

## Where to Find the Next Generation of Teachers? It May be Closer than you Think!

Despite numerous options for those interested in pursuing teaching careers and a number of incentives offered by school districts, state governments, and other agencies designed to abate the lack of qualified teachers, **the shortage of K-12 educators in the U.S. is growing**. Although regional differences exist, groups like *Recruiting New Teachers* and the National Education Association forecast need nationwide as teachers begin to retire en masse in the coming years or simply leave the profession (National Center for Policy Analysis, 2001). Areas of particular need include urban and rural schools, schools with dense populations of English Language Learners, male teachers, teachers of color, teachers of reading, mathematics, and the sciences. Because the teacher pipeline remains relatively empty in areas of high need, districts and colleges alike are compelled to **search for would-be teachers in non-traditional settings**. Recent research undertaken by the Center for Arts Research in Education (CARE) suggests that **ArtsBridge, the University of California's innovative arts outreach partnership with K-12 schools** might be good place to begin the hunt. Take, for example, the following findings:



- ArtsBridge places over 900 undergraduate and graduate scholars in public school classrooms every year. **Over half of ArtsBridge scholars have reported a serious interest in public school teaching.**
  - Through ongoing exposure to the teaching profession and given supervised opportunities to deliver instruction, **ArtsBridge scholars gain real world experience and first-hand knowledge** of educators' daily practice.
- Data from pre- and post- tests taken by ArtsBridge pupils and commentary supplied by host teachers suggest that scholars almost uniformly used pedagogy that impacted pupils' multiple intelligences and abilities to succeed academically. Many ArtsBridge **scholars were characterized as "innovative and exciting," "outstanding," "knowledgeable," and "natural born educators"** by their host teachers.

With support from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), CARE has been given the opportunity to investigate this phenomenon in the larger context of ArtsBridge programming. Specific research topics will include the identification of factors that influence scholars to enter the teaching profession and how scholars' interests might be nurtured throughout their tenure with ArtsBridge.

Although we are only one part of the solution to relieve the nation's teacher shortage, if the ArtsBridge example proves to ring true, the next generation of primary and secondary teachers may be closer than you think! **ArtsBridge is showing that university partnerships with schools can join the futures of young scholars with the future of public education.**

## Voices From the Field: Scholars Talk About ArtsBridge and Teaching

No evidence is more persuasive than the voices of scholars describing their experiences in the classroom. CARE has gathered commentary from each campus that we believe speaks powerfully to the value of ArtsBridge in cultivating a pool of future teachers:

“I am most definitely considering a career in teaching, because of the experience I had with ArtsBridge. I was already considering one, but ArtsBridge solidified my decision. ArtsBridge has had a pretty significant affect on my life because it has given me confidence. It has made me stop thinking about making a difference in my community and actually doing it.” –**Middle School Scholar, UC Berkeley**



“(Although) teaching was part of my life and a future plan, the program has reinforced the necessity of artistic outlets for children in an academic curriculum. It is an enabling force that inspires my motivation. During my last session one of the students approached me (and said), ‘One day I want to be a teacher or an artist.’ This student had been more inattentive and more active than other children, but now he had found a place to concentrate that energy.”

–**Elementary School Scholar, UC Davis**

“I realized how much (the children) want to learn and how much they need someone who cares to teach them. I really enjoyed (ArtsBridge) and learned so much.”

–**Elementary School Scholar, UC Riverside**

“The most rewarding college experience I’ve had has been in an elementary school!” –**Elementary School Scholar, UC Santa Barbara**

“ArtsBridge has given me a new outlook on teaching. I always knew that I liked kids, but I never thought that I wanted to be a teacher. I took this job because I thought it looked like good experience. After the experience, I have a new attitude about teaching. It is something that I would definitely consider for my future and I have a new respect for teachers and all of their hard work.” –**Elementary School Scholar, UC Santa Cruz**

“I am presently the director of Music at Loyola High School in LA. It is a great job, and I am having a wonderful time. One of the factors that prepared me well for this job was the ArtsBridge program...it was a great way to get experience and inspiration.” –**UC Irvine ArtsBridge Alumnus**

*ArtsBridge Research Notes* contain brief summaries of the impact of the ArtsBridge program on participants: university students, faculty, K-12 schoolchildren, and teachers. For others in the series, or for additional information, see our website. The contents of these Research Notes were developed under a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.