

2017 – 2018 School Year  
**PRESS RESOURCES**

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## ABOUT TEACH FOR AMERICA

Teach For America (TFA) is a diverse network of leaders who confront educational inequity through teaching, and work with unwavering commitment from every sector of society to create a nation free from this injustice.

**Most simply, TFA exists to eliminate educational inequity in America.**

TFA is a community of change makers and coalition-builders. Leaders who teach, and teachers who lead. We are a diverse network of tens of thousands of individuals who understand the boundless potential of our nation's most underserved children and the barriers they are up against in the face of inequity.

We are committed to profound systemic change. As a collective force – educators, advocates, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and community members – we fight for the aspirations of students and their families. Together, we shape the conversation about what's possible. From classrooms to districts to state houses across America, we're reimagining education to realize the day when every child has an equal opportunity to learn, to grow, to influence and to lead.

In every community where meaningful progress is being made in educational outcomes, TFA alumni and corps members are playing an essential role. Together with our students and all who support them, we strive for justice and opportunity for all.

## TEACHING CORPS

Teach For America recruits outstanding and diverse individuals who have demonstrated the values and leadership skills necessary to expand access and opportunity for students both inside and outside the classroom. Called "corps members", these individuals make an initial commitment to teach for two years in a public school, partnering with children and families most impacted by educational inequity.

### TFA-Bay Area Corps Member Profile

- 51 percent identify as a person of color
- 48 percent from CA
- 45 percent from a low-income background
- 34 percent received Pell Grant
- 32 percent first in family to attend college
- 25 percent teach STEM
- 18 percent themselves taught by a corps member
- 9 percent teach Bilingual

*Figures based on 9/12/2017 data and can fluctuate over time.*

Throughout our corps members' experience, we provide training and support to help them expand their perspectives, knowledge, and skill as educators and leaders in the movement for system-wide change.

In partnership with schools, families, local universities, other organizations, and businesses in the community, we provide initial training, ongoing professional development, and access to an unparalleled resource and support network.

## TFA BAY AREA REACH AND IMPACT

	BAY AREA	OAKLAND	RICHMOND	SAN FRANCISCO	SAN JOSE	NATIONAL
Years of Activity	25	25	11	9	15	27
Schools Served	104	26	25	15	38	2,100
Traditional	56%	70%	84%	47%	47%	66%
Charter	44%	30%	16%	53%	53%	32%
First-year CMs	185	46	65	13	61	3,539
Second-year CMs	138	34	44	17	43	2,228
Total Corps Members	323	80	109	30	104	6,467

*Figures reflect data as of 9/12/2017 and can fluctuate over time.*

## STAFF AND LOCATIONS

TFA-Bay Area is one of the largest of the 53 Teach For America regions across the country. A staff of approximately 60 supports operations in four communities: Oakland, Richmond, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Regional central office staff and San Francisco community team is located at 940 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Community teams serving Oakland, Richmond, and San Jose work from satellite offices in each of their respective communities.

TFA-Bay Area Executive Director: **Paul Keys**

TFA-Bay Area Chief Program Officer: **Samir Bolar**

TFA-Bay Area Chief Community Officer: **Diana Lee**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ABOUT OUR FOUNDING

#### When and why was Teach For America founded?

In 1989, Wendy Kopp proposed the creation of a national teacher corps in her senior thesis at Princeton University. Convinced that many accomplished recent college graduates seek work that offers significant responsibility and makes a real difference in the world, the 21-year-old Kopp raised \$2.5 million of start-up funding, hired a skeleton staff, and launched a grassroots recruiting campaign. During Teach For America's first year (1990), 500 corps members taught in six low-income communities.

### ABOUT OUR CORPS:

#### SELECTION

#### How selective is the recruitment process?

More than 49,000 individuals applied to the 2017 corps and 15 percent of those applicants received admission.

#### Whom do we recruit into the teaching corps?

TFA recruits top college graduates of all academic majors, career interests, and backgrounds who demonstrate achievement, leadership, perseverance, and a commitment to expanding opportunity for children in low-income areas. We continuously study our teachers to identify the characteristics of those whose students have made the most progress. Some of the areas of strength that TFA looks for include a deep belief in the potential of all kids (often informed by experience in low-income communities); leadership; past achievement; perseverance in challenging situations; long-term commitment to reaching goals; excellent organization and critical-thinking skills; strong interpersonal skills; and an ability to work with individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

#### Does the TFA-Bay Area corps include California natives?

Yes. Over half of our corps members are from California, and many who call the Bay Area home have returned to the region to teach in the communities where they grew up.

