses.

While placing importance on ethical character in the college admissions process is the goal of the report, Weissbourd says he hopes people will recognize this goes beyond getting into college.

"Ethical character matters," Weissbourd says. "It matters to admissions, but it should also just matter. Raising kids who are ethical is important regardless of college. We need kids who care about the common good."

ANDREW BAULD IS A WRITER  
IN NEW YORK CITY

READ THE REPORTS:  
[MCC.GSE.HARVARD.EDU](#)

Photograph by Jill Anderson



From left: Mumby, Lo, Taylor

## SEE YOURSELF IN THE CURRICULUM

COLORFULL ADDRESSES LACK OF DIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS'  
MULTIMEDIA OFFERINGS

STORY BY [TIMOTHY BUTTERFIELD, ED.M.'20](#)

Growing up in Los Angeles, [BONNIE LO, ED.L.D.'20](#), wished that her Chinese culture could be included in her classroom curriculum. As early as the first grade, Lo recalls her teacher telling her parents, "Don't speak Chinese with Bonnie; use English," as though the family's native language had no place in school or at home. Needless to say, this did not sit well with Lo.

And she's not the only person who has experienced these educational indecencies and wants to do something about it. That's why, after taking Senior Lecturer Irvin Scott's Sector Change class, in which they were challenged to think about one thing they wanted to change within the education ecosystem, Lo teamed up with two other Ed.L.D. students, [CHARISSE TAYLOR](#) and [YASMENE MUMBY](#), to start ColorFULL Media.

The goal of ColorFULL is to give diverse students validation in the classroom by introducing numerous cultural identities into the curriculum. According to Lo, Taylor, and Mumby, the project is based on their personal experiences of not being able to see themselves in their school curriculum's multimedia. Mumby, for example, recalls that whenever her teachers gave lessons on black history, the focus was almost entirely on the topic of slavery, but never on African Americans who were leaders or changemakers in other eras of U.S. history. Using photos, videos, and audio, ColorFULL is trying to shift the representation of youth of color in media and curricula to show more positive, and expanded, imageries and narratives.

Lo, Taylor, and Mumby bring to the project not only their personal experiences in schools, but also their professional perspectives. As San Francisco's public school system's director of principal leadership, Lo coached nearly 100 site administrators who worked with families that collectively spoke more than 20 languages. Taylor led the design and implementation of several large-scale citywide education initiatives in New York City. And Mumby cochaired the Baltimore Education Coalition that organized 3,000 parent, student, and teacher leaders around the renovation of school facilities throughout the city. Bringing their leadership skills together for the project is important, Taylor says.

"The prevailing narrative about women of color continues to be that we cannot or should not lead," she says. "We are, and will continue to be, proof that that narrative is false."

After achieving early successes as they were creating the project, including a win at the 2019 HIVE Pitch Competition and two fellowships with the Harvard Innovation Lab, the ColorFULL team held a convening in January with educators to dig deeper into developing culturally affirming content. They are now seeking out educators and teaching artists who would like to contribute curricular content to the project and share their knowledge.

"Too many teachers are doing this work in isolation," Lo, Taylor, and Mumby say in a group email, "and ColorFULL is a way to bring these educators together."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONTRIBUTING YOUR CURRICULAR CONTENT: [INFO@COLORFULLMEDIA.COM](mailto:INFO@COLORFULLMEDIA.COM)

Illustration by Michael George Haddad

RECESS



Drew Madson,  
Cartoonist

Since about the fourth grade, DREW MADSON, ED.M.'20, has been taking his first name seriously. He carries fancy pencils in his bag at all times. In class, he often takes notes using hand-drawn thought bubbles. And he doodles, constantly. "I have a ritual of doodling massive, free-associative cartoon scenes when I'm talking on the phone," he says. "I also keep a notebook on top of my dresser so that anytime I put away clothes or pass by it, I draw something. I've drawn a lot that way. I draw anytime I'm on the subway. It's a perfect practice for life-drawing." It also helps with the political cartoons this teacher (and current founder of Read to Me, a platform that listens to students read and then offers coaching, as well as feedback to teachers) has created over the years, including for his college newspaper at Saint John's University in Minnesota and, more recently, for the Harvard Kennedy School Senate Simulation. Earlier this year, Madson also tackled the illustration on the next page: a look back at the academic year from a student's perspective. It was a fun way, he says, to relive the memories of an extraordinary year that went by way too quickly. "Drawing this in January, and undating it in March, made me weirdly feel like I had lived a whole year," he says. "It was a reminder of the power of gratitude and perspective. Perhaps, just like New Year's is a holiday, we should have a holiday in June to celebrate the half of the year. You forget things, and this was a great way to remember and honor them."

☐ CHECK OUT MORE DOODLINGS: [HTTPS://DREWMADSON3.WIXSITE.COM/MYSITE](https://drewmadson3.wixsite.com/mysite)

Photograph by Tony Luong; Opposite: Illustration by Drew Madson



2019-2020. It was an unprecedented academic year, to say the least. In this illustration, DREW MADSON, ED.M.'20, highlights some of the more noteworthy moments, including Centennial, a therapy dog, 3D dinners, maker space Mark, campus turkeys, and of course, masks and Zoom classes.



# You're Gonna Learn to Laugh

HOW A BREAK FROM HUMOR AND SATIRE LASTED A WEEK FOR ONE MASTER'S STUDENT

STORY BY [SARAH GARFINKEL, ED.M.'20](#)



14 **S**o, Miss Sarah, what do you do for fun when you're not with us?" a middle school student asked during lunchtime improv club.

The others mock-gasped. "You have fun without us?"

"Yes, and..." I responded, employing the #1 improv rule, "I like to write humor and satire."

This sparked questions about satire. One student expertly described it as "comedy that is kind of mad about something." I added that satire uses a unique point of view to critique a specific target. This led to a discussion about using comedy to educate in a creative way.

When I signed up for my first comedy writing class, I was in New York City teaching K-8 students about human rights and global citizenship. Teaching these topics was simultaneously exciting and challenging. In an effort to resist future burnout, I decided to try something new and registered for a satire writing class.

While I was initially drawn to satire writing to nurture my creative side, I soon realized satire

is also an effective mode of informal education.

As readers, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the complicated issues in the world and numbly skim through the news. Satire can help counter this tendency. The indirect nature of the satirist's messaging allows readers to infer the subtext without feeling like they are receiving a lecture. Satire is the Phillips head screwdriver of the writer's toolbox: It's manageable, effective, and — unlike other tools — doesn't need to hammer the message home.

Humor has its own magic — it's entertaining and can make topics more digestible. In educational contexts, humor also engages students. My programs worked best when I incorporated humor to meet educational objectives. For example, in the improv club, students learned the fundamentals of youth organizing through entertaining games.

Despite seeing how humor and satire can enrich learning, I didn't anticipate humor and satire fitting into *my* academic coursework. When I came to the

Ed School to study language and literacy, I had resolved to take the year off from humor and satire.

My resolution, however, lasted all of one week.

I quickly learned that there were even more ways to study the overlap between humor and education than I had previously considered. My experiences at the Ed School showed me that the two can complement each other, not just practically but also academically. The first assigned reading for my fall course, "From Language to Literacy," described children's spoken language competence. We read about the development of children's understanding of communicative devices, including irony, metaphor, sarcasm, and humor. My professor introduced me to a visiting scholar who invited me to work on a research project exploring Polish-speaking children's comprehension of verbal irony.

In the fall of 2019, I also participated in a semester-long political media workshop at Harvard Kennedy School. After evaluating various forms of

existing political media, we created a prototype for what we envisioned to be a better political news site. Situating satire within the political media landscape reminded me of its potential. Just as humor can engage and educate children, social and political satire can engage adults and challenge their thinking.

What started as a resolution to take a comedy break turned into the best year exploring the intersections of satire, humor, and education within class, research, and practical settings. I remembered my student's question, "What do you do for fun when you're not with us?" and decided to start the HGSE Writers Room as a space to write creatively and build a community of writer-educators. Although nothing could ever be quite as fun as the lunchtime improv club, the writers room was a close second.

 **SARAH GARFINKEL** HAS WRITTEN FOR *THE NEW YORKER* AND *THE WEEKLY HUMORIST*. HER WEBSITE: [SARAHGARFINKELWRITING.COM](#)

STUDY SKILLS

## Emily Meland, Ed.M.'16, Current Ph.D.

At the first school where **EMILY MELAND** worked as an assistant teacher, there were 17 different languages spoken in a class of 19 students. At her next school, almost 100% spoke Spanish. As a white teacher teaching social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, she wondered how to also honor her students' varied cultural backgrounds and identities.

"There's lots of great research to show that SEL skills are linked to academic success, better decision-making, and so on," she says, "but often when SEL is taught in schools, it's seen as a way to control student behavior and to teach very specific ways of being in the world. I think that's restrictive and too often reflects a white, middle class way of being."

For example, SEL can be misinterpreted as teaching students to be calm and happy all the time, she says. "That's not a natural way of being *all* the time. I come from a big Italian family. We can get heated, but then everyone comes back to the table, and that's okay. And Italians aren't the only culture like this. If we're teaching students that there's only one way to express yourself, that there's a 'wrong' way and a 'right' way, that creates conflict. And often these judgments are driven by our unconscious biases"

When she looked for research and resources that integrate SEL with culturally responsive practices, she found very little, so she decided to survey what families and educators are doing in this area.

"I'm interested in finding what's working and shining a light on that," she says. "We're at a place in education where we now know SEL is important, but we don't necessarily know how to make sure it's reflective of all students." One tool that's promising is kernels of practice for SEL — simple strategies that teachers can tailor to students and settings. Meland learned about kernels working in the Ecological Approaches to Social and Emotional Learning (EASEL) Lab with Professor Stephanie Jones. "You can take these kernels and adapt them to be more reflective of your students."

To start though, she says, we have to ask what our purpose is in teaching SEL.

"Is it so that students can learn to conform and then succeed in the world as it is, or is it to provide skills students can use to think critically about problems, to push back against injustices, and to succeed in a new world of their making?" LH



## THE MAKING OF

## Lecturer Rhonda Bondie, Director of Professional Learning

Starting out as a professional dancer, Rhonda Bondie began teaching as an artist-in-residence in New York City, and then spent more than 20 years in urban public schools as a special and general educator and assistant principal before coming to the Ed School. This past year, Bondie took on a new role as director of professional learning. She spoke to *Ed.* about her early memories, inclusive teaching, and Tombstone Pizza.



RHONDA BONDIE

### Where did you grow up?

I was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and grew up in a rural area south-east of there, where my extended family lived on farms and worked at Ford Motor Company.

### Any childhood memories have a lasting impact on whom you become as an educator?

At home, my sister and I had lessons with family members every day to learn how to make things. I fondly remember waking up at 5 a.m. to pick vegetables or fruit to make pickles, jelly, and tomato sauce. We would make enough jars for the entire extended family by noon. From this experience, I learned the importance of modeling and mentoring. I also remember how my aunts and grandmas would adjust instruction based on the age and skills of my cousins and me. I was the youngest, so I would get just a little ball of bread dough to knead and to make into a tiny loaf until I became strong enough to work with a whole loaf. To this day, I enjoy the differences of my students and tailor instruction to ensure everyone feels valued and stretched. My teaching is also very hands on and active. I think these characteristics are rooted deeply in my favorite moments of active learning in my childhood.

Another: My ballet teacher was an artist and master of observation and feedback. Even today, I think about how she would walk down the line of dancers and offer an image to help us envision what our bodies should look like or say one word that helped us improve our dancing. She also would make us redo an exercise or a step many times correctly for every one mistake. She wasn't afraid to stop, fix things, practice,

and then go forward. She knew that rushing learners to the finish wasn't effective. I have worked very hard to be like her when I observe teachers in the classroom. I like to be on my feet with the teachers and students, giving feedback in the moment and using metaphors to help educators envision the end goal of the teaching strategies that I am explaining.

### What did you want to be as a kid "when you grew up"?

A ballet dancer. I achieved that goal by dancing professionally with the Minnesota Dance Theatre and performing in commercials such as Tombstone Pizza, where I played a cheerleader. Through a variety of unique and serendipitous experiences — including starting my degrees at New York University by following an advertisement on a bus that said, "Find yourself at the Gallatin Division" — I learned that I could take skills I used as a dancer to create innovative ways to help people learn by being an artist-in-residence in the New York City Public Schools. This discovery launched my career in teaching.

### What did it mean to be an artist-in-residence in schools?

I collaborated with educators to teach curriculum through drama in the public schools. I committed to a "career in teaching" when we received a three-year grant to teach immigration through drama with fifth-grade students in Brooklyn. Although the funds only included three classes, I stayed beyond the lunch period to teach an additional fourth class because I wanted to make sure that all fifth-grade students were included. On the day of the final production, I found out that the fifth-grade students who were deaf and hard of hearing had been left out. I felt terrible and asked the principal why he didn't tell me about the students in the special education class. He said that because I wasn't a certified

teacher and didn't know how to teach students with disabilities that it was better not to include students who were deaf and hard of hearing. I couldn't have been more upset, so I became certified in special education and learned sign language. The next school year, when I returned for year two of the grant, all students, with and without disabilities, learned together and performed in the play as a community.

