



2021 GROSVENOR TEACHER FELLOWS



Photo by Enaut Izagirre



FURAHİ ACHEBE

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Furahi Achebe is a high school teacher in New Haven, Connecticut, where she teaches digital moviemaking, broadcasting, and animation. As a former scientist and lifelong community activist, she leads her students to analyze their world through the lens of the physical and social sciences, then to share their knowledge using media. Furahi founded a nonprofit that inspires urban youth to carry out social experiments to test strategies for success in school and in life.



MAIMONA AFZAL BERTA

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Maimona Afzal Berta is a special education teacher at Fischer Middle School in San Jose, California. She believes learning and advocacy drive exploration, which empowers students to dismantle cycles of inequity in the community and across our planet. Maimona also serves as president of the Franklin-McKinley School District Board of Education, where she drafted and introduced the Global Advocates for Earth resolution to amplify student leadership around protecting our environment.



MYRIAM BARA

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Myriam Bara has taught science, Français, and Canadian studies in the French Immersion program at Sisler High School in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where she is currently the Special Education Resource Teacher. She is the founder of Sisler North, an extracurricular northern travel studies program that connects urban youth with the semi-isolated, subarctic community of Churchill, Manitoba. Myriam has a master's degree specializing in inclusive education and wrote her thesis on the value of traveling for high school students.



JANET BARBER

SPRINGFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA

Janet Barber has taught science for 29 years at Springfield High School in Springfield, Pennsylvania. She has taught a variety of subjects, including biology, environmental science, forensic science, human anatomy/physiology, genetics, zoology, and most recently, a course entitled The Great Diseases. Janet's desire to share her love for science drives her to design lessons based on a case-study approach. The case-study approach allows students to be inspired by real-life stories. Being able to teach such a variety of subjects allows her to share her love of the learning process.



KIMBERLY BOYCE-QUENTIN

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Kimberly Boyce-Quentin teaches STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) lab at Piney Point Elementary in Houston. She is passionate about project-based learning and environmental stewardship as an agent of empowerment for her students. In her lab, students learn to advocate for themselves, share their learning, and express their original ideas. They use a blend of digital and physical making and fine arts to bring their academic and environmental action projects to life.



BRIELLE CARLSON

GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

Brielle Carlson is a high school geography, government, and sociology teacher at Grand Rapids High School in Minnesota. She feels passionate about engaging students in complex global issues such as human migration, refugees, climate change, and water and food security. Brielle pursues professional development opportunities that provide her with strategies for promoting curiosity, empathy, and critical analysis about our world; she has been a recipient of the Teachers for Global Classrooms Fellowship and is currently a Qatar Foundation International Teacher Leadership Program fellow.



MATT COLAUTTI

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Matt Colautti teaches high school math and physics in Scarborough, Toronto. He is a trained International Baccalaureate educator, serves as moderator of the school robotics program, and has written math curricula for the district. He strives to connect the abstract skills learned in the math classroom to real-world data, inquiry, and the open-ended “big problems” facing the world today.



LAURA CUMMINGS

HALEIWA, HAWAII

Laura Cummings is a National Board Certified Teacher and coordinator of the gifted and talented math and science programs at Sunset Beach Elementary School in Haleiwa, Hawaii. She strives to equip her students with tools and knowledge to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and problem solvers. Through her leadership and outreach work in environmental science and sustainability, and her partnerships with local and global colleagues and organizations, Laura hopes to enhance learning opportunities and inspire positive change.



LAUREN D'AMBROSIO

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, FLORIDA

Lauren D'Ambrosio is currently teaches AP research, biology, and experimental science at Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, Florida. She is extremely passionate about wildlife and human interactions. Lauren strives to have students connect their scientific understanding with all disciplines and solidify their knowledge with independent research and service-based learning. She is committed to building students' confidence in science and empowering them to become environmental stewards and lifelong learners.



SHARON DAVISON

WILLISTON, VERMONT

Sharon Davison has been a teacher for over three decades. She currently teaches kindergarten in a public school in Vermont. She is a passionate teacher who explores how to connect her students and their families globally. Through the use of technology, she creates a rich, interactive, and collaborative learning culture where kindness and empathy are ever-present. Sharon is a National Geographic Certified Educator, a #TeachSDGs Ambassador, and a National Board Certified Teacher.



