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# Class Action

*What Clinton's national service program could learn from Teach for America*

by Jonathan Schorr

For a guy who isn't known for making short speeches, President Clinton can pack a lot into a few words. In the State of the Union address in January, at Rutgers University in March, and again in New Orleans on the 100th day of his administration, Clinton boldly pledged to include the nation's public schools in his national service program. The plan, something of a G.I. Bill for the MTV generation, promises college grants and loans for young people, "and some who aren't so young," willing, among other things, "to serve in our schools as teachers or tutors in reading and mathematics."

The idea, like Boston's community service-oriented City Year and the Peace Corps in the sixties, is exciting, but it's not as simple as it sounds. Perhaps college students and recent graduates could easily serve as tutors and teachers' aides, but Clinton's plan calls for some to work as full-time teachers as well. Overall, the president is asking for one or two years of service; most teacher recruits would presumably spend most or all of that time teaching. And while it takes five years to qualify to teach in most states, Clinton proposes sending those national service recruits into the classroom with just eight weeks of training. That may be long enough to train neighborhood clean-up workers or even police auxiliaries, but is it enough for teachers?

Teach For America (TFA), the recent private reincarnation of the sixties Teacher Corps, says yes. Developed by Princeton undergraduate

*Jonathan Schorr is in his third year of teaching English, history, and journalism at Pasadena High School. He recently earned his California teaching credential.*

Wendy Kopp (with whom Clinton met during his Rutgers visit) and kicked off in 1990, TFA sends college graduates to teach for two years in understaffed schools. As Clinton looks for a model of a crash course for teachers, TFA's eight-week program is an obvious choice, and TFA in fact has submitted a proposal to the president's Commission on National and Community Service. But my own rocky experience in TFA's first corps of teachers tells me—and ought to tell the president's planners—that a quick course and a year in the classroom without the support to make that year successful is a waste of the enormous potential of a young, energetic teaching force. Unless teachers are smartly selected, trained, and supervised, little of use will be accomplished except the soothing of New Democratic consciences.

## Training wreck

In many ways, I'm typical of the surprisingly large number of applicants who went after TFA's first 500 slots three years ago. One of a score of TFAers selected from over 100 Yale seniors who applied. I had had the best education money can buy. After nine years at Washington's Sidwell Friends School, which the president's daughter has made famous, and four years at Yale, I could have counted on my fingers the number of times I had been inside a public school. And despite volunteer tutoring in the City Lights school for emotionally disturbed and delinquent children in Washington and in the New Haven Juvenile Detention Center, I had never given serious thought

agree 100%

Strategy--Without aggressive work by us, we'll never get the professional side of the program. We need to get FT, TFA + OE into the same room at the same time if we want to get this done in 1994!!

is an exciting article. Perhaps Jonathan Schorr would be invited to see us we all

to teaching. Yet, a month after I graduated from college, I found myself at Manual Arts High School in South Central Los Angeles as part of the TFA Summer Institute.

The eight weeks of TFA training were a jumble. Summer school practice teaching in the morning was followed by a mix of classes, seminars, and discussions in the afternoon at the TFA Institute at the University of Southern California. As is so commonly—and problematically—the case, our student teaching roles in the classrooms varied widely. Many TFA student teachers were consigned to the back of the room, observing the “master” teacher at work and occasionally making cameos before the class. Other so-called “mentors” dropped the full load of planning, teaching, and grading on the TFA neophyte, sometimes even leaving the student teacher alone in the room. My experience was somewhere in the middle: I taught one two-hour class solo and observed another. Due to an oddity of the schedule, I ended up with an English class with four students in it. Grading was a breeze, but planning lessons was not, and I was up far too late every night. Quickly, I developed a pragmatic approach to my classes. I tried to figure out what would get me through the next day, not what would make me a better teacher.

The afternoon’s TFA Institute classes ran the gamut: classroom management seminars, methods of teaching particular subjects, prep courses for the many standardized tests we faced, lectures introducing us to the law, history, and theory surrounding education, and discussions of multicultural and bilingual education. Some of what we learned, especially classroom management and routines, was useful. But much of it—the fundamentals and general theory of education—had little relevance to our daily work. (If anything, theoretical training ought to be specific to the subject a given teacher is slated to teach.) All of it would have worked better if we had had the guidance of a strong mentor once we were in the classroom full time, perhaps with a reduced load the first year and then a second year at full speed.

In fact, the frequent TFA small-group meetings with a mentor teacher were the best part of that

summer’s training, though their value depended entirely on the talent of the mentor. Luckily, my mentor was a gifted, award-winning social studies teacher from New York City. He engaged each of us personally. Often he untangled our classroom problems on grading, discipline, or getting across a complicated concept. He watched each of us teach, offered support and criticism, and occasionally presented a lesson of his own as a model. Typical of the way he nudged us along was the journal he required me to keep. In one frustrated entry, I listed some of the things my students didn’t know, including the number of justices on the Supreme Court (guesses were 28, 36, and 2). Nor could they think of a significant event that happened between 1925 and 1945. “I think the class is bored,” I wrote. “I need to inject excitement and creativity.” In a typed response, my mentor sympathized, recalled similar experiences in his own work, suggested articles to read, and consoled: “Your advice to yourself is right on target. . . . You are your own worst critic. Not such a bad thing!” He was right.

## Talking ed

Soon, however, the student teaching, seminars, mentor groups, motivational meetings, and bad USC chicken were over. I cleared out my dorm room and found an apartment in Pasadena. A week later, while I was still sleeping on sofa pillows spread out on the floor, I showed up for my first day of work at Pasadena High School. Pasadena, to anyone outside southern California, is the sunny home of the Rose Parade, the Super Bowl, and Cal Tech—not as tough as L.A. or New York City. But Pasadena has its inner city, too, plus enough private schools (they outnumber public schools two to one) to drain off nearly all of the city’s affluent families.

The first hurdle, which took me months to clear, was simply writing daily lesson plans. This is one of the hardest points to make to non-teachers. Because the classroom is such a familiar and uncomplicated place for most people, it’s hard to see that developing and executing a good curriculum is about as simple as composing and performing a

good symphony. For the first few months, my double-period teaching blocks—I taught two 9th grade English and social studies classes and one senior literature class—yawned open as terrifying blocks of unplanned time. I was advised to keep my 9th graders on their toes by switching activities every 10 or 20 minutes—meaning at least five different activities for each class. And worse still, no two of the five-and-a-half classes I taught each day were the same.

Moreover, in the hazing that is typical at every school (and, of course, in many professions), I as the new teacher was given one of the school's toughest 9th grade classes, which was filled with "social promotions"—students who had not passed the 8th grade but were simply moved along with their classmates. And there were learning-disabled students (reading at 3rd and 5th grade levels), severe behavior problems, students who spoke little English, petty (and not-so-petty) criminals, and so on. No one who has taught in an urban public school will be surprised by this litany; it's utterly typical. Giving the least experienced teachers the toughest classes to teach is a stupid combination, even for the most eager of young teachers. I had thought I was ready. I was knowledgeable and excited. My lessons were good, designed to demand meaningful thought and hard work. Though I would not have admitted it at the time, I, perhaps like most TFAers, harbored dreams of liberating my students from public school mediocrity and offering them as good an education as I had received.

But I was not ready. The morning 9th-grade class was a rough mix. Mario, who had already been to jail—for truancy—took a pair of bolt cutters into the school bicycle cage and tried to steal a bike as I watched. Luther, a 15-year-old father-to-be, was so stoned once that he asked to be excused to go to a doctor's appointment scheduled two weeks earlier. Gina, whose mother refused to allow her to take medication for her hyperactivity, cursed and yelled when I asked her to sit and be quiet. Ernie, a born entertainer turned gang member, never turned in any work, but had an uncanny talent for mimicking me, which he did constantly: "Unacceptable! Unacceptable!"