### What prompted you to start your new class at the Ed School on inclusive teaching?

Teaching is a central part of the future careers of all Ed School students, no matter whether the current career goal is to become a teacher, a reading specialist, instructional coach, administrator, or educational entrepreneur. I wanted to provide a course on instructional decision-making, the "art of inclusive teaching." I hope to enable educators to make daily, deliberate instructional adjustments to increase equitable learning opportunities for students with a wide range of learning needs. I am excited about this course because we will use a variety of simulations, such as paper-based games, role-playing, and new technologies, including mixed reality and 360-degree videos, to develop skills and reflect on our instructional decisions.

### Finish this sentence: I love what I do because...

Teaching is an endlessly challenging and joyful adventure. Even though I plan every lesson, I never know exactly how learning will unfold. I love the discovery part of teaching every day in the classroom.

## PD Also Means Personal Development

ED.L.D. STUDENT CREATES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR NEW TEACHERS TO MANAGE STRESS AND WELL-BEING

STORY BY LORY HOUGH

After a few years teaching, **TYLER HESTER, ED.L.D.'20**, knew how difficult the job was, especially in the very beginning. New teachers worry they aren't doing a good job (especially during times like these) and often neglect their personal needs. They feel overwhelmed.

An entry on his blog about his first year teaching sums it up:

"I got my butt handed to me over and over again. I remember waking up exhausted, profoundly anxious about what the day ahead would hold. I would wake up convinced that my lesson plan would be a train wreck. I remember looking at myself in the mirror in the bathroom and feeling deflated by the bags under my eyes and my waistline that was expanding because of my fast-food diet."

Hester knew it didn't have to be this way. With the right training and tools, new teachers could learn how to manage stress and classroom challenges. Eventually, he outlined some of those

tools in a free e-book he wrote called *7 Steps For a Great Start to the School Year* as part of a larger project he started called *New Teachers Thriving*. Then Hester went even further, creating a personal development training program for new teachers that he piloted last academic year in Boston Public Schools, with the help of fellow Ed.L.D. student **CRYSTEL HARRIS** and then-Harvard senior Akash Wasil.

Offered to teachers in their first, second, or third year, the six-session program proved to be more popular than he expected.

"We thought we'd get 10, 15 applications," he says, noting that the room initially booked for the first meeting was meant to hold about a dozen people. "We got 75 applications."

During the sessions, early-career teachers learned social-emotional skills they could use to not feel so alone in their struggles and to help them manage stress. They also learned how to prioritize tasks and decisions,

how to change their own fixed mindsets, and how to practice meditation and mindfulness.

"It's so important to provide educators with personal development to help them sustain themselves in this work," Hester says. "In this country, we try to do a lot around professional development for teachers, but not a lot around personal development, even though we know teachers are experiencing personal challenges. That seems short-sighted."

When it was time for Hester to start thinking about where he was going to do his third-year Ed.L.D. residency, he reached out to superintendents around the country, sharing his background and his take on the problems first-year teachers faced. He told them about his project. Almost every superintendent he reached out to was interested; Tyler ultimately chose Stockton, California. When he first offered the program there and expanded it to 12 sessions, nearly 300 new teachers applied.

"What has continued to surprise me is the demand for this," he says. "There's a real hunger. To have 296 applications was a sign that there's something here people want. People appreciate having a space dedicated to their well-being, not just to their improved teaching skills. People appreciate knowing they're not alone. People feel overwhelmed or doubt their abilities to be effective educators. We hear over and over again that to know they're not the only one struggling is a huge relief."

Just before the coronavirus hit, other districts started reaching out, interested in learning more. His next challenge is how to scale the project, which he renamed to *Educators Thriving* after he also started working with principals in Stockton. "There's a huge demand, now more than ever," he says. "We need to figure out how to grow."

LEARN MORE: [WWW.NEWTEACHERS-THRIVING.ORG](http://WWW.NEWTEACHERS-THRIVING.ORG)

## ON MY BOOKSHELF

## Noah Heller, lecturer and faculty director, Harvard Teacher Fellows (HTF)

**WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?** *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry

**WHAT DREW YOU TO IT?** My mama recommended it as extremely beautiful and utterly heartbreaking. She said it was the only book she's ever read that was too sad to finish. For some reason that compelled me to pick it up. It's a thick book, so it's nice to be reading it to start the year and between semesters.

**WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK AS A CHILD?** I loved a lot of books. Early in my independent reading, *Ramona Quimby* books were a favorite, and a few years later, Walter Dean Myers' *Scorpions* and *Fallen Angels* had me rapt. However, if we're going to go way back, one of my favorite children's books was *The Story of Ferdinand*. Ferdinand's message of nonviolence and defying stereotypes touched my four-year-old soul. It still does.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BOOK TO READ TO YOUR SON?** My son is just over a year old. We have lots of fun with *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and *Good Night, Gorilla*. A dear friend and colleague gave him *Counting on Community* by Innosanto Nagara, which we also love because we get to see friends in all sorts of fun community activities while also having deep bedtime talks about cardinality.

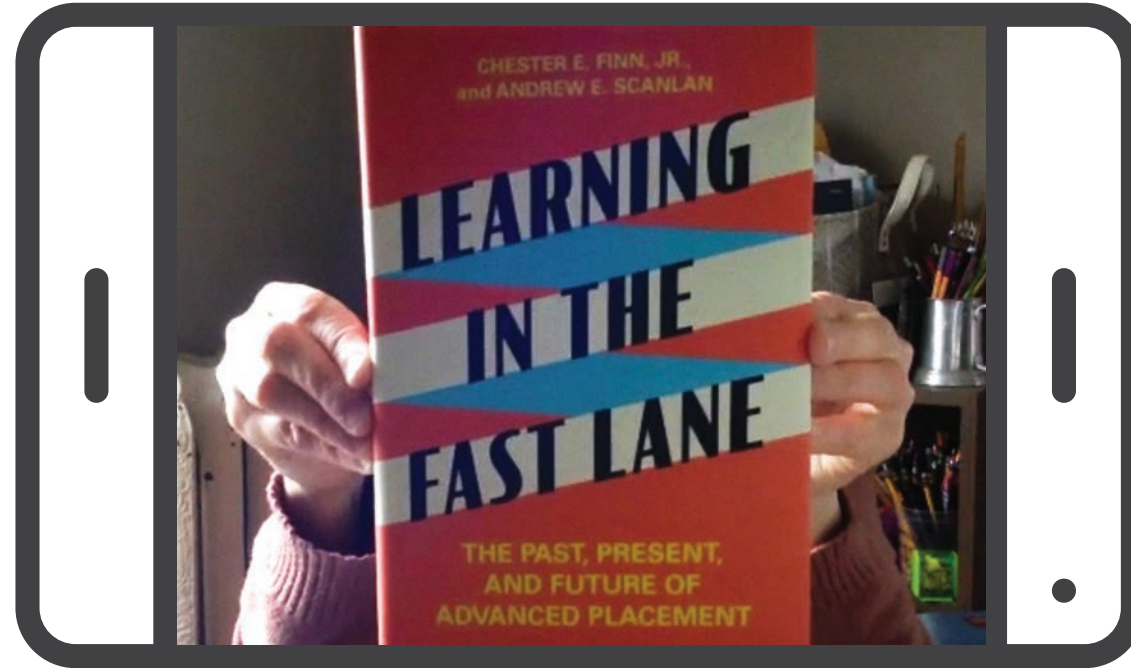
**WHAT BOOK WOULD PEOPLE BE SURPRISED YOU'VE NEVER READ?** There are so many great books that I have yet to read. When I was a teenager, my German-speaking Czech grandfather expressed disbelief and despair that I hadn't read Goethe's *Faust*. "Vut, you haven't read *Faust*? Vut are they teaching you?" So *Faust* it is.

**IS THERE A BOOK YOU HAVE THE HTF STUDENTS READ THAT YOU THINK IS HELPFUL?** A good, simple book that is useful for beginning math teachers is *5 Practices for Orchestrating Productive Math Discussions* by Smith and Stein. It provides a sequence of helpful practices that teachers can enact to build a classroom culture that facilitates problem solving and collaborative learning.

**WHAT'S NEXT ON YOUR READING LIST?** It better be *Faust*! But after that, *The Feast of the Goat* by Mario Vargas Llosa is on deck. I've been wanting to read one of his books for a long time, and someone recommended I start with this one. LH

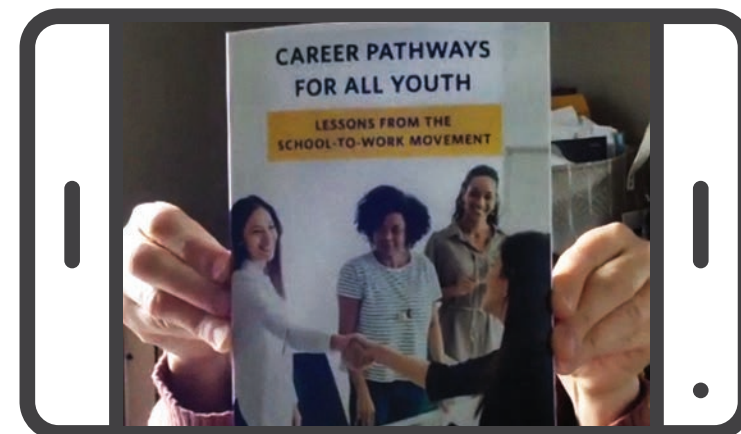
FOR A FULL LIST OF BOOKS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE: [GSE.HARVARD.EDU/ED](https://gse.harvard.edu/ed). IF YOU'RE PART OF THE ED SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND YOU'VE RECENTLY PUBLISHED A BOOK, LET US KNOW: [BOOKNOTES@GSE.HARVARD.EDU](mailto:BOOKNOTES@GSE.HARVARD.EDU)

\*When our regular book photo shoot couldn't happen because of the campus shutdown, we Zoomed instead.



### ▲ LEARNING IN THE FAST LANE: THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT Chester Finn Jr and Andrew Scanlan

*Learning in the Fast Lane* by **CHESTER FINN JR., M.A.T.'67, ED.D.'70**, traces the little-known history of the Advanced Placement Program, which started in 1952 in seven private and public schools around the country and today engages nearly 3 million high school students every year. In this account, in addition to the history, the authors also look at how the program currently works in schools, the benefits it offers, and the criticism the 68-year-old program has faced.



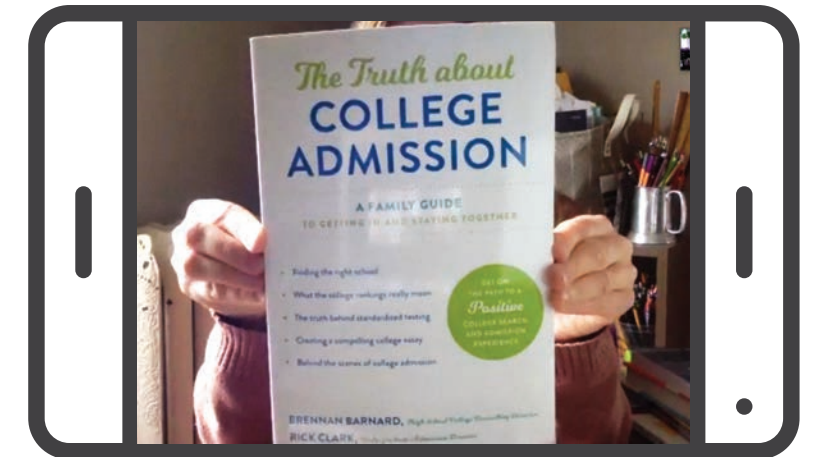
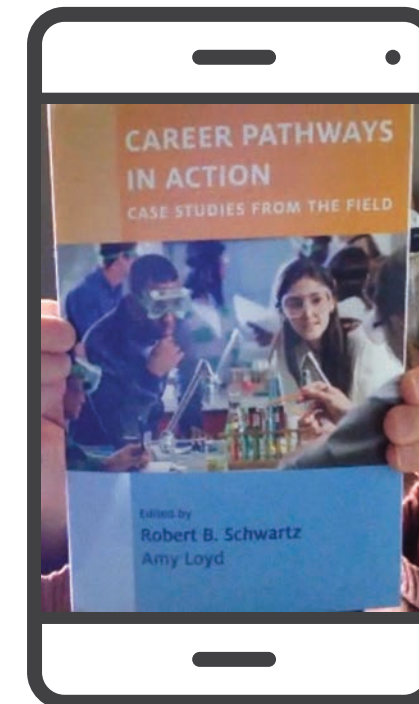
### ◀ CAREER PATHWAYS FOR ALL YOUTH: LESSONS FROM THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK MOVEMENT Stephen Hamilton

**STEPHEN HAMILTON, M.A.T.'69, ED.D.'75**, professor emeritus from Cornell University, explores differences and similarities between the current movement to create career pathways (CP) for all young people and the school-to-work movement (STW) of the 1980s and 1990s. As he writes, "Some CP initiatives can be traced to the STW movement, and others have an even older lineage. Examining the history of STW sheds some light on the origins of CP and identifies lessons to be learned if the new movement is to persist and grow rather than fading into the background like its predecessor."

