

# ED FUND FUNDAMENTALS

## Creating a High-Capacity Pipeline to Drive Teacher Retention

**This time of year, talented first-time teachers fill the halls of our schools eager to begin their careers in education. Unfortunately, within five years, more than 50% of these new teachers will leave the profession.**

Improving teacher retention is exactly the type of challenge the experts at the Philadelphia Education Fund like to tackle. So, when leadership at the Russell Byers Charter School sought to solve the problem with innovative ideas and a fresh perspective, they turned to the Ed Fund. Partnering with local universities, the Ed Fund designed a new program to ensure the energy and enthusiasm new teachers bring translate into high classroom performance and student achievement well beyond their early teaching years.

“There are significant challenges to providing a high quality education in an urban setting,” said Jesse Bean, Head of School at Russell Byers. “Charter schools don’t pay as well. People have other options. There has been a decline in college enrollment for potential teachers and we are also challenged with leadership turnover. There is a steady revolving door which causes us to lose several teachers a year who take our institutional memory and culture with them.”

“We want to provide a high-capacity pipeline that provides a win-win for teachers and Byers,” said Bean, explaining his decision to reach out to the Ed Fund.

The Byers Fellows Residency Program, which launches this fall and continues through June as a pilot,

aims to create that pipeline. Teachers new to the field will be chosen to serve as Fellows based on recommendations from participating schools; their passion for children—particularly the underserved; their willingness to learn; and their problem-solving skills. As part of the Ed Fund’s yearlong initiative, these Teacher Fellows will receive a stipend and benefit from the ongoing support of an excellent classroom mentor trained

by the Ed Fund. They will also engage in professional development, networking, and teacher trainings.

This effort comes at an important time for Byers, which currently enrolls 485 students in grades K-6 and will soon expand to 725 in grades K-8. Beginning with six Fellows, the program is expected to expand to 10 over the next two years.

The initiative also marks a significant turning point for the Philadelphia Education Fund as it represents the first in a series of consulting serv-

ices the organization will provide to schools. In this program, Byers will contract with the agency to oversee the effort and assign an individual mentor to each Fellow to deliver a full year of skills development. As the mentors support the Fellows in the classroom, they will engage in ongoing and collaborative mentor skills development through the Philadelphia Education Fund.

According to Farah Jimenez, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Education Fund, the move to a con-



Celebration of  
Scholars Event.  
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Having a network of support is cited as one of the most important influences for teachers who do stay in the field. The Ed Fund is taking a leading role in nurturing that support network in Philadelphia through its online Teacher Networks portal [www.philadelphiateachernetworks.org](http://www.philadelphiateachernetworks.org). The portal allows teachers to learn and share information, discover new connections, and find out about upcoming area teacher networking events, development programs, and grant opportunities. It’s a one-stop shop for all Philadelphia-area teachers’ networking needs – run for teachers, by teachers.

sultancy model will enable the Ed Fund to serve more schools. “Now interested schools, or donors, can engage with us directly to bring these services to their community,” she says. “With each engagement, we tailor the program to meet the unique hiring, retention and organizational culture needs of a school.”

**Are you interested in making a Fellowship Program possible for a school in the city? Find out more by contacting Kimberly Stephens, Vice President of Programs at [kstephens@philaedfund.org](mailto:kstephens@philaedfund.org).**

## President's Message



FARAH JIMENEZ

Growing up I was lucky. My parents were highly educated. My peers were college-bound. Our schools offered challenging coursework and academic counseling that enabled every student to rise to his or her fullest potential. But this is not the case for all too many students in Philadelphia. That's why

the Ed Fund's work is so important.

Each year, the Ed Fund's College Access Program touches more than 1,200 students who otherwise might not have in-school college counseling support. Each year, we encourage these students to recognize their college potential and, through our Scholars Program's Last Dollar Scholarships, enable them to close the financial aid gap.

Of course, to succeed in college, one must succeed in high school. And, to succeed in high school, one must succeed in middle school. As a research-based architect of education solutions, the Ed Fund was able to develop an Early Warning Indicator that identifies middle school students at risk of falling off track and helps ensure that they receive the critical interventions they need so that they can ultimately become a future Scholars Program success story.

I know that as Ed Fund Supporters, you not only see the abundant need in Philadelphia, but you care enough to invest in strategies that work. Your support is vital. And, we couldn't be more grateful for it.

I hope to reflect that gratitude by fostering a strong, vibrant and sustainable Ed Fund. The introduction of our consultancy model is a first step in this direction. After more than 30 years delivering solutions to school districts and schools, the Ed Fund is accepting engagement opportunities directly from schools and districts seeking our expertise. This model will allow us to support more teachers and ultimately touch the lives of many more students. (See Byers Residency Fellows story on page one.)

We will also continue to lead the way in the development and implementation of research-based strategies for Philadelphia's present AND future education challenges. Our experience securing notable speakers for our monthly education speaker series and convening regular public, private, and social sector discussions on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), will be matched by a robust research practice, like our current National Science Foundation research grant in partnership with Drexel University.