Boredom and frustration set in, intensified by the first set of grades, more than 80 percent of which were Fs in one class. I lacked the skills to "manage" the behavior of a student whose par-

ents suggested slugging her in the mouth if she talked back. I was unready for the illiterate student who, after sitting mute at the back of my classroom for months, dropped out to take a job fixing cars for the school district. I struggled desperately to improve the situation—games, conferences, calls home, pleading and threatening, everything but juggling and standing on my head—but positions were fixed, trenches dug for a battle that was to last all year.

As bad as it was for me, it was worse for the students. The 9th grade is the most important year for an at-risk student. Many of mine, unable even to visualize passing, took long steps on the path toward dropping out. For others who were more motivated and academically able, the control battle in my classroom wasted their time. I clearly remember Chris, an able and kind student who would have been in private school but for his father's desire to see him learn to relate with "all kinds of people"—perhaps, his mother admitted, at the expense of his education. Day after day, he sat silently at the back of the room, asking me with his eyes why I couldn't control the class and teach him a bit more.

## Class war

Two years later, however, things are incomparably better. I regard myself as competent; many of my superiors call me an exemplary young teacher, and I love my work. Indeed, I chose to stay on past the two years I promised TFA and complete my teaching credential. But my first year merits careful examination, especially as it seems to have been fairly typical for TFAers. (I had it easy compared to my TFA-trained colleague who had her bulletin board burned down and her car stolen by her students.) I was not a successful teacher, and the loss to the students was real and large. If we're going to encourage short stays in teaching, it becomes especially important to enable teachers to hit the ground running. So what would have prepared me for that first year?

An apprenticeship. Pilots learn to fly and surgeons to operate with a master by their side. Who's to say the work of a teacher is less complicated? More training before I entered the classroom would have done little because I didn't know how to understand what I was being told. \*

just as exhortations to "keep your balance" mean little to someone who has never ridden a bicycle. My needs were clear: instruction in how to teach my specific subjects; a chance to ask questions about lesson plans and about how to deal with difficult students; someone to push me to think about and critique my own work; and time, always a teacher's most precious commodity.

\* The national service program could offer a bold new model for training teachers correctly, even within the confines of a one- or two-year commitment. The first step is recruitment. Candidates must be screened rigorously for both their ability to communicate and their seriousness. Once the recruits have been selected, they must be trained more effectively than TFAers are now.

Clearly, traditional teacher education does not hold the answers, regardless of time constraints. The courses I took at three different colleges over the two years I pursued my California teaching credential proved that to me. (California, like many other states, has responded to its teacher shortage by issuing emergency teaching credentials, renewable as long as the teacher is taking education courses.) I began at Cal State University. Just one of many frustrations was being told I was unfit to teach the subjects I had studied in college. Although I had earned Distinction in sociology at Yale and had taken several courses in history and psychology, Cal State declared that I would need 14 more courses before I could teach social studies. I was pronounced similarly unqualified in English, in which I had done extensive coursework as well.

What passed for a "lesson" in these education classes was often nothing more than passing out a reading and then reshuffling "cooperative" groups to discuss it while the instructor sat at a desk. Or we might watch a sample lesson prepared by a student who had never taught a class. Spending three or four hours at this after a day of teaching, when I could have been working on the five lessons I had to prepare each day, nearly drove me mad. The last straw came at the beginning of my second quarter, after a brutal round of budget cuts, when one associate dean advised me resignedly, "Don't worry about the subject matter. Just take whatever you can get into."

After two years of so-called teacher education, I can say that virtually nothing of what I know came from those classes. Teaching like

other crafts, requires slowly building responsibility. The initial instruction in methods, history, and regulations should be kept short—eight weeks is probably the right length—since little can be learned without hands-on practice. Defenders of the current model argue that student teaching is already a form of apprenticeship. Perhaps so—in the few cases where the mentor teacher commits the same energy to teaching the young teacher as she would to teaching her students. The structure is not the problem: execution is. Most student teachers report either watching as the master teacher teaches, or being left to teach on their own and occasionally getting a few pointers (if the master teacher is even in the room). Neither is adequate. Expectations must be placed on the master teacher: the master teacher also must be selected carefully. Moreover, rewards—both in money and in compensatory time—must reflect the importance of the mentor's task.

Reflection-and-critique sessions, probably best done in a group of young teachers with two or three experienced leaders, could easily be made a requirement of the Clinton program. Learning to teach cannot be seen as a small commitment, relegated to evenings when the workday is done. Instead, the first-year teacher's workday might include only half a day or so of teaching—at least, one or two hours a day should be free for this work—so that training and reflection will not compete for time with preparation. Yes, this will cost money. It's worth it. And it may be reasonable to demand a time commitment—say two years instead of one—from the teacher in return for the investment. Such an idea is not unprecedented: in return for two years of mentoring, the nascent Teachers For Chicago demands a four-year commitment to teaching.

TFA offers good evidence to counter my generation's reputation of apathy toward public service. There is much to work with here. The current spotlight on service, and the creative thinking going into it, is an important step toward recognizing *all* the problems in education. Most important, we cannot allow a generation of students to be guinea pigs for poorly trained teachers from either traditional or newfangled schools of education. As President Clinton might say, we don't have a child to waste. □

## POLITICAL BOOKNOTES

### **A City Year: On the Streets and in the Neighborhoods with Twelve Young Community Service Volunteers**

Suzanne Goldsmith  
*The New Press, \$22.95*

**By Daniel H. Pink**

National service, once a flaky idea peddled only by *The Washington Monthly* and a few cranky neoliberals, has hit the big time.

Bill Clinton says national service will be a defining idea of his presidency. He has promised to usher in a

"season of service." and has created a White House Office of National Service to turn that promise into a reality.

Into this congenial climate comes Suzanne Goldsmith's firsthand account of nine months with City Year, the highly regarded Boston-based project that's a prototype for the national service programs Clinton envisions. The brainchild of Alan Khazei and Michael Brown, whose Harvard law degrees did not quash their entrepreneurial instincts, City Year is a privately funded service corps in which young people work in

small teams on projects like building playgrounds, restoring housing, tutoring children, or assisting the elderly. City Year participants earn \$100 per week, and if they stay an entire nine months, they receive \$5,000 for college or job training. To write her book, Goldsmith labored alongside a City Year team and talked at length with its members.

She began her City Year on a team that demonstrated one of the program's greatest strengths: diversity. (At the risk of being labeled a bean counter, I note that her team had six women, six men, two Latinos, four African-Americans, two Asian-Americans, three middle-class whites, a few college students, and a man on probation.) The crew was officially known as the Reebok Team, after the Massachusetts footwear company which supplied part of the uniform all City Year corps members must wear.

The Reebok Team's first projects were worthwhile. Team members excavated a weed-choked garden and playground complex in a beleaguered south Boston neighborhood, repainted a playground in Roxbury, and did chores for the elderly in a Charlestown public housing project. Then it was on to a state hospital to repair a greenhouse.

But difficulties quickly arise. Most tragically, one corps member is shot and killed one night as he walks home. And while some corps members hurl themselves into their work, others do little but complain loudly. Absenteeism and lateness are chronic. Several corps members often disappear for the afternoon or spend work days chatting on the phone.

What makes the shirking and skipping hard to understand is that the Reebok Team doesn't work that much anyway.