### ▼ CAREER PATHWAYS TO ACTION: CASE STUDIES FROM THE FIELD

Edited by Robert Schwartz and Amy Loyd

Using five on-the-ground case studies from across the United States, *Career Pathways* by **ROBERT SCHWARTZ, C.A.S.'68**, and **AMY LOYD, ED.L.D.'13**, explores work being done at the local, state, and regional levels by the Pathways to Prosperity Network. The network was launched in 2012 as a way to reimagine how we prepare young people in the United States for the future of work, and how important cross-sector partnerships are between education leaders, employers, and policymakers.

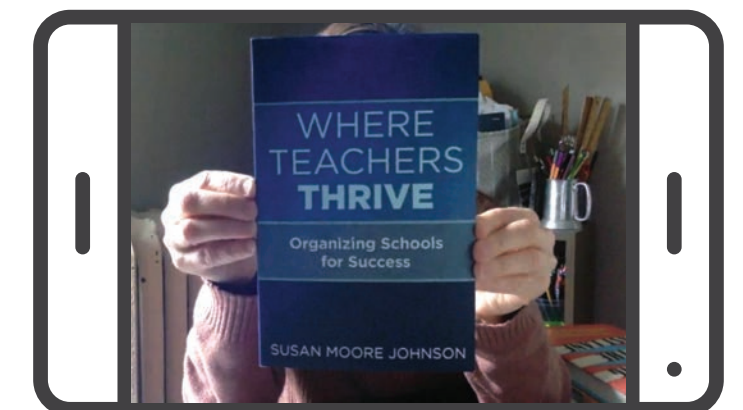


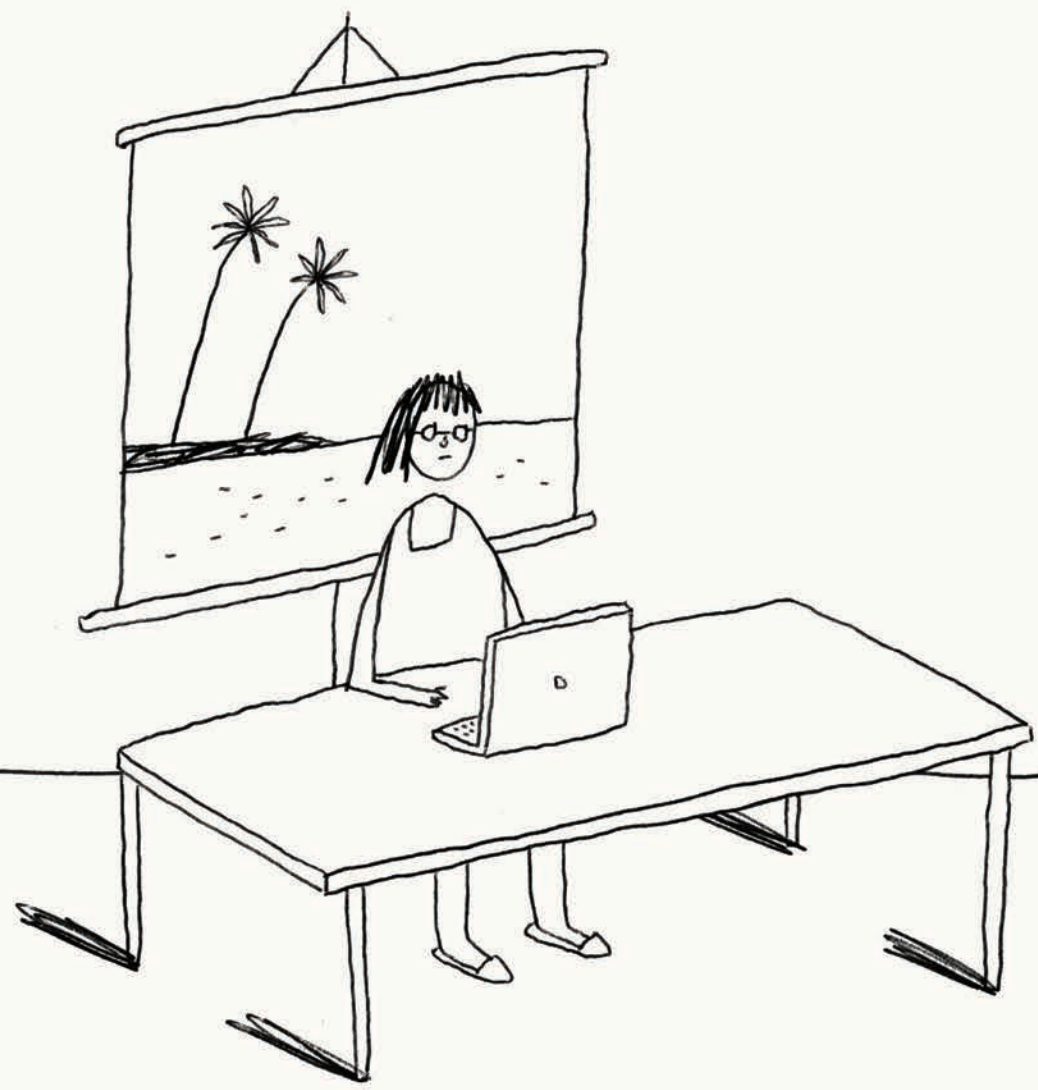
### ▲ THE TRUTH ABOUT COLLEGE ADMISSION: A FAMILY GUIDE Brennan Barnard and Rick Clark

"This book," write the authors, including Brennan Barnard, the college admission program adviser for the Making Caring Common Project, "is written to put the college search and admission experience into perspective for your family." *The Truth* challenges the common narrative that college admission is a rite of passage to fear, that there are only a few dozen great schools that all students should aim for when applying, and that students "must perfectly follow a secret formula throughout high school to unlock success."

### ▼ WHERE TEACHERS THRIVE Susan Moore Johnson

Based on decades of research and case studies of 14 high-poverty urban schools, *Where Teachers Thrive* by Research Professor **SUSAN MOORE JOHNSON, M.A.T.'69, ED.D.'81**, argues that while it's important for schools to attract skilled and dedicated people to teaching, keeping them in their schools and helping them do well depends not just on their training or disposition, but also on whether schools support their development. And rather than letting strong teachers work in isolation, schools must also find ways to multiply and share their strengths throughout their schools.





# Come On and Zoom

AMID CRISIS AND UNCERTAINTY, THE ED SCHOOL  
COMES TOGETHER (VIRTUALLY) TO CARRY ON THE WORK AND  
TO RESPOND TO THE CURRENT MOMENT

STORY BY BARI WALSH ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN REA



In retrospect, it was clear that the novel coronavirus that had begun circulating and sickening people in China, starting in late 2019, would spread.

And yet the dizzying series of events that led us to where we are now — and have given the Ed School's centennial year a far different flavor than we'd anticipated just weeks before — somehow still seemed to unfold suddenly, without time to adjust.

Harvard issued its first community-wide advisory about the new disease on January 24, as the spring semester began, in a message from University Health Services. The message read that the university was monitoring the outbreak in China, and it encouraged many of the hygiene practices that have since become standard: vigorous and regular hand-washing, no touching your face, cough into your elbow.

Harvard went on to issue a series of escalating travel advisories: discouraging and then forbidding university-related travel to China, to a wider range of affected areas, and finally, to anywhere at all — and strongly discouraging travel for personal business as well. Also unfolding at a fast clip: ambitious efforts to track, assess, and monitor the health of Harvard affiliates or visitors who were arriving from abroad, and efforts to institute social distancing measures on campus.

Things accelerated on March 6, when Provost Alan Garber and Executive Vice President Katie Lapp sent a community email that imposed restrictions on the size of campus gatherings (forbidding meetings of more than 100 — this would later drop to 25 and then 10). For the first time, Harvard advised the community to begin considering how they could transition meetings, work, and events to remote venues.

But even with the perspective of hindsight, the university's communication on Tuesday, March 10, still feels shocking. On that day, President Larry Bacow informed the community that Harvard would transition fully to virtual instruction and would ask

all students not to return to campus after spring break, which was due to begin that Friday. It was all in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus, to protect those who were especially vulnerable to infection, and to limit the reach of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the virus, into the Harvard community.

**AMID THE MOUNTING** changes during that remarkable week and the one that followed, the Ed School — which had been actively planning behind the scenes for all scenarios, even before the university's guidance — underwent its own speedy remaking, shifting its operations to an entirely online environment; assisting its students, faculty, and staff in a rapid relocation and a plunge into the new normal; and finally closing all of its buildings.

The Ed School navigated the dramatic shift by quickly embracing three priorities, which helped to hold the uncertainty at bay: health and well-being, academic progress for students, and community and connection. Every decision over the following weeks and months would be guided by — and would have to serve — those priorities.

With spring break providing a week's window to prepare, units across the school — master's program directors and administrators, faculty licensure leads, the Ed.L.D. team, the doctoral program team, the Harvard Teacher Fellows — mobilized rapidly to consider the student experience and the academic, social, and professional support structure they could offer, partnering with teams in Information Technology, the Teaching and Learning Lab (TLL), the Office of Career Services, and other offices across the school.

"I have never been prouder of the commitment and resiliency of this community in how we have



**In mid-March, students started moving their belongings home and Harvard Square started to empty out. Face masks became a common sight.**

rallied to support each other and to advance our work and our mission despite the many personal and professional challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis," says Dean Bridget Long. "These are extraordinary times, and I am grateful to our faculty, students, staff, and our extended HGSE alumni community for their boundless dedication."

Indeed, the pace of change seemed to bolster existing community strengths, wrote Academic Dean Nonie Lesaux in a letter to faculty at the end of spring break. "It was a week where we experienced the best of HGSE in so many respects — the talent, the sense of care, and community among the faculty and our administrative staff; our collective commitment to student supports; and, most clearly, our ability to mobilize in service of our mission. Next week, a new chapter begins, and we will continue

to push forward with purpose, impact, and community in mind."

As of this writing, we're two and a half weeks into virtual classes. What does this brave new world look like? What are the opportunities that online learning may be offering to faculty and students? Can the Ed School's community — its values and its hopes — expand into the virtual world? That's the experiment that's playing out right now. One thing is clear: This community is already finding new ways to support one another — from a distance, yes, but also as close as your laptop screen.

Turning on a dime, the school's Information Technology unit and its Teaching and Learning Lab jumped with remarkable speed to equip faculty with tools, in-person and online support, and thorough guidance on teaching remotely — largely

via Zoom, the web video conferencing technology that has become the centerpiece of online learning at Harvard this spring. The TLL engaged with 75 faculty members during the week before the online transition, providing substantive consultation to at least half. Informal drop-ins were offered all day on each of the five days of spring break, along with formal training sessions on getting started with Zoom, best practices in online pedagogy, and how to transition final products, among other topics. The TLL even hosted practice teaching sessions using student volunteers, allowing faculty members to get a glimpse of what an actual online class would feel like. Zoom was already part of the university's standard suite of work-based software applications — an easy-to-use solution for faculty seeking to bring virtual guest speakers into class — but any bets as to whether the system would be robust enough to support an entire university were not a sure payoff.

And yet, it was. The first several days after spring break were chaotic, bumpy, but largely free of major obstacles. By week's end, about 60 Ed School faculty members had completed a pulse survey sent by the Dean's Office, with almost 95% reporting somewhat positive or very positive teaching experiences (and almost twice as many "verys" as "somewhats"). On March 25, the Thursday of that first week back from break, Harvard hosted 7,800 classes on Zoom, with 87,000 participants across the university. Help desk requests had already gone back down to normal levels, and things were operating relatively smoothly.

Ed School faculty had the benefit of a one-stop online teaching shop, as the TLL quickly launched a comprehensive support site with an astonishing ar-

ray of remote teaching resources. In fact, Ed School faculty services have become a model for the university, according to Lesaux, with many elements — workshops, one-on-one coaching, and even the pulse survey — being adopted across Harvard's campus. The TLL offered virtual teaching lunches so faculty could share successes and challenges; it has also maintained a faculty discussion board and a faculty-sourced collection of tips.

"I have found the transition to online learning and to Zoom very positive on balance," says Professor **FERNANDO REIMERS, ED.M.'84, ED.D.'88**. "My classes have gone much better than I expected. What I most like is the ability to seamlessly integrate instruction and whole class discussion, breakout room discussions, and the use of the chat facility. I also think it is empowering to students to be on a level playing field with faculty in adjusting to the new technology; they've seen me at the beginning of the class asking them for help in finding the breakout button, and I've been ending classes asking them for advice on how to make the classes better."

Other faculty have shared similar stories of trial and error. "To lighten the 'tech-load' for my three-hour course (and in response to student feedback)," one instructor reported, "I am trying to pre-record about 45 minutes of content so they can watch it anytime, in advance of our class meeting. Our synchronous time is focused on group activities, discussion, Q&A, etc., and we can shorten class time accordingly. We also open the Zoom session early for hangout time."

