

2019-2020 LEVERAGE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOW PROFILES



Riley Bauling

Regional Superintendent, Achievement First

Brooklyn, NY

Riley Bauling is a regional superintendent for Achievement First, working with New York-based middle schools and principals. Prior to his current role, he was the principal of Achievement First Bushwick Middle School. Before becoming principal, he taught math after being placed there by Teach For America and worked as the STEM dean at the school.

In a previous life, he was a policy analyst for the Albuquerque City Council, ran literacy tutoring programs in Bremerton, Wash., and was a journalist in Albuquerque, N.M. He has his bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico in political science, and a master's of public administration from New York University, along with a master's of education from Hunter College.

In his free time, he loves spending time with his wife, Leah, and their dog, Oso.



Alex Bronson

Principal, Williamsburg Collegiate, Uncommon Schools

Brooklyn, NY

Alex Bronson became the Principal at Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School after working as a 5th grade science teacher and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction at WCCS. Alex was a 2007 Teach for America Corps Member in Brooklyn, NY where she first fell in love with teaching. After her first two years of teaching Alex sought a community of people working together to end educational inequity, which is when she found Uncommon Schools. Under her leadership WCCS has grown both academically and culturally, seeing double digit gains in math and ELA on the State Exam.

Alex is deeply invested in the mission at Uncommon Schools and is grateful for the opportunity to track student progress not only in middle school but in high school and college as well. Her husband is the Director of College Completion at the Uncommon High School her students attend, and the understanding she has gained over the past four years regarding the preparation students need for the first day of high school to ensure they are set up for success for the college process has helped frame her vision for her school and the significance of middle school on the path to college.



Anetra Cheatham

Manager of Instructional Leadership, Region 5 Education Service Center

Beaumont, TX

Anetra Cheatham serves as the Manager of Instructional Leadership for the Region 5 Education Service Center in the Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) program. The TIL program, inspired by and grounded in the principles of Leverage Leadership, launched in 2017 with a pilot reaching 57 campuses across 3 regions of the state. Anetra provides professional development, implementation support, and coaching for 18 campuses engaged in the pilot.

Before joining the Texas Instructional Leadership program, she served as Principal in the Beaumont Independent School District, leading her elementary campus to improve the level of instructional rigor and realize double digit gains in the domains of student growth and post-secondary readiness in just 2 years. Additionally, she has enjoyed the privilege of working at every level within K-12 as Middle School Principal, High School Assistant Principal, After-school Program Coordinator, and Teacher. Throughout all of her roles, she has proudly served the communities and students with the greatest need.

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Colleen Colarusso
Chief Schools Officer, Blackstone Valley Prep

Providence, RI

Colleen Colarusso has been the Chief Schools Officer for Blackstone Valley Prep since 2016. In this role she manages, coaches, and supports five K-8 Heads of School. Prior to this role, she was the founding Head of School for Elementary School 2 at Blackstone Valley Mayoral Academy which was recognized as a Commended School by the Rhode Island Department of Education in 2016. She joined the Blackstone Valley Prep team in 2009 as a founding Kindergarten teacher and began her career teaching kindergarten and first grade in the School Improvement Zone of Miami-Dade County Public Schools with Teach for America.

She received her Master of Education in Mind, Brain, and Education from Harvard University Graduate School of Education and holds a Bachelor's degree from Regis College. She has previously participated in the Leverage Leadership Institute with the Relay Graduate School of Education, the KIPP Leadership Design Fellowship, and the Emerging Leaders Program with Building Excellent Schools.



Prudence Daniels
Lead Partner, Denver Green School, Denver Public Schools

Denver, CO

Prudence Daniels is in her 4th year as Lead Partner at Denver Green School, an ECE-8 innovation school in southeast Denver. DGS is Prudence's dream school, serving students from over 30 countries speaking more than 25 different languages. Since 2014 DGS has risen from the 48th percentile on the Denver Public Schools Student Performance Framework to the 96th percentile in 2018. DGS was recently awarded the Colorado Governor's Distinguished Improvement Award and was a finalist for the Colorado Succeeds award in 2018.