SERGIO DE ALBA

LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA

Sergio de Alba is a sixth-grade teacher at R. M. Miano Elementary School in Los Baños, California. A 29-time teacher of the year, Sergio is known for his innovative, nature-based, and STEAM-based (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) instruction and program development. Sergio's focus is on developing successful students by providing a foundational understanding of successful strategies as well as learning the value of becoming productive members of the community.



SUSAN DORSEY

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Susan Dorsey is a museum educator who is passionate about facilitating interdisciplinary educational experiences for Pre-K through 12th-grade students that spark excitement and curiosity while cultivating creative and critical thinking. She combines her art and science backgrounds to develop programs focused on STEAM education. Susan received the Eastern Region Museum Education Art Educator Award in 2019 and the Maryland Art Museum Educator of the Year Award in 2017.



JACLYN FOSTER

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

Jaclyn Foster is a human geography, civics, U.S. history, and National Geographic elective teacher at Tuscaloosa Academy in Alabama. She focuses on giving her students a global perspective on the world by connecting them with experts in the field, incorporating storytelling with service-learning projects, and using Geographic Information Systems within her classroom. Jaclyn is also a community leader for the Educator Network and a facilitator for National Geographic Educator Certification.



SARAH GALLAH

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Sarah Gallah is a secondary science and geography teacher at St. Michael's Choir School in Toronto. She is also a graduate student at the University of Toronto and has collaborated with many research teams, including the University of Toronto Play Lab and the International Network of Education Institute (Beijing). As a National Geographic COVID-19 Fund grantee, she is currently teaching students to use coding to tackle complex issues such as climate change.



CHARU GULATI

SAN CARLOS, CALIFORNIA

Charu Gulati is a middle school science educator and an innovation coach in San Carlos, California. She leverages a design thinking approach for solutions that encourage responsible and sustainable development. Her domestic and overseas teaching experiences have ingrained an appreciation for social, cultural, and geographic diversity. Charu inspires her students to understand the interconnectedness of our world and cultivate environmental empathy, and she empowers them to be changemakers for issues that need collective action.



KATIE HARNISH

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Katie Harnish fell in love with teaching when she carried a flip chart into rural Haitian classrooms as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Today, this passion and sense of adventure ignites her teaching as a fifth-grade educator at Hambright Elementary School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. You can find her students looking for toad eggs in the schoolyard marsh, interviewing their community's refugees, or creating VR guides to the ecology of their backyards.



AMANDA HENDRICKS

MARYVILLE, TENNESSEE

Amanda Hendricks teaches seventh-grade science at Eagleton Middle School in Maryville, Tennessee. She is passionate about citizen science and outdoor learning. She integrates citizen science projects into her curriculum to foster a sense of exploration and curiosity in her students. Amanda works with the National Park Service to provide outdoor learning-based workshops, empowering teachers to take their teaching from four walls to no walls.



MICHAEL HERNANDEZ

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Michael Hernandez is a high school journalism, cinema, and photography teacher in Los Angeles who is passionate about digital literacy and social justice. For over 20 years, he has worked with students and teachers to develop collaborative, inquiry-based educational experiences, like digital storytelling trips to Asia and Latin America. Michael is a speaker, podcast producer, and author, and an Apple Distinguished Educator and member of the National Geographic Teacher Advisory Council.



KARL HOREIS

DENVER, COLORADO

Karl Horeis, a National Board-certified teacher, teaches elementary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) in Denver. A 2010 PolarTREC educator, Karl's passion is to engage his students with fascinating projects and promote a lifelong love of learning. He and his students are often launching rockets, sending balloons to the edge of space, or building replica artifacts. He encourages his students to discover answers for themselves through hands-on learning and collaborative exploration.



ELLIE KANTAR

HONOLULU, HAWAII

Ellie Kantar is a 9-12 grade ELL (English language learner) teacher at Farrington High School in Honolulu. She has taught a wide variety of classes ranging from foundational language classes to both single instructor and co-taught content classes in English language arts and the sciences. She works to create an environment that centers her students' experiences by celebrating their multilingualism and using it as an asset to directly support their learning in all content areas. Her goal is for students to see the value their experiences and perspectives bring to the world and help empower them to make positive change.