Another instructor focused more on the intangibles, telling students that "instead of expecting a 'perfect' course, they should see themselves as



Students in the Ed.L.D. Program hosted a "Diggin' Deep for Diversity Dinner" series online. It was one of the many social activities students started on Zoom as a way to stay connected



### HOW THE ED SCHOOL IS SUPPORTING THE FIELD

With schools shuttered across the country and in many parts of the world, the unprecedented and fast-changing needs of educators and families are motivating Ed School faculty and students to share resources for bringing learning home. Including:

- Education Now ([hgse.me/EdNow](http://hgse.me/EdNow)), a new initiative that includes resources for educators, leaders, and families; a webinar series to share insight and guidance on navigating today's complex landscape; and thought leadership from Harvard faculty about the crisis and opportunity in education.

- The school and Associate Professor **SARAH DRYDEN-PETERSON, ED.D.'09**, launched a daily children's book series called *Books of Belonging*, where Dryden-Peterson reads aloud books that give educators and families a way to help children process feelings and worries that may be relevant today — feelings of belonging, disruption, health, missing friends, and home. The *Books of Belonging* series is posting daily on Facebook and YouTube.

- HGSE faculty have been sharing their perspectives on the crisis: For example, Jal Mehta wrote about deeper learning at home for *Education Week*; Paul Reville wrote about the need for a whole-child paradigm shift in *The 74*; and **KAREN MAPP, ED.M.'93, ED.D.'99**, began offering a webinar series with *Scholastic* to help schools partner with parents at this uncertain time.

- Lecturer **LAURA SCHIFTER, ED.M.'07, ED.D.'14**, shifted much of the remainder of her federal policy class for students to consider the policy response to COVID-19 and come up with proposals to be considered in the wake of the crisis. She also pulled in three students to help her produce a piece for the Century Foundation on the ramifications for special education.

- In Associate Professor Karen Brennan's class, as students were exploring how narratives and creative production can motivate learning, the group's four student-facilitators designed an instructional activity that was particularly resonant. Students broke into small groups to examine topics related to our current situation, such as managing media consumption, staying physically fit, and fostering mental well-being. Each small group developed a visualization to creatively capture advice related to their topic — including the graphic shown here, which was created by **ANNIE WANG**, a graduate student in the class who also attends MIT.

part of a generation that is experimenting with new technology and has the responsibility to understand its limitations and possibilities." Another found that "it helps to change up the rhythm. Take stretch breaks occasionally. Have everyone unmute and say something together! I did a shout-out, and they seemed to enjoy it; it lightened the mood."

Many worried about how to preserve classroom community. "Both of my courses are small," Senior Lecturer Carrie Conaway says, "and students said they were worried about losing the sense of community we had built. One idea I had for maintaining it was to set the Zoom for my synchronous classes to start at quarter til the hour and run 30 minutes past the end, with students entering automatically and unmuted. That way they can catch up informally before and after class, in as close an approximation as I could create online."

Other faculty use playlists to welcome students into the room, or they experiment with Zoom backgrounds or ask students what's happening in their particular settings — connecting in ways that feel intimate, despite the distance. With no "front row/back row" dynamic in Zoom, faculty are finding that class participation has been rich, and that students are creating their own spaces for collaboration.

Faculty have been more intentional than usual about slowing things down to check in with their students — not only with master's students, with scant weeks left in their Ed School experience, but with doctoral students (who were likely to experience interruptions that could delay their academic progress), Ed.L.D. students (some of whom were in residency and navigating the consequences of the outbreak that rippled across the field), and their own teaching fellows, who were being extended in new ways as they assisted with course logistics.

"The determination and spirit of caring I've seen from our teaching teams — faculty, teaching fellows, faculty assistants, and so many others — has been incredible," says **MATT MILLER, ED.M.'01, ED.D.'06**, a senior lecturer and associate dean for teaching and learning. "I am especially heartened by the extent to which our faculty are working so hard to sustain community and caring in their classes. We may be physically distancing, but we are socially strong."

Indeed, students had to navigate breathtaking change — in their living situations (approximately 140 relocated to another city or country), their financial situations, their learning experiences, their dissertation and capstone defenses (now virtual), and in the shape of their job searches and future planning. They reacted with honesty and with a striking level of grace. They received a range of in-person and online resources, including emergency funding from the Ed School, travel and visa assistance, and a range of other supports from the Office of Student Affairs. Students were granted extended deadlines to drop classes and much more flexibility



## A SEND-OFF, THEN ON TO A NEW REALITY

Lecturer **HADAS EIDELMAN, ED.D.'14**, wrote this essay after the last in-person meeting of *S030, Intermediate Statistics for Educational Research*.

On the Thursday of the last week of in-person class meetings (March 12), I asked students in my stats class whether this would be their last class before the school shifted online, and most of them said that it was. I was already planning for some sort of closure to our experience, but it was sobering nonetheless to realize that for most of the students there, this was a very poignant turning point in their lives.

Matt Miller, dean for teaching and learning, had encouraged faculty to spend class time that day checking in with students, so I had planned to start class talking about how everyone was doing with the transition. If we also got some stats content in, then great, but we wouldn't worry if we didn't (and we didn't). We had each person share:

- ▶ One thing they were nervous or worried about as we shift to online learning;
- ▶ One hope they had for this experience; and
- ▶ An intention or idea about how to support themselves or each other as we all go through this.

• • •

It was one of the most beautiful and powerful experiences I've had.

Some students cried and shared personal fears for loved ones, themselves, and for society.

They expressed disappointment at how their year here was not going to end the way they

had thought it would. They acknowledged that there was room to grieve this loss, despite the concern that doing so might seem almost selfish or be in tension with the knowledge that we are all making a sacrifice in order to protect those more vulnerable than us.

They talked about the need to be kind and forgiving to one another and ourselves and to respect each other's fears and worries.

They were hopeful that maybe some good would come of this, and that as a society we might reevaluate our priorities.

They talked about how this may seem unprecedented for many of us, but that there are groups of people who have been experiencing this sort of upheaval, fear for safety, geographic displacement, and other related circumstances as a way of being for a long time. They expressed both anger that it takes something like this for many people to take notice, and also hope that society will listen to the wisdom of those who have been ignored.

We did not do one bit of stats (although we did walk through a visual of flattening the epidemic curve and related the exponential spread of COVID-19 to the logarithms we'd — ironically — been studying in that unit). But it was a profoundly powerful experience that was cathartic and served as a bridge between our in-class learning and our move online. A few students were actually joining us virtually via Zoom during that last class, already in their safe places, and I think (minus some minor technological glitches) the

experience of hearing their worries, hopes, and intentions was reassuring for all of us as a model of the connectedness we could hold onto as we stepped into this unknown.

I think that all of us in that S030 classroom — the students, our teaching fellows Jane and Rosa, and myself — were fundamentally in an experiential place where building connection and addressing our collective well-being seemed necessary. Not getting through the slides seemed small compared to the potential disengagement that could have resulted from not establishing our connectedness in a grounded and vulnerable way ahead of this shift. It was a powerful reminder of the centrality of relationships that always sits at the heart of teaching and learning.

After everyone had spoken, I wanted to share handwritten cards prepared for the students. The message was the same in each: thanking them for being a part of this course; thanking them for unexpectedly being a part of this new and unfamiliar experience we will share; letting them know that even though we're disappointed, we're also looking forward to finding new ways to be together.

Instead of just handing out the cards, it seemed more fitting to call each person's name separately. Someone joked that it might be the closest they would get to a graduation, and it turned into a beautiful, campy, pseudo-ceremony. I'd call someone's name, their classmates would cheer for them, we'd bump elbows, and then onto the next one. I think we all needed it.

in changing the grading basis of their classes.

"These past few weeks have only further underscored the centrality of emotions and relationships in learning," Associate Professor Karen Brennan says. "You're not going to be ready to learn if you're not in a good emotional place, which so many of us have absolutely not been in. And if you don't have relationships with and among members of a learning community, you have an extremely limited window into understandings of (and ability to be responsive to) the emotional landscape."

As the physical campus became quiet, the school's digital campus roared to life with virtual yoga classes, dance parties, mindfulness meet-ups, equity chats, and cocktail parties. Team Connect, a group of deans, faculty, students, and staff, launched a weekly crowd-sourced video series, a series of Ask Me Anything events with faculty, and the school's signature community storytelling series, Double Take, to be held virtually in the spring. Using its convening power, the school quickly launched the HGSE Leadership Series, a virtual speaker series giving students access to leaders from across education and beyond. The first guest, who appeared in conversation with Dean Long, was

**A sight not often seen during the academic year: An empty Harvard Yard**

Paul LeBlanc, a remote learning pioneer and president of Southern New Hampshire University. Other scheduled guests included John King Jr., **GEOFFREY CANADA, ED.M.'75**, and **DARIENNE DRIVER HUDSON, ED.M.'06, ED.D.'14**.

With Harvard's in-person Commencement postponed, and a digital ceremony planned in its place, community and connection feel even more essential, Long says.

"In undeniable ways, this has been a time of sadness and disappointment. It is so unfortunate that we will not gather together in person for Commencement and all of the other events that make spring at HGSE such a special time of year. Still, I have taken solace in being able to see many of the faces of my students, our alumni, and our colleagues — along with their children and pets! — on Zoom," says Long, who has hosted everything from casual coffee hours to informative community meetings to hours of planning meetings on that ubiquitous web platform. "We may be physically distant from one another, but this remains a vibrant, supportive, and resilient community."

**BARI WALSH** IS THE DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL STRATEGY AT THE ED SCHOOL. SHE WROTE THIS STORY IN LATE MARCH.



ELIO PALARES: KATHRYN KUHAR/HARVARD CRIMSON

IT'S SOMETIMES CALLED A GUT FEELING.  
PETER PARKER CALLED IT HIS SPIDEY SENSE.  
IT'S THE ABILITY TO READ A SITUATION  
AND KNOW SOMETHING WITHOUT PROOF OR  
CONSCIOUS REASONING.

**WE ALL USE IT.**

TEACHERS RELY ON IT, OFTEN DOZENS  
OF TIMES EVERY DAY IN THEIR CLASSROOMS.  
SOMETIMES IT WORKS; SOMETIMES IT DOESN'T.  
IT USUALLY GETS EASIER TO TRUST  
WITH EXPERIENCE.



# A Teacher's Intuition



# The class she taught

in Larsen Go8 had just ended, and [KITTY BOLES, ED.D.'91](#), then a senior lecturer, was packing up her materials when a young man in his early 20s walked up to her and said he was preparing to be a physics teacher. The young man also told Boles that she had been his third-grade teacher in Brookline 15 years earlier and that he remembered, more than anything, something that had made a huge difference: her hugs.

Boles remembered the boy and how his family had just moved to the area from Iran. She remembered that he didn't speak English and was scared to death. She also remembered hugging him.

"It was intuitive to me to hug him," she says, "to make him feel safe and loved."

Although Boles was herself a scared new teacher back then, she "sensed" what her student needed in that moment, not based on test scores or scientific data given to her from an administrator, but based on something teachers use every day, often hundreds of times a day: intuition.



**"It was intuitive to me to hug him — to make him feel safe and loved."**

**KITTY BOLES, FORMER SENIOR LECTURER, ED SCHOOL**



JANET STEARNS; (OPPOSITE) WALTER SMITH; UP EDUCATION NETWORK

**30** **SOMETIMES CALLED** a gut feeling or sixth sense, even a Spidey sense, intuition is the ability to read a situation and know something without proof or conscious reasoning. It's the "subtle knowing," writes Sophy Burnham in *The Art of Intuition*, "without ever having any idea why you know it."

In many professions, especially those that require lightning-fast decision-making, like firefighting or medicine, the ability to tap into our intuitive sense is critical. In 2015, the U.S. Navy even started a program to look into how members of the military could improve their intuitive abilities during combat, following discussions with soldiers returning from deployment who said their gut feelings often alerted them to impending danger, even when reliable intel wasn't available.

The teaching profession is no different. Although teachers don't usually deal with dangerous or life-threatening situations, classrooms are complex and situations move quickly. As [ANJALI NIRMALAN, ED.M.'17](#), points out, "intuition is incredibly important for a teacher in a room full of other humans — in my case, over 30! — with a spectrum of their own needs."

In fact, "A vital teacher skill is being able to 'read the room' and assess whether the mood of a class is sleepy, bored, fractious, or frustrated," says Nirmalan, a high school English teacher at the American School Foundation of Monterrey in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, and then respond in a way that feels right: turn on or off the lights, for example, or ask stu-

**"For many of my students, I could tell whether they would have a good day based on how they entered the classroom. ... Intuition is what made me effective."**

**EDVERETTE BREWSTER, PRINCIPAL, HOLMES INNOVATION SCHOOL, BOSTON**



**"With my current classes, it helps that I had already taught them for six months before we went online, so I am already very aware and attuned to their quirks, personalities, preferences, and home life."**

**ANJALI NIRMALAN, TEACHER, AMERICAN SCHOOL FOUNDATION OF MONTERREY, NUEVO LEON, MEXICO**



dents to stretch for a few minutes.