### **When *Death* is Preferable To Life**

Someone you love is dying. She is incontinent, racked with pain, unable to drink, eat or even care. Medical technology works overtime, even when the body can't go on. The grieving family looks to medical professionals for answers that may never come. Sad scenarios like this are played out every day all over the United States.

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For example, one of the group's projects was to organize a Community Clean-Up Day in the Boston neighborhood of Chelsea. But during this seven-week venture, the Reebok Team found itself, alas, with loads of "downtime." Not to worry, though.

"There is a benefit to this downtime," Goldsmith writes. "It gives us a chance to relax together and get used to one another as friends rather than teammates. Thursday afternoons have been set aside for social activities—the team calls it 'Team Bonding day.' We go bowling. We go boating on Jamaica Pond. One Thursday we go together at lunchtime to Faneuil Hall, a popular open-air market, and the women on the team spend an hour browsing together at a lingerie store." Goldsmith adds, "Team members are rarely absent on team bonding days."

No wonder. It sounds like a hoot, but it doesn't sound much like national service. Also troubling is the amount of work time devoted to show. Each morning, City Year teams participate in group calisthenics at a major Boston subway stop, an exercise that seems geared less to physical fitness and more to public relations. One week goes to rehearsing a "recruitment blitz," complete with rap songs and skits, for the next year's program.

At times in this account, City Year seems more like an advertisement for national service than national service itself. At other times, the only real advertisement I could think of violated the jurisdictional boundaries of sneaker marketing. I often wanted to shout, "Reebok Team, just do it." Every Friday, for instance, is "Enrichment Day"; instead of digging or tutoring, corps members attend workshops and take field trips. In January, as at many private Eastern colleges, the Reebok Team has an "intercession," which is soon followed by a five-day "midyear retreat" at Camp Grotonwood.

These activities raise fundamental concerns about the book and about City Year itself. Goldsmith shines her attention almost entirely on the participants. She appears more concerned with what the corps member are getting out of the program than what

they're accomplishing in the communities that are supposedly being served.

Her epilogue, written two years after her City Year ends, is especially revealing. We learn that Reebok teammates, Amy and Jackie, are in college, that Richie has been arrested, and that Brendan believes City Year improved his self-image. But the 30-page section doesn't say anything about the condition of the places where the team worked. Has the Chelsea Clean-Up Day been repeated? Have the kids at the Blackstone School become better readers because of City Year tutoring? Have drugs and gangs returned to the playground and garden the Reebok Team cleaned?

We don't know; Goldsmith doesn't tell us. The result is a cloudy view of service because true service is about doing a job, solving a problem, improving a life. Its primary focus is the served, not the servers.

Clinton has himself fallen into this trap. In a March speech on national service, he mentioned Stephen Spalos, a 23-year-old City Year team leader. "Last year, when I visited his project," Clinton said, "he literally took his sweatshirt off his back and gave it back to me so that I would never forget the kids at City Year. And I still wear it when I go jogging, always remembering what they're doing in Boston to help those kids."

Unlike John Kennedy, his political hero, Clinton begins with the wrong question. We must ask not what national service can do for its participants, but what its participants can do for their neighbors and neighborhoods.

True, many Reebok Team members come from troubled backgrounds. We learn that about half the team drops out. Charles returns to jail. Richie essentially drinks himself out of the program, and then is accused of burglarizing one of his teammates. Several team members sell drugs.

But if the overriding goal of enlisting volunteers in national service programs like City Year is to rescue troubled *volunteers*, then we are being foolhardy. Many of these kids come to the program with nearly two decades of pain and heartache that a single year—not even a City Year—can erase.

And that is precisely why we need national service. Our country has a screaming set of needs that neither the private sector nor the government is meeting—dangerous streets, abominable public schools, inadequate health care. Conditions like these produce kids with troubles. Yet the solution to their troubles is not a nine-month stint in City Year but a focused assault on the conditions themselves.

City Year is a good program, and its creators and participants ought to be commended for their innovation and pluck. And as long as the programs are open to criticism and evaluation, problems like the ones Goldsmith sometimes inadvertently points out can be solved.

If we go that route and focus on the volunteers *and* on the substance of their work, Clinton's "season of service" might achieve its most spectacular result. It might be followed by a season of solutions.

*Daniel H. Pink is a Washington writer.*

## American Health Care

### Power and Illness

The Failure and Future of American Health Policy

**DANIEL M. FOX**

Fox offers a forceful argument for fundamental change in national health care priorities. He shows how ideas about illness and health care, as well as the power of special interest groups, have shaped the way in which Americans have treated illness, and he suggests ways to solve the increasing problem of chronic illness without increasing the already high cost of health care.

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the thickness of the polar cap in conjunction with radar scans from an orbiting satellite. The studies were designed, among other things, to monitor changes possibly related to global warming.

Traveling as passengers on the attack submarine USS Pargo, the scientists were the first to conduct nonclassified work on such a vessel. They were spared arduous conditions on the surface that would have detracted from their work.

Some discussion has already taken place about

Boston Globe, 9/28/93

## Building on YouthBuild

A program to train young people for construction jobs is threatened by a severe cutback in federal funding. Congress would do well to continue its support so YouthBuild can continue to expand across the country.

The program, which began in Harlem 15 years ago, has spread to 15 cities, including Boston, and has provided training for 2,500 young people. "These are the people we have to reach," said Labor Secretary Robert Reich when he visited the program's Boston office.

Reich noted that while US business spends \$30 billion on job training, most of it goes to those in white-collar jobs, a far cry from the poor young people YouthBuild attracts.

For most of its history, YouthBuild has scraped by on a combination of funds from private groups and local governments. Last year, heartened by its success, Congress agreed to give the YouthBuild groups \$40 million as part of the budget of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HUD was set up to rebuild urban neighbor-

hoods - also YouthBuild's mission - and if thousands of young people could be trained for worthwhile work in the process, so much the better. Sen. John Kerry deserves credit for pushing the funding through the Senate last year.

Most of all, of course, scientists have found search mobility heretofore out of reach because of the intense security regulations that have governed nuclear submarines. That expanded horizon is well worth exploring.

The extra money allowed YouthBuild to begin planning an expansion to 100 more cities, all of them in need of construction work and job training. But this year, after the House approved a \$44 million appropriation, the Senate cut it sharply on the grounds that YouthBuild should compete with other programs for the limited funds allotted to President Clinton's National Service Trust.

YouthBuild has a tighter focus than many of the programs that will be part of the national service initiative. While it may qualify for some of this money, its main source of federal support ought to be HUD, whose mission it neatly complements. When the bill comes before a House-Senate conference this week, House members should make the case strongly for full funding.

## TEACH FOR AMERICA *corps members go above and beyond...*

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*Juan Pantoja, a 1990 graduate of Princeton University, teaches a bilingual fifth-grade class in South Central Los Angeles. Juan deferred Harvard Law School for two years to join Teach For America.*

*Last year, he wrote to Harvard explaining that he wouldn't be going to law school; he had decided to teach for a third year.*

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Teach For America corps members go above and beyond the call of duty. In addition to daily teaching responsibilities, corps members assume leadership roles in school administration by acting as department heads and serving on school committees. Furthermore, corps members demonstrate incredible commitment to the intellectual and social growth of their students.

**Teresa Gonsalvez**, a 1990 graduate of Clairemont-McKenna College, coaches the after school debate team at a middle school in New York City. Last year, Teresa took six students to Los Angeles for a debate and cultural exchange just one week after the LA riots. Her students also reached the semi-finals of the city-wide debate competition. This year, Teresa is taking four of her debate students to Los Angeles again, and two to West Sussex, England.

