



TEN NEWSLETTER

Bimonthly Newsletter of the
Transformative Education Network
at Montclair State University

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1

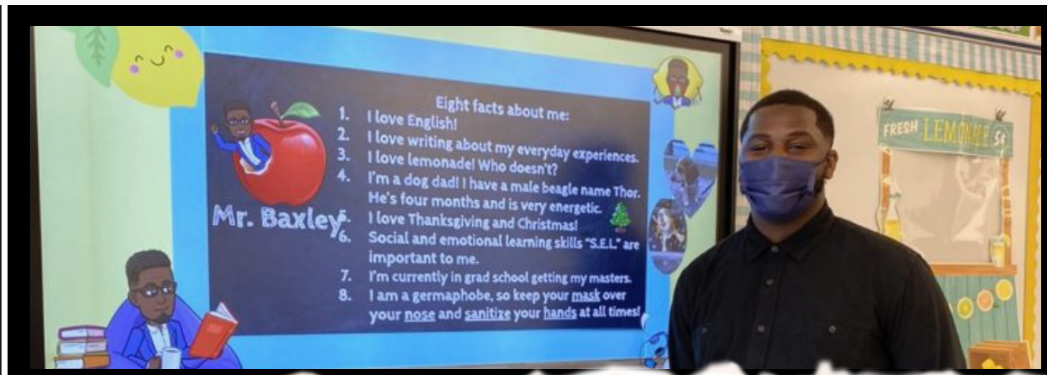
- Feature Article:
"Back to School"

PAGE 2

- Spotlight On Sonya Rosario
- Upcoming Events

PAGE 3

- Defining TEN
- Did You Know?



BACK TO SCHOOL

Schools are back in session for in-person learning, and thanks to two dedicated cohorts of students, the classrooms of Newark will have a little more support as they transition back to in-person learning. Transformative Education Network (TEN) at Montclair State University (MSU), formally known as UTR@MSU, is designed to recruit diverse and talented individuals into the teaching force; improve the quality of new teachers by focusing on social justice and anti-racist pedagogy, increase teacher retention rates, and ultimately improve student achievement.

In June, a new Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) cohort of 11 Residents and a new Newark Teachers Project (NTP) cohort of 12 residents began a summer of intensive learning and community building to prepare for the 21-22 school year. Highlights included a scavenger hunt throughout Newark, interning with community organizations, an environmental justice tour of the Ironbound section of Newark, working with children at the Ben Samuels Children's Center and clinical experience at the Newark Regional Day School. Residents also participated in their first Critical Professional Development experience (read more about CPD on page 3 of this newsletter) through a two-day intensive workshop with the Racial Equity Institute.

In August, residents from both programs began working with their mentor teachers and preparing their classrooms. We currently have 23 residents in 25 classrooms across 12 schools in Newark, and that is just the current residents. Our induction program kicked off this school year supporting 44 first, second, and third year UTR and NTP graduates as well. Additionally, we have partnered with NBOE to provide Critical Professional Development to all 350 new teachers in Newark!

Even with masks on, you can see the smiles on the kids' faces as they reenter the school buildings and see their friends, teachers, and administrators. Our residents, alumni, and mentor teachers continue to work hard to make learning relevant and fun as we face the challenges of this unique time. When asked what it felt like to meet her 6th grade students for the first time, NTP resident, Llamylis Roman Rivera said "it honestly reminded me that the kids really make my day... it's the insightful comments they make, the thoughtful actions - always making sure to greet me and say bye to me - the connections I make with them remind me why I am in this program." And we couldn't agree more!

SPOTLIGHT ON...



Sonya
Rosario

Sonya Rosario is a UTR resident. She is working toward dual certification (Elementary Education and Teacher of Students with Disabilities). She is in residence at Salomé Ureña Elementary School in Newark teaching 3rd grade Math.

• **How and why did you get involved with the UTR@MSU?**

I first had the idea to switch careers and go into teaching about 18 years ago when I was working in advertising. I even got my sub license, but I didn't get called and then my husband lost his job so I had to go back to work. Then I had my children and I got very involved in their school. Eventually the school encouraged me to become a substitute teacher and then a paraprofessional. I realized how important it is for a teacher to understand the needs and values of their students and to teach them the value of their cultural wealth. I thought about coming to MSU for a Master's (and was even admitted into another program!), but life kept getting in the way. Then, one day last year while I was in the car with my children, a friend called and said "There's this info session online that I forgot to tell you about. It's for this urban teacher residency program. I think it would be perfect for you. Oh, and it's half an hour from now." The rest is history!