For [EDVERETTE BREWSTER, ED.M.'16](#), a former middle school teacher who says he relied on his intuition every day when he was teaching, reading the room started even before the lesson began.

"For many of my students, I could tell whether they would have a good day based on how they entered the classroom," says Brewster, now a principal at Holmes Innovation, an elementary school in Boston. "It was then my job to check in with them, find a way to connect, and ensure that they were prepared to learn. If that meant a student was hungry, I would find a snack. For many of my boys, it meant giving me a number, 1-10, to indicate how they felt, then strategizing on how we could end the day higher. Intuition is what made me effective."

It sometimes also means a change in plans.

[ZACHARY LINDEMANN, ED.M.'11](#), teaches AP biology at Wimberley High School in Wimberley, Texas. When the coronavirus crisis sent students and teachers home, he, like other educators, had to quickly pivot and rethink how to move learning forward with little tangible guidance. Relying on his intuition has proved vital, he says.

"I've absolutely had to change how I do things with the online learning gig and definitely feel like I am 'building the plane as I fly it' sometimes!" he says. "My initial plan was to have live online classes each morning where either my A day or B day kids would join a Google Hangout organized by me, where I would present a lecture using the share screen function and be able to engage in discussion and questions together, which hypothetically would be easy because we would all be on a video chat."

In reality, his Internet couldn't keep up, and he ran into myriad technical problems. He also found that many students were too nervous or unwilling to ask questions in a big online group. He sensed they might, instead, respond better to recorded lectures, paired with live Q&A sessions.

"I've also had to use my intuition to figure out the biggest bang for the buck in terms of content to teach for the rest of the year, and how to conduct AP exam review," he says. "It's simply not feasible to do every single thing I had planned in the original way I wanted to do it."

**31** **ALBERT EINSTEIN ONCE** noted that "intuition is nothing but the outcome of earlier intellectual experience," and most educators would probably agree that making these kinds of calls, and trusting intuition, changes with experience.

"While some may translate intuition as 'gut instinct,' I believe much of our intuition is developed through experience and is activated by unconsciously picking up on minute social cues," Nirmalan says. "From the tone of a student's voice to the way they are sitting in their chair to the direction

of their eye line, I can ‘read’ everything from how their day is going to their current engagement or comprehension.” For example, after 11 years in the classroom, she says, “I can tell from the tilt of a student’s head whether they secretly have AirPods in their ears under their long hair.”

With learning now happening online, Nirmalan says all of the teacher intuition instincts she’s built up over the years have proved essential.

“There are fewer clues to pick up on through screen-only or text interaction with my students,” she says, “and yet it is more important than ever that we are conscious of our students’ socioemotional states during the anxiety of the pandemic.”

She’s doing this by focusing not just on her lessons, but on factors like participation and mood.

“I try to pay attention to everything from the students’ enthusiasm or reluctance to be on video or audio, how much they participate in a weekly Zoom class, whether they prefer the text chat or the ‘raise hand’ function to contribute an idea, which breakout rooms of which group combinations produce the most thoughtful work, how quickly they respond in Google Chat, and what time they send me emails,” she says. “With my current classes, it helps that I had already taught them for six months before we went online, so I am already very aware and attuned to their quirks, personalities, preferences, and home life.” It might not be as easy if classes continue online in the fall, she says, and she has to start with a new group of students she has never taught.

And science backs this up. Intuition isn’t just a feeling or something magical that just pops into your head, it’s actually our brains quickly processing information subconsciously and comparing what’s currently happening with stored knowledge and memories of previous experiences, and then predicting what will come next. And this all happens within seconds.

A study by psychologist Gary Klein, for example, found that firefighters can make super-fast intuitive decisions about how a fire might spread through a building because they can access memories of similar experiences and run mental simulations of potential outcomes.

Since becoming a teacher, Nirmalan has had to break up a physical altercation four times, including one that left a student hospitalized. By the third time, during her fifth year teaching, she reacted and intervened much faster than she had during previous fights.

“Within seconds,” she says, “entirely because of my own intuition picking up on a change in the room’s mood. While no educator wants to experience such events, they taught me to subconsciously recognize and react to the subtle tells of a prevalent encounter: raised voices, angry tones, sharp movement, and other students crowding. While teenagers may argue and playfight frequently —



“Every interaction we have with a student is a piece of data that eventually builds and adds to our expertise, which ultimately becomes our intuition. Both are essential to rely on to be an effective teacher.”

CASEY NELSON, TEACHER, CHARLESTOWN HIGH SCHOOL, BOSTON



“With our technology, teachers can see for themselves that certain methods are literally more engaging from a neuroscientific point of view. It validates their strategies and builds confidence that they are in fact more effective for increasing engagement.”

MAX NEWLON, PRESIDENT, BRAINCO, USA

“I’ve absolutely had to change how I do things with the online learning gig, and definitely feel like I am ‘building the plane as I fly it’ sometimes!”

ZACHARY LINDEMANN, TEACHER, WIMBERLEY HIGH, WIMBERLEY, TEXAS



“Some of my intuition comes from the experience of being empathetic, so now I can look at a lesson plan and have a sense of how students might feel traveling through the learning.”

RHONDA BONDIE, DIRECTOR, PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, HGSE



CASEY NELSON: BRAINCO, USA

WIMBERLEY ISD: RHONDA BONDIE

and it is difficult for adults to tell how much is aggressive or not — there is a slight and significant difference to the tones and movements of a situation that is about to turn violent. One reason why I believe that I have not had to break up a fight in my classroom in the last six years is because I will intuitively pick up on and pivot towards a potential situation in order to de-escalate it.”

Knowing how to do this isn’t easy at first and requires a new teacher to build up his or her confidence, says CASEY (GREEN) NELSON, ED.M.’14.

“The first few years of teaching are incredibly challenging, and you feel like you have to have every minute planned and you are not able to deviate from those plans,” she says. “I did not trust my intuition because I had no data to back up what I was feeling. I was nervous every single day. But as you build experience, and confidence, you begin to sense when you need to alter course, sometimes mid-lesson, and sometimes completely unplanned.”

Reaching out to more experienced teachers helps, too, says KENTON SHIMOZAKI, who is currently teaching seventh-grade world studies at a charter school in Denver through the Harvard Teacher Fellows Program. It’s his first year in the classroom.

“As the year progresses, I sense that my teacher instincts are sharper. I feel more confident clarifying misconceptions in the lesson, defusing conflict between students, and recognizing what each student needs to be successful,” he says. “But there is a significant degree of doubt that comes with being a first-year teacher in a new school, so I find that it is important for me to check my instincts with veteran teachers. As often as my colleagues confirm my gut instincts, they also offer suggestions about how I could have better responded to a tough situation in class and how I can improve my practice going forward.”

Brewster says he also started trusting his intuition more once he had a sample of ideas under his belt and proof that those ideas might work.

“My second year teaching, I posed a question to the class: I know that we’re not going to have a difficult time being positive in room 230, right?” he says. “Most sixth-graders responded, ‘No!’ with joy. However, Daniel, with a straight face, said, ‘Yes.’”

Based on experiences during his first year, Brewster says he knew what Daniel needed: special attention. “So I took an interest in Daniel. I made it my point to learn more about him, to connect with his family, and highlight any positive achievement he made. Daniel moved after his eighth-grade year, and we stayed in contact. May of last year, he graduated high school in Jacksonville, Florida. I was in attendance and was one of the last people he spoke to before he was recently deployed in the Navy.”

Lecturer Rhonda Bondie, director of professional learning, says that this kind of empathy for learners often comes with experience.

“Some of my intuition comes from the experi-

ence of being empathetic, so now I can look at a lesson plan and have a sense of how students might feel traveling through the learning,” she says. “When teachers are new, just writing a lesson plan is challenging, so there is little time to feel the lesson from the student experience. As teachers become more experienced, I think we think about what we are going to do in a lesson and how learners might be feeling more in concert. This type of coordinated perspective taking and thinking about learning is teacher intuition.”

Sometimes, however, trusting your gut as a teacher doesn't always work—or not in the same way it had in the past. When Boles was teaching in Brookline, a child from a poorer family was reading two years below grade level. Again, she did what felt right. “I nurtured him, and I loved him,” she says. This had worked beautifully with other students, including the one from Iran. But in this situation, Boles says she also *didn't* do something: “I didn't push him. My intuition was to be nice to this student, to hug him. Would I have been better to push him harder or was it better to follow my intuition and hug him?”

Nirmalan says she has also made mistakes.

“There are times that I thought a student who had made a hurtful remark to another student needed a sharp rebuke, and when they either burst into tears or responded aggressively, I realized that I had unintentionally worsened or escalated the situation,” she says. “As an early-career teacher, I sometimes delivered public criticism to a student; as a more experienced teacher, I am more likely to have that conversation with a student privately in order to avoid shame or escalation. In all these cases, I file away those experiences so I can remember to act different next time.”

Bondie says the need to act quickly as a teacher often plays a role in what they do—or don't do.

“Unfortunately, most decisions we make as teachers use what [psychologist] Daniel Kahneman would characterize as fast thinking: decisions made fast, automatic, unconscious, and prone to error and bias,” she says. “Our decisions often live in our muscle memory, instead of being deliberate responses carefully considered by being present in the moment because teachers are making many decisions every minute of their day.”

As a result, a teacher's fast, intuitive response sometimes make things messier, as [JOHN TOURNAS](#), a current fellow in the Harvard Teacher Fellows Program, discovered one day this past year when he was teaching sixth-graders, alone, at the Bronx Community Charter School.

“Students were not listening to me, and so in the moment I decided to yell really loud to get their attention,” he says. “Rather than listening to me, the class erupted in chaos, students running around, yelling, standing on chairs.” He was at a loss for what to do. “Because we have to make 1 million

decisions every minute, sometimes I feel like all I have is my intuition.”

• • •

BUT WHAT IF TEACHERS had more? In Somerville, a company incubated at the Harvard iLab called BrainCo, USA, recently rolled out a wireless headband that uses EEG technology to quantify when students are engaged, something critical for learning. As a 2013 Gallup study showed, a 1% increase in student engagement can lead to a 6% improvement in reading scores and 8% in math scores.

Unfortunately, gauging engagement in a tangible way isn't easy to do.

Instead, says [MAX NEWLON, ED.M.'16](#), BrainCo's president, “teachers often use intuition to understand student engagement,” and usually base this on what they see: eye contact or body behavior. The student looking right at the teacher is assumed to be fully invested in the lesson while the student drawing on their arm is not.

As Nirmalan says, “teachers observe, or try to observe, and take in data on everything from eye contact, posture, work on the paper or laptop, doodling, and tone of voice to read the student's engagement and comprehension. At the same time, people are complex and just because our hunches are sometimes proven right does not mean we can always assume, for example, that the student who is doodling is disengaged, or that the student making eye contact has a thorough understanding of the directions.”

But what if we could end the guessing when it comes to engagement, Newlon asks? “What would

## The Halo Effect

Many educators have a strong sense of what's working in their classroom in terms of engaging their students. Doing active learning such as group discussions or hands-on activities are good examples. But rather than relying primarily on intuition to determine if these things are actually getting students' attention, what if teachers could somehow quantify that engagement? BrainCo's Focus 1 headband lets teachers see that in real time.



BRAINCO, USA

it be like if we could quantify this important state of mind?”

In a class where students are wearing the BrainCo headbands, teachers can do just that. Similar to a Fitbit, but for the head, not the wrist, the headband evaluates what's going on in the brain, and then sends information to the teacher's computer. The teacher can see engagement, in real time. For example, during a long discussion about polynomials, the teacher can glance at her screen and see that students one and two are engaged, but students three through 10 aren't. The teacher can adjust her teaching, in the moment, maybe moving from passive lecturing to a hands-on activity. She can also review the data after class and evaluate where the peaks and lows were.

“With our technology, teachers can see for themselves that certain methods are literally more engaging from a neuroscientific point of view,” Newlon says. “It validates their strategies and builds confidence that they are in fact more effective for increasing engagement.”

Gaining a better understanding of the science behind learning has certainly helped Bondie.

“I root all of my ‘go-to’ learning routines in cognitive and motivation sciences and culturally relevant pedagogy,” she says. “Teachers can look to what we know about working memory, elaboration, retrieval, and metacognition to guide decisions. For example, we know that about four bits of information is enough for our working memory, so it makes sense to move to an activity where students can elaborate and make meaning of the information rather than continuing when the students' working memory is on overload. Teachers should continually pursue an understanding of the science of learning. This will support better decision-making.”

Even without technology or a deep understanding of science, there are ways for teachers to pair intuition with something else when making decisions in the classroom, says Barney Brawer, a former teacher and principal who codirected the Harvard Project on Women's Psychology, Boys' Development, and the Culture of Manhood.