#### How is corps size determined?

Each year, the Bay Area team works in collaboration with officials and principals of many school districts and charter networks to assess their hiring needs for the upcoming year. In any given year, corps size may grow, shrink, or remain the same for an upcoming school year, depending on the hiring needs of our partner schools. Our goal is to provide quality teachers to schools most in need.

## DIVERSITY

### Does TFA strive for diversity within its corps?

Yes. Our recruiting efforts focus on individuals who share the racial and/or economic backgrounds of students in underserved public schools, many of whom are African American or Latinx and many of whom are eligible for the federal lunch program. More than half of corps members identify as people of color, nearly half come from a low-income background, and nearly one in three are the first in their family to graduate from college. (See ["TEACHING CORPS" on page 1](#) for Bay-Area corps profile.)

### Why is corps diversity important?

Numerous studies have shown that students of color achieve better outcomes when taught by a teacher who shares their ethnicity. See the following studies:

[New York University Study](#)

[National Education Report](#)

[IZA Institute of Labor Economics Study](#)

[Education of the States Study](#)

Although there is a need for leader-teachers who share the racial and economic backgrounds of their students, we believe that at-scale reform will take a concerted and sustained effort from an entire community of individuals—representing all ethnicities and background—committed to eliminating educational inequity.

### Does the corps include teachers from lower income backgrounds?

Yes. Among our corps members, 32 percent were the first in their family to attend college, and 34 percent received a Pell Grant (the overwhelming majority of Pell Grant recipients have an adjusted gross income of less than \$50,000).

## PREPARATION

### How are corps members prepared?

TFA has developed its approach to teacher training and professional development through years of studying corps members and other teachers who are successful in low-income urban and rural classrooms. TFA trains more teachers for low-income communities than any other organization or institution in the nation. Our teacher support model has two parts.

#### 1. Pre-Service Training

After approximately 30 hours of independent work and observation of experienced teachers, corps members must complete a rigorous eight-week training institute. At the institute, corps members teach in summer school programs; receive feedback from veteran teachers; and complete a regimen of seminars and practice sessions designed to build the capabilities necessary to advance student achievement, including developing the mind-sets and skills to build relationships and work effectively with diverse groups of students, families, educators, and others in their school communities. During regional orientation, corps members complete additional training sessions on establishing clear

goals for their students' achievement, planning for instruction, and preparing to use data to inform their approach.

## 2. Ongoing Professional Development

Building on pre-service training, TFA works with corps members in a two-year program of support and professional development. Full-time instructional coaches work directly with corps members, observing their practice and providing professional development in order to accelerate student progress. Corps members receive toolkits that include sample assessments, standards, and teaching resources customized for their grade level, subject, and district; meet periodically in content-area and grade-level learning teams; and complete coursework toward teacher certification and a master's degree.

## CREDENTIALING

### Do corps members enter the classroom with a credential?

Yes. In compliance with strict requirements set forth by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, TFA corps members teach their first year under a commission-issued intern credential. To qualify for intern program participation, an individual must possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, satisfy the basic skills requirement, meet the subject matter competence and US Constitution requirement, and obtain character and identification clearance. TFA corps members receive commission-approved teacher preparation coursework and an organized system of support from teaching staff at Loyola Marymount University. Completion of the intern program results in the same preliminary teaching credential as is earned through a traditional teacher preparation program route.

## PLACEMENT

### Do corps members apply for teaching positions?

Yes. TFA teacher-recruits are part of the same candidate pool as other teachers and must demonstrate the same qualifications. Corps members apply for open jobs, and undergo the same interview and hiring process as any other candidate. Principals choose TFA corps members to fill vacancies at their schools, often in hard-to-staff subject areas including science, math, and special education. Our survey data shows that more than 80 percent of principals are satisfied with the performance of the corps members at their school.

### Does TFA favor charter schools?

No. The complexity of educational inequity calls for a rigorous examination of all solutions, and that we continuously innovate on those solutions, while also exploring new ones. We encourage our corps members to seek out the most valuable lessons and insights from all models of school governance, as they develop their own opinions and shape their unique role in education reform.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### How effective are corps members?

TFA is among the most studied teacher-preparation programs in the nation. A growing body of rigorous research demonstrates that TFA corps members are as effective as—and in some cases more effective than—other teachers.