• **What is your "why" for antiracist/social justice education?**

If we don't address the inequities in the school system, then we're really not investing in our most valuable resource. It really saddens me that we devalue people, that we actually look at people and say their culture is not valued and not needed. Also, we don't understand why we are where we are today as a country, because we don't understand what happened before that brought us to where we are today. People think "this is just the way it is" and they don't have any idea why and how BIPOC communities have been marginalized. We all need to unlearn our own biases and the false narratives that we've been taught throughout school. The curriculum needs to change to be actually inclusive and reflect many other perspectives on our country's history.

• **What is one change you'd like to see in public education?**

I would like to see students with impairments be valued as equally as students who are typical. They have so much to contribute.

• **What's the book that changed your life?**

That's an easy one for me: the Bible, because, since the age of 19 it has guided me, and not just in my daily moment-to-moment decisions. It has gotten me through some of the roughest times in my life.

UPCOMING EVENTS



October 12 via Zoom
• 10 am - 12 pm EST
Core Planning Meeting

October 19 via Zoom
• 9 am - 1 pm EST
NJ ACTE Diversifying the Workforce Convening
[View the flyer](#) and [Register](#)

October 21 via Zoom
• 5:30 pm EST
**CUE Speaker Series:
Dr. Rosa L. Rivera-McCutchen
"Radical Care: Leading for Justice in Urban Schools"**
[View the flyer](#) and [Register](#)

October 22
• 9 am - 3 pm EST
Mentor Professional Development
Mentors Only

October 22
• 3:30 - 5:30 pm EST
UTR Happy Hour
Casa d'Paco
73 Warwick Street
Newark, NJ

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know that one of the distinguishing features of TEN is our commitment to providing Critical Professional Development (CPD) to our residents, mentor teachers, field team members, alumni, and school leadership teams.

CPD moves beyond a top-down model of PD:

- Instead of treating teachers as empty vessels needing to be filled with knowledge by outside “experts,” CPD seeks to engage teachers as “politically aware individuals who have a stake in teaching and transforming society... [and it] centers social justice-oriented teachers as agents of change, offering them the space and the structure to develop as liberatory actors”. (Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015).
- We see the value in treating teachers as partners in their own learning, and it is our intention to help teachers develop skills necessary to use education as a vehicle for equity, justice, and social change.

TEN consistently provides CPD opportunities. Our most recent CPD event took place on October 5, with **Zellie Thomas**.

INTRODUCING TEN

The Transformative Education Network (TEN) was formally known as the UTR@MSU. TEN was created as an inclusive umbrella term for three programs outlined below that have a shared mission of advancing racial justice in education, offering critical professional development, and actively creating an expanding network of anti-racist educators across our partner districts. TEN consists of 3 main programs detailed below:



UTR - URBAN TEACHER RESIDENCY

The Urban Teacher Residency is a grant-funded, cohort-structured teacher education program modeled after a traditional medical residency. Critical aspects of UTR include classroom immersion, mentorship, and induction support, combined with critical professional development that benefits both teacher residents and experienced educators. Additional key features include: anti-racist and social justice pedagogies, collaborative inquiry and professional learning communities, and emphasis on connecting theory with practice.

NTP - NEWARK TEACHER PROJECT

NTP is a cohort of residents from MSU's larger teacher education program who have an interest in social justice and antiracism. NTP students are placed in Newark classrooms with carefully selected mentor teachers. NTP seminars support all areas of teacher development with a special focus on social and racial justice. The small cohort is provided support and access to many special events and high-quality antiracist critical professional development.

CUE - CRITICAL URBAN EDUCATION SPEAKER SERIES

CUE is a bi-annual speaker series that hosts national scholars at MSU, providing a forum to develop attendees' racial and political analysis through a series of lectures and workshops focused on social and cultural issues influencing urban schools and communities. CUE is free and open to the public and the audience includes Montclair State University students and faculty, as well as local young people, educators, and community members.

Funding for these programs was made possible by Teacher Quality Pipeline grant by the USDOE, along with additional support from Montclair State University, Newark and Orange Boards of Education, The Victoria Foundation and Impact 100 grant.