THOMAS KENNING

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

Thomas Kenning is an educator, author, and adventurer. He holds an M.A. in history from American University in Washington, D.C., and teaches the subject in St. Petersburg, Florida. As a writer and photographer, he is passionate about documenting the stunning ecosystems and vibrant history of the Gulf Coast.



AMY KING

BEAR CREEK, NORTH CAROLINA

Amy King teaches 11th/12th-grade American history in North Carolina. In 2019 she was named the North Carolina History Teacher of the Year and a national finalist by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. She focuses on blended learning in the classroom and loves creating historical learning trails for her students to navigate. Amy is passionate about creating amazing experiences in her classroom that empower her students to be changemakers in society.



KARLA LEE

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Karla Lee holds a Ph.D. in education, and currently instructs in English/Language Arts in Baltimore City, Maryland. Additionally, she is an American Federation of Teachers National Teacher Trainer. Karla is dedicated to instilling global awareness and responsibility into her inquisitive young scholars. Karla's educational goals have led her to have the honor and privilege of becoming part of the National Geographic educator community as a Certified Educator, Mentor, and Mentor Leader.



CAROLINE LITTLE

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Caroline Little teaches science and engineering at Visitation School in Mendota Heights, Minnesota. She inspires her all-girl middle school classes to see the wonder in the world around them as they explore everything from the soil under their feet to the stardust in the sky. A lifelong learner, Caroline spent the first part of her educational journey teaching French and moderating the Experimental Vehicle Team, an internationally recognized engineering cocurricular.



JULISSA LLOSA

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Julissa Llosa is a founding teacher at Harvest Collegiate High School in New York City. Originally from Peru, she comes from a long lineage of teachers and explorers. Julissa is passionate about teaching climate justice, art, and compassion. Above all, she loves leading her students on overnight camping trips. At Harvest, she spearheads professional development on trauma-informed teaching, racial justice, and outdoor education.



RACHEL MAINERO

ROCHESTER, MICHIGAN

Rachel Mainero is an information literacy specialist at Rochester Community Schools in Rochester, Michigan. She collaborates with teachers to leverage technology as a tool to spark curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. A passionate advocate for student voice and choice, Rachel integrates storytelling and making into her library programs. As a 2020 National Geographic Explorer, she is working with immigrant-origin youth to create a magazine that shares their stories of migration. She believes storytelling has the power to connect us and transform our understanding of the world.



ALEJANDRA MARTINEZ

EAGLE PASS, TEXAS

Alejandra Martinez has taught seventh-grade science for 15 years in Eagle Pass, Texas, a small town on the Mexican border. She is a National Geographic Certified Educator and strives to awaken the next generation of scientists and explorers within her students. Recently, Alejandra, along with class mascot, SloMo, spent five weeks on the North Slope of Alaska as a PolarTREC educator learning about the effect of climate change on tundra vegetation.



JESSICA MAURITZEN

RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS

Jessica Mauritzen is a National Board-certified Spanish teacher at Riverside Brookfield High School in Riverside, Illinois. In the classroom, she teaches through an Organic World Language approach where students participate in an immersive and interactive learning experience. Jessica is also a WE Schools teacher who explores the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals alongside service learning, with the intention that every student sees their power in becoming changemakers.



KATIE MAURO

NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT

Katie Mauro is an elementary school library media specialist and technology leader at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. She has a passion for exploring our world and creates inquiry-driven lessons that allow her students the opportunity to become environmental stewards. Katie aspires to empower her students to collaborate, problem solve, and take action on global issues. Recently, she has developed a love for scientific diving and conservation biology.



ROBBY MAY

LAVALE, MARYLAND

Robby May, a son of rural Appalachia, has an extensive background in K-12 education, serving for 13 years teaching middle and high school as a Nationally Board Certified social studies facilitator of learning experiences. He is passionate about fighting for social justice and being a co-learner with his students to help them become change agents in the world. Today he serves as the Advanced Life Support faculty coordinator for the University of Maryland, supervising the ALS faculty for the University, scheduling and teaching classes for paramedics throughout the state, and developing curricula for ALS courses. He has served in Emergency Medical Services since he was 16 years old, first as an EMT and then as a paramedic.



