

Teach For America

History

As a college senior, Wendy Kopp proposed Teach For America's creation in her Princeton University undergraduate thesis. She was convinced that many in her generation were searching for a way to assume a significant responsibility that would make a real difference in the world and that top college students would choose teaching over more lucrative opportunities if a prominent teacher corps existed. As a 21 year-old, Kopp raised \$2.5 million of start-up funding, hired a skeleton staff, and launched a grass-roots recruitment campaign. During Teach For America's first year in 1990, 500 men and women began teaching in six low-income communities across the country. Since then, Teach For America's network has grown to over 24,000 individuals. We have become one of the nation's largest providers of teachers for low-income communities, and we have been recognized for building a pipeline of leaders committed to educational equity and excellence.

Our impact

Firsthand experience has shown us that, when given the opportunity, students in low-income communities can and will achieve at high levels. Armed with this knowledge, our corps members and alumni work relentlessly to increase academic achievement and expand educational opportunities for their students.

Since our inception in 1990, the Teach For America network has grown to include 24,000 individuals. Currently, some 7,300 Teach For America corps members teach in 35 urban and rural areas profoundly affected by the achievement gap. They are working extraordinarily hard to ensure that their students achieve academic success despite the inequities they face.

Our alumni are a powerful and growing force for change. By exerting leadership from inside and outside education, our nearly 17,000 alumni leverage their corps experience to improve outcomes and opportunities for low-income students and to fight for systemic reform.

Because of the impact our corps members and alumni are having in the short and long term, there is tremendous demand within communities and larger education reform circles for Teach For America. In fact, we are growing our presence in regions where we already place corps members, and will be expanding to new communities for the 2009-10 school year.

Regions

Teach For America places corps members in regions most profoundly impacted by the gap in educational outcomes. Roughly 80 percent of the students we reach qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and more than 90 percent are African-American or Latino. All of the districts we serve are classified as "high-need" local education agencies by the federal government.

As we grow our corps, our geographic reach grows as well. The 2009 corps will head to classrooms in 35 regions across the United States, including six new sites: Boston; Dallas; Milwaukee; Nashville, Tenn.; Tulsa, Okla.; Twin Cities, Minn.; and Wilmington, Del. (part of Mid-Atlantic region). At the same time, we are working to grow our presence in our existing placement sites.

Teach For America

President and Chief Program Officer



Matthew Kramer

As president and chief program officer, Matthew Kramer is responsible for Teach For America's overall performance, operations, and effectiveness. He works closely with the chief executive officer and operating committee to guide Teach For America's long-term strategy, make operating decisions (including resource allocation), and develop the optimal organizational culture. In his role as chief program officer, Kramer oversees recruitment, selection and placement, teacher preparation and ongoing support, and alumni affairs. He joined Teach For America after working at McKinsey & Company, a management consulting firm, where he was a partner and leader in the North American Financial Institutions practice. In addition to his work with insurers and asset managers, Kramer has also served nonprofit institutions focused on K-12 education. Prior to joining McKinsey, Kramer received a B.A. in economics from Harvard University

Executive Director, Miami-Dade



Rebecca Fishman Lipsey leads the Miami-Dade region, managing a team of talented staff and nearly 100 corps members as they work to create a movement for educational equity across South Florida. Rebecca joined Teach For America as a 2004 corps member where she taught 4th and 5th grade in Harlem, New York. During her first year of teaching, Rebecca was able to increase student learning in her classroom by 1.5 years, and in her second year, Rebecca's students demonstrated more than 1.77 years of growth. Inspired by her work in the classroom, she brought her skills and talents to the New York City regional team as a program director, where her corps members demonstrated record breaking satisfaction levels. Rebecca went on to become the managing director of program in New York City, managing approximately 200 teachers in their work with 6,000 students across Manhattan, the Bronx, and Brooklyn, while fostering partnerships with principals, teachers, community members, and leaders in the educational reform movement. Rebecca was the valedictory speaker from her graduating class at the University of Pennsylvania and holds a M.Ed. from Bank Street College of Education.

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