In a course that Brawer taught for many years at the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development at Tufts University, he helped teachers really think through actions they had taken in the past with students and then understand how intuition can be the source of their “best and worst moves.” Too often, he says, “we try a little of this, a little of that.” With a disruptive student, for example, we move the student's desk. (It worked for other students!) We call a parent. We yell—sometimes really loud. We give a hug. “We use our instincts and we improvise. We see how it goes. ... Our hearts are in the right place. We do our best. If we've tried something before and it worked, we try it again. If it bombed, we avoid it the next time. Trial and error.”

But is trial and error really the way to go, he says? “You wouldn't want to be a patient in a hospital whose methods relied so heavily on intuition or trial and error. ‘I don't know. I'm not sure. I just feel like it's time to take out her gallbladder.’”

There's not doubt that intuition is important, he says, but what if teachers also had proven techniques they could pull out when making decisions—like doctors and nurses have—in addition to gut feelings? Techniques like setting clear goals (what do you want to have happen here?) and examining existing data (what do we already know?)

Finding distance when acting or reacting in class is another technique, Brawer says, because teaching is very personal. “Our spontaneous reactions come from deep within us. They arise from the personal history we bring to the situation.”

Nelson says she definitely has taken things personally as a teacher and reacted in response.

“There have been many times where my intuition is telling me that a student is angry or frustrated with me, when in reality their energy or emotional state has nothing to do with me at all,” she says. “Sometimes it's drama with their friends, tough circumstances at home, lack of sleep, a difficult test; it could be anything.” Now, after teaching at Charlestown High School for nearly six years, instead of reacting in the moment, she'll have a quiet conversation with the student or ask in a note if they want to talk.

Having data on the student helps, too, she says. Before going virtual, she had a student who was very quiet, sometimes had their head down, and often left work incomplete. Intuition told her the student wasn't understanding the material. However, looking at assessment data, she realized the student was understanding the majority of what she was teaching. The issue was actually motivation.

“Every interaction we have with a student is a piece of data that builds and adds to our expertise, which ultimately becomes our intuition,” she says. “Both are essential to rely on to be an effective teacher. Intuition helps us identify an area that needs our attention, and concrete data helps us determine a course of action to improve a situation.”

These days, with little data to guide teachers in how to wrap up an academic year during a pandemic, Lindemann says his intuition is being tested.

“There's no ‘perfect’ way to finish up this school year,” he says. “While I'm preparing physical packets for my students without Internet access, they simply pale in comparison to what I'm doing online. And online teaching, in my opinion, pales in comparison to being face-to-face with my students. I usually am far more able to gather formative data on how lessons are going, and how my students are doing emotionally, but it's been way more difficult online. My intuition is not quite as sharp and my effectiveness as a teacher is now diminished. I miss my students!”



# Belonging

WHEN IT COMES TO EDUCATING REFUGEE STUDENTS,  
IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO JUST TEACH THEM. SCHOOLS ALSO NEED  
TO HELP THEM FEEL WELCOME — AND SUPPORTED.

STORY BY JESSICA LANDER, ED.M.'15 PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER HICKS

“Miss?!” 18-year-old Diane called in exasperation from across the room. “There is no way for me to answer this question!”

It’s mid-October, and 10 of my high school seniors are busy filling out the college Common Application. For more than two hours, I have been bouncing between computers answering questions.

As I sit down next to Diane, she jabs her hand at a question on the screen: “List the countries you are a citizen of,” the application asks.

“What do I put?” she asks, perplexed. “I’m a citizen of nowhere.”

My students come from across the globe, from more than 30 countries in total. They have escaped war in Syria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). They have been raised in refugee camps in Turkey and Thailand. They have traveled with their families from sprawling cities in Brazil, Lebanon, Cambodia, and the Dominican Republic, seeking opportunities and education. They have fled gang violence, roaming militia, and terrorists in El Salvador, Somalia, and Afghanistan.

Diane is one of a handful of my students who is stateless, one of more than 4 million such people globally, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Before her birth, Diane’s parents fled the brutal civil war in the Congo. Diane never set foot in the country of her ancestors. She was born and raised in a refugee camp in Zambia. After 17 years of waiting, she and her family were granted refugee status here in the United States.

Throughout her life, no country has ever claimed her as theirs. Nowhere does she legally belong. And, sitting in the computer lab on that crisp fall afternoon, we realize that even the Common Application will not acknowledge Diane’s existence.

**WHAT DOES IT** mean to belong?

For nearly 26 million refugees across the globe, plus an additional 41 million internally displaced by conflict and millions more displaced by disasters, exclusion is a daily, lived experience. As Associate Professor [SARAH DRYDEN-PETERSON, ED.D.’09](#), says, for refugees, “the foundation on which their lives exist is built on a lack of belonging.”

Dryden-Peterson has devoted her career to working with refugees and those who support displaced people. She is particularly concerned about the future of young people caught up in an eddy of conflicts, epidemics, and natural disasters.

How do the world’s 13 million refugee children imagine a future when there is a very real worry that tomorrow they will no longer be welcome? As Dryden-Peterson puts it, “your sense of belonging is always tattered at the edges because you don’t know when someone else is going to make a decision that means you can’t stay.”

The vast majority of the globe’s displaced children will grow up with this uncertainty. According to the UNHCR, each year, less than 1% of the world’s refugees are permanently resettled, providing them the chance at fully belonging once more. But as Dryden-Peterson emphasizes, belonging requires more than just legal status.

This winter, she launched a new Ed School initiative, REACH (Research, Education, and Action for Change and Hope) in collaboration with Lecturer [ELIZABETH ADELMAN, ED.M.’08, ED.D.’18](#), and Columbia University postdoctoral research fellow [VIDUR CHOPRA, ED.M.’15; ED.D.’18](#). Their hope: convene researchers, policymakers, and educators with the goal of sharing and amplifying best practices that create opportunities and futures for displaced young people globally. It is important to note that many of these considerations and best practices apply to all students with ambiguous legal status or other uncertainties connected to migration.

The three believe that schools have an essential role to play in welcoming and grounding refugee students — whether that classroom is in a billowing tent in the middle of Kenya’s Kakuma Refugee Camp or in a cavernous New England public school. It is not enough that schools transmit academic content. For a refugee child, Dryden-Peterson explains, “If they don’t have the sense of ‘I am comfortable here. I can imagine myself here. I feel safe here,’ then very little learning can happen.”

Countries, communities, and classrooms across the globe are grappling with how to educate and in-

**“If they don’t have the sense of ‘I am comfortable here. I can imagine myself here. I feel safe here,’ then very little learning can happen.”**

Professor Sarah Dryden-Peterson

Jessica Lander



Photograph by Jill Anderson

tegrate refugee children on a scale never seen before, but, as Adelman says, the work is often siloed.

“How can we connect and disseminate ideas?” she says. “How can we make central the often unheard but knowledgeable voices of practitioners?” With REACH, the three researchers see solutions in collaborations and valuing and elevating multi-country academic studies alongside classroom-level lesson plans.

Through the choices we make in the classroom cultures we foster, our curriculum, and our school and state policies, educators and policymakers send refugee students a powerful message. It is our choice to decide whether that message is one of exclusion or inclusion.

For Diane it was in a Zambian school where she was first taught that she did not belong. Last winter, she shared part of her story in a book my class published, *We Are America* (which later grew into a national project). “My first day [of sixth grade] was horrible. ... Kids in school called me a *caburunda* (a name they called all refugees and which meant you weren’t a part of the country). I was so mad. I always believed I was Zambian, even though I was born in a camp. But here in Solwezi, I realized that I was not. I started thinking, who am I? Where do I belong, if not in Zambia? I realized that if Zambia didn’t recognize me as its citizen, then I had no country to call my own.”

**TURKEY WOULD NEVER BE** home for Safiya. A week into seventh grade, her family fled Iraq after terrorists targeted and almost killed her brother for working with the U.S. Army.

Eleven-year-old Safiya didn’t realize they were leaving forever. She was just excited — she had never traveled to another country before. Of course they would be coming home, she thought. In a large bag she packed clothes, a box of pictures, and her favorite stuffed animal, a gift her father bought in Syria when she was a baby. Her father packed a few carpentry tools. Her mom brought thick blankets and, carefully wrapped, her glass lemon squeezer — a wedding present from her mother-in-law.

After a multi-day journey on crowded buses, her family settled into a second-floor apartment in Turkey and tried to reassemble a life. But when Safiya tried to enroll in school, she and her parents were turned away. Safiya knew not a single word of Turkish, and without the language, the schools would not allow her to study.

More than half of all school-age refugee children around the world, roughly 4 million young people, are not enrolled in school. The reasons are varied: Parents might have safety concerns or lack the right documents; classrooms can be overcrowded; students might need to work. But even when enrolled, refugee students, too often, don’t

feel they belong. How can schools welcome displaced students into their communities and truly instill in them a sense of belonging? Here are six steps schools and communities should take, based on my conversations with Dryden-Peterson, Adelman, Chopra, and other educators in the field, as well as my own work as a teacher working with refugee students.

**1. Link language learning to community building.** Safiya’s best and first teachers in Turkey were two teenage girls who lived in the apartment above them. Quickly the girls became inseparable. They played volleyball in the street, they cooked endless bowls of macaroni in each other’s apartments, they played tricks on their brothers. And, through her neighbors’ careful tutelage, Safiya mastered the basic outlines of the language. So much so that a year later, she was able to pass a Turkish test that allowed her access again to formal education.

Young people are most motivated to master a new language when they feel a sense of belonging. As refugee children grapple with the trauma of displacement and flight, often simultaneously they must master new languages to regain access to education — a daily reminder that *here* is not home. Research suggests that newcomers learn fastest when they have host-country friends they can practice their new language with, but they often have too few opportunities to make such connections.

**2. Train teachers to know their students and give them tools to support their growth.** When Safiya was finally allowed to attend the Turkish school, she quickly realized that, despite her rapidly expanding Turkish, she would always be an unwelcome refugee. School was not nearly as strict as her all-girls school in Iraq. But more starkly, teachers just didn’t seem to care about her. If she showed up late or missed days of school, no one followed up. If other students forgot their homework, they got reprimanded; for her and the other refugee in class, the teacher never seemed to care if they did their work. Not once that year did she turn in an assignment.

Too often, teachers are ill-prepared to support their newest refugee students. For teachers in countries that neighbor conflicts, classroom sizes and responsibilities might transform seemingly overnight — like the Lebanese teacher who suddenly has to teach an entire second-shift class of newly arrived Syrian refugees, as Adelman describes in research she is conducting for REACH. In resettlement countries, in Europe and the United States, teachers might not even be aware that their newest student has fled their home.

As Adam Strom, the director and cofounder of Re-Imagining Migration, an organization working in collaboration with the Ed School’s Project Zero, says, to successfully welcome refugee students,

“Without kids being able to imagine that broader sense of collective, there is no way to shift migration, politics, and policies away from exclusion.”

Professor Sarah Dryden-Peterson

teachers need concrete and ongoing training and access to resources. Collaborating with more than 36 organizations from museums and universities to individual school districts, Re-Imagining Migration is developing a framework, curriculums, and trainings that aim to shift how we teach and understand migration with the goal of helping teachers intentionally create more welcoming classrooms.

**3. Fostering responsibility in native-born young people.** When Safiya was 14, her family was granted refugee resettlement in the United States. In early September they flew to Massachusetts. Within weeks, Safiya was enrolled in ninth grade.

In Turkey, Safiya had sat at the back of the class, going whole days without saying a word. But in her new U.S. school, group work was the norm. Safiya was naturally outgoing, and with the encouragement of the class structure, she started striking up conversations with her new peers. What she learned surprised her. Although they might not be from Iraq, so many students shared her story of migration. Even most of her U.S.-born peers had immigration stories of parents, or grandparents, or great-grandparents. Though her class was filled with students of many nationalities, ethnicities, and religions, Safiya felt that she and her peers shared much in common.

As a junior in my class, I watched as Safiya quietly grew into a leader, as she and her peers tackled a semester-long civics project. Everywhere I looked, Safiya was there, organizing a letter-writing campaign to state representatives, reviewing proposal drafts, collecting petition signatures. Again and again that spring she was surprised when others — both peers and adults — listened and took her seriously. That spring Safiya and her classmates presented at the Massachusetts State House. That morning she spoke with pride about their work in her adopted community, realizing that America now felt like home.

For Chopra, belonging comes partly when refugee students “feel they have a voice and a stake in their community.” To accomplish this, schools and communities must foster in native-born young people the desire to connect with, welcome, and hear their refugee peers. Too often refugees (and immigrant-origin students, more generally) are “othered,” he says.

But migration, Strom argues, is a shared human experience. “Everyone, at some point in their family history, has a story of migration,” he says, “whether voluntary or forced. We should be using these experiences to build bridges.”

For Dryden-Peterson, strengthening students’ feeling of responsibility to others not just locally, but globally, is imperative.

“Without kids being able to imagine that broader sense of collective, there is no way to shift migra-

tion, politics, and policies away from exclusion,” she says. To this end, REACH is compiling resources for educators to help them foster welcoming classrooms. But she also recognizes this can be challenging, particularly in countries neighboring conflict areas that might suddenly be hosting huge populations of refugees while still struggling to support their own people. Here the global community has a responsibility to ensure that marginalized people in host countries and refugees both have opportunities, “jointly, rather than one at the expense of another,” she says.

