



College of Education  
& Human Services



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**CURRICULUM**  
**FOUNDATIONS**

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NEWSLETTER VOL. 2 | FALL 2020

# Welcome Back, Vikings

A virtual fist bump goes to all the Vikes!

You did it in spite of a lengthy coronavirus — COVID-19 — quarantine that shut down Cleveland State University's campus. You made the adjustment from on-campus to virtual school and work.

You did it while making sure your kids got their online schoolwork done. Some did it while teaching virtual K-12 classes or holding jobs as essential workers that put their health at risk. Some even contracted the virus or tended to loved ones who did.

As a result of the hard work and perseverance of students, faculty and staff, spring and summer semesters ended successfully. In May, we watched a virtual commencement where our students received well-earned bachelor, master and doctoral degrees. All that was accomplished in the midst of a global pandemic.

And now it's the fall semester, and COVID-19 could care less. At press time, the virus has caused 4,354 deaths in Ohio, according to the state's department of health. There have been 189,709 deaths in the United States and 905,426 around the globe, as reported by the World Health Organization.

CSU's President Harlan Sands announced in June that the university would adopt a hybrid approach that combines on-campus classes with remote learning. Taking into account classroom capacity, the fall schedule and safety protocols, half the university's classes will be remote and half will be on campus.

Staff for the Department of Curriculum and Foundations will work remotely this fall. You can reach us at 216-687-4577.

## C&F will offer four forms of virtual courses:

▶ **WEB-BASED LEARNING** – These are traditional online courses. Instructors provide lessons and lead course discussions on Blackboard.

▶ **REMOTE LEARNING (SYNCHRONOUS)** – Students and teachers meet virtually during scheduled days and times.

▶ **REMOTE LEARNING (ASYNCHRONOUS)** – There is not much difference between these remote courses and traditional online courses offered at CSU. Some instructors will be providing lectures, but students are not required to view them at a scheduled day and time.

▶ **WEB-BLENDED LEARNING** – These courses combine web-based instruction and face-to-face meetings on campus during the semester. To allow for physical distancing, classrooms are being reconfigured and seats will be assigned to students.

### ADDITIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

- All students, faculty and staff must read and sign a [social contract](#) at the beginning of the semester pledging to practice safe behavior such as wearing masks and practicing physical distancing.
- Prior to coming to campus, they must pass a [daily health self-assessment](#) available online or by mobile app.
- Testing of students who are symptomatic or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be available at the Health and Wellness Center by appointment.
- Faculty will hold office hours — please check course syllabi for this information.
- For updates on Viking Outfitters, [click here](#).

Cleveland State has taken special care to ensure that learning is not disrupted during COVID-19 and that students, faculty and staff study and work in a safe, sanitary environment. Go Vikings!

# MUST Trains Teachers to Serve Urban Schools for 21 Years

Want to make a career change to a profession that can impact the lives of young people for the better? MUST — Master's in Urban Secondary Teaching — is the program for you.

MUST is a 14-month teaching residency program that trains its cohorts to teach in underserved, urban school districts. The program was created in 1999 by Dr. Francine Peterman, the former chair of the Department of Curriculum and Foundations in the College of Education and Human Services.

"It was her creativity and commitment to urban education that began MUST," according to Diane Corrigan, the current coordinator for the program. Since its inception, approximately 500 MUST cohorts have earned master's degrees and obtained teaching licenses. More than 90% of MUST graduates are placed in teaching jobs, Corrigan said.

To be accepted, applicants must have a bachelor's degree and pass FBI and BCI background checks. They also must meet Cleveland State University's admission requirements for graduate school. That includes a 3.0 grade point average. Students who do not have that GPA can enroll as a non-degree graduate student or take the GRE General Test or Miller Analogies Test.

Apart from meeting admissions requirements, Corrigan is seeking MUST candidates who are committed to providing a quality education to students in urban districts.

"I'm looking for that understanding for the need for social justice and closing the gaps that are caused by poverty, inadequate resources, differences in gender, race. All the things that MUST identifies in its outcomes," Corrigan explained.

MUST cohorts are trained to teach in the content areas of their choice: English, math, science,

social studies and Spanish. The program now trains teachers for instruction in mild-moderate special education.

