



## **New Orleans Education Organizations Awarded Nearly \$13,000,000 to Collaborate on Strategy to Recruit and Train Teachers**

New Orleans LA - The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a nearly \$13 million grant to a group of New Orleans universities and non-profits to recruit, prepare, and develop nearly 900 highly-effective, culturally competent teachers from diverse backgrounds by 2020.

The project establishes a unique and innovative partnership of teacher training programs, including two local universities – [Xavier University of Louisiana](#) (XULA) and [Loyola University New Orleans](#) – and four New Orleans education non-profits – [Teach For America Greater New Orleans](#), [teachNOLA](#), and [Relay Graduate School of Education](#), and [New Schools for New Orleans](#). The partners will work together to address teacher pipeline challenges across the city, implementing their unique teacher preparation models to meet the needs of schools with high concentrations of High-Need Students while collaborating on best practices and problem-solving.

“The partnership that this award will help foster is an important step for our city,” said Dr. Renee Akbar, Chair & Associate Professor of Xavier University’s Division of Education and Counseling. Xavier University will serve as the lead convener of each of the awardees. “We will come together across the full range of ways teachers are prepared to work in our city’s schools – residencies, university programs, and alternative routes.” Xavier will recruit, prepare, and develop new teachers over the course of the grant through the Norman C. Francis Teacher Residency (NCFTR), a partnership between Xavier and New Orleans charter management organizations.

“Xavier is extremely proud to take the lead in this dynamic educational endeavor,” said Dr. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University. “Developing a diverse pool of locally trained teachers is critical to the future of the educational system in New Orleans and to the success of our youth. We are grateful to the Department of Education supporting us in these efforts.”

“Public school enrollment continues to rise in New Orleans while we face the same teacher attrition challenges as districts across the country do,” said Patrick Dobard, CEO of New School for New Orleans. “Leveraging a diverse set of teacher training pathways is critical to addressing any teacher supply and training gaps that may limit our ability to get a great teacher in every classroom, every year.” New Schools for New Orleans will provide strategic support on the project and assist with overall citywide teacher recruitment efforts.

Loyola will recruit and train teachers over the course of the grant through their recently launched Master of Arts in Teaching program, which prepares teachers to apply for certification in grades 6-12. The year-long program emphasizes competency-based skills, real-world applications, and includes significant advising and coaching for teachers. “Expanding pipelines that will allow New Orleans to meet rising demand for excellent teachers is an urgent challenge,” said David B. Borofsky, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at Loyola University New Orleans, adding that Loyola University New Orleans is pleased to help educate the next generation of educational leaders. “Our new Master of Arts in Teaching degree program provides yet another pathway to increasing the number of teachers with deep content knowledge, hands-on experience, and cultural competency.”

TFA will continue to prepare and support a racially and socioeconomically diverse corps of new teachers. Corps member training begins in a summer institute focused on essential classroom skills and continues through observation and feedback cycles, quarterly step-backs with teacher coaches, and regular whole-corps and small-group professional development opportunities. “The investment to bring teacher training programs together is an affirmation of how important it is for our city to cultivate the next generation of leaders in this work, said Joy Okoro, interim Executive Director of Greater New Orleans-Louisiana Delta. “That is what we are all stepping up for, and I’m inspired by that.”

Relay will recruit, prepare, and develop novice teachers over the course of the grant through the Relay Teaching Residency. In the first year of the program, residents serve as apprentice teachers, gradually taking on more responsibility as they build their skills. Successful first-year residents will transition into lead teaching roles in the second year of the program and complete their master’s in teaching at Relay New Orleans. “We’re eager to work alongside local partners to recruit and develop more great teachers for our city’s schools. Through the Relay Teaching Residency, we’re prioritizing attracting – and retaining – more talented, diverse individuals into teaching, the world’s greatest profession,” stated Jennifer Francis, Senior Dean of Relay Louisiana.

teachNOLA/TNTP will recruit and train teachers over the course of the grant for placement in over 35 schools in New Orleans. The program is designed to ensure new teachers working with high-need students have the classroom skills and deep content knowledge necessary to deliver rigorous, standards aligned instruction from their first day in the classroom. Celena Siprajim, New Orleans Program Director for TNTP shared that “our team is thrilled to be part of this exciting collaboration and for the continued opportunity to serve our schools and students by providing a robust, local teacher talent pipeline.”

In addition to the individual organizational efforts, the partners will collaborate on specific activities to increase the number of teachers of color, enhance the cultural competency of their teachers, and participate in structured collaborations to learn from local and national experts and one another.

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