**Craig Daniel**, a 1991 graduate of Emory University, and **Tanya Friedman**, a 1991 graduate of Wesleyan University, have arranged to travel with their sixth and seventh graders to Washington, DC from May 14–19. The field trip includes visits to Congress, the Supreme Court, FBI headquarters, and the White House. The children are responsible for raising one third the cost of the trip, with the rest of the money coming from a grant awarded by Aetna Insurance.

**Laurie Lowenthal**, who graduated from SUNY-Binghamton in 1992, is teaching high school English in rural Georgia. Laurie is also coaching football, and making headlines for being the school's first female coach.

**Jon Raj**, 1991 corps member from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, coached his high school history class in the "Odyssey of the Mind," a world-wide academic competition. Although they were newcomers to the event, Jon's team won first place in Houston, and went on to place fifth in the state.

**Mike Fee**, a 1991 graduate of Stanford University, initiated a voter registration drive with his journalism students. Mike combined lessons of demographics and polling as the class worked to register every 18 year old in the high school.

**Karla Oakley**, a 1991 graduate of Duke University, took 17 students from Central High School in Mariana, Arkansas on a field trip to France as a means of inspiring more students to undertake a foreign language. The students visited sites which included Versailles, Mont St. Michel and the Loire Valley.

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*"They are wonderful — superior to any new teacher that I've had."*

Mirian Acosta-Sing, Principal,  
Mott Hall School, New York, NY

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**Monica Liang**, a 1991 corps member teaching in New York City, and **Karina Gaige**, a 1991 Rio Grande Valley corps member, have involved their high school classes in a pen-pal exchange over the last two years. Their students have exchanged letters in English and in Spanish, and sent videotapes of their classrooms and schools. Monica and Karina are both 1991 graduates of Oberlin College.

*"We have a tough time getting top quality people...I have not seen one [Teach For America corps member] yet whom I would not want teaching my son."*

Frank R. Petruzielo, Superintendent, Houston Independent School District, *Houston Chronicle*, September 8, 1991

# TEACH FOR AMERICA

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## DEMONSTRATED COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND PROGRAM IMPACT

Teach For America is a national teacher corps of talented, dedicated individuals who commit a minimum of two years to teach in under-resourced urban and rural public schools. Since 1990, Teach For America has inspired over 12,000 outstanding college graduates to compete for teaching positions in some of this nation's most challenging schools. Teach For America has trained and placed almost 1,800 corps members in classrooms from South Central Los Angeles to the South Bronx in New York City to rural areas in Louisiana and Texas.

- Teach For America consistently attracts a diverse pool of extraordinary candidates by recruiting actively at over 150 college campuses across the nation. Teach For America makes a special effort to attract math, science and foreign language majors as well as bilingual individuals.
- More than 3,600 candidates applied to be part of the 1993 Teach For America corps through day-long interview sessions across the country and 686 applicants (19%) were selected to become part of the 1993 corps.
- Teach For America provides corps members with an intensive two-year program including the pre-service training Institute and ongoing professional development.
- Corps members are assigned to school districts according to their academic backgrounds, personal preferences and district requirements. Public school districts hire corps members at first-year salaries.
- Whether corps members continue in teaching or move into other fields, they are dramatically impacted by their experience. A full 60% of Teach For America's corps members who completed their two-year commitments in June, 1992, have remained in teaching.

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*Julie Mikuta, a 1991  
Georgetown University  
graduate, teaches 9th grade  
Science in New Orleans.  
She is a 1993 Rhodes  
Scholarship recipient and plans  
to attend Oxford University  
after completing her  
Teach For America  
commitment this spring.*

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### Program Costs per Teach For America Corps Member

*Teach For America spends \$5,000 per year on each corps member which leverages an average \$25,000 annual teaching salary paid by local school districts.*

Recruitment & Selection	\$1,200
Pre-Service Institute	4,600
Ongoing Support & Professional Development	2,800
Administrative Overhead	<u>1,400</u>
<b>Total (for two years)</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

### Annual Cost per Participant: Teach For America vs. Federally-funded Programs

#### Program

Annual Cost per Participant (1992)

Teach For America	\$5,000
Federal Prison	\$20,000
First-term Enlisted Soldier	\$41,000

(Source: Report of the Commission on National and Community Service, January 1993)

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**TEACH FOR AMERICA**

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# Application

1993

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March 1, 1993 - Final deadline  
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*Jim Healy*  
Regional Director

To:

*Robert Jordan*

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*I hope this is helpful - please call  
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## **TEACH FOR AMERICA**

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# Program Summary

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**T**each For America is a national teacher corps of talented, dedicated individuals who commit a minimum of two years to teach in under-resourced urban and rural public schools. Corps members are united by the common beliefs that all children can learn and that all children deserve an equal opportunity to a quality education.

Teach For America recruits candidates nationally, selects corps members through an intensive application process, groups them in placement sites across the country, establishes local offices in these areas that provide support services, and organizes an extensive program of pre-service and ongoing professional development.

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October 1992

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## History

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Teach For America was conceived in the fall of 1988 as a means to inspire this nation's most talented college graduates to teach in its most under-resourced public elementary and secondary schools. With the conviction that education can be the solution to our nation's most pressing problems and that our schools and children demand the attention of our brightest and most dedicated individuals, Wendy Kopp proposed the creation of a national teacher corps in her senior thesis at Princeton University. The teacher corps would surround teaching with an aura of selectivity, status and service, and it would make teaching accessible to individuals without education degrees.

After submitting her thesis in April, 1989, Wendy condensed it into a thirty-page prospectus and sent it to the chief executive officers of a number of large corporations. Mobil Corporation approved a grant of \$26,000 the day after she graduated in June of 1989, and Union Carbide donated office space in Manhattan. The following fall, a team of recent college graduates began to take Teach For America from idea to reality.

The team began by recruiting 100 "campus representatives" - student leaders at each of 100 colleges and universities. The representatives came together at Princeton in November of 1989 and began spreading the word about Teach For America in January of 1990. They declared February 10 "Teach For America Day" on each campus and organized their fellow students to host fifth graders from a local public school for a day of educational activities. Teach For America's selection process began on February 14. By the end of April, 2,500 individuals had completed the essay application, sample teaching session, and personal interview. Five hundred charter corps members (Corps '90) had matriculated by the end of May.

The charter corps came together for the first time in Los Angeles in June of 1990 for an eight-week pre-service training Institute. From there, they travelled to New York City, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, rural North Carolina, and rural Georgia to assume teaching positions in the fall of 1990. Local offices in each of those areas facilitated their transition and provided ongoing support.

Corps members recruited in subsequent years have undergone a more extensive selection process. They also have the advantage of a much-strengthened pre-service Institute and expanded system of ongoing support and

professional development. As of the fall of 1992, 8,600 individuals have applied to Teach For America, and 1,800 of them have assumed positions in each of the already established placement sites and in Oakland, Houston, Washington, DC, Baltimore, and rural areas in Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

Since the fall of 1989, Teach For America's national office has operated out of space provided by Morgan Stanley in New York City's Rockefeller Center. Today, 45 full-time staff work in that office, while 45 full-time staff work out of 16 local offices. Together, they manage a careful mechanism of recruitment, selection, placement, pre-service and ongoing professional development, and beginning teacher support.

Teach For America was incorporated as a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization on October 6, 1989.