In addition to courses that teach pedagogy, the cohorts do observations (practicums) and student teaching in urban public school districts in Cleveland, Euclid, Parma and Warrensville Heights. MUST also has added a new program called Teach, Earn & Learn in which substitute teachers train to become full-time teachers through MUST.

MUST student-teachers are paired with mentor-teachers at the schools they are assigned. Upon graduating, the cohorts seek a teaching license. In March, governors around the country, including Ohio's, gave stay-at-home orders because of the novel Coronavirus. As a result, both college and K-12 buildings closed for the remainder of the spring semester.

However, education did not cease. Kindergarteners to doctoral degree candidates were taught online. Unfortunately, the substitute teachers in the TEL Program no longer received an income because of the school closing. Their substitute teaching and the student teaching of the traditional MUST students counted as a completed experience by the state. They continued to work with their mentor-teachers who were conducting virtual classes.

"The mentor-teachers appreciated that significantly," Corrigan said. Getting the high school students online was a challenge, she said. "Many of the urban schools were not set up for that type of instruction. It was unanticipated and students needed a lot of assistance getting the very basics, getting a Chromebook to take home to use and having access to Wi-Fi."

**INTERESTED IN ENROLLING IN MUST? [CLICK HERE >>>](#)**

## Two cohorts share their experiences with the MUST Program.



### ALISON SUKYS

#### *MUST Graduate Begins Teaching Career at Beaumont School*

Despite a weak economy and job insecurity caused by Ohio's COVID-19 quarantine, Cleveland State University grads like Alison Sukys are seeing their career goals fulfilled. Upon graduation from the Master's in Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) program, Sukys had a job waiting for her at Beaumont School, an all-girls Catholic high school in Cleveland Heights. She started in August as a social studies teacher.

The job allows Sukys — pronounced Sue-keys — to combine her desire to work with youth with her love of political science and history. Sukys initially planned to become a pediatric nurse when she enrolled as a freshman at The Ohio State University. She realized nursing wasn't for her, so she changed her major to public policy.

Sukys said she had some good internships that included working in the offices of U.S. Sen. Robert Portman, the communications department at OSU and Dwellworks, a downtown Cleveland corporation that relocates businesses.

"I liked them all, but I realized what was missing is that I always wanted to work with kids," she said.

Some MUST students come to the program years after being in the workforce. Not Sukys, who enrolled in the program after receiving a bachelor's degree in public policy from OSU in 2019.

She knew she didn't want to change her undergrad degree. She also knew that earning a master's degree was in her future. MUST allowed her to achieve that and get her teaching license.

Sukys said she was already acclimated as a full-time student, but faced some challenges

with MUST's fast-paced schedule.

"In the MUST program, most of us are coming from non-educational backgrounds. We're coming straight out of college, others are coming from different careers. So trying to learn everything to be a successful teacher in 14 months can be overwhelming and challenging, but it also is super rewarding, and I wouldn't change it."

"You are in grad school 100%. That is your life," Sukys explained.

MUST's emphasis on preparing teachers to work in underserved communities is another reason why she chose the program.

"I'm learning that everyone doesn't get the same start in life, which is important for everyone to know even if you aren't a teacher," she said.

Her role as a teacher is not just to deliver subject content, she stressed. "I'm learning that teachers are so much more than teachers. They can be mentors, advocates for students — just the ally that they need."

She remembered how two of her favorite teachers served in those capacities. One was her third-grade science teacher Kathy Gentile at Our Lady of the Lake School in Euclid. "She advocated for all students as a whole and wanted us to learn in a positive way," Sukys recalled. She added that Gentile not only worked to teach science but to "teach the whole student to form a well-rounded citizen who is educated and knowledgeable."

She expressed admiration about her math teacher Gary Minadeo at Villa Angela-St. Joseph (VASJ) High School, where she graduated in 2015.

"He really pushed me, encouraged me and challenged me to grow as a person, not just as a student," she recounted.

Sukys' high school prepped her to work in a diverse setting along with her MUST work.

"I went to Villa Angela-St. Joseph, and I had a really diverse educational experience. I wanted to keep that for my teaching experience as well and my teaching preparatory experience," she said.

Sukys did her practicum at New Tech West in Cleveland. "I formed a great relationship with my kids," she said.