**ON THE FIRST DAY** of high school in the United States, standing in the middle of an enormous cafeteria, Robert felt very much alone. He knew he stood out with his clothes straight from a Ugandan refugee camp. He was positive everyone knew he was different, that he didn’t fit in.

Robert was born into conflict. In 1998, the year Robert was born, his native country in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in central Africa erupted in war. When he was 12, his family was murdered, and Robert fled to Uganda, where he lived on the border and then in a refugee camp, before being resettled in Massachusetts.

When he arrived in the United States, Robert had been so excited to study. For weeks he had been bubbly with nerves and excitement.

“I am going to get the chance to study with white people!” he thought.

But he quickly became deflated. His new school was huge — floor upon floor of classrooms, a warren of tunnels. On his first day, he quickly got turned around, barely found his classes, and felt too shy to speak. Weeks slipped by, and Robert struggled to find his footing. There was little he seemed to share with his new peers — few interests, fewer experiences. In the refugee camp, it seemed so easy to forge friendships, even despite the dozens of languages and the hodgepodge of nationalities and ethnicities. Here, everyone seemed divided into settled groups.

“There was no group that I could fit into,” he says. For a young man who could converse in 10 languages, in his first months in America, Robert was practically silent at school.

**4. Honor and include students’ cultures and histories.** I met Robert when he took my U.S. history class during his junior year, one year after he arrived in the United States. At the culmination of our immigration unit, I asked students to share a slice of their migration story, told through a favorite family recipe, which we published in a cookbook. For two weeks they gathered, translated, and recorded recipes, then drafted and edited stories detailing food traditions and memories. We end-

ed with a global feast. Tanzanian chapati breads, Mexican tamales, Nepalese momo dumplings.

When I ask Robert this fall what class assignment he most remembered, he was quick to mention the cookbook.

“At school, I didn’t see any kind of representation [of my culture],” he says. No one dressed like his mother had in the DRC, no one cooked stews like his aunt. “You feel like there’s not space for [your culture].” As Robert explains, the cookbook provided an opportunity to share and be seen. “Somebody is learning about your culture. They want to know more. It makes you feel like your culture contributes something to a larger community.”

Refugee children work hard to mold themselves to new cultures, contort their mouths around new languages, adopt new mannerisms. But too often that comes at a high price — the feeling that belonging can only be gained by letting go of who they once were. Schools signal to refugee students they belong when they create ways to acknowledge and honor the histories and traditions of newcomers in classrooms and curriculum.

**5. Give students the language to understand their past and imagine a future.** In Robert’s senior year, he took a course on the literature of the Holocaust. He pored over the graphic novel *Maus* and was captivated by Christian Picciolini’s TED Talk describing his descent into the Neo-Nazi movement. For Robert, the stories and recollections were painfully palpable. Robert’s family had been murdered by a neighboring tribe, as part of an ethnic conflict that mirrors, in many ways, the horrific violence of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Seven thousand miles from home, Robert was gaining the language to begin to understand his own life’s story.

“I had faced terrible experiences of losing people, of oppression, of terror,” he says. “But in studying other people who had been through such terrible things, I realized that these things didn’t only happen to me.”

As Dryden-Peterson describes, often refugee students are not given the skills to make sense of the conflict or oppression that drove them from home. They study the history of their host or new country, but those curriculums rarely provide the tools needed to understand why they have experienced inequality and exclusion. Without the skills to process their past, it is hard to build a future.

**6. Create opportunities and space for student-teacher connections.** This past fall, four years after Robert landed in the United States, I had the opportunity to ask him about those first months of school, those months where he felt he didn’t belong. He stared for long moments into empty space before answering, his response thoughtful.

“Even though I felt sad, I still needed to live my life and accept whatever was happening. ... There’s so much that can put a hold on life. And if you let it, then you won’t get anywhere. ... If I felt like I didn’t fit in, then I wouldn’t want to come to school, or maybe I would hate my classes, I wouldn’t do the work. But somehow, I got along. There were some teachers and we talked sometimes. Those conversations gave me a little more confidence. Even though I felt different, I still felt like some people knew me.”

I was honored to be one of those teachers who got to learn with and from Robert. I grew to know him over conversations in class, but also in the in-between times. Robert often came early or stayed late, our conversations ranging over the political, the historical, and sometimes just the everyday.

Dryden-Peterson says that schools can help refugee students regain belonging by serving as spaces where teachers can listen and build connections. Impact lies, she says, in “the ways in which teachers are able to interact with kids that show that they actively want to understand what the child’s experience has been, who they are, what their hopes are, and what they’re bringing to the classroom.” For this, teachers and students need time and space to build these authentic relationships.

To make sense of learning, and also to make sense of their journey, refugee children (indeed, all children) need guides. They need teachers who they can ask hard questions of, who, as Dryden-Peterson describes, “can help them grapple with understanding the inequalities they have experienced.” And who can support them in fashioning their futures.

**LAST SPRING ROBERT** graduated from high school. His unfathomable discipline and resilience earned him a place at an elite New England university. When I come to visit campus, he shows me around confidently. I hear his excitement when he talks about his classes, the soccer team he’s joined, the fraternity he is considering rushing. But perhaps what makes me smile most is that when we walk across campus, every two minutes it seems, someone stops Robert to say hi.

Laughing, I point out how popular he has become. He smiles.

“I thought it would always be hard for me to make connections with American people,” he says, “but here in college, they want to know you, they care about you, they think you are great, and that empowers me.”

**JESSICA LANDER, ED.M.’15**, IS A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER IN THE BOSTON AREA. SHE IS ALSO A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO *THE BOSTON GLOBE*, *USABLE KNOWLEDGE*, AND *ED*. SHE IS CURRENTLY ON SABBATICAL RESEARCHING AND WRITING A BOOK ABOUT IMMIGRANT EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES.



PDF RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS, FROM THE REACH HOMEPAGE:

**KOSOVIÆ: YOUR STORY**  
A PLAY ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES OF AN ETHNICALLY ALBANIAN YOUNG GIRL DURING THE KOSOVO WAR IN 1999. FOR AGES 10–14.

**LEARNING IN MANY WORLDS: MOMOLU’S JOURNEY FROM LIBERIA TO NEW YORK CITY**  
A NONFICTION STORY, BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF A YOUNG BOY FROM A VILLAGE IN LIBERIA. FOR AGES 14–18.

**HOW ANIS TOLD HIS STORY**  
A SHORT STORY AND NARRATED VIDEO ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES OF A YOUNG BOY IN THE WEST BANK WHO FOUND SOLACE IN MUSIC. FOR AGES 5–9.

**CONTINUING LEARNING AND COMMUNITY DURING CLOSURES**  
IN LIGHT OF COVID-19. A COLLECTION OF PAST CASES OF SCHOOL CLOSURES AND LESSONS LEARNED.

FIND THESE RESOURCES AND MORE: [REACH.GSE.HARVARD.EDU/ED](https://reach.gse.harvard.edu/ed)

# Grad.



“I would tell you all to go out and create your own non-profits or NGOs. That’s what I’m doing. I’ve seen it and I’ve done it, having been here as a student and as an administrator. I was just gobbling up tools, knowledge, excellence, always thinking about how am I going to apply this in the community? How am I going to connect theory and practice? When I was here and decided to leave an administrative position, colleagues thought I was crazy. ... This institution was getting the best of me and I thought, don’t Native students deserve the best of who I am?”

**CARMEN LOPEZ, ED.M.’00**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE HORIZONS AND WINNER OF THE 2020 AOCC ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, SPEAKING ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES DURING A PANEL DISCUSSION AT THE AOCC CONFERENCE

## IN MEMORY

## 1940–1949

NANCY BECK, M.A.T.'49

## 1950–1959

ROGER BARTINDALE, ED.M.'51

PETER MERENDA, C.A.S.'51

ROBERT DEMAINE, M.A.T.'52

SARA GOODMAN, ED.M.'52

ALICE CASEY, ED.M.'53

JOHN HERZOG, M.A.T.'53

HILDA STEVENSON, GSE'53

JOYCE WAGNER, M.A.T.'53

DAVID HUNTINGTON, ED.M.'54

WILLIAM KELLOGG, ED.M.'54

LUCIA SUTTON, M.A.T.'54

PHILIP CROTTY JR., M.A.T.'55

WENDE HARPER, ED.M.'55

JACOB NEEDLE, M.A.T.'55

MARGARET SMITH, M.A.T.'56

MARILYN YALOM, M.A.T.'56

FREDERICA DIMMICK, M.A.T.'57

BRUCE HUNT, M.A.T.'57

PHILIP MCCURDY, M.A.T.'57

JOHN ANDERSON, M.A.T.'58

ALLAN HARTMAN, M.A.T.'54,

C.A.S.'57, ED.D.'58

JANE ORANS, ED.M.'58

REDMOND FINNEY, ED.M.'59

BENEDICT MAZZA, M.A.T.'59

N. LOUISE MCCLENATHAN,

ED.M.'59

## 1960–1969

PATRICK FOLEY JR., ED.M.'60

HELEN ARMSTRONG, M.A.T.'61

HENRY FOWLER, M.A.T.'61

GERALD HARDCASTLE, ED.M.'61

CAROLE HUXLEY, M.A.T.'61

LEWIS KNIGHT, M.A.T.'61

ROBERT LEWIS, M.A.T.'61

JOSEPH SATERIALE, ED.M.'61

CAROLE FERENGE, M.A.T.'62

JOSEPH MASSIMO, ED.M.'57,

ED.D.'62

SHEILA ARONS, M.A.T.'63

EVELYN MCKENNEY, ED.M.'63

NINA SEGRE, M.A.T.'63

KARMA SMITH, M.A.T.'63

STEFANIE SULLIVAN, M.A.T.'63

JUDITH AUSTIN, M.A.T.'64

MARK SMITH, M.A.T.'64

SUZANNE SOPPET, ED.M.'64

RAYMOND THIBAUT, M.A.T.'64

THOMAS BECHTEL, ED.M.'65

JILL BECKER, M.A.T.'65

VINSON BRONSON, ED.M.'65

RONALD DUTTON, M.A.T.'56,

ED.D.'65

SUSAN FARGO, M.A.T.'65

ALFRED LAZZERI, ED.M.'65

CHARLES SMITH JR., C.A.S.'65

RHODA BARUCH, ED.M.'60, ED.D.'66

SHEILA DEITCHMAN, ED.M.'66

## 1964

Elizabeth Edgerly, M.A.T., is the author of *My Mother Went to Jail to Win the Vote: Diary of the Daughter of a Militant Suffragist*, available in digital and paperback.

## 1973

Rozelia LaFayette Kennedy, Ed.M., received her Ph.D. in 2018 from the University of South Florida in Tampa, in curriculum and instruction. Her dissertation focused on her brother, **Bernard LaFayette Jr., Ed.M.'71, Ed.D.'74**, an adult educator. She is currently the project director of HA! Healthy and Agile, a free training center for educators, based in San Antonio, Florida.

Samuel Meisels, Ed.M.'69, Ed.D., received the Simms/Mann Institute Whole Child Award for Visionary Leadership last October at the Simms/Mann Institute Think Tank and Whole Child Award ceremony in Los Angeles. He is the founding director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska.

## 1975

Stephen Hamilton, M.A.T.'69, Ed.D., published *Career Pathways for All Youth: Lessons from the School-to-Work Movement* (see page 19) in February with Harvard Education Press. Hamilton retired from Cornell University in 2015 and currently lives in San Diego where he is participating in an Urban Institute project to promote youth apprenticeship.

Alan Woodruff, Ed.D., recently published the sixth novel in his Lucius White legal thriller series.

## 1977

P. Sinikka Sahi, Ed.M., finished her Ph.D. in education in the spring of 2019 from the University of Helsinki. Sahi's dissertation focuses on virtual mentoring of student teachers using virtual simulation.

## 1979

Ronald Kronish, Ed.D., blogs for *The Times of Israel*, which can be accessed on his website, along with information about his books, lectures, and programs about inter-religious dialogue, education, and action in the context of peacebuilding. [ronkronish.com](http://ronkronish.com)

## 1980

Brenda Kinsler, Ed.M., in collaboration with Cynthia White and Charles Smith, published *From Whence We Came: A History of the African American Kinslers* in 2019.

## 1985

Juan Guillermo Feliciano-Valera, Ed.M.'75, Ed.D., became a board of trustee member of Interamerican University, serving as chair of the academic and students affairs committee. A retired minister, he is also vice chair of the religious life committee.

## 1986

Vicki Jacobs, C.A.S.'80, Ed.D., retired last August from her administrative work at the Ed School (most recently, as faculty director of the Specialized Studies Program, the Teacher Education Program, and the Field Experience Program), but continues to teach as she works toward full retirement.

## 1987

William Haddad, Ed.M., left the Defense Intelligence Agency where he was working in the applicant screening and security clearance branch. He is now at the Providence VA Medical Center.