JUSTIN MOODIE

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Justin Moodie teaches photography at Oceanside High School in San Diego, where he also leads the Arts, Digital Media, and Design Academy for Career and Technical Education. He creates authentic learning experiences for students, enabling them to work for real clients through their photography assignments. A Nationally Board Certified teacher, Justin also taught in Mexico City and spent a summer in China with the Fulbright-Hays Program.



SONIA MYERS

EL GRANADA, CALIFORNIA

Sonia Myers is an advocate for environmental literacy and sustainable education. She completed the Science and Environment Teacher Fellowship and the Clean Energy Teacher Fellowship through the San Mateo Environmental Literacy and Sustainability Initiative, and was recognized as a standout leader in environmental and sustainable education through the One Planet Schools Challenge. Sonia also writes fiction novels for middle readers to promote environmental literacy. She believes that education is our greatest tool to act individually and collectively to affect positive change for our present and future communities.



KARINA NEW

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Karina New is an educator, artist, and nature enthusiast based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. She finds her inspiration from hiking and exploring the mountains and rainforests of the west coast. Her fifth and sixth grade students are taught to challenge themselves and embrace their natural curiosity. Karina brings a diverse range of hands-on learning tasks to her class, from engineering challenges to community leadership. Karina's background in ecology and experience as an outdoor educator has her students spending time in nature every week. She believes that kids who are taught to love our natural spaces will grow to protect and conserve our planet.



VICKIE OBENCHAIN

MORAGA, CALIFORNIA

Vickie Obenchain teaches science and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) at The Saklan School in Moraga, California. She has made science her passion and her goal is for every student to fall in love with some area of science. She does that by creating a classroom where science is fun and interesting, and where being a nerd is awesome. Vickie connects what students are learning to their lives so that they find science exciting and empowering.



JULIE OLSON

MITCHELL, SOUTH DAKOTA

Julie Olson teaches STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) at Second Chance High School and biology at Mitchell High School in South Dakota. She is passionate about exciting and engaging her students in real-world investigations. Julie wants them to ask questions and solve problems, such as food insecurity and water quality, using cross-curricular applications. It is not uncommon for her to develop new courses based on the needs of her students and the world.



JORGE PACHECO, JR.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Jorge Pacheco, Jr. was born and raised in San Jose, California, and has been an elementary and middle school teacher in the Bay Area since graduating from UC Berkeley in 2013. As an ethnic studies teacher and activist, he is passionate about decolonizing schooling and bringing Indigenous values into education and curriculum. Jorge is also the president of both the California Latino School Boards Association and the Oak Grove School District Board of Education.



ZANA POUNCEY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Zana Pouncey is the school programs coordinator at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. She leads educational programs for K-12 students in Title I schools, conducting interactive STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) activities focused on environmental literacy. Zana's passion is connecting kids with nature and empowering them to forge healthy lifestyles for themselves and for the planet.



KELLY PREHEIM

ARMOUR, SOUTH DAKOTA

Kelly Preheim is a kindergarten teacher in Armour, South Dakota. She incorporates birds and nature into her curriculum through transdisciplinary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) teaching. Kelly encourages children to be curious explorers and stewards of their environment. Kelly also leads an afterschool bird club for elementary students, gives bird presentations for all ages, writes articles about birds, and participates in citizen science. Kelly was a 2018 recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching.



ALI PRESSEL

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Ali Pressel is an environmental science teacher in a career academy program at Creekside High School in St. Augustine, Florida, where she pairs project-based learning and GIS mapping technologies with community partnerships. Ali engages students in authentic outdoor field studies to help them become global citizens. Her passion is to foster a love for nature, ensuring students connect their own human stories to the natural world, make a difference in their communities, and always be inquisitive lifelong learners.



JESSICA RADEK

PARK RIDGE, ILLINOIS

Jessica Radek is an instructional technology coach at Eugene Field Elementary School in Park Ridge, Illinois. She enjoys working with both teachers and students to ignite new passions and interests and encourage lifelong learning. As a former environmental educator and someone who is passionate about both nature and technology, Jessica aims to find innovative pathways to empower and inspire students and help them become global citizens.