Prior to her role at the Denver Green School, Prudence started her career in education serving middle school students with special needs followed by roles as a high school instructional coach, assistant principal, and Director of Peer Observation for Denver Public Schools.



Cecilia Jackson
Principal, Pioneer Academy, NYCDOE

Queens, NY

Cecilia Jackson has worked in education for the past 18 years, and has experience in both charter and traditional public schools. After a successful career in finance, she felt compelled to make an impact on underserved communities within the New York City education system. In 2003 she changed careers, and by 2008 she was the founding principal of Pioneer Academy in Corona, Queens, New York. Pioneer Academy is a Title 1 elementary school that serves approximately 910 scholars in kindergarten through 5th grade of mainly Central and South American families.

In 2018, Cecilia earned her doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her doctoral studies focused on developing the cultural competency of NYC educators as an adaptive approach to closing the achievement and opportunity gaps. Additionally, she has earned an Ed.M. at Teachers College, Columbia University, MEd in Special and General Education at Hunter College, and a BA in Political Science at Douglass College, Rutgers University. Cecilia Jackson is a Fellow in the Cahn Fellows Program for Distinguished Principals at Teachers College, Columbia University, and she received the Principal Award for Excellence from the New York City Department of Education.

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LeVar Jenkins

Principal, John Burroughs Elementary, D.C. Public Schools

Washington, D.C.

LeVar Jenkins is the Principal at Burroughs Elementary School located in Washington, D.C. As Principal of Burroughs Elementary School, LeVar has leveraged collaboration amongst stakeholders to build STEM programming for students. As such, Burroughs Elementary is currently the only established STEM school within DC Public Schools. During his second year as school leader, the school saw dramatic increases in both content areas of the PARCC assessment. Before entering the principalship, he served as Assistant Principal and SPED Coordinator within DC Public Schools. LeVar has taught in Fairfax County Public Schools, VA and Prince George's County Public Schools, MD. LeVar received his bachelor's degree from Tuskegee University and his master's degree in education with a focus in special education from Bowie State University.



Ashley Johnson

Principal, Henderson Collegiate

Henderson, NC

Ashley Johnson currently serves as the Founding Principal of Henderson Collegiate Elementary School. In 2011, Ashley joined the Henderson Collegiate team through Teach For America as an Eastern North Carolina Corps Member. In her eight years at Henderson Collegiate, she has taught 5th grade English/Language Arts and served as a 4th and 5th Grade Level Chair and as an Instructional Coach. Additionally, Ashley has served as a Curriculum Specialist at Teach For America's Mississippi Summer Training Institute. She earned her B.A. from James Madison University in Media Arts and Design with Minors in Humanitarian Affairs and Spanish and earned a Masters of School Administration from N.C. State University through the Northeast Leadership Academy.



Ross Lunceford

Junior High Principal, Mound Fort Jr. High, Ogden School District

Ogden, UT

Ross Lunceford is driven by a passion to ensure academic excellence for all. He has more than 22 years of experience in education, including 17 years as a Title I elementary school principal. He was named the 2015 National Distinguished Principal for Utah the same year that his school, Horace Mann Elementary, was recognized as a National Title I Distinguished School. Also under his leadership, Lincoln Elementary was named a National Distinguished Title I School for Utah in 2017. Currently Ross has been appointed to Mound Fort Jr. High a Title 1 school that is involved in the turnaround process. Ross mentors new leaders and remains motivated by opportunities for his own continuous improvement.

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Shawn Mangar
Principal, Baychester Middle School, NYCDOE

Bronx, NY

Shawn Mangar is an educational leader who builds school culture that fosters trust and inspires the development of both students and staff. Starting his career as a special education teacher, Shawn followed his passion for developing others by becoming a NYC Teaching Fellow trainer.