*"[TFA's staff] has shown a willingness to come in and meet the needs of the district head on. They're interested in working with us and finding out what our needs are...With the kind of support and intensity of the program, [corps members] will be able to overcome some of those difficulties that many first-year teachers face."*

Cynthia Harris  
Director of Teacher Recruitment, Oakland Schools  
Oakland Montclair, 7/12/91

*"Some of them are going to be stars, and all of them brought an enthusiasm and a motivation to the job that was really stirring to all of the staff."*

Josephine Schwindt  
Superintendent, District 27  
Queens, New York  
Teacher Magazine, September 1991

## Vision & Mission

### Our Vision

Our vision is that one day all children in this nation will have an equal opportunity to attain a quality education.

### Our Mission

To recruit a group of our nation's most talented and dedicated individuals - who are passionate in the belief that all children deserve an equal opportunity to a quality education and who have the potential to become outstanding teachers - to make a two-year commitment to teach in our nation's most under-resourced public schools;

To place these corps members in those under-resourced schools which will ensure that their experiences have a positive influence on their students and on their own commitment to public education;

To support and develop corps members in such a way that they fulfill their potential as outstanding teachers;

To build these individuals into a corps of education advocates who will work throughout their lives - together and as individuals - to effect positive social change;

To inspire in America a greater commitment to ensuring equal educational opportunity for all children;

To elevate the image of teaching by showing college students and the public at large that thousands of outstanding individuals compete to enter the profession and find it challenging and rewarding; and

To influence positively the recruitment, selection, support, development, and certification of all teachers by having a long-term, systemic impact on public school districts, states, universities, and other institutions which impact public education.

## Program Overview

*Teach For America recruits candidates nationally, selects corps members through an intensive application process, groups them in placement sites across the country, establishes local offices in these areas that provide support services, and organizes an extensive program of pre-service and ongoing professional development.*

Teach For America recruits a diverse group of outstanding graduating seniors of all academic majors at over 150 colleges and universities, and we encourage anyone with a bachelor's degree to apply to the program. All applicants complete a written essay application, a sample teaching session, and two interviews. Recruiters recommend for acceptance those applicants who demonstrate commitment, flexibility, maturity, leadership, effective communication skills, and a respect for all children.

Individuals recommended for acceptance are carefully assigned to one of Teach For America's placement sites based on their academic backgrounds, personal preferences, and district needs. Teach For America currently places corps members in Baltimore, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York City, Oakland, and Washington, DC, and in rural areas in Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Texas. Districts in these areas, which traditionally experience shortages of qualified, certified teachers, hire corps members as teachers at regular salaries through existing alternative certification mechanisms.

Teach For America expects corps members to assume full personal responsibility for developing themselves into teachers whose performance consistently demonstrates defined standards. Corps members document their progress toward these standards in a portfolio. Teach For America aids corps members in their development by providing resources, guidance, and opportunities for sustained collaboration through mechanisms including: a 6 week pre-service Institute; a 1-2 week orientation to the schools, school districts, and communities in which they will be teaching; 2-4 regional conferences during each school year; a one-week second summer program; direct technical assistance from veteran teachers; on-site mentoring; small teams of corps members who work together on curriculum development and other projects; local resource rooms of videos, books, computers, copy machines, and directories to community resources; and a national computer network

which provides opportunities for live discussions and sharing of resources.

In each placement site, Teach For America establishes local offices that provide corps members with transitional help and ongoing direct support. Local offices also work with school districts, local universities, corporations, foundations, community organizations, and states in a collaborative effort to effect systemwide changes in teacher recruitment, selection, placement, development, and certification.

After their two-year commitment, corps members become part of an alumni network designed to facilitate their ongoing communication with each other and involvement in the education system. Alumni programs include reunions and local alumni groups.

Teach For America seeks to use its resources and unique niche in American society to inspire in America a greater commitment to public education, and to elevate the image of teaching. Components of this effort include: (1) an ongoing public relations campaign; (2) a series of public service announcements; (3) a coordinated effort to encourage corps members to speak and write about their experiences; and (4) student-run campus chapters designed to increase college students' awareness of educational issues, and to inspire their involvement in K-12 public education.

Teach For America's research and evaluation effort guides internal program development and provides information about the effectiveness of Teach For America for its constituencies - public school districts, funders, corps members, and potential candidates. The effort includes an external evaluation of program effectiveness, which involves a comparison of the effectiveness of corps members and a matched control group, and five survey instruments administered yearly to corps members, their principals, and others who have provided guidance and supervisory support to corps members. A national advisory board oversees the effort. Evaluation results are disseminated through a quarterly newsletter and longitudinal studies.

*Without programs like this, we are never going to resolve pipeline issues related to attracting the very best and brightest to our profession."*

Joseph Fernandez  
New York City Schools Chancellor

## Recruitment & Selection

Teach For America recruits outstanding graduating seniors who have strong academic backgrounds and who are actively involved on their campuses. We make a special effort to recruit individuals for whom districts express a particular need: those who are bilingual; those who majored in math, science, and foreign languages; and people of color. Anyone with a bachelor's degree can apply to the program.

Full-time recruiters visit student organizations, classes, and career service offices on each of 150 college campuses to encourage students to apply. Teach For America selects these target schools according to size, selectivity, minority enrollment, and geographic distribution.

Those who apply to the program complete a written essay application which includes three written references; a sample teaching session taught to other candidates on a topic of their choice; a personal interview; and a group discussion. Recruiters recommend for acceptance those candidates who demonstrate the following characteristics:

- A high level of commitment, demonstrated through excellence in academics, work experience, and extracurricular activities
- Flexibility
- Leadership
- Maturity
- Effective communication skills
- A respect for all students

*"We were looking for people who would bring in new concepts to the school; we were looking for fresh ideas. That's what [our TFA corps member] has brought."*

William Gutierrez  
Principal, Rivera High School, TX  
*Brownsville Herald, 10/1/91*

## Assignment & Placement

Teach For America groups corps members in urban and rural public school districts which traditionally experience shortages of qualified, certified teachers. These districts have existing mechanisms to hire individuals who are not fully certified. Corps members are hired through these mechanisms and work toward certification during their two-year commitment. Boards of Education hire corps members at regular first-year teacher salaries ranging from \$15,000 to \$26,000.

Placement sites are chosen based on the extent of their need and their willingness to support Teach For America and its corps members.

### Teach For America's Placement Sites

	# of Corps Members		
	1990	1991	1992
Arkansas*	-	8	22
Baltimore	-	-	71
Middle Georgia	10	8	11
Houston	-	200	80
Los Angeles <sup>†</sup>	215	186	81
Southern Louisiana	15	94	58
Greater New Orleans	45	96	57
New York City <sup>Δ</sup>	175	23	52
Eastern North Carolina	29	33	41
Oakland	-	36	48
Rio Grande Valley, Texas	-	22	26
Washington, DC	-	-	19
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>566</b>

\*=Mississippi Delta Region

†=Los Angeles placements are in Compton, Inglewood, Long Beach, Los Angeles Unified, Lynwood, and Pasadena.

Δ=New York City placements are in Brooklyn, Queens, Upper Manhattan, and the South Bronx.

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Upon acceptance, Teach For America corps members are tentatively assigned to a placement site on the basis of their academic qualifications, personal preferences, and district needs and requirements. These assignments stem from the projections districts make based on past experience and projected retirements, enrollment growth, and state and local budget allocations. Assignments are subject to change due to last-minute budget cuts or changes in retirements or enrollments. Teach For America finds alternative positions for corps members displaced for these reasons.

Tentative assignments become official placements once school district officials offer corps members positions. Corps members interview with school and district personnel throughout the summer and into the fall and generally sign contracts in August or September. Local Teach For America staff organize this process, establish relationships with principals who hire corps members and work to ensure that corps members assume positions in supportive schools.