She and her fellow "MUSTies," as she

referred to the cohort, began working in their respective schools at the beginning of the school year. "I started teaching two or three weeks into the school year. We all threw ourselves in. That's the best way to do it," Sukys said.

Sukys taught American history with mentor-teacher Zachary Zlocki, whom she describes as "fantastic." She recounted a particularly interesting lesson about the Bill of Rights, in which stations were positioned around the classroom. A set of circumstances were proposed at each station that ranged from the protest of a law to the search of lockers on school property. Students had to tell which of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution addressed each issue.

Executed in a creative way, this exercise helped students see how laws written in the 1700s are still being used today. "Being able to cater lessons to your students' interest is the biggest thing I learned," Sukys explained.

She will be conducting lessons of this type at Beaumont, which is not considered by many to be an urban school. Sukys applied for work in underserved communities, but to no avail.

"The demand for social studies teachers in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Cleveland Heights, Euclid — any of those is so low," she explained.

In Ohio and other states, there is more of an emphasis on STEM — science, technology, engineering and math — studies. Students are not required to take as much in social studies. As a result, teaching positions for social studies are harder to come by, according to Sukys. She reached out to Beaumont and was hired.

"I wanted to get my career going because I had been in school for five years. So I took that opportunity," she explained.

It also should be noted that Beaumont's tuition is \$16,500 a year, but 48% of its students receive financial aid, according to school's website. Sukys added that the student body is diverse.

Sukys' teaching style at Beaumont will focus on project-based learning. "I like class discussions. I like students taking an active role in their learning. Direct instruction, lecturing is important and needs to be done, but making sure students have that active, engaging role in their learning is really important to me."



### KEL SHABAZZ

#### *Poet to Share Writing Gift as a Teacher*

A strong social conscience and a commitment to being a positive force in uplifting the community are just two of the reasons why Kel Shabazz is becoming a teacher. Another is a desire to share his gift of writing as an English teacher upon graduation from the Master's in Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) program.

Shabazz began considering a career in teaching back in 2013 when he was an undergrad at Cleveland State University, majoring in English.

"I started to educate myself on how there is a lack of Black male teachers and the importance of having them in urban schools as positive influences on Black youth," he explained. "I realized that I didn't have that and a lot of my peers didn't have that."

"I want to give back to the community," he asserted.

Shabazz was encouraged to enroll in MUST by Dr. Donna Whyte, whom he met three years ago when she was the interim director of CSU's Black Studies Program.

"I observed Kelton's strong leadership and organizational skills as president of the Speak Up student organization, and especially in his success in hosting Ilyasah Shabazz, Malcolm X's daughter, for a large public presentation on campus," Whyte said.

"Kelton is diligent, committed and focused in his pursuit of educational and career goals. Other qualities that I believe are important in his success in the MUST program, and subsequently as a teacher, are his creativity, confidence and approachability," she added. (Shabazz recently changed his first name from Kelton to Kel.)

Shabazz graduated with a master's degree

this summer, which has prepared him to teach English. Shabazz earned his bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in creative writing from CSU in 2017. He credits his English teacher Marian Sroka of Cleveland Central Catholic High School with noticing his talent as a poet.

"She saw how good I was and she encouraged me to write and get published," he said.

Sroka also urged him to participate in poetry slams at Central Catholic, which he won his junior and senior years. His poetry helped him earn a scholarship to Kent State University, where he went a few semesters before transferring to CSU.

He also enjoys reading novels. His favorite authors are Omar Tyree and Eric Jerome Dickey, who both write about modern relationships of African-Americans. Tyree's books in particular inspired Shabazz to write his own book. Shabazz self-published "Kel's Poetry Blues" in 2013.

Shabazz also has read the works of African-American scholars and historians on the liberation of Black people. He was inspired to become a teacher from the knowledge he obtained from those books and from instructor Philip Cole, who taught Black Religion here at CSU. Cole's course was the first time he learned about Marcus Garvey, who led the largest Black liberation movement in the western world, Shabazz said.

"[Cole] taught us a lot of history that we don't really get taught in schools. That added to why I wanted to become a teacher," he said.

Through MUST, Shabazz received classroom experience working with mentor-teacher Jim Heffernan at New Tech West in Cleveland. Shabazz had the opportunity to teach poetry and history there. He also learned more than pedagogy.