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## Transforming STEM Education

As Philadelphia positions itself as an innovation hub, the need for students to be competent in the STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) has grown exponentially. To help ensure that our current students and future workforce are prepared for the challenges of the new economy, the Philadelphia Education Fund has launched a comprehensive effort to change how students learn these subjects and support teachers in their instruction.

The need is real. In the School District of Philadelphia, just 40% of 11th grade students scored proficient in the Algebra Keystone Exams, and a stunningly low 20% scored proficient in the Biology Keystone Exams.

The Ed Fund assembles business, civic, and community leaders along with teachers, union representatives and school administrators to address the most pressing STEM education issues impacting our city. These systemic efforts translate into direct results for students and teachers. For example, through the Ed Fund's Explore STEM! Philly program, students are exposed to STEM careers through in-classroom speakers, as well as coordinated field trips to institutes, STEM-related workplaces, and research and development labs. Additionally, networks and forums for teachers and educators enrich how STEM is taught.

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## \$3 Million Award for College Access Services

The Philadelphia Education Fund is the recipient of a \$3 million federal TRIO grant from the U.S. Department of Education to offer college access and success services in five public city high schools over the next five years. The award will benefit more than 1,200 students annually.



Ed Fund Board Chair, David Baker, and Ed Fund President and CEO, Farah Jimenez, announce the award in the Ed Fund's College Access office at Kensington Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) High School, one of the benefiting schools. They were joined by Dr. William Hite, Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Agosto-Cintron, Principal of Kensington CAPA, Philadelphia Education Fund leadership, and participating students.

# Celebration of Scholars Honors A. Morris Williams, Jr.

More than 220 guests gathered for a special night to support the **Philadelphia Scholars Program** and honor **A. Morris Williams, Jr.**, a long-time friend and donor whose generosity has made it possible for thousands of students to attend college.

The fundraiser and auction raised \$227,000 for scholarships for students. Art Baldadian, chairman of the Philadelphia Scholars Program, warmly welcomed the evening's honoree, A. Morris Williams, Jr., whose extraordinary generosity has helped thousands of bright young men and women attend college in the past decade. Diane Melley, Vice President, Global Citizenship Initiatives, IBM, spoke on behalf of the corporation, lead sponsor for the event. The talented students from Kensington Creative and Performing Arts High School choir performed, and Scholar Chelsea Scruggs, a 2016 graduate of Lincoln University, shared her story.

The Philadelphia Scholars Program was established in 1990. It awards "last dollar" scholarships to Philadelphia high schools students. Last dollar scholarships fill the gap between a financial aid package and the cost of attendance. For many students, the Ed Fund's last dollar scholarships are the difference between a college future or a dream forgone.

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Left: A. Morris Williams, Jr. shares his commitment to education with the crowd. Center: Philadelphia Scholars Program chairman Art Baldadian joined by his wife K.C. Right: Kensington Creative and Performing Arts High School choir students perform.

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## Create an Endowed Scholarship Fund

Want to help our city's young people reach their potential and realize their dreams of a college education? Consider creating an endowed scholarship. The Ed Fund's new endowed Scholarship Program allows you to direct gifts to a personalized fund, bearing your name, in honor of a loved one, or commemorating a special milestone in your family's life. With an initial gift of \$50,000, a named scholarship fund ensures that your investment provides for students now and for years to come. Donations can be made payable over time and contributed through a variety of means, including stock gifts.

To get started, please contact Farah Jimenez, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Education Fund, at [fjimenez@philaedfund.org](mailto:fjimenez@philaedfund.org).



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IT'S  
THAT  
TIME OF  
YEAR!



College acceptance letters are starting to arrive. But some students won't have letters in their mailbox.

**WHY?** Because they didn't apply.

They have the talent. But no one ever told them they were college material. By making a gift to the Philadelphia Education Fund, you can help ensure that our city's talented young people have the support they need to achieve their dreams.

Go to [www.philaedfund.org/donor](http://www.philaedfund.org/donor).

### President's Message

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Finally, we will engage more with you. I want to hear more from you and I want you to hear more from us. This newsletter is just the tip of the iceberg. You can learn more about our work in a two-page insert appearing in each of the six issues published by The Notebook, Philadelphia's leading education periodical. Let me know what you think of this newsletter, The Notebook insert, the Ed Fund and our programs. I am eager to get to know you and to better understand the stories that drive your interest and your commitment to education. Most of all, I am looking forward to working with you to develop strategies that will deepen our impact and serve more of Philadelphia's richly deserving students. Thank you again for your generosity and support.

— Farah Jimenez

### STEM Education

(Continued from page 2)

Funding from partners like Boeing, which recently made a gift of \$50,000 to the Ed Fund, makes this work possible. "Education is the key to success, and we partner with outstanding community organizations like the Philadelphia Education Fund to help strengthen teachers' knowledge and training in STEM education, better equipping them to help students learn the 21st century skills they need to be successful," said Boeing community investor, Global Corporate Citizenship, Peggy Sweeney.

Current Ed Fund Corporate Partners in STEM education include GlaxoSmithKline, Dow, and PECO.

To share your STEM expertise as a speaker or mentor, contact Nancy Peter at [npeter@philaedfund.org](mailto:npeter@philaedfund.org). To make a gift that brings STEM education to more students, email [give@philaedfund.org](mailto:give@philaedfund.org).