

2022-2023 LEVERAGE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOW PROFILES



Paola Alvarez

Supervisor
ONE WORLD NETWORK OF SCHOOLS
Metepec, Mexico

Paola Alvarez supports One World's partners in Latin America, with a focus on principal training in the Dominican Republic. She also leads the development of Spanish language curriculum and helps with global Fellowship programs.

Before joining One World, Paola was a primary school teacher and school leader. She launched her own school and later became Chief Academic Officer for the SER network of schools in Mexico.

Paola earned an advanced degree in Clinical Psychology from the Universidad Iberoamericana, and she has a degree in Children & Adolescents from the Universidad Gestalt de América



Brent Barnes

Principal
CLEBURNE ISD
Cleburne, Texas

Dr. Brent Barnes is an Elementary School Principal at Coleman Elementary in Cleburne ISD. Prior to his role as principal, Brent served as an Assistant Principal at Cleburne High School. Brent began his career in education as a high school social studies teacher. Under his leadership, Coleman Elementary has enjoyed a high level of growth and success. The success is a result of a solutions based, shared leadership approach that utilizes planning and data meetings with observation and feedback to ensure rigorous instruction for all students.

Brent received his undergraduate, Masters, and Doctoral degrees from Lamar University. He has also benefited as a member of the 2021-22 NPAF cohort. He is excited to continue his journey with RELAY to positively grow scholars and staff.

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Monica Blasingame

Principal

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SYLVAN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL
Hampton, Georgia

Monica Blasingame is the Principal of Sylvan Hills Middle School, a Title I school located in Atlanta, Georgia where she has served for 8 years, first as Special Education Lead Teacher, then as an Assistant Principal, and now as Principal. With over 19 years of experience, Monica has worked as a Special Education Teacher and District Compliance Specialist serving multiple schools, grades K-12. During her time at Sylvan, she has worked to successfully support with school turnaround, resulting in double digit gains in the area of mathematics. She has maintained this trend of high gains this school year, leading the district with the highest percent of K-8 students who met or exceeded Math growth targets (73% percent). Under her leadership, Sylvan Hills has consistently yielded high growth in the areas of student achievement and staff satisfaction. This success is a result of a strong distributive leadership team, solid systems and structures, and a devout passion for educational equity and innovative practices.

In addition to her work as a school leader, Monica serves on the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Principal Advisory Committee, the APS Math Curriculum Implementation Team and on district Leadership hiring panels. Outside of her commitments to educational leadership, she enjoys traveling with her husband and two children.



Mallorie Bocachica

Principal

UNCOMMON SCHOOLS
Bronx, New York

Mallorie Bocachica is the principal at Leadership Prep Canarsie Elementary Academy, Uncommon Schools. Under her leadership, Leadership Prep Canarsie earned the distinction of being a 'Recognized School' in the state of New York. Recognition schools are the highest performing and rapidly improving schools across the state. Before becoming a school leader, Mallorie founded Leadership Prep Canarsie in 2013 as a teacher and taught Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade. She also served as an Instructional Fellow at Leadership Prep Ocean Hill and Excellence Girls Charter School (Uncommon Schools). Previously, Mallorie worked as a teacher in the NYC Department of Education in the Bronx.

Mallorie received her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Psychology from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, her Master of Science in Special Education from CUNY, The City College of New York, and has done post graduate work in education in the Relay National Principals Academy Fellowship.

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Marisa Castello

Principal
NYC DOE - DISTRICT 29
Long Island City, New York

Marisa Castello is an elementary principal at PS 176Q in Queens, New York. Prior to becoming a principal, Marisa served as a teacher and assistant principal. Marisa received her B.A. in Communication Sciences from the University of Vermont, her M.S. in Childhood Education and Special Education from St. John's University, and Ed.M. in Educational and Building Leadership from Teacher's College, Columbia University. Marisa is excited to work with visionary leaders as a member of this cohort.



Monique Cincore

Vice President of Schools
JOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Bartlett, Tennessee

Monique Cincore currently serves as the Vice President of Schools at Journey Community Schools. She joined Journey Community Schools, formerly Aspire Memphis, in 2014 as a Resident Principal. Monique served as the Founding Principal of Aspire East Academy, now Journey East Academy, for 3 years before accepting the role to serve as the Vice President of Schools and Principal Manager.

She has served in numerous roles including Common Core State Coach, District Professional Learning Coach, Ryan Fellowship Principal Mentor, Governor's Academy for School Leadership Mentor, and is a graduate of the Relay National Principal Academy Fellowship Program. Monique began her teaching career in New Orleans Public Schools and has taught grades 1-6. During that time, she was named Teacher of the Year and served on the state committee to write state assessments.

She is a proud graduate of Dillard University, and she received her master's degree in Educational Leadership from Walden University. Monique is the wife of Wesley Cincore and a proud mother of two children.

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Brandon Clay

Building Principal
CARVER ELEMENTARY
Saint Peters, Missouri

Brandon Clay was born and raised in St. Louis Missouri. He attended the Normandy School district located in a suburb of St. Louis where he graduated from Normandy Sr. High School in 2003. He went on to attend Culver-Stockton College located in Canton, Missouri where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Music Education in 2007.

After earning his bachelors, Brandon began his teaching career in Maplewood Richmond Heights School district, a suburb of St. Louis. From there he went on to earn a master's degree in piano studies at the University of Western Illinois. Brandon began teaching music in St. Louis Public Schools in 2012 at the New American Academy. He later became the Assistant Principal there after completing administration coursework at Maryville University in 2017. He was then named principal of Carver Elementary in 2018 where he currently leads.



Akela Dogbe

Principal
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Prince Frederick, Maryland

Akela Dogbe is an urban school administrator and education consultant with over eighteen years of experience spanning transformational school leadership, effective classroom instruction, and curriculum development.

As an administrator, Akela implements Multi-Tiered Systems of Support to raise yearly reading and math scores at an average of 15% and 20% respectively. Her team's mixed model plan of small group instruction, high impact tutoring, and digital learning proves to be highly effective in elementary urban school environments.

As a curriculum developer Akela designs comprehensive and culturally responsive curriculum for public school classrooms, as well as parochial and private schools. She applies her extensive knowledge of effective instructional models to also serve community organizations, publishing houses, and research consortium.

Akela is a proud graduate of Spelman College where she received her B.A. in English. She has Masters' Degrees in Educational Policy from Loyola University Chicago and Executive Leadership from Georgetown University.

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Tammy Finch

Director of Education and Curriculum
THE EXPEDITION SCHOOL
Mebane, North Carolina

Tammy Finch serves as the founding Director of Education and Curriculum at The Expedition School (TES). TES is a project-based learning school where social-emotional learning is prioritized. Student projects have included a 5th grade greeting card business where students built their business from the ground up and the 8th grade Hillsborough Black History Walking Tour. In 2021, US News and World Report ranked TES as the #5 charter middle school and the #9 charter elementary school in NC. In 2021, Tammy and her team were instrumental in obtaining the NC ACCESS grant for the school, which supports access and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students.

Tammy taught elementary students for 19 years in NC before opening The Expedition School. She earned her BA from Pacific Lutheran University and her Masters in Teaching from City University. Tammy enjoys hiking and being outdoors!



Jacqueline Glasheen

Executive Director of School Leadership
HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Holyoke, Massachusetts

Jackie Glasheen is the Executive Director of School Leadership for the Holyoke Public Schools, where she supervises and manages several schools across the district. She also supports the district's middle school design and building efforts.

Jackie has a wealth of experience in the Holyoke Public Schools. Since 2010, she has served as principal of Kelly and E.N. White Schools in Holyoke. From 2005-2010, she was the vice principal for Kelly and Morgan Schools. She has also been a principal mentor.

During her time at E.N. White, Jackie led the school's transition from grades K-8 to an elementary school. She also launched the school's dual language program. Students at E.N. White have shown growth during her time at the school, with students meeting or exceeding accountability targets on MCAS testing, based on the most recently available data

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Kevin Greeley

Executive Director of Elementary
DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Littleton, Colorado

Kevin Greeley has had many diverse experiences in education over the last 25 years. They have ranged from being a Special Education teacher in Hawaii to a Regional Assistant Instructional Superintendent in Denver Public Schools. This upcoming school year will be his 11th in DPS where he will be taking on a new role as the Executive Director of Elementary Education.

Kevin is passionate about creating systems that allow adults to learn from one another in service of enabling all students to become independent learners who dream big and have the skills to reach those dreams. Specifically, he is committed to making this a reality for our Black and Brown students. He knows that we learn best by doing the work together, giving one another feedback, and always striving to be a little better today than we were yesterday. He is extremely excited to be a part of this cohort.



Nikki Jones

Principal
UNCOMMON SCHOOLS
Roselle, New Jersey

Nikki Jones currently serves as the Principal of the NorthStar Academy Downtown Middle School, a public charter school which is part of the Uncommon Network located in Newark, New Jersey.

With over 20 years of experience in public education, she began working for the New Jersey Newark Public School District in 1999. She taught for five years in traditional public school, and 14 years in Newark Charter Schools. In 2001 and 2003, she was a recipient of the Best Practices Award for Newark Public Schools. In 2011, she was the Recipient of the Charter School Teacher of the Year. In 2022, she was the recipient of Uncommon Principal of the Year award.

After working for over 14 years as a teacher, curriculum developer, and Instructional leader, she became principal of the one of the highest performing Charter Schools in New Jersey, NorthStar Academy. In addition to being a Principal and Teacher, Nikki also spent a few years providing professional development and coaching for teachers and school staffs.

Nikki received her teaching Credential from the Rutgers University and her master's in educational leadership from Montclair State University.

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Darrin Lett

Principal
FLORENCE FRESHMAN CENTER
Florence, Alabama

Dr. Darrin Lett has 17 years of experience in the field of education. He has served as a classroom teacher, Career Tech Supervisor, Director of Career and Technical Education, and he is currently in his fifth year serving as Principal of Florence Freshman Center. Darrin has been in administration for 11 years.

Darrin holds a Bachelor's Degree from Jacksonville State University, a Master's Degree from the University of Alabama, an Education Specialist Degree from the University of North Alabama, and holds a Doctorate of Education from Samford University. In 2019, Darrin was one of 35 educational leaders in his state to be commissioned as a Certified Instructional Leader through the Council for Leaders in Alabama (CLAS) Organization. Darrin has been married to his wife, Christy, for 18 years, and they have three wonderful teenage children.



Victor Liria

Director of School Leadership Center
ISFODOSU
Santo Domingo Este, Dominican Republic

Victor Liria was born in Santo Domingo in 1967. He grew up in a poor family and spent his childhood in a countryside community. At the age of sixteen, he started studying education at a Normal School located in Santo Domingo, and two years later he became teacher in a rural school. Later, Victor continued studying education at three Dominican universities. Some years later, he became Principal of the same school where he started his career.

In 2003, Victor traveled to Japan as an international student and earned a master's degree in Human Science. He later became Principal of a Secondary school in a poor community in Santo Domingo. Now he works at Instituto Superior de Formación Docente "Salome Ureña" at the Center for Educational Leadership. His focus is to improve school results by working with principals and other school leaders in partnership with One World, a branch of Together Education.

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Sean M Gavin

Principal
UNCOMMON SCHOOLS
Woodside, New York

Sean Gavin is the Founding Principal of Uncommon Leadership Charter High School in Brooklyn, NY. Sean joined Uncommon Schools in 2013 as a Teacher, Department Chair, and Dean of Curriculum. In 2017 he helped a team of 12 tireless teachers and 100 wonderful students launch ULC in one tiny hallway. Five years later the school is all grown up and 100% of those founding students were accepted into college and are thriving on the next stage of their journey.

Prior to working at Uncommon Schools, Sean taught English in Baltimore City Public Schools. He received his Bachelor's in English and French from NYU and his Master's in Education from Johns Hopkins University. He was part of the inaugural cohort of Hollyhock Center Fellows at Stanford University and has also participated in Relay's National Academy Principal Fellowship. He is a proud citizen of the World's Borough, Queens, where he lives with his wife and two sons.



Jason Maclin

Principal
VISTA PEAK PREPARATORY
Commerce City, Colorado

Jason Maclin believes in the power of being equity-centered through all staff and student-facing actions. His leadership of data-driven and student-centered systems has led to positive outcomes for both his school and the broader community. He values the importance of having a culture that fosters belonging and leveraging an instructional approach to teaching and learning aligned to his ongoing research in Mind, Brain, and Education Science (MBE). He recently presented "Belonging and the Brain" at the Mind, Brain, and Education Science Mini-Conference at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Such efforts have led to a stronger school culture, increased staff diversity and retention, stable student enrollment, and ultimately the achievement of double-digit gains on state assessments.

Jason earned his bachelor's degree in Educational Studies and English Literature from Knox College as well as a master's degree in School Leadership from Concordia University Chicago.

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Christopher Mansell

CEO

BIRMINGHAM DIOCESAN ACADEMIES TRUST

Derby, England

Dr. Christopher Mansell became a teacher in 1992 and then from 2000 to 2017 was headteacher (principal) in four different schools in the UK. Since September 2017 he has been the CEO of the Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust (BDMAT). The Trust is comprised of 19 schools, 18 of which are primary (elementary) schools and 1 is a secondary (high school). The majority of the schools within the Trust serve disadvantaged areas. 18 of the schools are sponsored by the Church of England. The Trust has seen some significant improvements over the last few years through the implementation of many of the methods advocated by Leverage Leadership.

Christopher has a Master of Philosophy degree from the University of Birmingham and a doctorate from the University of Nottingham.



Angie McDowell

Principal

GREELEY EVANS WELD COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 6

Greeley, Colorado

Dr. Angie McDowell is proudly serving as the principal at Centennial Elementary in Greeley, Colorado. With over twenty years of experience in education, Angie has served as a special education teacher, classroom teacher, assistant principal, and principal. She is dedicated to teaching students who are living in poverty and students who are culturally diverse. Her strong pedagogical background as an educator helps develop meaningful systems of support for students, families, staff members, and other leaders. Her leadership style highlights her collaborative and innovative approach to identifying effective ways to improve educator talent to best meet every student's needs. Under her leadership, the school has experienced a high level of academic growth and success. Angie and her team focus on creating a positive culture for student learning, planning high quality instruction, using data to inform instruction, and engaging all students.