*"They are wonderful - superior to any new teacher that I've had."*

Mirian Acosta-Sing  
Principal, Mott Hall School  
Washington Heights, New York City  
*The New York Times*, 6/26/91

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## Professional Development

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Teach For America expects corps members to assume full personal responsibility for developing themselves into teachers whose performance consistently demonstrates defined standards. Corps members document their progress toward these standards in a portfolio. Teach For America aids corps members in their development by providing resources, guidance, and opportunities for sustained collaboration through a variety of mechanisms.

### *Structure*

The professional development model consists of national, regional, and site-based programs. While all corps members participate in the same national programs, the structure and model of local and regional programs vary according to local needs and resources. What follows is a general blueprint of the model:

### **National Pre-Service Institute**

The 6 week pre-service Institute serves both as the final step in the selection process and as the first step in corps members' professional development as teachers. The Institute charges corps members with the responsibility to prepare themselves to enter the classroom, and it provides them with the resources they need to begin acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to quality teaching. Corps members practice teach in Los Angeles' public schools, and a faculty of veteran teachers, teacher educators, and returning corps members coach and mentor corps members as they work together in teams to develop plans and strategies for their first years in the classroom.

### **Induction**

Each local office hosts a 1-2 week Induction, which is designed to provide corps members with the opportunity to orient themselves to the schools, school districts, and communities in which they will be working. Corps members continue working together, with the guidance of veteran teachers and returning corps members, to prepare for their first years as teachers.

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### **Direct Technical Assistance from Teach For America "Support Directors"**

Teach For America employs veteran teachers to identify teaching positions in schools where the principal is likely to be supportive of the corps member and to help ensure that he or she has a positive experience. Support Directors provide corps members with direct technical assistance through classroom observations and one-on-one conferences.

### **On-Site Mentoring**

Wherever possible, Teach For America works with principals to ensure that corps members are paired with "mentor" teachers – veteran teachers within their schools who can provide guidance and technical assistance. Teach For America also attempts to ensure that corps members and mentors have release time that enables them to observe each other's classrooms and have conferences with each other. In some schools, the mentor programs are formally established; in others, Teach For America is able to identify experienced teachers who volunteer their guidance to corps members.

### **"Learning Teams"**

Corps members are encouraged to continue working together throughout the school years, as they did during the Institute and Induction, on projects directly related to their classroom experiences. Each local office has its own mechanisms for bringing corps members together in the spirit of collaboration.

### **House Conferences**

Corps members are grouped into five regional "Houses" – Texas, Louisiana, California, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern. Corps members of these Houses come together for 2-3 weekends during each school year. The purpose of these conferences is to:

- build esprit-de-corps
- provide workshops and resources needed to alleviate stress and meet immediate classroom needs
- allow time for portfolio sharing
- allow time for the guided development of personal professional development plans

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### **National Computer Network**

Corps members are linked together nationally through America Online. Teach For America's private section of America OnLine offers: (a) Resources: lesson plans, educational software, tests, handouts, classroom ideas; (b) Opportunities for Collaboration: live conferences with groups of up to 8-12 corps members and ongoing discussions through message boards and electronic mail; and (c) Guidance: certain Teach For America faculty are available online to provide guidance, and corps members are encouraged to provide each other with feedback.

### **Access to Local Resources**

Regions provide a variety of resources to support corps members in their professional development. These resources may include: workshops, print media and videos, books, directories to resources available in the community, a computer, a copy machine, and access to America Online.

### **University Coursework**

Many corps members are required by the state or the district to take certain university courses. Others who are not required to take courses may choose to do so.

### **Newsletters**

Monthly regional newsletters and a quarterly national journal keep corps members abreast of local and national Teach For America happenings, and provide another vehicle for corps members to share hopes and ideas.

### **Second Summer**

Corps members come together during the summer between their first and second years for a week of workshops and guided reflection. A major component of Second Summer is a formal portfolio presentation, sharing, and feedback.

### **Third Summer and Reunion**

This 3-4 day conference serves as the final step in corps members' professional development and as the first step in corps members' activities as alumni. A major component of Third Summer includes a final portfolio presentation, sharing, and feedback.

## Portfolio

Corps members compile portfolios for two purposes: (1) to enable them to chart their progress and to receive feedback and guidance throughout their development as a teachers; and (2) to enable outside entities including schools, districts, or states to assess corps members' progress toward the outcome-based standards.

The portfolio is meant to reveal what the corps member has done, who the corps member is, and what the corps member knows. It should document progress toward the outcome-based standards and may include (a) evidence of a corps member's activities in preparation for teaching, in the classroom, and in pursuit of professional development; and (b) self-assessments of these activities.

## Assessment

At the Institute, Teach For America faculty are responsible for determining whether corps members may assume teaching positions through Teach For America. They make these judgements based on the corps members' practice teaching, participation in group meetings, and progress as documented through the portfolio. Following the Institute, Teach For America faculty evaluate corps members on the basis of their portfolios, and principals evaluate their performance in the classroom. The feedback of mentors and Support Directors is non-evaluative.

*"We have a tough time getting top quality people... I have not seen one [TFA corps member] yet whom I would not want teaching my son."*

Frank R. Petruzielo  
Superintendent, Houston Independent School District  
*Houston Chronicle, 9/8/91*

## Local Offices

Teach For America establishes local offices in each of its placement sites. These offices are responsible for placing corps members and for providing them with the ongoing professional development outlined in the previous section; for generating support among corporations and foundations, local media, and community organizations; and for working with districts, states, universities, and other educational organizations in a collaborative effort to improve the ways that beginning teachers are recruited, selected, developed, and supported. A Regional Director leads each office in the pursuit of these goals.

Local offices generally operate under the guidance of an advisory group of community leaders and of a "Corps Member Advisory Council."



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## Outreach & Advocacy

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Teach For America's outreach and advocacy efforts encourages corps members to effect positive change in education by building a corps of education advocates, inspiring in America a greater commitment to ensuring equal educational opportunity for all children, and elevating the image of teaching. Our outreach and advocacy efforts include the following features:

### Reunions & Alumni Services

Teach For America seeks to facilitate ongoing communication between corps member alumni and to inspire their ongoing involvement in the education system. Annual reunions seek to spark in alumni a new vision for how they can work together to create positive change in education. Additionally, Teach For America provides corps members with information on continuing their involvement in education; an annual Alumni Directory; and access to an alumni field of the computer network.

### Local Alumni Groups

Local alumni groups exist wherever there is a critical mass of corps members and a level of interest that would justify their existence. Groups have frequent social get-togethers, regular planning and organizational meetings, and submissions to the local newsletters and quarterly journal. Alumni groups determine their own projects, which may include recruiting, providing services for current corps members, and local service and advocacy projects.

### Quarterly Journal

This magazine provides members of the Teach For America community (corps members, corps member alumni, faculty, and staff) with a forum for their viewpoints and updates on the developments at Teach For America.

### Forums on Education Reform

Local offices sponsor discussions on education reform for members of the Teach For America community.

### Public Relations and Advertising

The public relations arm of Teach For America works to institutionalize the organization and program in the mind of the American public. In the process, we aim to elevate the image of teaching and inspire in

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America a greater commitment to equal educational opportunity. Through media attention, which includes a series of public service announcements, we hope to change the American consciousness by showing the public that thousands of individuals compete to enter the profession and find it incredibly challenging and rewarding, and by helping corps members speak and write about their experiences as teachers in our nation's most under-resourced schools.