## 1988

Fernando Reimers, Ed.M.'84, Ed.D., was named to the UNESCO Commission on the Futures of Education. The commission will prepare a report on global education



## Congratulations Class of 2020!

You are in our hearts as we (remotely) celebrate your hard work!  
Full Commencement coverage: [gse.harvard.edu/commencement](http://gse.harvard.edu/commencement).

# Alumni Council Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education

2020 Recipient: **Johan Uvin, Ed.M.'99, Ed.D.'03**

STORY BY STEVE RAGNO

This year, **JOHAN UVIN** received the Ed School's annual Alumni Council Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education. Uvin is currently president of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), a nonprofit based in Washington, D.C., that equips diverse leaders with the skills to close opportunity gaps in education and workforce development in the highest-need communities. Prior to joining IEL, Uvin served in the U.S. Department of Education during the Obama administration as the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, as well as acting director of its policy research and evaluation services division. Uvin co-chaired the Inter-agency Forum on Disconnected Youth, a multi-agency federal collaboration to improve the learning and employment outcomes of our nation's most vulnerable young people. Leveraging the power of cross-sector strategic partnerships, Uvin also coordinated efforts to implement President Obama's memorandum on job-driven training. Additionally, he led the innovative Pay for Success program, which only awards funding to private sector partners who achieve measurably successful outcomes for students. Uvin became an American citizen after coming to the United States from the Netherlands to pursue graduate education. As a public servant, he served on the Domestic Policy Council's New Americans Citizenship and Integration Initiative and the White House Task Force on New Americans to welcome and support naturalized citizens. For his many notable contributions to our nation, Uvin was a recipient of the 2016 Outstanding American by Choice Award given by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

STEVE RAGNO IS THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS AND ANNUAL GIVING

### What is the Alumni Council Award?

HGSE's Alumni Council Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education began in 1985 to recognize alumni who have made a significant impact in the field of education. Potential awardees are nominated by other alumni of the school, and the Ed School's Alumni Council selects one recipient each year. Typically, the awardee is presented with the award at the school's annual Convocation ceremony. This year, the award was done virtually.

### How do I nominate someone for the award?

Submit a nomination at [gse.harvard.edu/alumni/council/nomination](http://gse.harvard.edu/alumni/council/nomination).

### What is the Alumni Council?

The HGSE Alumni Council is a dedicated group of volunteers who work to strengthen the school's alumni community and engage alumni with each other and back to the Ed School. They attend two meetings on campus annually, and they host events, are active on social media, and work on projects to advance alumni engagement at the school.

### How can I get involved?

In the spring, the school opens applications for alumni to join the Alumni Council. Want to get involved before then? Engage on social media, keep us updated with your news and story ideas, and consider becoming an Alumni Advocate. Go to [gse.harvard.edu/hgse100/alumni](http://gse.harvard.edu/hgse100/alumni) for details.



ANNE MEYER, ED.M.'66  
 EDWARD WHALEN, ED.M.'66  
 LAURA AVERY, ED.M.'67  
 CYNTHIA COOK, M.A.T.'68  
 JOANNE DAVIS, ED.M.'68  
 DAVID NAPIOR, GSE'68  
 EDWARD YAGLOU, M.A.T.'57,  
 C.A.S.'61, ED.D.'68  
 FRANCIS AMORY III, M.A.T.'69  
 DOROTHY BARNHOUSE, ED.M.'69  
 MARTHA GORDON, M.A.T.'69

1970-1979

JOHN DUNN JR., ED.M.'70  
 EDWARD ESTY II, ED.M.'62,  
 ED.D.'70  
 MICHAEL NAROSNY, M.A.T.'70  
 CHARLES YEAGER, ED.M.'67,  
 ED.D.'70  
 RICHARD SEDERSTROM,  
 C.A.S.'71  
 RICHARD SOVDE, ED.D.'71  
 FRANCES BARNARD, GSE'73  
 JUDITH CUSICK, ED.M.'73  
 EVA TRAVERS, M.A.T.'66, ED.D.'73  
 PAUL LING, ED.M.'75  
 ROCHELLE LURIE, ED.M.'76  
 ROBERTA SACKS, ED.M.'76  
 MARY-JANE YURCHAK, ED.M.'59,  
 ED.D.'76  
 MAUREEN JACKSON, ED.M.'77  
 LEWIS GREENLY, ED.M.'78  
 RUTH BLACK, ED.D.'79  
 MARCIA CHELLIS KAY, ED.M.'79  
 DEBABRATA SEN, ED.D.'79

1980-1989

BETSY PARSONS, C.A.S.'82  
 GENEVIEVE WYNER, ED.M.'82  
 BETTY BARDIGE, M.A.T.'72,  
 C.A.S.'77, ED.D.'83  
 CONSTANCE TURNER, ED.M.'83  
 MELINDA WALSH, ED.M.'83  
 KARIN FROOM, ED.M.'84  
 ALEXANDER DREIER, ED.M.'86  
 RAUL RUIZ, ED.M.'81, ED.D.'88

1990-1999

NANCY GOLDMAN, ED.M.'91  
 BRECKEN CHINN-SWARTZ,  
 ED.M.'93  
 ROBERT FAIRBANKS, ED.M.'93  
 NANCY CLARK-CHIARELLI,  
 ED.M.'87, ED.D.'94  
 NOEL IGNATIEV, ED.M.'85,  
 C.A.S.'95  
 KRIESTA WATSON, ED.M.'95  
 LISA FADEN, ED.M.'96  
 JACQUELINE COSSANTINO,  
 ED.M.'91, ED.D.'99

2000-2010

GUIOMAR GARCIA, ED.M.'96,  
 ED.D.'01

imperatives and on the purposes education systems should pursue in a rapidly changing world. Reimers is currently faculty director of the International Education Policy Program at the Ed School.

1993

**Mark Gesner, Ed.M.**, recently coauthored *Your Life is Your Message: Discovering the Core of Transformational Leadership*. Gesner is executive director of the Hub for Innovation and Community Engaged Learning at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee.

1995

**Kristen Warner, Ed.M.**, was named one of two teachers of the year in the Rye City School District in Rye, New York. Warner teaches AP U.S. government and politics and AP psychology at Rye High School.

1997

**Jeff DeCagna, Ed.M.**, in August 2019 became the 32nd recipient of the Academy of Leaders Award from the American Society of Association Executives.

**Kate O'Neill, Ed.M.'90, Ed.D.**, was appointed secretary of higher education in New Mexico by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in 2019. She is spearheading an initiative to provide tuition- and fee-free college at all public colleges and universities in the state. She is also working with national foundations to increase nontraditional college student enrollment and improve attainment levels.

1998

**Brian Buckley, Ed.M.**, is executive director of the Southwest Native-American Foundation, which offers scholarships to outstanding enrolled university and high school students of Native American tribes in the southwest. He also recently started working with second-



2020: BEFORE ZOOM

Before the coronavirus closed campus and turned learning virtual, Appian Way was a busy place for the community. First and foremost, on January 20, the school hosted a kickoff event on campus to celebrate the school's Centennial. The event included a series of panel discussions on the future of education, as well as a party for the community. A month later, on February 20, a Centennial event for alumni in the Washington, D.C. area was held. The D.C. event (an extension of Appian Way) included Dean Bridget Long; Professor Marty West; **LINDSAY FRYER, ED.M.'08**; and **SCOTT SARGRAD, ED.M.'08**. And at the end of February, thankfully, before all our lives changed, the annual student-organized **Alumni of Color Conference** was held, celebrating 18 years of bringing the Ed School community and other educators together to discuss and honor the work and leadership of people of color in education. This year's conference had the highest number registered: 700!



ELIO PALARES RUIZ; KAVEH SARBARI; JILL ANDERSON

third-, and fourth-graders at Puente de Hozho Puente de Hózhó elementary school in Flagstaff, Arizona.

2001

**Billie Gastic Rosado, Ed.M.**, was named associate dean of applied liberal arts, languages, and post-traditional undergraduate studies in 2016 at the NYU School of Professional Studies.

2004

**Rebecca Blouwolf, Ed.D.**, was named national language teacher of the year by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in November. She wrote of the honor, "I plan to use my platform to promote respect for multilingual people in America."

**Jeffrey Garrett, Ed.M.**, cohosts a podcast called *All of the Above* with **Manuel Rustin, Ed.M.** Now in its third season, the podcast explores issues in education with educators and noneducators. When not in the studio, Garrett is senior director of leadership development for the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools. Rustin is a social science teacher at John Muir High School Early College Magnet in Pasadena, California.

**Christine Power, Ed.M.**, was named director of instruction and innovation for Medfield (Massachusetts) Public Schools this past fall. Prior, she was a social studies teacher at Medfield High School since 1997.

**Matt Underwood, Ed.M.**, became the executive director of innovation for Atlanta Public Schools in January 2019. Prior, he served for 12 years as the executive director of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School.

2006

**Daren Graves, Ed.M.'00, Ed.D.**, and **Scott Seider, Ed.M.'04, Ed.D.**, recently published *Schooling for Critical Consciousness: Engaging Black and Latinx Youth in Analyzing,*

*Navigating, and Challenging Racial Injustice* with Harvard Education Press. The book draws from the authors' four-year study involving more than 300 youth.

**Michael Stepniak, Ed.D.**, published *Beyond the Conservatory Model: Reimagining Classical Music Performance Training in Higher Education* last fall with Peter Sirotn, concertmaster of the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra. Stepniak is dean and professor of music at Shenandoah Conservatory at Shenandoah University in Virginia.

2008

**Scott Seider, Ed.M.'04, Ed.D.**, and **Daren Graves, Ed.M.'00, Ed.D.'06**, recently published *Schooling for Critical Consciousness: Engaging Black and Latinx Youth in Analyzing, Navigating, and Challenging Racial Injustice* with Harvard Education Press. The book draws from the authors' four-year study involving more than 300 youth.

2009

**Anne Jones, Ed.M.'98, Ed.D.**, co-founded District C, a North Carolina-based nonprofit that offers training to high school students in solving real-life problems. Prior, Jones was a middle school science teacher, a consultant for the Data Wise project, and chief program officer at the nonprofit, Project Lead the Way.

2010

**Magda (Wierzbicka) Joshi, Ed.M.**, recently joined United World College of the Atlantic, her alma mater, in London, as events and alumni engagement manager.

**Chris San Antonio, Ed.M.**, is a research project manager for STEM curriculum development through the Boston Science Museum. He and his team created online curriculum and STEM activities for families to use during the coronavirus crisis.

2013

**Almi Abeyta, Ed.M.'09, Ed.D.**, became the superintendent of Chelsea Public Schools in Massachusetts in August 2019.

**Cecilia Zhang, Ed.M.**, married Benjamin Bathgate Talbot on October 26, 2019. The reception was held at the Atlanta High Museum of Art.

2014

**Ryan Stewart, Ed.L.D.**, was named secretary of education for the State of New Mexico this past August. Prior, he was a regional executive director for Partners in School Innovation, a national nonprofit that helps low-income students of color, and taught algebra and science in California and Philadelphia.

2017

**Annice Enyonam-Kwawu Fisher, Ed.L.D.**, received the Iowa State University Outstanding Young Alumni Award last fall. The award recognizes Iowa State alumni age 40 and under who have excelled in their professions and provided service to their communities. She is a founding member of BEE FREE Woman, a coaching service for women to overturn fixed mindsets.

2019

**Tracy Edwards, Ed.M.**, was chosen by the Knowles Teacher Initiative as a member of its 2019 cohort of teaching fellows. Fellows are promising high school math and science teachers just beginning their careers. Edwards teaches at Hillsboro High School in Nashville.

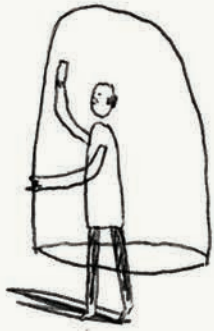
2020

**Todd Stewart, Ed.L.D.**, became superintendent of the Ashburnham-Westminister Regional School District in Massachusetts in December 2019. Prior, he was a superintendent fellow in Worcester, a social studies teacher, and a principal.



## 2020: CENTENNIAL READING

Before COVID-19, before everything got turned upside down, *Ed.* magazine captured some of our favorite readers checking out the special issue we published in January focused on the school's Centennial. They include (clockwise, starting at the top right corner): **ANN (EARLY) CLYDE, Ed.M.'83**; 10-year old Ed M. from Ohio, reading "his" magazine cover to cover — something his grandmother, Tammy, says he does with every issue. *Ed* even brings *Ed.* to school to share with classmates; **Dinesh Thapa, the face of HGSE; XIAODONG YUE, Ed.M.'88, Ed.D.'93**, during his visit to campus in March from Hong Kong; **EVELYN CHURCH HATFIELD, Ed.M.'42**, our oldest living alum; and **MIDHAT AQEEL, Ed.M.'13**, and her daughter, Sumaiyyah.



7,800



● ON MARCH 25, WITH THE CAMPUS SHUT DOWN AND STUDENTS JUST BACK FROM SPRING BREAK, HARVARD HOSTED 7,800 CLASSES ON ZOOM, WITH NEARLY **87,000** PARTICIPANTS ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY.