

## 2020-2021 LEVERAGE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOW PROFILES



**Kathryn Anstaett**  
**Chief Schools Officer, United Schools Network**

Columbus, OH

Kathryn Anstaett is the Chief Schools Officer for United Schools Network (USN) in Columbus, Ohio, and is responsible for leading and coaching the school directors at the network's four campuses while also overseeing USN's operations, talent, and alumni services departments. Prior to her current position, Kathryn founded USN's second school in 2012, Columbus Collegiate Academy-Dana Ave, and served as the school director for four years. Kathryn has held several teaching and instructional leadership positions since she began her career in 2009 as a Teach For America corps member in St. Louis, Missouri.

Kathryn earned a bachelor's degree in International Studies from Miami University. She is passionate about leveraging the power of data and analytics to drive results in classrooms and inform network-level strategic decision-making. Outside of work, Kathryn spends her time goofing off with her two young children, cooking meals with her husband, and being outdoors.



**Anthony Asmus**  
**Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools**

Fort Collins, CO

Anthony Asmus's journey with Relay started in 2016 when he was struggling to turn around a school that was low achieving. After his first year of Relay implementation, his school jumped to Performance, the highest rating earned in the state of Colorado. Since then, Anthony was moved into the Director of Turnaround Support where he helped other schools improve their school rating.

Currently, Anthony is the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools in Greeley, Colorado. He intends to help his building leaders use observation feedback, data teams, and culture to address gaps in instruction and continue to raise achievement, improve graduation rates, and prepare our learners for college and/or career readiness.



**Anetra Cheatham**  
**District Coordinator of School Improvement**

Beaumont, TX

Anetra Cheatham currently serves as the District Coordinator of School Improvement in the Beaumont Independent School District working with campuses PK through 8th grade to drive meaningful change and increase access to high quality educational experiences for all students.

Prior to this assignment, she served as the Manager of Instructional Leadership for the Region 5 Education Service Center. Anetra's work in the Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) focused on providing professional development, implementation support and coaching for 18 campuses engaged in the program. Before joining the Texas Instructional Leadership program, she enjoyed the privilege of working throughout the K-12 system as elementary and middle school principal, high school assistant principal, Program Coordinator and 6th grade English/Language Arts teacher. Anetra is a proud member of LLI Cohort 6 and is deeply invested in opportunities to learn and grow as a leader.

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### **Brandi Nicole Chin**

**Founding School Director, DSST Middle School at Noel Campus, DSST Public Schools**

Aurora, CO

Brandi Nicole Chin, Ph.D., is the Founding School Director at DSST Public School's 8th Campus: DSST Middle School at Noel Campus, ranked the #1 school in the city of Denver, Colorado. Brandi brings over 15 years of experience in both K-12 and higher education, along with a deep commitment to educational equity and excellence. She has developed a strong track record in leadership development, establishing strong school culture, and achieving some of the highest academic results in both the city and state (#1 in the city for academic growth in Denver and #2 in the state for academic growth in Colorado).

Brandi holds a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Studies from the University of Michigan, a Master's degree in K-12 Curriculum & Instruction from Regis University and a Doctorate degree in Education Policy from the University of Denver. She is a proud former Fellow of and Advisor for the RELAY Graduate School of Education's National Principal Academy Fellowship where she coached over 30 school leaders on teacher effectiveness, school culture, and data-driven instruction.



### **Aaron Fong**

**VP of Schools, IDEA Public Schools**

Midland, TX

Aaron Fong is the VP of Schools for IDEA Public Schools in the Permian Basin of West Texas. In this role, he oversees the development of new and training principals as IDEA launches new campuses in partnership with local school districts in the region. He uses the principles of Leverage Leadership and RELAY as the model for leader development.

A native Northern Californian, but proud Texan, Aaron has previously served as a secondary assistant principal and elementary principal in West Texas. Being a part of the total educational transformation of a region with the highest of educational needs excites and motivates him to bring it every day.



### **Marco D. French**

**Principal, Queensborough Elementary School**

Shreveport, LA

Marco Darnell French is the proud Principal of Queensborough Elementary School, a Title 1 School serving a diverse group of Pre-K – 5th grade students in Shreveport, Louisiana. Marco graduated from Grambling State University with a Bachelor's of Science in Elementary Education and earned his Master's in Educational Leadership from Arkansas State University. He is also a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.

As a turnaround principal, in his first year at Queensborough Elementary School, Marco led the school to double digit gains in all core content areas, removing Queensborough from Louisiana's Academically Unacceptable Schools' List. Queensborough is now listed as one of Louisiana's Outstanding Schools by the State Department of Education, ranks number 1 in the TOP 10 performing elementary schools for ELA Growth, and has a 94.7% student progress growth index.

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### **Tommy "TS" Hoard**

#### **Principal, Excellence Boy Middle, Uncommon Schools**

Westbury, NY

TS Hoard is the Principal at Uncommon Schools' Excellence Boys Charter School of Bedford-Stuyvesant Middle Academy.

Prior to this role, TS was a Ryan Fellow with the Accelerate Institute. Under his leadership, EBCS-MA saw double digit gains in math and ELA on the NY State Exam and was recognized as Bed Stuy's 2018 Most Improved Middle School. TS was a 2006 Teach for America Corps Member in the Bronx and served as the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. He received his B.A. in Sociology and African American Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a M.A. in Teaching from Pace University, an Ed.M. in Educational Leadership from Fordham University and an Ed.M. in Instructional Leadership from the Relay Graduate School of Education.



### **Tiffany Johnson**

#### **Principal, DC Public Schools**

Washington, D.C.

Tiffany Johnson has been a champion for education for the past 15 years in DC Public Schools. Currently, Tiffany serves as the Principal of the Whittier Education Campus. Since 2017 Whittier Education Campus made double-digit gains in level 4s and 5s of the PARCC assessment in reading and mathematics and reduced the number of students scoring 1's. In three years the school has more than doubled the state and district gains in ELA and tripled the gains in Math while closing the achievement gap for students with special needs.

Tiffany has been honored as a Rubeinstein Teacher of the Year (2009) and Assistant Principal of the Year (2016). Tiffany received her bachelor's degree from Howard University and her Master's degree in Education with a focus in Special Education from Trinity University.



### **Siân Maddrell**

#### **Regional Director, Ark Schools**

London, United Kingdom

Siân Maddrell is a Regional Director for Ark Schools, working with Secondary Schools and Principals in London and Hastings in the United Kingdom. Prior to her current role, Siân served for 8 years as Headteacher to the students and community of The Grey Coat Hospital in Westminster, London.

Siân became a modern foreign languages teacher during the last century! She is passionate about the importance of languages in education, not only because of the importance of developing the key skills of language learning, but also because it encourages and supports an open approach to different people, cultures, religions and points of view.

Prior to teaching, Siân worked as a fashion buyer for a department store in London. She completed a Bachelor's degree in French with English at Durham University, a Post Graduate Certificate in Education at the University of Oxford and the National Professional Qualification for Headship at the Institute of Education.

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### **Chunita Pilgrim** **Principal, DC Public Schools**

Washington, D.C.

Chunita Pilgrim is a proud product of DC Public Schools and a native Washingtonian. She currently serves as the principal of Burrville Elementary School, located in the Deanwood area of Washington, DC. Prior to serving as principal, Chunita was: an assistant principal, master educator, instructional coach and a classroom teacher, all in DC Public Schools.

Chunita is committed to public education in Washington, DC and believes in giving back to her community. She received her bachelor's and doctorate degrees from The George Washington University and her master's degree from Regent University.



### **Kenya Roberts** **JS Clark Elementary School, Caddo Parish Schools**

Shreveport, LA

Kenya Claiborne Roberts is the principal at Dr. Joseph Samuel Clark Elementary School in Shreveport, Louisiana. In two years, Kenya helped JSC to increase the school performance score. She frequently hosts events to bring the community closer together and bridge the gap between the school and community. Events have included: a breast cancer awareness program; partnership with the Shreveport police department to host "Springing into Action Against Crime in Our Community"; providing a monthly food pantry through the Northwest Louisiana food bank; and, bringing in leaders from all over the city to motivate her students on "Motivational Mondays".

Prior to being a principal, Kenya obtained a bachelor's degree in Secondary Mathematics Education from Southern University & A&M College, a master's degree in Education focusing on Administration and Supervision from Louisiana State University in Shreveport, and a doctorate degree from Walden University in Teacher Leadership. Kenya has taught mathematics students, alternate certification, been a math interventionist, a master teacher, an intervention specialist, and an assistant principal.



### **Lindsey Robinson** **Associate Managing Director, ReGeneration Schools**

Flossmoor, IL

Lindsey Robinson is currently the Associate Managing Director for ReGeneration Schools and the Interim Principal at their Basil Elementary School campus. In this role, she leads two Elementary Principals, two Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, and two Instructional Leaders and indirectly leads over seventy-five teachers and staff. Before taking on this role, Lindsey was the Elementary Principal of the Avalon campus on the Southside of Chicago. During the 2018-2019 school year, Lindsey won the Ryan Award for her leadership at Avalon Elementary school.

Before joining the ReGen team, Lindsey was an intern with the Ryan Fellowship through the Accelerate Institute. Before that, she worked at a small single campus charter school on Chicago's Southside. There she taught kindergarten, first grade, third grade, and middle school ELA.

Although Lindsey was raised on Chicago's Southside where she currently does her work, she also worked in Camden, NJ as a 2005 Camden TFA corps member. She will not rest until she reaches her mission of creating equitable educational opportunities for all children!

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### **Tameka Royal**

**Senior Principal, North Star Academies, Uncommon Schools**

Newark, NJ

Tameka Royal serves as a Senior Principal with Uncommon Schools North Star Academies.

Tameka is going into her 11th year as an educator with experience in: her hometown of Cleveland, OH; Ithaca, NY where she graduated from Cornell University; Washington, DC where she worked in the Office of the Chancellor with Michelle Rhee and Kaya Henderson; Atlanta, GA where she was a TFA Corp Member; New York, NY where she was a founding teacher and principal of the city's first successful turnaround of its kind and was honored as Teacher of the Year; and, Newark, NJ where she currently lives and serves.



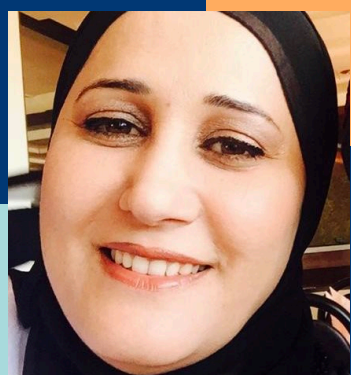
### **Chase Sander**

**Principal, YES Prep Hobby, YES Prep Public Schools**

Manvel, TX

Chase Sander is the Founding Principal of YES Prep Hobby and one of five Lead Principals for YES Prep Public Schools. Chase previously served as the Principal of YES Prep Hoffman, a district-charter partnership middle school, for three years where he led the campus to achieve dramatic gains in student achievement, the turnaround of school culture, and increased elective opportunities for all students. Chase joined YES Prep Public Schools in 2013 leading operations at YES Prep Fifth Ward, and he was the first operations leader to transition to the Principal role at YES Prep.

Prior to joining the YES Prep team, Chase was a Manager of Teacher Leadership Development for Teach For America – Houston supporting corps members in traditional and charter schools across the city. Chase joined Teach For America as a 2009 corps member in the Rio Grande Valley where he taught high school science in San Benito, Texas. Chase earned his Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from The University of Texas at Austin.



### **Samera Shibli**

**Principal Supervisor, Rashi Israel and One World**

Shibli, Israel

Samira Shibli is superintendent for ten elementary schools situated across Israel. She participated in the 2018-2019 Relay NPS and was inspired by the program. She is now working to implement the methods learned at Relay which are new for the traditional Israeli educational system. She provides professional development, implementation support, and coaching to these aforementioned 10 campuses.

Before joining LLI, Samira was a biology teacher in high school for 20 years as well as the Chief Science Coordinator. Over the course of two decades, Samira has aided her students in getting accepted to universities and supported them in facing the challenges of being a Bedouin, a minority within a minority inside the higher educational environment.

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### **Rockell Stewart**

**Principal, Dallas Independent School District**

Desoto, TX

Rockell Williams Stewart is in her 21st year in education. She's served as a teacher, academic facilitator, assistant principal and principal within the Dallas Independent School District. During the 2018-2019 school year, as a first-year principal, Rockell's school, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center, went from a D-rated to a B-rated campus boasting the highest growth in the state of Texas amongst its comparative group and earning six state distinctions. Additionally, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center had the #1 Positive Climate & Culture in Dallas I.S.D.

This year, Rockell became the principal of another turnaround campus, Dr. Billy E. Dade Middle School. There, in her first months as principal, the climate and culture went from the bottom of the survey list to one of the highest in the district amongst Dallas I.S.D.'s secondary schools. Furthermore, the school's 2019 district benchmark scores increased by double digits in every subject.

Rockell is a passionate and resilient leader who is humbled to serve and lead in the community where she was raised. She believes in equity and excellence for all.



### **Mary Ann Stinson**

**Instructional Superintendent, DC Public Schools**

Washington, D.C.

Mary Ann Stinson is an Instructional Superintendent for DC Public Schools, serving schools in the southeast region. She began her career in DCPS in 2010, as the principal of Truesdell Education Campus. Truesdell is a title one school that prepares students to identify, analyze and overcome the aggressions they will inevitably encounter in their journey to become social disruptors and agents of change. In 2017, Ms. Stinson completed the Leverage Leadership Institute Fellowship with distinction, and continued the work as a faculty adviser.

Mary Ann is a two-time Rubenstein Award winner and under her leadership, Truesdell Education Campus received the Standing Ovation Award for Innovation in Education and the Academic Leadership Team Standing Ovation Award. She holds a Master's in Administration and Supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is a member of the first DCPS-Georgetown McDonough School of Business Executive Master's of Leadership Cohort, earning a degree in executive leadership. She has since earned an Education Specialist degree in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations from The George Washington University and is currently working on her doctorate from the same institution.



### **Christina Sylvester**

**Principal, Merrill Middle School, Denver Public Schools**

Denver, CO

Christina Sylvester has been the principal at Merrill Middle School in Denver Public Schools since 2016. She is humbled and grateful to serve the students and community of Southeast Denver – Go Jaguars!

Prior to this role, Christina served as Assistant Principal and 7th/8th grade Spanish teacher in the suburbs of Chicago. She has always worked in diverse public schools and has been fortunate to study internationally in Belgium, Argentina and Italy. In addition, she completed a Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad in Mexico. A lifelong learner, Christina completed her Doctorate of Education from Loyola University Chicago in 2019. Her research interests include feminism and school leadership. She holds a Master in Education from Loyola University of Chicago and Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Northwestern University. She is a proud Chicago native, but has enjoyed living in Denver with her husband and their two dogs for the past four years. Some of her favorite things to do are ride her bike and visit local coffee shops.

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### **Janet Thornton**

#### **Manager of Instructional Leaders, Texas Education Agency, ESC 17**

Idalou, TX

Janet Thornton currently serves as the Manager of Instructional Leadership for two Texas school districts—Midland ISD and Ector County ISD. She also serves as a Texas Instructional Leader (TIL), School Improvement Specialist, and Effective Schools Framework Facilitator (ESF) for Texas Region 17 Education Service Center, which serves 57 school districts and six charter schools in twenty Texas counties.

Before joining the Texas Region 17 Service Center in 2017, Janet enjoyed a 20-year career as a public school teacher and administrator. During those years, she taught junior high ELAR and high school U.S. History before serving eight years as Principal of Idalou High School.

Janet received her B.A. from Hardin-Simmons University, and her Masters of Educational Leadership and Texas Superintendent certification from Lubbock Christian University.

In her personal time, Janet enjoys reading and camping/hiking with her husband of 31 years, her three children and their spouses, and her three grandchildren.



### **Maria Luisa Valdez**

#### **Instructional Leader, Principal and Supervisor Coach, Aptus Chile**

Santiago, Chile

María Luisa Valdés is the Director of Aptus Instructional Leaders Program (PFLI) in Chile. Inspired by the Leverage Leadership model, the program forms and coaches instructional leaders, principals, and supervisors. Aptus works with schools that serve students belonging to the poorest 30% in Chile; its results in national assessments exceed schools with similar characteristics. Maria Luisa is an ESL teacher and has been working for Aptus for a decade.

Prior to her work with Aptus, Maria Luisa was Director of Implementation at Fundación Oportunidad in a joint project with Harvard University aiming to improve the quality of early education in the most under-resourced neighborhoods in Santiago. The project significantly improved the literacy levels and the socio-emotional development of the participating students.

María Luisa is a mother of four children and enjoys spending time with them and her husband in Santiago.

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### **Beth Vinson-Grabois**

**Principal, Barnum Elementary, Denver Public Schools**

Denver, CO

Beth Vinson is currently serving as the principal of Barnum Elementary, a Dual Language ECE-5 school in Southwest Denver. She is committed to achieving equity and closing opportunity gaps. Barnum was recognized as a “School to Learn From,” posting some of the district’s highest growth scores for state testing in 2019 English Language Arts and Mathematics. Beth has equipped a representative instructional leadership team with the tools and facilitation skills to effectively lead lesson planning, professional development, data-driven instruction, and observation and feedback.

Beth has been honored with a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (2012). She received her Bachelor’s of Fine Arts degree and Certificate in International Business from the University of Arizona. She attained her principal licensure through the Ritchie Program for School Leaders: Executive Leadership for Successful Schools at the University of Denver. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, cooking, reading, and being outdoors.



### **Maisie Wright**

**Troy Prep High School, Uncommon Schools**

Albany, NY

Maisie Wright became the Principal of Troy Prep High School in January 2018. Maisie was a 2006 Teach for America Corps Member in the Mississippi Delta, teaching 7th grade Math and Science. After three years of teaching, Maisie moved to a new community in the Delta to open a middle school--KIPP Blytheville College Preparatory School. When the founding class of KIPP BCPS became freshman in high school, Maisie expanded the school by opening KIPP Blytheville Collegiate High School. After 11 years in Arkansas, Maisie moved closer to her hometown and was thrilled to find the Troy Prep community.

Maisie is deeply committed to fighting social inequity and strongly believes that great teaching is a cornerstone of revolutionary change in our society. She is grateful to have the opportunity to learn from so many amazing teachers and leaders as a part of Uncommon Schools and looks forward to continuing her own development in service of providing a high quality education for students in the Capital Region.

When Maisie is not working, she can be found outside in any season exploring with her dog, Echo.

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
- ▶ 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

