

# Arthur Zankel Urban Fellowships 2021–2022

Established in 2007, The Arthur Zankel Urban Fellowship Program has provided opportunities for Teachers College students to impact the lives of students in New York City. Partnering with public schools and after-school programs, the Fellows contribute to the growth and well-being of young people through reading, mathematics, art, and other educational initiatives. Thanks to the generous support of the Zankel Urban Fellows program, hundreds of Fellows have been able to connect with and support New York City's underserved youth, forging mutually beneficial relationships.



In her role as an early intervention home visitor at ABC - The Graham School, Candelaria Ponceliz became more sensitive to the numerous factors outside of school that influence a child's development. The family, nutrition, health, safety and well-being all play a vital role, and Candelaria considers it a "gift" to explore these areas with families in need as she equips them with the tools to ensure optimal results for their children at a critical stage of development.

Assigned to three families, Candelaria facilitates remote individual sessions via Zoom once a week and creates lesson plans that promote the achievement of goals according to developmental stage, strengths and weaknesses. She approaches this work with the belief that **"education has the power to change lives and everyone is deserving of an opportunity tailored to their needs."** The families are partners in this effort, providing Candelaria with information about their children while learning how to support their developmental journeys in a nurturing and empowering way.

The relationships Candelaria is building with these families provides comfort and company, a balm for the pandemic-related stress and economic struggles that further complicates the challenges associated with raising and educating children. She is eager to apply this approach in her work as a teacher who promotes communication with families.

**"Education is a lifelong process that occurs within and outside of the classroom, and while we may know how to best support our students, it is also our duty to support their families so they can maintain and extend this work with their children."**

*education is a  
lifelong process*

■ **Candelaria Ponceliz**  
Ed.M., ID/Autism - Dual Certification  
Reading & Math Buddy



■ **Beatrice Wedd**  
**M.A., Teaching of English**  
 Reading and Math Buddy

Beatrice Wedd quickly came to appreciate the importance of being adaptable and flexible in engaging her students at P.S. 36 Margaret Douglas and P.S. 154 Harriet Tubman Learning Center. **“I’ve never had this much responsibility and freedom, as an educator, and I cherish the opportunity.”** Beatrice invests time in discovering her students’ interests and what excites them, and takes their feedback seriously as she designs her units.

She hosts a literary magazine for groups of students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade with the overarching question, *“How does writing create positive change in ourselves, and therefore our communities and the world?”* Beatrice is responsible for every aspect of the unit design and session planning, and is continually seeking ways to draw each student in through a variety of literary forms. Some students had a love for poetry last semester, while others are passionate about creating graphic novels, storyboards, or movie scripts.

A sense of playfulness is central to Beatrice’s approach. For example, her students love playing games, which led Beatrice to incorporate fun “brain breaks” into her sessions. For her efforts, she is rewarded with students whose “eyes light up at the beginning of every class.”

Beatrice is grateful for the skills she’s developing and satisfaction she gains through her work with her students. **“They’re brilliant kids — if I can provide them with the resources, guidance, adaptability, vulnerability, and my own excitement for reading and writing, I get to watch them soar.”**

*they’re brilliant kids...  
 I get to watch them soar*



■ **Oliver Gonzalez-Yoakum**  
**M.S., Nutrition and Exercise Physiology**

When Oliver Gonzalez-Yoakum began his Zankel Fellowship placement with the Small Kids in Physical Activity (SKIP!) program at the Teachers College Community School’s (TCCS) lower school this past fall, he noticed that many students in his Movement classes seemed unable to release their energy in productive ways. Through trial and error, he fostered safe and comfortable spaces and ways of expression for students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, first and second grades. As he introduced collaborative games and numerous dance parties, Oliver witnessed noticeable changes, particularly in those students who had a history of disregarding rules and negative interactions with peers.