He is founder and principal of Baychester Middle School in the Bronx, which develops not only distinguished scholars but also extraordinary teachers, 7 of whom have already become national educational leaders.

Shawn has served on the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline and is a speaker for education programs on data-driven instruction and teacher training. Having been born, raised, and educated in the district where he works, Shawn explores new horizons in long training runs for his many marathons.



Hillary Niebauer
Principal, Morey Middle School, Denver Public Schools

Denver, CO

Hillary Niebauer is the principal of Morey Middle School in Denver, Colorado. After teaching 7th grade Language Arts for 10 years, she moved into leadership where she was able to help transform two failing middle schools into effective schools. Hillary has spent all but one of her 16 years in Denver Public Schools, serving middle school students and families in the northeast part of the district.

Hillary was a sports reporter before going into education. In her free time, she enjoys watching her two daughters play competitive soccer, fishing, reading, and cheering on the Denver Broncos



Fabrizio Patrìtti
Principal / Director General, Liceo Impulso

Uruguay

Fabrizio Patrìtti is Principal of Liceo Impulso in Uruguay, the first non-confessional private school and free access school in Uruguay. (Free access schools are comparable to charter schools in the U.S.) The school works collaboratively with the 1 World network of international schools.

The school is located in Casavalle, an area with the lowest levels of schooling and the poorest socioeconomic conditions in Uruguay. It is the first high school ever built in such an unprivileged area. School enrollment has quickly grown from 100 to over 600 students.

Prior to founding Liceo Impulso, Fabrizio worked as an assessor of values education and was part of a technical team at public full-time schools. Fabrizio also served as a teacher trainer of Pedagogy and Educational Psychology at Formación Docente (I.P.A.: Instituto de Profesores Artigas). At the university level, he taught masters level education courses for Universidad de la Empresa (UDE). Currently, he is a faculty member at Universidad Montevideo (U.M.) where he teaches coursework related to leadership and pedagogical roles, curriculum design, and project-based learning.

Fabrizio is a graduate of Relay's National Principals Academy Fellowship, and he has developed an exchange and teacher development program with

Aptus Chile (Potenciadora Educacional: Fundación Reinaldo Solari). He has co-written several books, such as: "*La Educación como ética de la libertad*" [Education as Ethics of Freedom] and "*Educación en valores: guía didáctica*" [Education in Values: A Didactic Guide].

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Justin Pigeon

Principal, Bedford Stuyvesant Collegiate, Uncommon Schools

Brooklyn, NY

Justin Pigeon became the Principal at Uncommon Schools' Bedford Stuyvesant Collegiate Charter School after working as an Uncommon Schools Instructional Fellow, and a founding reading teacher at BSC. Justin has served the same community and the same school in Bedford Stuyvesant Brooklyn for over a decade. Before working with Uncommon, Justin joined Teach for America in Houston, Texas and has been working in urban education reform ever since.



Leah Peters

Vice President of Academics, DSST Public Schools

Denver, CO

Leah Peters is the Vice President of Academics at DSST Public Schools in Denver, CO starting June 2019. Leah is responsible for overseeing key academics teams, including: Curriculum and Instruction, Teacher and Leader Development, and School Culture, and she manages School Directors. Prior to her role at DSST, Leah served schools across Houston (her hometown!) for 12 years with YES Prep Public Schools as a middle school and high school teacher, Founding High School Principal, School Director, and Head of Schools. At YES Prep, Leah supported turnaround initiatives at 2 campuses with "Improvement Required" designations, led the redesign of School Director Professional Development, and served as School Director at one of YES Prep's highest performing campuses for 6 years.

Leah earned her Bachelor of Science from Cornell University in Policy Analysis and Management and her Masters of Public Administration from the University of Houston. She's a proud graduate of LLI Cohort 3 and a former Relay NPAF/NPSA Advisor.