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Jovan Moore

Principal
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Jovan Moore is the principal of Girard Academic Music Program (GAMP), a special admissions school that services grades 5-12 as a part of the School District of Philadelphia. GAMP prides itself on offering its students a rigorous education paired with “majoring” in music. Jovan prides herself on serving as GAMP’s first leader of color, increasing student voice through the creation of affinity groups, and her school community becoming a part of the 2021 Cohort of Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence for High Performing Schools.

Jovan operates from the relentless belief that all students should be given fair and equitable supports in order to thrive and become their best selves. Having worked for the School District of Philadelphia for 14 years, Jovan has served as a biology teacher, Assistant Principal, and is currently a member of the Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders fellowship.



Carice Sanchez

Chief Academic Officer
HENDERSON COLLEGIATE
Rolesville, North Carolina

Carice Sanchez currently lives in North Carolina with her husband and 3 boys. She is the co-founder and CAO of Henderson Collegiate.

Carice earned her B.A. in Education from The Ohio State University and joined Teach for America in Eastern North Carolina. She taught grades 1st and 3rd at her placement school for 6 years. She earned her M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from North Carolina State University and is a nationally board-certified educator. She then transitioned to KIPP GCP where she taught 5th grade for 3 years.

In 2010, she co-founded Henderson Collegiate with her husband, Eric Sanchez, as the school’s 4th grade Reading teacher. After teaching Reading for the school’s first two years, Carice became the school’s Chief Academic Officer. She continues to serve in this role today, coaching leaders and guiding the development of the curriculum across all grade levels. Carice works with Department Leaders to create aligned and rigorous curricula, assessments, lesson plans, and classroom materials. Under Carice’s leadership as CAO, the school’s composite score for EOG’s (the state test) has grown from 50 to 87%. Henderson Collegiate has Exceeded Expected Growth each year since opening, earned Title I Reward School status for High Student Growth for three consecutive years, and achieved the highest school performance grade in the state of North Carolina, A+NG, an honor earned by only 2.8% of all NC public schools.

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Celia Sanchez

Principal
DALLAS ISD
Eules, Texas

Celia Sanchez is the proud principal at San Jacinto Elementary in Dallas, Texas. She is honored and humbled to serve in the Southeast Dallas community. She began her educational career as a Teacher Assistant in 2007.

During the past fifteen years, Celia has positively impacted students' academic achievement in predominantly diverse and low socioeconomic areas by building trust through shared leadership, creation of culture systems, data analysis practices, implementation of effective quality instruction and accountability systems via observation and feedback. While serving as a principal, the campus experienced growth in academic achievement by increasing the school grade from at risk of "F" to "B" and receiving awards for outstanding performance including 1st Place at Robotics Competition, Parent-Teacher Non-Profit Organization of the Year, and Feeder Pattern Principal of the Year.

Celia is committed to improving student achievement through a shared vision and showing great passion for learning, teaching, and student success.



Thomas Shepley

Chief Academic Officer
New Orleans, Louisiana

Tom Shepley is the Chief Academic Officer for FirstLine Schools in New Orleans, Louisiana. Tom began his career as a TFA corps member, teaching in Baltimore and later in Detroit. After completing his Doctorate at the University of Michigan, he returned to Baltimore where he served as a principal. During his last year, Tom was proud to announce that his school had the highest reading achievement in the city and was subsequently named a Blue Ribbon School for sustained progress.

Tom moved to New Orleans in 2008, working for TFA, New Leaders, and as Vice President of Schools at New Schools for New Orleans during a time of unprecedented growth in the number of high-quality seats in the charter schools of New Orleans. Tom started at FirstLine Schools in July of 2018 and assumed the role of Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Schools in September 2019.

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Rachel Willcutts

Director of Rhodes Fellowship
IDEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Austin, Texas

Rachel Willcutts serves as the Director of Rhodes Fellowship at IDEA Public Schools, a network of tuition-free public charter schools in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Ohio. In her role, she designs and leads the Rhodes Fellowship, a training program for new founding principals and assistant principals of operations. She also piloted the Successor Principals Academy, a development program for new successor principals that is now led by her team. Prior to her current role, Rachel was a regional leadership coach for new assistant principals, and she has coached other leadership coaches across multiple regions.

Rachel was a member of the 2017-18 National Principal Supervisors Academy (NPSA) cohort and has served as a RELAY advisor every year since. She lives in Austin, TX with her partner and chosen family.