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### **The CTTL and TFA, DC Region: The Power of a Replicable Public and Private School Partnership**

Posted on [March 8, 2018](#)

**By Julia Dean**

Did you know that our long term memory capacity is limitless? Are you aware that memory is a whole brain activity? How about that acknowledgement, affirmation, and even celebration increase our ability to remember?

St. Andrew's faculty member Christine Lewis challenged Teach for America (TFA) Corps members and alumni of the DC region to consider these questions while teaching about the science of memory. Lewis modeled strategies that teachers can implement to help students remember material more effectively, such as the use of novelty, relevancy, and visualization, as part of the Brain Science and Advanced Instructional Delivery Fellowship.

In 2010, Gabriela Smith, Founder and President of [the Crimsonbridge Foundation](#), and Glenn Whitman, Director of [the CTTL](#) at St. Andrew's, cultivated this innovative public-private partnership with [Teach for America, DC Region](#). Over the years, the partnership developed a fellowship for rising second-year TFA Corps members and TFA alumni in the DC region to receive training and feedback from veteran St. Andrew's teachers. The Brain Science and Advanced Instructional Delivery Fellowship evolved from the CTTL and TFA DC's common goal: to ensure that all students have teachers who understand how students' brains learn, work, and thrive.

In Whitman's words, "Each of us from the CTTL and TFA DC share authority for the design, facilitation, and measurement of impact that this professional development experience has. We each bring expertise and experience to this program. It is the type of mutually beneficial public/private partnership that I hope more schools will embrace, like St. Andrew's has, in their regions of the country."

This year's fellowship allows TFA teachers, who instruct students in some of the most underserved schools in the region, to receive professional development from SAES teachers like Christine Lewis.

This is Christine's third year as a CTTL facilitator with TFA DC in their collaborative program that is offered to second year TFA corps members and TFA alumni. This year's topics include: the science of stress in the classroom and how to reduce its impact; the science of mindset and how to apply ideas appropriately within a diverse urban classroom; and, most recently, an introduction to the science of memory and its applications for improving academic achievement for all students. Fellowship participants also have the opportunity to earn [micro-credentials](#) in topics such as neuroplasticity through the CTTL's partnership with Digital Promise.

certifies TFA teachers. Lewis gave daily workshops over the course of the TFA Corps members' six-week summer preparation program, which they took immediately before entering the DC school system with no prior teacher training. Gaining insight and experience into the public school teaching world, Christine, in her words, "developed a deep respect for the individuals who took on this monumental task with no experience or real training other than my six week intensive."

Through this partnership, Christine Lewis and other SAES teachers over the program's history have shared their wide range of experiences and knowledge with TFA Corps members. In addition to sharing knowledge, Lewis notes that she "use[s] this time to embody enthusiasm and optimism for the career of teaching as a way to counteract some of the teacher loss that is often associated with TFA assignments."

The professionalization and retention of teachers is at the heart of this partnership, which has positive benefits for SAES teachers as well, who gain an appreciation for the creative work TFA teachers are doing with the resources available in underserved schools in the District.

Earlier this year, the leaders of the Crimsonbridge Foundation, CTTL, and TFA DC presented at the [National Network of Schools in Partnership's](#) 1st Annual Conference to share what they learned through their nearly decade-long collaboration. Though this journey included many iterations of the CTTL-TFA fellowship, their missions remained aligned: to serve every child to achieve his or her potential by supporting the teachers who work with them every day.

The Brain Science and Advanced Instructional Delivery Fellowship represents a model of collaboration between public and private schools and is one of several offerings the CTTL extends to TFA Corps members and public and charter school teachers. With the support of the Crimsonbridge, Marriott, and E.E. Ford foundations, the CTTL also provides scholarships for public school teachers to attend its Mind, Brain, Education science professional development programs, including the upcoming [Science of Teaching and School Leadership Academy](#), which will take place this July.

[For more information about the CTTL, click here.](#)