"I learned a lot about what goes on behind the scenes, a lot about policy, the political things that go on between teaching staff and administration, the good and the bad," he explained.

Shabazz said he also learned about all the work that goes into preparing lessons and how teachers make sure those lessons align with school testing standards.

As a student teacher, Shabazz said he was not intimidated being in front of a classroom for the first time. He had experience working

with third- to eighth-grade students through America SCORES Cleveland, an afterschool program run by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Shabazz alternated between teaching writing and coaching soccer. The children participated in poetry slams and soccer matches at Cleveland's recreation centers. He also did administrative work with Coach Across America, a sports and mentoring program. That position was funded by AmeriCorps. Shabazz said those positions readied him for the classroom.

"I was very comfortable. I was used to it," he said of his student-teaching experience.

One new classroom experience that he found positive was co-teaching. He and another MUST cohort Trent Bailey co-taught history. "We had the same passion and mission for teaching, so that made co-teaching work," he explained.

"Our mentor teachers let us have creative control and let us do things we thought were good ideas," Shabazz added. For example, one lesson they used poetry to teach students about imperialism.

While at New Tech West, he learned that what students expect most from teachers is to be understood and accepted as individuals.

Shabazz thought being a strict disciplinarian would be a part of his teaching style when he first decided to become a teacher.

"Discipline is important, but I want to be their emotional and social support," he said. "There is a time when we can play. We can joke. We can laugh, but it's a time when we have to be serious."

In addition to his schoolwork, Shabazz also worked 20 hours a week in the university's housekeeping department. He said the challenge for him was "trying to balance the school life with the work life."

Shabazz would like to see more African-American men enter the teaching profession.

"If you want to get youth on the right track, it can be done by people who come from the same experiences, who can show them this is what you can do if you stay focused, stay positive," he said.

"You go for that education, you can be in the same position I'm in and help the generations behind you," Shabazz stated.

## Dr. Melanie Caughey Challenges Presumptions about Gifted Education



Dr. Melanie Caughey is used to getting strong reactions when she reveals what she does for a living. As the new coordinator of the Gifted and Talented Program, Caughey trains teachers on instructing gifted students. People are not shy about sharing their opinions and experiences with gifted education.

“I often get a side eye when I say I’m in gifted education,” she said.

Are those responses coming from people who were not in gifted programs at school or from those who had bad experiences in them? “Both,” Caughey answered.

She usually responds to skeptics with the question: “What do you think gifted education is?”

Caughey uses a sports analogy to explain how gifted programs function in K-12 schools. “Where we’re okay with having people accelerate or are gifted is in sports,” she explained. She used Baker Mayfield, quarterback for the Cleveland Browns, as an example. “Are you going to have Baker Mayfield practice with the practice squad and not practice with the team that is going on the field on Sunday?” she asked. “How is he going to get better if he is not playing with people at his level?”

Caughey’s interest in gifted education and what it can offer students dates back to when she was placed in a gifted program as a fifth grader at Avonworth Elementary School in the Pittsburgh suburbs. Her office in Julka Hall is decorated

with reminders of her hometown, such as a Steelers’ Terrible Towel on the wall and a figurine of Pittsburgh’s favorite son Fred Rogers, the late host of Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood on PBS.

While in her high school’s gifted program, Caughey had the chance to complete independent studies in topics of interest, such as film and psychology. She also participated in academic competitions, and, as an eighth grader, she accelerated to ninth-grade Spanish. “I am interested in making sure other students have those opportunities because they were so useful,” Caughey said.

For an undergraduate independent study at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in English and education, Caughey created a handbook to aid general education teachers in instructing gifted students.

Caughey continued to pursue her interests in gifted education during the six years she taught a variety of 12th-grade English and journalism courses at Ligonier Valley High School in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, while obtaining a master’s degree from Duquesne University in Educational Studies. However, Caughey was unaware of the abundance of information about gifted education until she began pursuing her doctorate at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

“There really is a lot of research and scholarship in gifted education, a lot of dedicated professionals, but we’re still off to the side and not mainstreamed. So I got into it because I thought no one was studying it, but I found out I was wrong,” Caughey said.

Caughey became the coordinator for the Department of Curriculum and Foundations’ Gifted and Talented Program in the fall semester of 2019. She also is a visiting assistant professor for the department.