### Campus Chapters

Teach For America's campus chapters are founded and run by college students for the purpose of inspiring college students to become involved in K-12 public education. With an eye to involving college students who might not otherwise work in education, chapters seek to match resources of the university with the needs of one or more local public schools. For example, a chapter which discovers that a local school does not have a student newspaper might seek volunteers from the college newspaper staff to help the students start and run their own newspaper.

*"I have no doubt that at least one of the 15 teachers we have will hold political office or be in a position of influence some day. Having spent two years in the classroom first can only help us."*

Steven Wrenn  
Superintendent, Halifax County Schools  
Halifax, North Carolina  
*Raleigh News and Observer*, 11/29/91

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## Research & Evaluation

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The goals of Teach For America's research and evaluation effort are twofold:

- (1) To monitor, evaluate, and disseminate information about program effectiveness to provide guidance for internal program development; and
- (2) To determine, document, and disseminate information about the effectiveness of Teach For America for its constituencies – public school districts, funders, corps members, and potential candidates.

The purpose of the research and evaluation effort is to answer the following questions:

- (a) Are corps members effective teachers? If so, in what ways?
- (b) How do corps members compare to their peers?
- (c) What contributions have corps members made to the schools, students, and communities they serve?
- (d) How effective are Teach For America's components in accomplishing their stated objectives? (recruitment and selection, assignment and placement, pre-service Institute, ongoing professional development and support, outreach and advocacy)?
- (e) To what can corps member effectiveness be attributed?
- (f) In what ways has Teach For America enhanced the teaching profession?
- (g) What impact has Teach For America had on other institutions?
- (h) How has Teach For America influenced the attitudes, career directions, and civic involvement of corps members?

Teach For America is contracting with an external organization to conduct a study of program effectiveness. This evaluation will include a longitudinal study of sample populations of corps members and will compare their effectiveness to a matched control group.

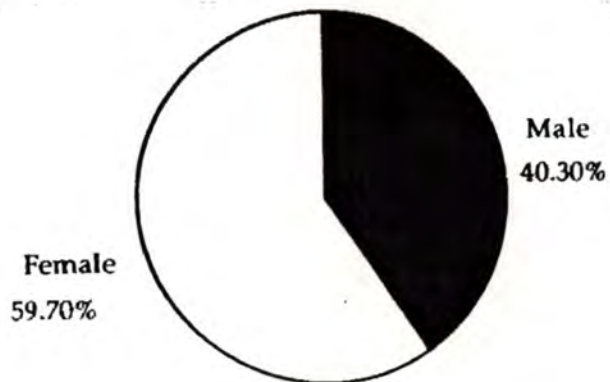
Internally, Teach For America administers survey instruments to address the aforementioned questions: a pre-service survey to corps members entering the program; a post-Institute survey; a mid-year survey to corps members and to those who provide them with ongoing professional development and support; a post-service survey to all corps members who leave the program; and a post-service survey to principals and others who worked closely with corps members.

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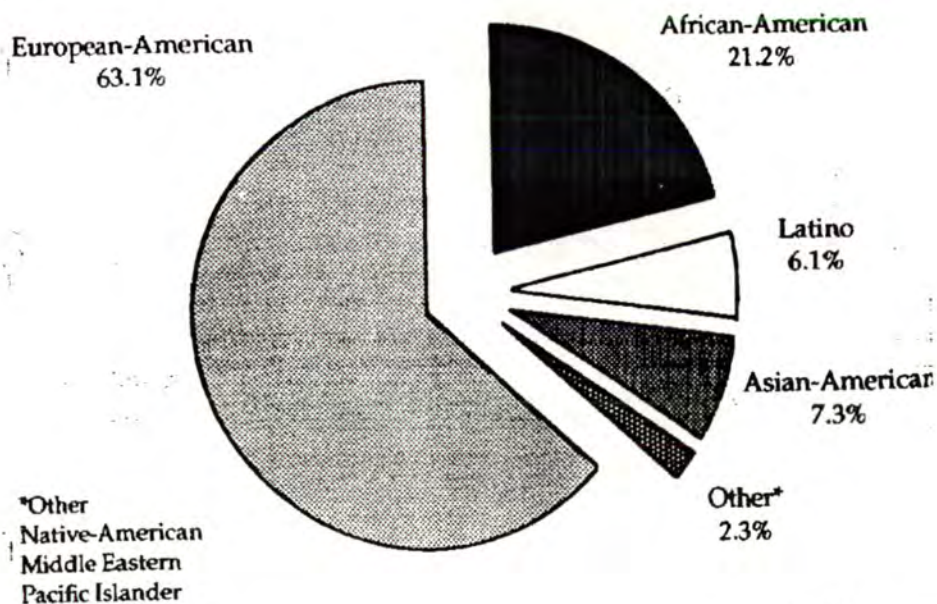
A National Advisory Panel assists Teach For America's research and evaluation efforts by providing guidance in the development of survey instruments and interview protocol sheets, selection of external evaluators, promotion of evaluation results to the general public and determination of ongoing activities. Members of the Panel, who may not support every component of the program, include:

- Emily Feistritzer, Director, National Center for Education Information
- Martin Haberman, Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- Nicholas Hobar, Senior Partner, Workforce 2000, Inc.
- Leo Klagholz, Director, Division of Teacher Preparation & Certification, New Jersey Department of Education
- Richard Kunkel, Dean, College of Education, Auburn University
- Michael McKibbin, Consultant, Program Evaluation and Research
- Jean Miller, Director, Interstate New Teacher Assessment & Support Consortium, Council of Chief State School Officers
- Lee Shulman, Charles E. Duce m m u n Professor of Education, Stanford University
- James R. Smith, Senior Vice President, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- William Smith, Former U.S. Commissioner of Education, Former Director of Federal Teacher Corps
- Trish Stoddart, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Education, University of Utah
- William M. Wale, Director of Programs, Division of Professional Development, Texas Education Agency

# 1992 Corps Member Profile



Gender



Ethnicity

(7/92)

## 20 Colleges Most Attended

Univ. of CA Berkeley	18	Colby College	9
Yale University	14	Dartmouth College	9
Northwestern	13	Harvard University	9
Univ. of Massachusetts	11	Univ. of N. Carolina	9
Univ. of Wisconsin	11	SUNY Binghamton	8
Cornell University	10	Stanford University	8
Wellesley College	10	Univ. of Michigan	8
Wesleyan University	10	Univ. of Chicago	8
Tufts University	10	Brown University	7
Boston College	9	Univ. of Pennsylvania	7

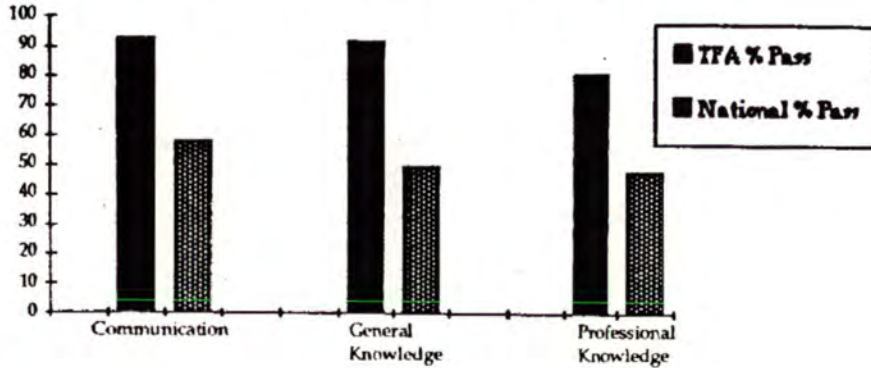
Corps Member Average Age:	23.3
Oldest Corps Member:	44
Youngest Corps Member:	21

