

URBAN TEACHER ACADEMY

Fact Sheet



The Urban Teacher Academy (UTA) is an excellent long-term recruitment strategy to increase the pool of candidates interested in becoming teachers. The UTA is designed as a two-week, intensive summer program targeted for high school juniors. The first UTA in New Jersey began in 2006 at The College of New Jersey. Today, as part of the work of the Center for Future Educators at TCNJ, the original UTA model has been replicated at five universities across New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University, William Paterson University, Kean University, Rider University, and Rowan University.



Participating students experience learning as individuals and as productive citizens as they examine new concepts and ideas. Students also explore the teaching profession as they are guided through issues pertinent to urban education and the functions of schools. Additionally, students experience the classroom as they become acquainted with teachers and teaching on a personal and professional level. Working in small groups, students plan and teach mini-lessons to urban rim elementary school children. Each participant is required to complete assignments, keep a portfolio, and write a summary report of his/her experiences in the Urban Teacher Academy.



Fifty-three juniors representing over 30 area high schools were selected for the 2012 UTA. Admission is based on a minimum GPA of a 2.8 on a 4.0 scale, essays, and teacher recommendations. The 2012 UTA was held from July 23—August 3, 2012, at The College of New Jersey.

Program Facts

In 2012, the UTA recruited 52 high school juniors who are aspiring teachers from over 30 high schools across the state. Nearly 300 students have participated in the UTA program at TCNJ since 2006.

Graduates of the program have gone on to become NJFEA state officers, student NJEA officers, and many have completed undergraduate and even graduate programs in teacher education.



"I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, but I was not sure where I wanted to teach. The [UTA] program opened my eyes to a new area where I could teach: inner cities."

*—Lillian Ruffo, 2006 UTA Student
2011 TCNJ Education Graduate
2012 Columbia University Graduate*

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The Center for Future Educators (CFE) at The College of New Jersey was established in 2010 to inspire, encourage, and recruit high school and middle school students who are considering teaching as a future career. CFE especially seeks future educators interested in teaching in high shortage subjects such as math, science, technology, and ESL. CFE also seeks future teachers for high poverty, hard-to-staff schools, as well as students who represent diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. CFE believes that New Jersey's students are entitled to have the best, highly trained teachers to promote academic progress and social skill development. CFE works collaboratively with New Jersey's high schools and middle schools, colleges and universities, corporate, governmental, and community agencies to develop an exemplary model of future teacher recruitment. CFE is funded by the New Jersey Education Association.

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Here's what past participants have said...

"UTA has truly positively made an impact in my life. I want to give back to the community whenever I can. This has made me want to be a teacher more than ever. Thank you, Mr. Fieber and the rest of the staff for such an AMAZING opportunity!!!" —*Christina Mastroianni, Hopewell Valley Central High School*

"An awesome program to find out truly where your heart is! From Day 1 to Day 10, everyday my life changed in a different aspect from every trip, discussion, or speaker...!" —*Shabrea Chambers, Trenton Central HS*

"The Urban Teacher Academy is a multi-perspective program where you learn so much about teaching as a profession.... If your goal is to change the world and the lives of children, then this is a great place to start." —*Amanda Ewing, Hunterdon Central Regional HS*

"This experience is truly life changing and fulfilling. Being in this program, I was able to figure out exactly what I want to do in the future." —*Danielle Farmer, Burlington County Institute of Technology*

"The Urban Teacher Academy was one of my favorite experiences I've had in life. It helped me take that step into what career I plan to pursue and it couldn't have been a better career for me. I want to be a middle school teacher and make a difference and UTA helped me discover it." —*Yaritza Corado, Trenton Central HS*

"The Urban Teacher Academy is an eye-opener to the true meaning of teaching. It gives you the hands-on experience you need and allows you to see for yourself what teaching is really like, giving you the opportunity to discover if this is truly for you." —*Carolina Echeverri, West Windsor-Plainsboro HS South*

"It [the UTA] actually changes your life. You make amazing friends, talk to fantastic people, learn a boat load, and figure out if teaching is the right path for you. I have never been more sure than I am after these two weeks that teaching is the path for me." —*Alexandra Falcone, Hopewell Valley Central HS*

"The UTA program is an outstanding way to get insight into the teaching profession, make new friends, and truly learn what urban teaching is all about." —*Kate Hallinger, Hopewell Valley Central HS*

"My eyes were opened to not only the challenges that urban students face, but also the rewards that would come from teaching in that type of setting. This program has made me not only want to make a difference as an urban teacher, but also it has made me believe that I can." —*Imani Evans, Ewing HS*

"When you enter the Urban Teacher Academy you are interested in teaching but when you leave, you are absolutely sure that you want to pursue this career. I have learned so much and it was a life changing experience." —*Dana Castronovo, Montgomery HS*

"The Urban Teacher Academy is an excellent program that allows students to learn more about themselves and the different areas to teach in. It will help a student define his or her passion to the area of teaching where he or she can make the greatest difference in the life of a student." —*Nicole Profetto, Hopewell Valley Central HS*

"The Urban Teacher Academy is a truly enriching experience for those who look to pursue a career in education. It's a great way to be informed about your future career, while interacting with others who share your passion." —*Daniel Kaplan, Ewing High School*

"The [UTA] was the first experience I have had that provided an intensive hands-on look at not only the teaching profession but the life of a teacher." —*Philip Gould, Ewing HS*

"This program is truly life changing. I am walking away not only as a well prepared future teacher but also as a better informed present student." —*Sara Rosenthal, West Windsor-Plainsboro HS North*

"The Urban Teacher Academy is one of the most valuable experiences an aspiring teacher can have. They receive knowledge and hands on experiences that can't be found anywhere else." —*Tara Kennette, Robbinsville HS*

"This program will prepare future teachers to handle all the challenges and joys of teaching in an urban setting. The experiences you will take away will be life changing on your path to becoming a teacher." —*Nicole Paparella, Nottingham HS*