“Melanie has enthusiastically embraced her new role at CSU. I have enjoyed our times together, exchanging thoughts on past, present and future

ideas for the gifted program,” said Patty Clary, an instructor for the gifted program.

At CSU, educators can earn a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Gifted and Talented Education. Current teachers also can earn an endorsement in gifted education, which allows them to become intervention specialists.

The gifted program is designed to train educators about appropriate teaching strategies, curriculum design and assessment techniques to use when fostering the development of gifted children.

Part of Caughey’s job as coordinator is to keep the program and herself updated on the best practices in the gifted field and to seek out research opportunities. It also is crucial that she is aware of what gifted education looks like in Ohio, as policies vary from state to state.

While there is a mandate for schools to identify students as gifted, Ohio does not mandate that school districts offer gifted programs. Teachers who do work in a gifted program should complete coursework leading to an endorsement.

“I have a fair amount of teachers who need to get their license because they either have gifted positions or want to apply for one in their district,” she said. “Some of my current students are talking about how they want to create gifted programs or enhance the gifted programs where they are.”

The conversation about programming often starts with working on an answer to the question: “What sets a gifted child apart from a typical student?”

“That is a really complicated question,” Caughey said. She recommends that everyone start with a definition of the term.

The Ohio Board of Education defines a gifted child as one who “performs or shows potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience or environment.”

Children in Ohio may be considered gifted in four categories: (1) superior cognitive ability, which districts determine by using IQ tests or other approved intelligence tests; (2) specific academic ability in math, reading/writing, science and social studies; (3) creative thinking ability; and/or (4) visual and/or performing arts.

Unlike special education, where a child's learning disability can be diagnosed, Caughey explains that giftedness is a "social construct."

"Even if you do use any of these procedures for identification measures, a lot of it is how we think and how we feel. It is the way we categorize people. 'All the smart kids sit here and they act like this,'" she said. For example, Caughey spoke of working with teachers who describe

some students as "truly gifted" compared to their classmates, who passed the same tests that identified them as gifted.

"We seem to, as a society, be more interested trying to make sure people deserve the label and not trying to serve the people that have the label. More of the debate centers on identification and not what we're doing to try to help students," she explained.

The issues surrounding identification have led to the criticism that gifted programs are creating a new form of segregation within schools. There is under-representation of African-American, Hispanic and poor children in gifted programs, according to Donna Y. Ford, a nationally known expert on gifted education whose work Caughey has studied.

"We need to desegregate our gifted programs and open doors for advanced placement as well," said Ford, a distinguished professor in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University.

Caughey agrees that lack of diversity has been a problem. In Caughey's Work with Students with Gifts and Talents, Their Families and Other Professionals course (EGT 518) students reviewed the gifted education policies of the school districts in which they worked and/or lived. Though many policies call for diverse gifted classrooms, this is not always reflected in practice, according to Caughey. She asked the students, "In your school, does the population of your gifted program look like the population in your school. Is your program diverse? If your program doesn't look diverse, what changes can we make?"

According to Caughey, some inequality in Ohio might come from a testing process that uses

national norms in which students' scores are compared to a statistically selected nationally represented group of the same age and grade. This makes it challenging for districts to consider the experience or environment of under-represented students who do not have the same opportunity to learn.

While tests and academics play a part in who are selected for gifted programs, referrals from teachers also have a great influence. Often African-American, Hispanic, low-income and students with disabilities are not getting those referrals. One issue is that children who are perceived as having behavior problems do not get accepted in gifted programs.

Caughey explained that one way to combat this perspective is for educators to reframe their thinking about behavior issues: "That kid who can't sit down in his seat, maybe that's not a behavior issue. He's just excited about what is going on in the classroom."

Caughey would like to see pre-service teachers introduced to training gifted students at the undergraduate level. During the time she taught in the teacher preparation program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, there was a push for pre-service teachers to be trained to differentiate instruction for a variety of student populations, including those in gifted education. In response to this directive, she built instruction about gifted education and differentiation into her elementary language arts and secondary literacy courses.

Integrating gifted education practices into all classrooms could be a way to help the field grow and help better identify students, she suggested.