## Top Ten Academic Majors

- English
- Psychology
- Political Science
- Spanish
- Biology
- Mathematics
- International Studies
- General Science
- History
- Sociology

## Charter Corps Test Results

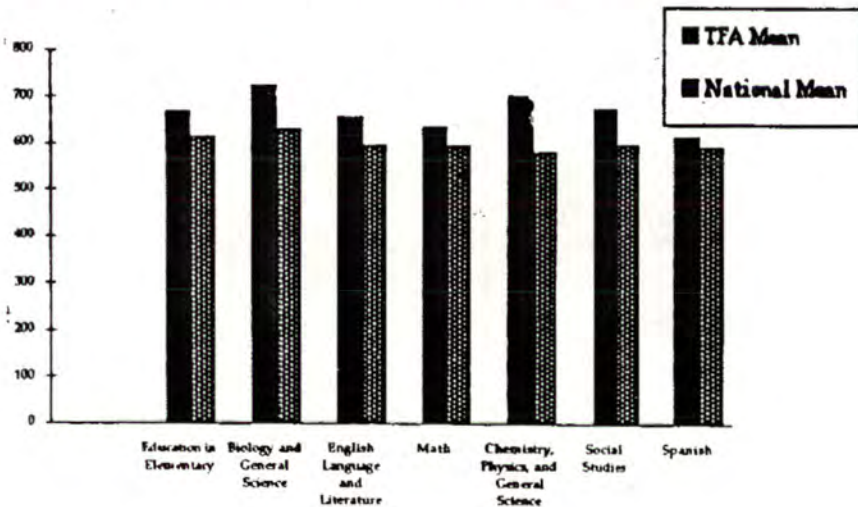
### National Teachers Exam Core Battery Percentage Passing Comparison Based on Highest Qualifying Score (660)



### Self-Reported Standardized Test Scores

Combined Average SAT scores: 1251  
Education Majors in 1988 average SAT scores: 950

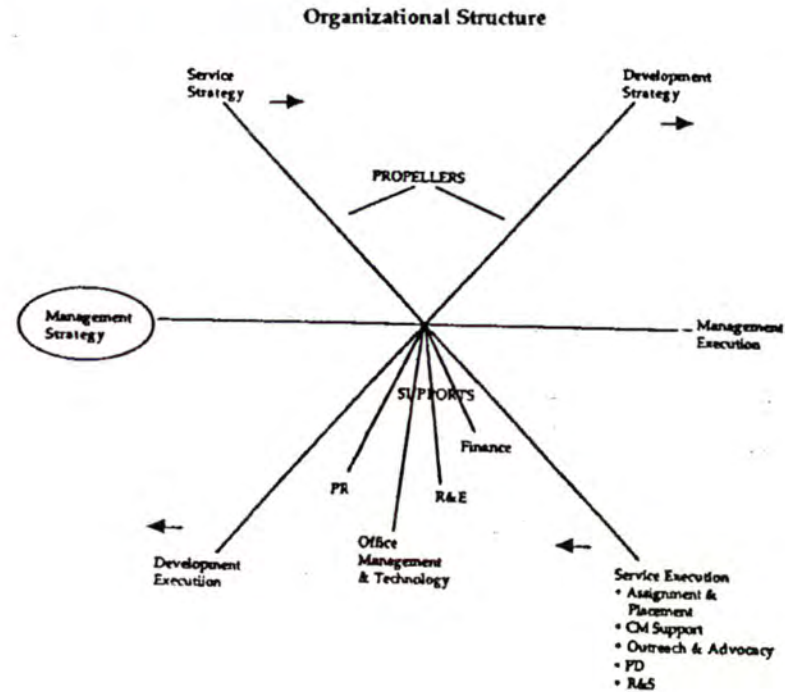
### Comparison of TFA and National NTE Specialty Test Scores



## The Organization

With the goal of maintaining the spirit, responsiveness, and energy which have characterized our first three years, we hope to facilitate a constant infusion of former corps members into staff and management positions. Our organizational structure is designed to accommodate this goal while ensuring institutional memory and program quality.

The structure can be graphically represented by a set of propellers – one determines and executes the service strategy; the other determines and executes the development strategy. The propellers revolve around a horizontal axis which determines and executes the management strategy of the organization as a whole. A set of supports ensures that the propellers continue to operate.



The *Strategic Management Group* determines Teach For America's management strategy by making decisions relating to expansion, budgeting, and organizational structure. The *President* chairs the Strategic Management Group. The *Managing Director* is in charge of overall

## **ROBERT GORDON**

300 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024  
(212) 362-4059

### **EDUCATION**

**Harvard College.** A.B. with honors in Social Studies expected. Currently on leave. Group I Dean's List, all six semesters. GPA=3.85. John Harvard Scholarship, Harvard University Scholarship, Telluride Association Scholarship, National Merit Scholarship. Advanced coursework in urban policy, political theory and economics.

### **EXPERIENCE**

**Presidential Transition.** *Legislative Assistant.* Develop National Service Trust Fund plan in consultation with congressional experts, academic leaders and key service organizations. Revise and edit several domestic policy presentations to President-Elect. (11/92-present)

**Clinton/Gore '92.** *Writer and Domestic Policy Specialist.* Working in the "war room" operation, wrote press releases, talking points, position papers, direct mail, brochures and attack flyers. Co-edited and contributed to *Putting People First*. Developed Clinton proposals on community development and welfare reform. (5/92-11/92)

**New York City Department of Finance.** *Executive Assistant to the Commissioner.* As a Government Scholar, helped produce property tax reform and waste reduction plans. (6/91-8/91)

**Organization for Agricultural Development.** *Consultant.* Developed promotional materials and literature for program to aid small farmers in the Caribbean. (8/91-9/91)

**Cambridge City Council.** *Research Assistant.* Studied rent control statutes and delivered reform proposal. (9/90-12/90)

**National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions.** *Policy Analyst.* Studied success and failure among community groups and wrote report on redlining in Brooklyn, NY. (6/90-8/90)

**Civics Education Project.** *Director.* Created curriculum, trained teachers, and expanded 50 volunteer program that uses role-playing to raise questions about civic responsibility in urban schools. Served in cabinet of Phillips Brooks House, Harvard's public service organization. (12/90-5/92)

**Committee for Housing Rights.** *Board Member.* Through mailings, foundation applications, fundraising events and free media, raised more than \$40,000 to create a revolving fund that offers homeless individuals loans to finance rents. (9/90-5/92)

**The Harvard Crimson.** *Editor.* Wrote editorials and news stories, developed staff positions, and helped produce daily newspaper. (11/91-5/92)

**Perspective: Harvard's Liberal Monthly.** *Senior Editor.* Edited, produced and wrote for Harvard's largest political journal. (11/90-12/91)

Dear Bruce,

I hope you can tell me what sort of job I could get in the administration before I decide whether to return to school in the Spring.

I know that since I'm young and not an expert on anything, I will be pretty far down in the scheme of things wherever I am. So I'd like to be in a neat place, working for smart people who will give me real responsibility even though I'm sort of a kid. Bob was a dream here, and Bill is not. And I'd like to stop sitting in front of my computer all the time and start talking to people, playing politics and all that. (This note may prove that I can't write, once and for all.)

Ideally, I'd be in the White House, working for you on most anything substantial, though national service is a first choice. Of course I'd also work on service elsewhere, and maybe on welfare and such, but an agency sounds like not the right place for me right now.

Other stuff: Money isn't much of an issue. The fact that I might leave in September probably is for you. I need to talk to Bob. And I'm ready to be told that I've gotten too big for my boots, or whatever the saying is. So fire away.

Thanks,  
RShurt