Oliver is certain that his students are teaching him as much, if not more, than he taught them as he begins to imagine possibilities for his future in public nutrition education and an eventual private practice. **“Young people have tremendous plasticity and the ability to see the world with fresh eyes, and I often wonder how I can capitalize on this willingness to learn to foster a love of healthy living [in others].”**

His work at TCCS is shaping Oliver’s conception of his role as a nutrition educator and informing his career mission to help people live better and longer lives. **“My experience as a Fellow has been nothing short of instrumental in my career aspirations.”** Recognizing the importance of encouraging movement, physical awareness, and collaboration in the early years, Oliver is eager to **“continue to learn about the young people at TCCS, their families, and their history to understand how and where I, as a budding health professional, can fit in.”**

*the ability to see the  
 world with fresh eyes*



■ **Christina Torres**  
Ph.D., Science Education

Christina Torres discovered a passion for the natural world as a young child, and later realized her favorite aspect of science was the opportunity to teach others about it. Now in her second year of doctoral studies, Christina aspires to develop curricula that creates a framework for a comprehensive understanding of ecology and sustainability.

Christina is committed to making STEM concepts more accessible in order to bring about policy reform. **“I want to use Ecology as a way to change the way people interact with science in their daily lives.”** She runs TC’s Sustainability Task Force student club and develops workshops for the TC Advocacy Academy on the importance of storytelling in advocacy work.

Through the Zankel Fellowship, Christina is deeply engaged with the Youth At The Center (YATC) Project at TC’s Center for Sustainable Futures, led by Director Oren Pizmony-Levy. The Project provided a framework for her to engage with NYU students to discuss environmental science and climate change activism in a virtual medium.

Christina and youth climate activists throughout the city have been co-creating a Storytelling Project, a virtual repository of the voices and stories of the Climate Movement in NYC public schools. **“These stories will serve as a bridge from the youth in the movement today to the future youth in the movement tomorrow.”** Christina’s hope is that these stories will eventually catalyze policy action on a local and state level, and is optimistic about its potential to bring about real, positive change.

*change the way people  
interact with science*



■ **Ericka Hill**  
M.A., Education Policy and Social Analysis (EPSA)

Ericka Hill’s passion to support children and families stems from her 11 years of experience as a teacher, researcher and analyst in the field of Early Childhood Education. This passion has taken Ericka around the country, as she pursued academic and professional opportunities in California, Idaho, Tennessee and Texas. Ericka arrived at TC eager to build her knowledge regarding the links between education and policy, particularly concerning children and families in underserved communities.

In her REACH placements with 4th and 5th graders at P.S. 154 Harriet Tubman and with 1st graders at P.S. 36 Margaret Douglas, Ericka instructs the children in dance and zumba. She takes a child-centered approach which requires her to be ready to employ a variety of teaching strategies to draw the students in and establish trust.

**“I know instructing children of different ages requires being flexible to their daily needs, helping to enrich their lives in the way they explicitly or implicitly tell me they desire.”** As she teaches dance moves to the students, Ericka strives to empower them as learners who are comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas.

After graduation, Ericka plans to work as an analyst to improve policies and programs affecting children and families, and has also set her sights on obtaining a doctoral degree. Because she is always looking to sharpen her skills, Ericka views her Zankel Fellowship as **“another valuable opportunity to understand and support the versatile and holistic development of my students.”**

*helping to enrich their  
lives in the way they desire*

## 2021–2022 ZANKEL FELLOWS

**Megan Acosta-Carr**

Youth Historians in Harlem

**Olu Animashaun**The Art and Literacy of Justice:  
Creating Life After Rikers Island**Geordany Arias**Supporting RESI for the Public  
Good: Improving Antiracist  
Professional Development**Ruscandra (Roxy) Bitere**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\***Grant Brown**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\***Marissa Caputo**

TCCS Intervention Services

**Laura Carbajal Montalvo**Leveraging Linguistic and  
Cultural Diversity to Improve  
Student Achievement and  
College Readiness\***Rani Corak**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\***Jessica Coombs**SKIP! (Small Kids in Physical  
Activity) at TCCS**Natalie Davis-Porada**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\***Izabela de Souza**Leveraging Linguistic and  
Cultural Diversity to Improve  
Student Achievement and  
College Readiness\***Jacob (Jake) Diaz**Supporting RESI for the Public  
Good: Improving Antiracist  
Professional Development**Rebecca Ericson**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Michaela Foreman**Media Justice for Social Change:  
Racial Literacy, Civic Engagement,  
Participatory Action with Children  
and Youth\***Gabriela Garcia de la Noceda**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Lyndsay Gehring**