## Interesting Fact!

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) has the distinction of being the first in the United States to offer a gifted education program, according to the Ohio Association for Gifted Children's website. The district's Major Work Program began in October 1921 at Denison Elementary School, stated on the CMSD's website.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CSU'S GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM, [CLICK HERE >>>](#)**

## Dr. Heather B. Hill Promotes Community Building in the Classroom

Dr. Heather B. Hill describes herself as an “introvert/extrovert.” The introvert side of her personality brings on feelings of trepidation when she enters a classroom for the first time. “Every semester I carry a little bit of, ‘Oh boy, here we go.’ You’re meeting a whole new group of people. You have to immediately figure out how to form authentic connections with them,” she explained.

This fall begins Hill’s second school year as an assistant professor of Educational Psychology with the Department of Curriculum and Foundations. She will teach Life Cycle: Development and Learning (EDU 803) in the Department of Doctoral Studies in the fall semester and Psychology of Education (EDB 302) and Introduction to Education (EDB 242) in spring of 2021.

Her style of instruction does not call for her to be the center of attention in a classroom filled with future teachers. “For me, I don’t like to do a lot of lecturing,” Hill said. Instead there is lots of discussion and community-building based on the constructivist approach she takes to teaching

“Constructivist theory is the idea that teaching and learning is a process where everyone is constructing knowledge together,” she said.

Prior to coming to CSU, Hill was an assistant professor in the Department of Education at Ithaca College in New York. She also has taught language arts in public and Christian middle schools in Columbus. Hill was a volleyball coach at the latter. The importance of teamwork and community building that she learned as a coach is something she instills in the teachers-in-training she instructs at Cleveland State University.

“I value community building more than anything,” she explained. “I really want them to practice engaging in hard conversations and working collaboratively. Those things matter the most to me.”



Hill replaced Dr. Jeremy Genovese, who retired last year as associate professor of Educational Psychology. Hill said the subject answers, “How do people learn? What motivates people to learn? How do we use psychology to inform how we create a classroom experience? How we build a relationship with students?”

Through educational psychology, she also wants students to understand how gender, race and class influence how we learn and how we teach.

“According to research, the dominant view is teaching is apolitical, that it’s neutral and that your identity has nothing to do with anything. We know it has everything to do with teaching and how you connect with people,” she said.

Hill, a married mother of two daughters, first became interested in educational psychology while pursuing her doctorate at The Ohio State University.

“A lot of people say that research is like ‘me

search.’ Generally, your line of inquiry is somehow situated in your lived experiences. In fact, as qualitative researchers, your experiences offer resources for noticing and making meaning of interactions others would ignore, devalue or overlook. And so, my research, at least in terms of my dissertation, has focused primarily on Black girl literacies, writing inside and outside school.”

Hill finds that too often teachers assume they have to coerce African-American students to read and write. Her Black, female research participants were avid readers who wrote fan fiction that require lots of writing and rewriting and providing feedback to other readers and writers online.

“In reality, these girls were doing what they needed to do to get the grade, but there is so much they could have experienced if their teacher had been aware or even assumed they were already doing this kind of work,” she said.

“In terms of psychology, my research is about how girls are making sense of the world, how they are coming to see themselves in relationship to others, self-efficacy and self-esteem. I’m not just necessarily looking at issues of cognition or trying to diagnose Black girls or Black boys, which sometimes is the approach in psychological perspectives. There is always the assumption there is something wrong with Black kids and we need to figure out what the gap is in their way of thinking and doing something,” she explained.

In her courses, she urges her students not to fear African-American students and “not to view them as bodies that have to be managed and silenced and policed.”

Hill notes that African-American youth bring rich experiences to schools that are not always recognized by teachers. She wants educators to see, “What we can learn from Black youth on how we can design classrooms that are engaging, more nurturing, more fun.”

Some of her interest in educational psychology stems from her own experiences as a student at Hawken School, a predominately white private

school in the affluent suburb of Gates Mills. Being one of a few African-American students at the school, she had feelings of being both hyper-visible and invisible. “Outside of school, I was writing poetry. I was reading. I never got the feeling teachers cared or even presumed that was occurring.”

The East Cleveland native admits that while at Hawken she walked the halls of the school with shame about her working-class background and the fact that her father was a drug addict. “For me, it was trying to figure out how to negotiate what parts of me can I tell and not tell,” said Hill, who graduated in 2001.