Edward Rangel

Innovation School Fellow, The Mind Trust

Indianapolis, IN

Eddie Rangel (rawn-hel) began his teaching career in Southern California, teaching 4th and 5th Grade band students. He moved to Indianapolis in 2012 where he has taught instrumental music, 1st Grade, and 5th Grade for Indianapolis Public Schools. In 2015, Eddie became the founding assistant principal of Tindley Genesis Academy, a K-5 public charter school. Eddie then served as the principal of Tindley's flagship K-5 school, Tindley Renaissance, and transitioned back to Tindley Genesis, where 100% of 3rd graders passed the Indiana state promotional reading exam. Tindley Genesis also ranked as the second-highest performing public school in the greater-Indianapolis area and grew 19 points in math and 14 points in English/Language Arts proficiency. These accolades led Tindley Genesis to achieve the overall highest growth in Marion County for a public school. In 2018-2019, 100% of Tindley Genesis third graders have once again passed the promotional reading assessment.

In July of 2019, Eddie was accepted as an Innovation School Fellow at Indianapolis's education non-profit, The Mind Trust. He will spend the next two years studying high-performing schools and plans to launch an elementary school in 2021. Eddie served as a 2014 Teach Plus Policy Fellow and was selected as a 2016 Teach For America Indianapolis Principal Fellow to attend the Columbia University Summer Principals Academy. He served on Indianapolis's Mayor Hogsett's Education Transition Team and was a fellow in Relay's 2018-2019 National Principal Academy Fellowship.

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Vernon-James Riley

Associate Dean of Regional Support, Relay Graduate School of Education

Arlington, VA

Vernon-James Riley is an Associate Dean of Regional Support, Leadership Programs Team at Relay Graduate School of Education. In his current role, Vernon-James provides professional development and on-the-ground coaching in the areas of school culture, observation & feedback, and data-driven instruction to principals, assistant principals and instructional coaches in DC and Atlanta Public Schools.

Previously, Vernon-James served as Principal at North Star Academy Charter School in Newark, New Jersey, part of the Uncommon Schools network. During his tenure as principal, Vernon-James led the West Side Park Middle School campus to academic gains of 18 points in ELA and 6 points in Math on the state exams, with all grades outperforming the state average in Math and all grades outperforming the state's non-economically disadvantaged students in ELA.

Prior to North Star, Vernon-James served as a teacher, Dean of Students and Director of Operations. Vernon-James received a B.A. in American Studies from Yale University, an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from the College of Education at Michigan State University, an Ed.M. in Organizational Leadership from Teachers College, Columbia University, and an Ed.M. from Relay Graduate School of Education. He is an alumnus of the Education Pioneers Fellowship.



Jahnia Robinson

Principal, Camden City School District

Camden, NJ

Jahnia Robinson is the proud Principal of the Alfred Cramer College Preparatory Lab School, which serves over 400 students, pre-K-6th grade, with a bilingual class in each grade level. Her motto this year is I am because we are.

Prior to the Camden City School District, Jahnia worked as a Principal at the Chester Community Charter School where she was responsible for the academic success of 555 kindergarten and first grade students. While at CCCS, kindergarten students went from 34% ELA proficiency in 16-17 to 77% proficiency in 17-18. First grade students improved from 67% ELA proficiency in 16-17 to 76% proficiency in 17-18. In math, first grade proficiency levels rose from 34% to 68% proficiency. In addition to her experience at CCCS, Jahnia worked in the School District of Philadelphia for over 15 years as a teacher and school leader.

