



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **PATRICK R. RICCARDS NAMED DIRECTOR AT WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION** *Nationally Recognized Communications Strategist Will Spearhead Media Relations and Strategy*

PRINCETON, N.J. (August 6, 2014) — The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation announced that Patrick R. Riccards has joined its communications team as director of media relations and strategy.

Riccards is an award-winning education communications strategist with nearly 20 years of communications and public engagement experience. He was previously CEO of the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now and, prior to that, executive director of communications and public affairs at American Institutes for research. PR News named Riccards its Public Affairs Professional of the Year in 2013. He was also Bulldog Reporter's 2011 Not-for-Profit Communications Professional of the Year.

Riccards has also served in senior communications positions for many of the nation's leading education communications agencies, including roles as executive director of the Pennsylvania STEM Initiative and as de facto chief of staff and counsel to the congressionally mandated National Reading Panel. He began his career on Capitol Hill, holding communications posts for U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd (WV), U.S. Sen. Bill Bradley (NJ), and U.S. Rep. John Olver (MA).

"The Woodrow Wilson Foundation is leading a national effort to transform how we prepare educators for the classroom and how we ensure high-need schools have the teachers and innovators they need and deserve," Riccards said. "With its work in states like Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio, the Foundation has an incredible story to tell. I am thrilled to be able to help tell it and share the lessons learned through the Foundation's work to strengthen our nation's schools and communities."

The Foundation's education reform initiatives include the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowships, providing master's-level preparation for high-achieving individuals with backgrounds in science and mathematics to teach in high-need high schools. Another recent program, the Woodrow Wilson MBA Fellowship in Education Leadership, prepares school, district, and charter leaders, blending an education-based business curriculum with clinical experience in schools, corporations and nonprofits.

Other Woodrow Wilson programs include fellowships that prepare candidates for the U.S. Foreign Service, administered on behalf of the Department of State; support dissertation work in ethics and religious values, funded by the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation; and offer awards for graduate study in various other fields.

"For two decades, Patrick has worked with institutions, educators, and policymakers to help improve public education and make the American Dream a reality for all of our children," said Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. "Patrick brings to Woodrow Wilson the knowledge and experience essential to advance the Foundation's work of identifying and developing leaders to address the nation's educational challenges. We are thrilled that Patrick has joined us."

A University of Virginia graduate, Riccards is author or lead editor of more than two dozen education research studies, beginning with the NRP's Teaching Children to Read report. He is the author of *Dadprovement* (Turning Stone Press, 2014) and is lead editor and contributing author for the forthcoming second edition of *Why Kids Can't Read: Challenging the Status Quo in Education* (Rowman Littlefield Education, 2014). He is the creator and author of Eduflack, a nationally recognized blog focused on the intersection of education research, policy, politics, and communications, and its companion @Eduflack Twitter feed.

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation of Princeton, New Jersey ([www.woodrow.org](http://www.woodrow.org)) identifies and develops leaders to meet the nation's most critical challenges. In 1945, the Foundation was created to meet the challenge of preparing a new generation of college professors. Today Woodrow Wilson offers a suite of fellowships to address national needs, including the education of teachers and school leaders.

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