Still, she is grateful for her experience at Hawken. “I see a lot of my work as bridging the divide,” she said.

“I am free and transparent in sharing my stories to let [students] know my family didn’t reflect a traditional environment,” she said, as she exhibits the extrovert in her personality.

She challenges her pre-service teachers to value what she brings to the courses she teaches. “Value my mother and even my father. Value our community and don’t regard us through a deficit lens,” she explained.

She wants her students to “really think about how they will engage students and love on students and see past all the stereotypes that come with being poor or the working poor.”

Hill has the respect of Dr. Adam Voight, who teaches the Social Context of Urban Education (EDB 241), a companion course to Hill’s EDB 242. They were co-instructors last spring for Rotation I in the CREATE program for first-semester education majors.

“She has been a tremendous addition to the Rotation 1 team, bringing a fresh perspective on teacher training and a brilliant ability to critically analyze issues in class, the scholarly literature and the larger world of education. In addition to being a talented scholar and teacher, she’s just a great person, too,” Voight said.

# Teach, Earn and Learn

## SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS EARN CASH AND TEACHING DEGREES

Earn \$24,000 or more as a substitute teacher through Teach, Earn & Learn, sponsored by the MUST — Master’s in Urban Secondary Teaching — program. TEL gives students the chance to earn money to cover living expenses while they pursue a master’s degree and teaching license through MUST. The 14-month program begins in May.

“Lots of our interns don’t have opportunities to work outside the MUST program, so long-term or short-term substituting can alleviate some of that,” according to Rashida Mustafa, the MUST recruitment coordinator. This fall semester will be the second school year for TEL. The six students in the first TEL cohort graduated in May.

Substitutes can hold long-term teaching assignments that last throughout the school year or short-term assignments of as little as two days a week. The TEL substitute teachers work with seventh- to 12th-grade students in Cleveland, Euclid, Parma and Warrensville Heights school districts. They also can do short-term assignments at St. Martin de Porres Catholic High School in Cleveland.

The pay ranges from \$85 to \$110 a day depending on the school. The Cleveland Metropolitan School District pays the most, Mustafa noted. Hiring is done through CMSD, Rachel Wixey and Associates and the Renhill Group.

Pay for the substitute teachers goes directly to them. Teachers with long-term assignments can earn between \$24,000 and \$28,000 during the school year. That is the amount tuition can range for MUST. Financial aid and grants also are available for that cost, Mustafa added. For example, Ohio offers \$4,000 grants for teachers who plan to work in underserved, low-income communities.

Anyone who has been a substitute teacher or had a substitute teacher during their schooling knows that

at times maintaining control of the class can be a challenge. Mustafa was a substitute teacher before enrolling in and completing the MUST program. She admits that classroom management was a problem for her. MUST students take pedagogy courses in the summer before becoming substitute teachers when school begins in the fall semester.

“Classroom management is super important when you’re a substitute teacher,” Mustafa explained. “The MUST program definitely prepares students to step into the classroom. I wish I had that same experience.”

In addition to substitute teaching during school days, the TEL students take courses in the evenings at Cleveland State University’s campus or online. The education experience for TEL students differs in some ways from traditional MUST students. In the fall semester, the traditional MUST students take a practicum that involves observing a classroom. In the spring, they student teach and work daily with a mentor-teacher. TEL students with long-term substitute teaching positions have MUST Coordinators at the site of their schools, reviewing their work during a semester, Mustafa said. They do a practicum, and their work as substitute teachers serves as their student-teaching experience. They work more hours than typical MUST students, but they are being paid.

To be accepted into TEL, as well as MUST, teaching candidates must have a bachelor’s degree. Second, they will need Ohio substitute teaching licenses. Traditional MUST students also are encouraged to get substitute teaching licenses. Mustafa said practicums take place Mondays through Thursdays, which gives them time on Fridays to substitute teach. All MUST cohorts also can substitute for their mentor-teachers when they have to be away from class.

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### Teach, Earn & Learn Is Helping Scott Bell Make the Career Switch From Factory Worker to Teacher

After earning a bachelor’s degree, Scott Bell planned to further his education in order to become an English and theater teacher who also coached football.

“Life happened, I got married, had a family and needed to pay bills. So I really didn’t have the money or the opportunity to continue my education at the time,” Bell explained.