Jahnia will continue to lead by promoting a positive educational experience for students and educators. Her educational philosophy is simple, *"Education should be attainable, accountable, and sustainable."*



Anna Russell

Principal, Buder Elementary, Saint Louis Public Schools

St. Louis, MO

Anna Russell is a native St. Louisan and joined Saint Louis Public Schools as a high school English teacher, where she fell in love with reading instruction. Anna served as an instructional coach, assistant principal, and principal in the Saint Louis Public Schools. Anna will enter her fourth year of leading Buder Elementary, a traditional neighborhood school in Saint Louis. She is proud of her school team's work to drive change; students earned the highest scores in the city on the state assessment in literacy, math, and science. Anna works relentlessly to support students and teachers so outcomes are not tied to zip codes.

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Florencia Simonetti
Instructional Leaders Program Coach, Aptus

Chile

Florencia Simonetti is a coach of a training program for the best instructional leaders in Chile. These leaders serve students that belong to the poorest 30% of the country, and their results in the national assessments far exceed results of schools with similar characteristics. The Instructional Leaders Program (PFLI), of Aptus Chile, is completely inspired by the Leverage Leadership model and its key levers: Data Driven Instruction, School Culture and Observation and Feedback.

She is an educational psychologist and in essence, a teacher. Prior to her work at Aptus, during 2013-2014 and through Enseña Chile (part of the Teach for America network), Florencia taught English from kindergarten to 12th grade at a public school in Peñalolén, one of the most under-resourced neighborhoods in Santiago.

Florencia is mother of Ema, who was born in London, while she was studying a master in Educational Leadership at University College London during 2016. She and her husband met teaching in poverty contexts in Santiago.



Colin Smith
Academic Director, 1 World Network of Schools

Mexico City

Colin Smith has been the Academic Director for 1 World, Mexico, for three years. He leads the academic design and leadership development for the SER network of schools, currently operating in seven cities across Mexico. He is also supporting projects to improve classrooms and schools in several other countries. He is helping to create a literacy curriculum in Chile and support the leadership team at an exemplary school in Uruguay. Additionally, he is involved in a leadership development program for over 400 school leaders in the Dominican Republic. Before working with 1 World, he was a founding member of 4 KIPP schools in Houston and New Orleans and was part of the 2005 Teach For America corps. He has been a teacher, assistant principal, principal and principal supervisor.



Kerri-Ann Thomas
Regional Superintendent, Achievement First

Brooklyn, NY

Kerri-Ann T. Thomas was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia and her master's degree in education from Columbia University. She became a founding teacher, founding Dean, and Principal in Residence at Achievement First Endeavor Elementary. She then became the principal at AF Hartford Elementary (Go Dragons!). As a principal she made history at Achievement First as the first turn-around school to make the most growth and outperform the district within one year. After a few years of being a principal she became a Superintendent and now oversees Achievement First elementary schools.

Kerri-Ann is also the author of two children's books, "Roll Call" and "The Coffee Shop." As an educator, she pushes students and peers to believe that "although you are a product of your environment you do not have to become a duplicate of the majority."

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Kamiah Turner

Principal, Winchester Elementary, Shelby County Schools

Memphis, TN

Kamiah Turner has been an instructional leader in Shelby County Schools' nationally acclaimed Innovation Zone for the past four years. He is a product of Memphis City Schools and has spent most of his career serving the scholars of Memphis, TN in various capacities- teacher, coach, assistant principal, and principal. He is most proud of the accomplishments the scholars of Douglass K-8 have made while he has served as principal. In the 2017-2018 school year, the school experienced substantial improvement in Reading and Math on the state assessment.

Most recently, he was selected to lead Winchester Elementary School, a priority school that will be entering the District's iZone. Kamiah holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Mathematics from Rust College and earned a Master's and Specialist degree in Educational Leadership from Union University. Kamiah resides in Southaven, MS with his wife, Staci, and their three children, Avery, Kelsey, and Kennedy. He firmly believes that serving children, parents, and teachers is his calling and therefore serves with the intent to create lasting impact on the lives of those who he serves.