Youth at the Center

**Lunx Girgado**Media Justice for Social Change:  
Racial Literacy, Civic Engagement,  
Participatory Action with Children  
and Youth\***Oliver Gonzalez-Yoakum**SKIP! (Small Kids in Physical  
Activity) at TCCS**Alaina Gostomski**Engaging Urban Youth in  
Ethical Inquiry**Katherine Guy**Working with Special Readers  
and Writers\***Ericka Hill**Raising Educational Achievement  
Coalition of Harlem\* (REACH)**Reynaldo Hill**

TCCS Intervention Support

**Mei Huang**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Catherine Huff**Media Justice for Social Change:  
Racial Literacy, Civic Engagement,  
Participatory Action with Children  
and Youth\***Katy Jewett**Hands and Voices: Language  
and Literacy for Deaf and Hard of  
Hearing Children\***Raul Jindra-Cortilla**MS 371 Earth Justice through  
Garden and Nutrition**Margaret Kepley**Human Rights Education:  
Empowering Newcomer &  
Resettled Refugee Students in  
New York City Public**Erika Kessler**

Youth at the Center

**Jessica Key**

TCCS Intervention Support

**Zahra Ladhani**Supporting the Healthy  
Development of Young Girls  
in NYC**Jessica Lipaz**Media Justice for Social Change:  
Racial Literacy, Civic Engagement,  
Participatory Action with Children  
and Youth\***Thuy Vi Nguyen**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Chloe O'Neill**

REACH\*

**Juliya Pattammady**

REACH\*

**Nayeli Peña**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Dane Peters**

Youth Historians in Harlem

**Candelaria Ponceliz**Supporting the Academic and  
Social-Emotional Development of  
At-Risk Youth with Special Needs  
in East Harlem\***Rob Popik**

REACH\*

**Allie Ralph**Working with Special Readers  
and Writers\***Victoria Rinsem**SKIP! (Small Kids in Physical  
Activity) at TCCS**Xin Rong Yeo**MS 371 Earth Justice through  
Garden and Nutrition**Neal Schick**The Art and Literacy of Justice:  
Creating Life After Rikers Island**Hira Shahbaz**

REACH\*

**Lindi Shepard**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\***Uttarika Shetty**

REACH\*

**Shamini Shetye**Creative Technologies STEAM  
Fellows**Elizabeth Spearman**Creative Technologies STEAM  
Fellows**Lila Stenson**

TCCS Intervention Support

**Erik Stone**

Youth Historians in Harlem

**Elizabeth (Lilly) Sullivan**

TCCS Intervention Support\*

**Julia Tax**Hands and Voices: Language  
and Literacy for Deaf and Hard of  
Hearing Children\***Christina Torres**

Youth at the Center

**Macie Wasserberger**Supporting the Academic and  
Social-Emotional Development of  
At-Risk Youth with Special Needs  
in East Harlem\***Beatrice Wedd**

REACH\*

**Ashlynn Wittchow**Empowering Teachers  
and Students through  
Project-Based Learning\*

\* Reading and Math Buddies

Zankel Urban Fellowship Fund

Endowed Fund Report - 644165  
Fiscal Years 2006 through 2021

	Corpus at Beginning of Year	New Gifts	Corpus at End of Year	Market Value	Spendable Gift	Distribution	Spending	Unspent Distribution	Zankel Fellows Distribution %	Total Endowment Return %
FY2006	-	2,213,240	2,213,240	2,237,186						7.7%
FY2007	2,213,240	6,120,000	8,333,240	9,246,083		322,643	350,000	322,643	5.25%	14.6%
FY2008	8,333,240	1,171,955	9,505,195	9,777,622		413,190	500,000	385,834	5.00%	-2.1%
FY2009	9,505,195	676,000	10,181,195	9,171,653		472,499	500,000	358,333	5.00%	-7.0%
FY2010	10,181,195	112,490	10,293,685	9,675,694	120,000	-	470,000	8,333	0.00%	7.6%
FY2011	10,293,685	112,325	10,406,010	10,538,843		518,938	435,000	92,270	5.00%	13.6%
FY2012	10,406,010	12,078	10,418,088	10,903,903	556		452,500	-	0.00%	4.1%
FY2013	10,418,088	13,040	10,431,128	11,729,581		520,178	445,000	75,178	5.00%	12.6%
FY2014	10,431,128	737	10,431,865	13,296,100	767	543,129	345,000	274,074	5.00%	18.5%
FY2015	10,431,865	-	10,431,865	12,529,591		575,675	355,000	494,749	5.00%	-1.3%
FY2016	10,431,865	-	10,431,865	12,023,339		591,018	347,500	738,267	5.00%	0.7%
FY2017	10,431,865	3,730	10,435,595	12,543,178		583,673	352,500	969,440	5.00%	9.6%
FY2018	10,435,595	-	10,435,595	13,136,858		587,625	495,000	1,062,065	5.00%	9.7%
FY2019	10,435,595	-	10,435,595	12,923,200		576,988	583,675	1,055,378	5.00%	3.1%
FY2020	10,435,595	-	10,435,595	14,290,903		590,788	595,000	1,051,166	5.00%	16.0%
FY2021	10,435,595	-	10,435,595	17,008,650		642,324	627,000	1,066,490	5.00%	24.0%
Total					121,323	6,938,669	6,353,175			