So the 2008 graduate of Cleveland State University worked some retail jobs before taking a permanent position in manufacturing. For 10 years he worked at Superior Roll Forming, located in Valley City. The company is a tier 3 supplier for Ford, Chevrolet, General Motors and Honda auto corporations. There’s a chance you sat on a car seat that was made with a roll-formed steel part from Superior or drove a vehicle with the frame work on its chassis made there.

Years of working in the factory did not diminish his desire to teach.

“Once my kids were old enough to be in school full time, my wife went back to work and was able to support the family,” he said. “That was the point where we said, ‘Now I can go back to school.’”

He expressed his gratitude to his wife, Amy, for helping him meet his career goals. “I couldn’t have done it without her,” Bell said. The two are the parents of 8- and 11-year-old boys.

Bell had considered enrolling in the 14-month MUST (Master’s of Urban Secondary Teaching) program years ago. When the time became right to go back to school, he attended a MUST information session and learned about Teach, Earn & Learn. TEL enabled him to earn as a substitute teacher while pursuing his master’s degree in education and eventually obtaining his teaching license. He will graduate this summer.

“Here is the opportunity to get paid while you’re doing your student teaching, while you’re doing the program,” Bell stated. “As somebody who has a rather full plate and with boys who just won’t stop eating,” he joked, Teach, Earn & Learn was the perfect fit.

Bell was a student-teacher for three days a school week and a building substitute teacher for the remaining two at New Tech West in Cleveland. As a substitute teacher, he taught a variety of subjects that included English, Spanish, math, history and computer science. Bell’s long days began when he left his Medina home at 6:50 a.m. to arrive at the school at 7:30 a.m. He packed a lunch and dinner on days he left New Tech West for evening courses at Cleveland State’s Julka Hall.

How did he get through those long days?

“I drank lots of coffee,” Bell said. “I was fortunate that I could lean on my wife for support, sometimes literally, when I came through the door.”

“Sometimes it was a struggle. We knew going into this that free time was going to be at a premium,” he said.

One of the biggest strengths about being a substitute was being able to experience the different cultures teachers create in their respective classrooms, Bell said. He taught three different classes with the same students. Their behavior changed depending on the culture of that particular classroom.

As a substitute, he also learned the importance of teachers communicating with their students, Bell said.

“I worked with students who had a wide range of backgrounds and cultures, expectations and needs. Every single one needed something different from me, but all of them needed me to understand what they needed and respond to that,” he said.

“I may not do a good job of listening to my wife at home, but I’ve learned to listen to my students,” said Bell, a jovial man with a quick sense of humor.

To prepare Bell to substitute teach, he and other TEL students took courses such as Psychological Foundations of Education, Teaching and Management in Secondary Schools and Educational Research.

“Studying why things get done the way they do was nice, but where I really did the learning was when I stepped through the doors of the school,” he said.

There were students who gave the substitutes a difficult time. “I was fortunate that as a building substitute I got to know the students on a first name basis,” he said. He left detailed notes to teachers on the conduct of their students.

“Only in the classrooms where there weren’t expectations — I was just there to be a babysitter or a warm body and there wasn’t anything expected of me — is where I had the most trouble,” he explained.

In those instances, Bell always had work for his students to do. He sometimes allowed them to complete assignments he had given them in his English class where he was a student-teacher.

Students and Bell benefited when teachers left assignments in their absence. He recalled a 10th-grade biology teacher, who kept a rack of science magazines in her classroom. The students were required to read an article and write a summary of it. Bell plans to do that exercise once he becomes a teacher.

Bell as well as other students and educators around Ohio were affected by Governor Mike DeWine’s stay-at-home Order in March because of the novel Coronavirus.

“The shutdown was really rough for me as a substitute. I haven’t had a paid day since the last week before the schools closed. I’m grateful to my wife, who has been shouldering the weight of financial responsibility for our family for a while now, and even more so since the virus closed things down,” Bell said.

As a student-teacher, he continued to work with his mentor-teacher Daniel Drake conducting virtual classes.

“He’s a great teacher, passionate about both his subject and his students. I learned a great deal from him about not only managing a classroom and planning lessons, but about how to be successful within the professional structure of the school system,” he said of Drake.

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