Malacy Williams

Principal, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools

Charlotte, NC

Malacy T. Williams graduated from Johnson C. Smith, in Charlotte, N.C. with a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration. She taught Business Education in Middle and High school for 10 years. After earning her Master's Degree in School Administration from Gardner Webb University, Malacy served as an Assistant Principal at Coulwood Middle School, in Charlotte, N.C. for nine years. Malacy accepted a principal position at Westerly Hills Academy (K-8) and served for three years. She then transitioned the school back to a PreK-5, where she currently has served for four years.

As a turnaround principal, in her first year as the instructional leader at Westerly Hills Academy, Malacy removed the school from the state's low performing list and improved the school's letter grade from an F to a D. The school earned growth in the top 10% among all schools in the state of North Carolina. Under her leadership, Westerly Hills Academy has continued to exceed growth every year for the last three years and remains in the top 10%.

Malacy has two boys, ages 10 and 13, and is a Military wife of a Lt. Colonel in the Army National Guard in North Carolina. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and crafting.



Dontae Wilson

Principal, Chester Community Charter School

Chester, PA

Dontae Wilson previously served as a principal in the School District of Philadelphia, starting in 2008. Under Dontae's leadership, the school has met or exceeded the state growth standard in Reading and Math; implemented a 1:1 Blended Learning environment in Grades 1-6; established a Digital Media Hub; and launched an incentive based school store, PawMart. During the 2016-2017 school year, Dontae participated in Relay GSE's National Principal Academy Fellowship where he was introduced to effective practices such as Deliberate Practice, Weekly Data Meetings and Observation/Feedback. As a result, there was a 8% increase for students in PSSA performance in Reading and 6.5% increase in Math.

Dontae has been an educator since 2000. Prior to becoming a principal, Dontae served as a high school chemistry teacher. Dontae is product of the School District of Philadelphia and proud graduate of Central High School.

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Candace Young

Principal, Northeast Elementary School, Farmington Municipal Schools

Farmington, NM

Candace Young has 32 years of experience in education, all in the state of New Mexico. Her hometown of Farmington is located 30 minutes from the Navajo Reservation, the largest Native American reservation in the United States. She has worked with low income and culturally diverse students her entire career.

During Candace's tenure in administration, she spent six years as Curriculum Director. She left that position, temporarily, to help turn-around the district's only "F" school. Through distributed leadership, the school moved from a "F" to a "C" grade in one year. It was awarded a "B" grade the next year and three years as an "A" school. The state selected Northeast Elementary to receive the Distinguished School Award from the National Title 1 office. The school qualified in two areas, proficiency ratings and growth. Candace, along with four teachers, also designed framework, guidelines and curriculum for a Family School, wherein students attend public school part time. Students are in the classroom with a teacher for half the day. During the remainder of the day, through a teacher/parent partnership, students are at home learning from their parents.

Over the course of the fellowship year, there are three key objectives that will guide our collective work together in the Leverage Leadership Institute:

OBJECTIVE 1:

Define a Replicable Pathway for Excellence

Define the criteria and pathway for exceptional, replicable results by:

- ▶ Identifying and codifying a set of best practices that guarantee exceptional results (advanced implementation of Leverage Leadership)
- ▶ Identifying and honoring exemplary instructional leaders that have both exceptional results and advanced implementation of these codified, replicable best practices
- ▶ Continuously improving these best practices by implementing and replicating the practices of honored instructional leader

OBJECTIVE 2:

Create a Community of "Proof Point" Practitioners

Create a worldwide community of proof point practitioners to:

- ▶ Strengthen and increase the number of proof point models for success
- ▶ Keep exceptional leaders refreshed and energized by engaging with other quality leaders outside of their home district

OBJECTIVE 3:

Coach Others to Meet the Bar

Certify and train exemplary leaders to develop other leaders by learning how to:

- ▶ Have advanced implementation of the coaching levers needed to coach other school leaders
- ▶ Lead professional development of the highest quality on the levers of the Leverage Leadership model