DEREK RATCHFORD

SPRINGDALE, ARKANSAS

Derek Ratchford is the EAST (education accelerated by service and technology) facilitator at Sonora Middle School in Springdale, Arkansas. Through EAST, he empowers students to analyze real problems in their community and attack them head-on with innovative thinking and advanced technology. Derek enjoys connecting students to the world and seeing them rise above their hardships to truly make an impact on the issues they care about most.



BRITTANEE ROLLE

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Brittaneé Rolle teaches English at Butler College Prep on the South Side of Chicago. She currently coaches a spoken word team that competes in one of the largest poetry festivals in the country. She believes that teaching creative writing to her students helps them dance toward their liberation. Brittaneé's hope is that one day the South Side of Chicago will be known for its young talented writers.



GABRIEL-PHILIP SANTOS

CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

Gabriel-Philip Santos is a paleontologist and educator at the Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology in Claremont, California. As an educator, his goal is to help his audiences make meaningful connections to science in their everyday lives and interests and ensure that education is both equitable and accessible. Through projects like the Cosplay for Science initiative, Gabriel enjoys using immersive storytelling, art, and pop culture in his work to help others develop critical thinking skills.



CHRISTIAN SCOTT

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Christian Scott lives and teaches in Boston. A middle school educator, he teaches world history, geography, and civics. Christian is passionate about bringing the arts and technology skills into his social studies curriculum. As a lover of travel, culture, and museums, he is often found leading his students on field trips around the city. Christian is a National Geographic Certified Educator and mentor, attended the 2019 National Geographic Summer Institute, and coordinated his school's National Geographic GeoBee.



CHERYL SHEFFIELD

NEW LISKEARD, ONTARIO

Cheryl Sheffield is a special education resource teacher from New Liskeard, Ontario, Canada. She is a National Geographic Certified Educator Mentor and Facilitator, and views teaching, travel, and storytelling as pathways to encourage others to become more engaged in global issues, environmental concerns, and conservation efforts. Cheryl has facilitated professional development for teachers around the world, and inspires teachers, students, and others to “be the change.” Cheryl will be heading into an administration leadership role in the near future.



ANDREA SMOLA

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Educator, explorer, and nature enthusiast Andrea Smola is an elementary school teacher at Avonmore School in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Andrea uses the inquiry process and a concept-based learning approach to build curiosity and discovery in her classroom. She enjoys traveling abroad to explore our rich natural world and appreciates human diversity and making global friendships. Andrea wants her students to develop their individualism, find their passions, and discover who they are as they enjoy authentic experiences in learning.



CHRISTINA TORRES

HONOLULU, HAWAII

Christina Torres is an eighth-grade English teacher at Punahou School in Honolulu. She is passionate about exploring issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice with students. When she is not teaching, Christina works with pre-service teachers, writes for publications such as *Education Week*, *ASCD*, and *Teaching Tolerance*, and loves running. She strives to help her students and other teachers question current systems and explore how they can be changemakers.



BEN WALKER

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Ben Walker is a seventh-grade integrated science teacher at Romig Middle School in Anchorage, Alaska. He wants his students to apply their learning to local and global issues and immerse themselves in the content and processes of science and engineering. Ben earned National Board Certification and was named Alaska's 2018 Teacher of the Year.



JARAUX WASHINGTON

TAMPA, FLORIDA

Jaraux Washington taught science for 16 years and is passionate about empowering, equipping, and inspiring the next generation to identify, explore, and solve problems within their communities and abroad. Jaraux is a National Geographic Certified Educator and is currently the regional manager of EmpowerED.



SUSAN WOLFE

BOISE, IDAHO

Susan Wolfe, a specialist in gifted and talented education, teaches a self-contained multigrade classroom of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students in a Title I school in Boise, Idaho. Through inquiry, project-based learning, community partnership, and collaboration, her students apply a curiosity-driven, geographic perspective to solve real-world problems. An award-winning educator, Susan has shared her standards-based curriculum development processes with local, state, and national audiences, guiding educators to develop their own high-quality curricula.