(A) \$354,675 of fiscal year 2012 spending was funded by Teachers College operating budget

# TEACHERS COLLEGE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Fiscal Year Ending August 31	Market Value	Change During Year	Return
2021	508,660,230	124,129,349	24%
2020	384,530,881	41,785,849	16%
2019	342,745,032	18,652,916	3.1%
2018	324,092,116	33,269,575	9.7%
2017	290,822,541	15,492,414	9.6%
2016	275,330,127	12,272,665	.8%
2015	263,057,462	(13,607,715)	-1.3%
2014	276,665,117	36,779,363	18.5%
2013	239,885,754	30,258,129	12.6%
2012	209,627,625	197,839	4.1%

## How Your Fund Is Invested

Endowment gifts to Teachers College are pooled in the College's Endowment Fund for investment and oversight. The Trustee Investment Committee is responsible for overseeing the investment process. The Trustees have adopted a policy of investing endowment assets to preserve the long-term purchasing power of both the principal and the endowment income available to support the operations of the College through a carefully planned long-term investment program.

To diffuse market and investment risk and to enhance expected returns, investments are made in a broad range of asset categories with diversification within each asset category. The Investment Committee, which determines both the asset categories in which the endowment is invested and the percentage of the endowment to be allocated to each category, has established the following target ranges:

Endowment Target Allocation	
Cash & Core Fixed Income	0–30%
Opportunistic Fixed Income	0–25%
Traditional Equities	30–60%
Alternative Investments	15–35%
Private Equity & Real Assets	5–25%

Offit Capital Advisors LLC serves as investment advisor to the endowment. In this role, Offit Capital Advisors LLC provides recommendations to the Investment Committee related to asset allocations and managers. They also monitor the current portfolio providing return information to the Committee on a monthly basis.

## Understanding the Fund's Current Valuation

The endowment is made up of many separate, individual

donations (or funds) that donors, or the College on behalf of the donors, have set up.

Each year the College, like virtually all endowed, non-profit organizations, plans withdrawals from its endowment equal to a certain percentage of the endowment's value and uses the withdrawn funds to meet current operating expenses and to fund expenses for which a donor has restricted the use of income. The percentage of an institution's endowment withdrawn each year in support of these purposes, and the manner by which it is calculated, is known as the institution's spending policy.

Teachers College Trustees have established a spending policy of 5 percent of the value of the endowment, determined by averaging its market value at the end of each of the prior 16 quarters. The College will withdraw this amount each year irrespective of the actual return earned during the year. To the extent that a fund's gains in any year exceed the annual withdrawal, the excess remains in the fund and is reinvested.

Institutions have established spending policies to regularize the withdrawals they can make from their endowments each year. The spending policy is set in the expectation that, over long periods of time, the returns earned on the investment of the endowment will equal or exceed the amounts withdrawn plus inflation, thereby preserving the purchasing power of the endowment for future generations.

Teachers College's endowment utilizes a unitized endowment model structure. Specifically, when the College receives cash, which is restricted for an endowed purpose, these funds purchase units in the overall endowment pool at the prior month's unit market value. This unit holding determines the level of participation each endowed fund has in all endowment activity (allocation of investment return and withdrawals for spending).