A 2015 study by Mathematica Policy Research found that Teach For America corps members who had an average of 1.7 years of teaching experience in elementary grades were as effective as other teachers in the same schools, who averaged nearly 14 years of experience.<sup>1</sup> The study also found that pre-K through second students taught by corps members outperformed their peers in reading by the equivalent of an additional 1.3 months of learning.<sup>2</sup> These findings are consistent with those of statewide studies in North Carolina, and Tennessee. The North Carolina study found that middle school math students of TFA teachers received the equivalent of an extra half-year of learning.<sup>3</sup> The Tennessee report identified TFA as the most effective of the state's 42 teacher-preparation programs, with corps members demonstrating a greater impact on student achievement than the average new teacher in every evaluated subject area.

In a 2012-13 independent survey of principals who employ TFA teachers, 95 percent reported that corps members make a positive difference in their schools.

An independent study commissioned by SFUSD in 2012 found that new TFA teachers had higher ELA (English Language Arts) and Math acceleration scores than other new teachers, and similar acceleration to veteran teachers. Two exceptions were in middle school math, where TFA teachers had much higher acceleration than both other new teachers and veteran teachers, and high school math, where TFA teachers did not differ from other new teachers and had lower acceleration than veteran teachers had.

## RETENTION

### Do TFA teachers fulfill their teaching commitment?

Yes, the overwhelming majority of TFA corps members fulfill their teaching commitment. Although high-need schools in the U.S. have high rates of teacher turnover (regardless of how teachers have been prepared), TFA corps members stay in the classroom longer than teachers who have entered the teaching profession via another pathway.

- Ninety-two percent of TFA-Bay Area corps members complete their first-year of teaching—a higher percentage than the average for first-year Bay Area teachers.
- Eighty-five percent of TFA-Bay Area corps members complete their second year of teaching—a higher percentage than the average for second-year Bay Area teachers.
- Half of TFA-Bay Area teachers having just completed their two-year initial commitment stay in the classroom to teach a third year.
- Nationally, more than 1 in 4 of the more than 50,000 alumni are still in the classroom today.
- Teaching is the most common profession among all TFA alumni.

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1 Clark, M.A., Isenberg, E., Liu, A.Y., Makowsky, L., & Zukiewicz, M. (2015). Impacts of the Teach For America Investing in Innovation Scale-Up. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.

2 Ibid.

3 Clark, M. A., Chiang, H.S., et. al. (2013). The effectiveness of secondary math teachers from Teach For America and the Teach Fellows programs. (No. NCEE 2013-4015). Washington, DC; Institute of Education Sciences and Mathematica Policy Research.

## ABOUT OUR ALUMNI

### Bay-Area Alumni Reach and Impact

Total Alumni	2,038
Alumni School and System Leaders	13 percent*
Alumni Classroom Teachers	35 percent
Alumni Working Full-time in Education	60 percent
Alumni in Education or Serving Low-income communities	82 percent

*Bay-Area figures reflect data as of 9/12/2017 and can fluctuate over time.*

*\*Includes mid-level school leaders, e.g. Assistant Principals, Academic Deans, etc.*

### National Alumni Reach and Impact

Total Alumni	50,000
Alumni School and System Leaders	2 percent
Alumni Classroom Teachers	34 percent
Alumni Working Full-time in Education	69 percent
Alumni in Education or Serving Low-income communities	83 percent

*National figures reflect data as of 9/12/2017 and can fluctuate over time.*

## ABOUT OUR FUNDING

### Who are TFA's funders?

Our funders include school systems and governments at the local, state, and federal level, as well as a mix of individuals and public and private organizations. No private donor represents more than 5 percent of our annual revenue. Seventy-five percent of our revenue stream is regional, and the remainder is national. See our 2014 financials for the latest breakdown.

### Who pays TFA corps members?

Corps members are paid directly by the school districts for which they work and generally receive the same salaries and benefits as other entry-level teachers. Teach For America is a member of AmeriCorps, the national service network, through which corps members are eligible to receive loan forbearance and interest payment on qualified student loans, as well as an education award at the end of each year of service. A complete listing of TFA-Bay Area funders may be found on [tfabay.org](http://tfabay.org).

## How does TFA spend its money?

Research shows that teachers are the single biggest school-based factor in a child's academic success, so we invest there – in teachers who lead their students to outstanding outcome and become lifelong educational champions. We spend about \$53,000 annually to recruit new corps members and to prepare and support current corps members. That breaks down to \$13,000 to recruit and select each new teacher; \$10,000 in pre-service training for each new teacher; and \$14,000 in professional development during each corps member's first two years in the classroom. We spend 10 percent of our annual budget on fundraising (on par with other nonprofits) and 10 percent on administrative expenses (lower than other nonprofits). TFA has earned 12 consecutive top ratings from Charity Navigator.