



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

Teacher Residency Program Spotlight

September 2017

David Frazier - Frankford High

“Empowering Through Education” - David Frazier



The Teacher Residency Program Spotlight is a designed to showcase our residents doing what they love most - teaching. Every month we will highlight a different teacher resident to illustrate the ways in which Philadelphia’s new educators care for their students and communities.

David Frazier is currently working at Frankford High School in the Northeast teaching English. He is a graduate of Widener University with a degree in Social Work and loves spoken word and poetry.

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Why did you apply to the Teacher Residency Program?

I applied to the Teacher Residency program [when I left] grad school. During my year working as a SPED Classroom Assistant, I heard that the Special Education Department had a shortage of teachers. So I went to the Special Education Liaison and asked to get an Emergency Certification, because I already had the experience. ..the SPED teacher whom I was working with, introduced me to this program, Relay Graduate School of Education. She made me use her computer to complete the application and pushed me to do the online interview. I AM VERY GLAD THAT I DID!!!

When did you know that you wanted to be a teacher?

I wanted to be a teacher ever since I was child. One thing that had always drawn me to teaching was the ability to empower and inspire. Over the course of my development, both as a person and a professional, I found that I was most inspired by someone who worked in some form of teaching capacity. I was encouraged by after school teachers and coordinators; furthermore, I had one specific teacher who took the time to pour into my well-being. Those instances were the catalyst that served the call to me to become a teacher.

What has surprised you most about teaching?

Last year, as a SPED Classroom Assistant, I was surprised about how confidence play a major role in a student's academic and personal development. the challenge was the lack of confidence that my students had as a result of being limited by the perceptions of people who may have discounted their abilities. Consequently, a shift in our teaching had to occur. While material was being presented, time was given to encourage the group collectively and individually. Also, another important factor was providing that encouragement outside of instruction. That includes gym time, lunch, and even in the hallway. That's important because confidence is holistic in terms of building up people. Therefore, students need to hear the same message of being worthy outside of the classroom as well as inside.

What are your short term and long terms goals as a teacher?

My short term goals as a teacher is to strengthen my planning and instructional skills....I have to start putting time into intentional planning and implementing. My long term goal is to strengthen as many students as possible while I am on this journey Also, I want to create a classroom that operates like a sanctuary, which students come in and be safe, supported, challenged, held accountable, empowered, inspired, and educated.

Why did you want to teach in Philadelphia?

In our district and schools... there is a need for innovative, exciting, and encouraging teachers. I want to teach, because I want [to] introduce a new expectation, and a new attitude that will impact our students

in a way that motivates them. That's the expectation to persevere and succeed. Not only that I come in with the expectation for the students to have confidence in themselves. Those are the attitudes that I want to display, portray, and have the students relay.

Think back to a teacher that inspired you. What would you say to that teacher now?

The one teacher who inspired me was my 4th/5th grade teacher. I came to her as a failing, mediocre student who was living in familial turmoil....I was exhibiting behavioral issues such as throwing temper tantrums. [This teacher] saw pass that. She spent so much time with me. She brought in clothes for me. She came to my house one time to do homework with me. For three straight periods, I was on honor roll in fifth grade. If I saw her again, the first thing I would probably do is cry. I would be speechless because she would not even know how she impacted me. As a matter of fact, she would not even be aware of the legacy that she left, because the work that I am doing is the result of her work. As a matter of fact, I would name every student she impacted, which are my former students from the after school program and the life skills classroom at Frankford. Those names would also include future students who will experience her impact.

There is a saying, “To teach is to touch a life forever”. How would you finish that sentence, “To teach is to”?

To teach is to serve. We, as teachers, have this misconception that we're the boss. NO! Not true. Most of our position requires us to serve: we are serving knowledge. We are serving inspiration. We are serving hope in a dim, cruel world. We are serving light in areas that are darkened with ignorance. We are serving in so many areas that just cannot be accounted for. That's something that we have to be mindful of.

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- ❖ Meet the [Residents of Cohort 1](#).
- ❖ Interested in joining our 2018-19 cohort? Please fill out this [survey](#). For full consideration, candidates must have a passing exam score in their content area, 3.0 undergraduate GPA, and commit to teach in Philadelphia's public schools for 3 years.
- ❖ For more information about our Teacher Residency Program, please visit our website <https://jobs.philasd.org/teacher-residency/>.
- ❖ Teacher Residency Program [FAQs](#)
- ❖ For any immediate questions, feel free to contact us at teacherresidency@philasd.org.