



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:  
CONTACT:

Wednesday, July 17, 2019  
Patrick Riccards  
[riccards@woodrow.org](mailto:riccards@woodrow.org) | (703) 298-8283

# Pennsylvania Takes Important Step to Ensure Its High-Need Schools Have Excellent STEM Teachers

## *Inaugural Class of Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows to Help State Construct Strong Pipeline of Science, Math Teachers*

**PRINCETON, NJ** (July 17, 2019)—As part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s commitment to close the achievement gaps and provide all students with high-quality teachers, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation today announced the inaugural class of Pennsylvania Teaching Fellows.

Twenty-four individuals will be part of the first cohort of the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship program in the state (*Fellow names follow at the end of this release*). They recently began their programs at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education and Duquesne University.

The highly competitive program recruits both recent graduates and career changers with strong backgrounds in science, technology, engineering, and math—the STEM fields—and prepares them specifically to teach in high-need secondary schools. Pennsylvania Teaching Fellows will also begin the program at West Chester University in 2020.

“Pennsylvania is a national leader for investing in science and technology education, and we need more great STEM teachers,” said Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf. “These fellows will help expand quality STEM learning and prepare generations of students for high-growth fields that Pennsylvania needs. I commend the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation for its commitment to STEM learning.”

The WW Pennsylvania Teaching Fellowship focuses on preparing top-quality educators for many of the state’s most underserved public schools. Each Fellow receives \$32,000 to complete a specially designed, cutting-edge master’s degree program based on a yearlong classroom experience. In return, Fellows commit to teach for three years in the high-need Pennsylvania schools. Throughout the three-year commitment as a teacher of record at a public school, Fellows receive ongoing support and mentoring.

“The Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship helps build a more effective teacher workforce while expanding the pipeline of individuals considering a career in education,” Woodrow Wilson Foundation President Rajiv Vinnakota said. “Through the Pennsylvania Teaching Fellowship program, the state is able to strengthen its teacher preparation programs while recruiting and developing educators committed to school improvement and closing the achievement gaps.”

Selected in a statewide review by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the university partners have spent the past year ensuring their teacher preparation programs meet the Fellowship's standards for intensive clinical work and rigorous related coursework. West Chester University will join Duquesne and Penn in offering the program for the 2020-21 academic year. The work at West Chester University will later be replicated on other campuses in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE).

"These Fellows share our commitment to making sure every child in Philadelphia has the opportunity to experience an excellent education," said Pam Grossman, Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. "Over the next year, they will work closely with Penn GSE faculty and experienced educators in our city's schools, and graduate prepared to make an impact in the lives of Philadelphia students."

"Duquesne has been delighted to partner with the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation on teacher education focused on science and math," said David Dausey, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Duquesne University. "We are looking forward to welcoming our first cohort of students to Duquesne where they will have the opportunity to interact with teachers and students from public schools across our region. We know that this program will have a significant impact on STEM education and will help to increase the diversity of STEM teachers and students that ultimately pursue STEM careers."

All three participating universities received \$400,000 matching grants to develop their teacher preparation programs based on standards set by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. For each of the program's three years, the participating Pennsylvania universities will enroll 12 Fellows, totaling 108 fellows over that three-year period. Given the state's shortage of secondary-level STEM teachers, the foundation is looking for additional partners and funders to expand the program.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation will create and administer the program, with support from the William Penn Foundation, Highmark, AT&T, the Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union, M&T Bank, the Weiss Family Foundation, Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education Foundation, and several other major individual donors.

To date, more than 1,200 teachers have been prepared through the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship program. A range of foundations and private funders, including Lilly Endowment Inc., Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Overdeck Foundation, and a consortium of Ohio and New Jersey foundations, as well as state and federal funds, have supported the Fellowship. The Pennsylvania program brings the total commitment to the Fellowship to nearly \$100 million nationwide.

Pennsylvania joins Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio as Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship states. More information on the Pennsylvania program can be found at: <https://woodrow.org/fellowships/ww-teaching-fellowships/pennsylvania/>.

###

**About the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation**

Founded in 1945, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation ([www.woodrow.org](http://www.woodrow.org)) identifies and develops the nation's best minds to meet its most critical challenges. The Foundation supports its Fellows as the next generation of leaders shaping American society.

**The 2019-20 Class of Woodrow Wilson Pennsylvania Teaching Fellows include:**

***Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows – Duquesne University***

- Heather Amper | Pittsburgh, PA
- Jessica Campos | Tempe, AZ
- Erin Caplan | Pittsburgh, PA
- Bethany Giombetti | Lake Ariel, PA
- Alexandra Gow | Pittsburgh, PA
- Clayton Jacques | Newburyport, MA
- Rachel Milliron | South Plainfield, NJ
- Natalie Panigall | San Diego, CA
- Kerry Martin Skora | Kent, OH
- Denise Tyler | Pittsburgh, PA
- Madeline Winn | Carlisle, PA

***Weiss Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows – University of Pennsylvania***

- Marc Bassler | Philadelphia, PA
- David Chapman | North Brunswick, NJ
- Kaninta Esmeralda | Jeannette, PA
- Jessica George | Media, PA
- David Kalb | Westport, CT
- Julia Klingler | Bethel Park, PA
- Nicholas Manning | De Pere, WI
- Cristina Ramacciotti | Langhorne, PA
- Andrew Rinn | Philadelphia, PA
- Rachel Scratow | Pittsburgh, PA
- Michael Slaza | Pennington, NJ
- Lindsey Snyder | Philadelphia, PA
- Kwesi Vincent | Plainfield, NJ