

Great Teachers
and Leaders
are the Heart of
Great Schools

Annual Newsletter

Full Circle: An Alum's Journey from New Teacher to Mentor Teacher

By Monica Nachemja-Bunton

LISA DAWN GLIDEWELL (TIP '20, MEd '23) knew for a long time that she wanted to be a first grade teacher. As a stay at home mom caring for her family, it wasn't until her own kids started school that she entered the classroom as a paraeducator. Eventually, with the support of her family, she earned her teaching license by completing UVEI's Teacher Intern Program, and she is now in her 5th year teaching first grade at the Grantham Village School in New Hampshire.

As a teacher intern and then a new teacher, Lisa dawn was challenged by the uncertainty of the profession but supported by mentors and colleagues. With teaching, "You don't always know the full picture or what exactly the whole structure is going to look like. I learned to look at the challenge and do the part I knew." Her advice to others? "Hang in there and get support, lean on people wherever you can, take care of your body and spirit." And of course "Rest your voice on weekends!"

Lisa dawn entered the profession at the height of the pandemic, which was hard. Early in her career she returned to UVEI for her master's degree, joining a cohort of teachers from different schools and grade levels. From sharing feedback on their teaching of a new unit, to being thought partners on their action research, Lisa dawn recognized that they were all experiencing

similar challenges and had a lot to offer each other. "Everyone leans on each other, and we are all better when we put all our brains in the box together."

With four years under her belt, Lisa dawn says "I'm realizing that I am that older woman that I used to be so grateful for, who had already gone through it." This past fall, she came full circle to mentor a current UVEI intern. "I know UVEI and I knew I could help her trust the process. I could create a safe space for her to develop her own teaching style." She also witnessed a common phenomenon: that taking time for reflection gives you an opportunity to grow! "Having an intern really elevated my practice. I wanted her to see what teachers should be doing."

Lisa dawn continues to balance the challenges of teaching with the gifts of support around her. She is now training to be a reading specialist and looks forward to collaboration in this area. She also stays grounded in the needs of her school community. As those needs have increased over the years, she notes that this puts stress on teachers but also validates her choice to be in the classroom.

"Every single day I'm making a difference. We are part of the family support system. When I'm tired and things are hard, I remember that and know this job is exactly what I'm supposed to be doing."



Top, Lisa dawn with students during her internship at Simonds Elementary in Warner, NH, and bottom, in her classroom at Grantham Village School.

MEd Degrees at UVEI



Graduate degree pathways in teaching, teacher leadership, school leadership, literacy teaching, and literacy leadership



Candidates advance and deepen their skills in their focus area, and take action to solve practical problems in their schools



Designed for working educators who want to advance their practice

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Morrison, *Chair*
Tom Debalsi, *Vice-Chair*
Anne Hill, *Secretary*
Robert Webber, *Treasurer*
Jenny Bradley, '21
Thomas Candon
Philip J. Hanlon
Michael Livingston
Leah Wheelan, '18
Kristin M. Wilson

EMERITI

Barbara Ragle Barnes (1923-2018)
Carolyn M. Clinton
Peter Coburn (1942-2020)
Cornelius C. Rose

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jacqueline Allen
Joanna Carr
Michael Harris
Joan Holcombe
Rebecca Holcombe '91
Jamie Kinnarney
Louisa Moats, EdD
James Nourse
Jackie Richter-Menge
Anne Segal
John (Jed) Williamson

STAFF AND PROGRAM FACULTY

- R Page Tompkins, EdD, *President*
- Andrea Feid, *Financial and Operations Manager*
- Elijah Hawkes, MSED, *Director of School Leadership Program*
- Kristen Liu, MSED, *Adjunct Faculty*
- Marie McCormick, '07 *Registrar and Operations Associate*
- Monica Nachemja-Bunton, MS, *Program Faculty*
- Adam Norwood, EdD, *Coordinator, Barnes Initiative for Collaborative Learning*
- Audrey Richardson, PhD, *Literacy Program Coordinator*
- Christopher Ward, PhD, *Academic Dean, Coordinator of Graduate Studies*

Partnering With Schools & Educators

FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS, a core part of UVEI's mission has been to partner closely with schools to develop their teachers and leaders. One of the most important ways we do this is by listening and responding to the needs our partner schools express.

Recently, we've received consistent feedback that schools in Vermont and New Hampshire are in critical need of qualified and committed educators. Financial pressures on schools, the youth mental health crisis, housing shortages, and lack of child care have combined to make it harder than ever to recruit teachers. Christine Bourne, Superintendent of Windsor Southeast, says, "Hiring and retaining teachers has become an increasingly challenging task in recent years. There have been instances where we received no applications for open positions."

This is where UVEI's scholarship fund comes in. Last year, through our generous community of donors, we provided scholarships to 11 candidates in our Teacher Intern Program who are committed to working with high-needs schools, all of whom are now teaching. One example is Alissa Hebert, a scholarship recipient from Christine's district, who was a paraeducator before becoming a teacher through UVEI. Alissa notes that this is a path that many others like her couldn't access without support. Christine says, "We are deeply grateful to partner with UVEI in our 'Grow Our Own' initiative, allowing us to cultivate and support future teachers from within our own community."

Another area of need we have heard from our partners is help connecting



Graduating teacher candidates Kaitlyn Veracka, Lianna Dunten, and Alissa Hebert presented their unit designs at UVEI's Celebration of Learning in June 2024.

our alumni to open job opportunities. To respond, UVEI launched an alumni-focused jobs board. Our goal was to communicate district needs to our network of over 1000 alumni and partner educators, **while highlighting UVEI alumni who are working in that school.** We have already posted over 30 jobs, with more being added every day. Check it out at uvei.edu/job-postings-for-educators/!

You'll find other examples throughout this newsletter of UVEI's partnerships with educators and schools. Educators are essential to great schools and positive student outcomes, and we are privileged to work with these dedicated individuals.



Sincerely,

R PAGE TOMPKINS, PRESIDENT

Learn More

- 603-678-4888
- www.uvei.edu
- staff@uvei.edu

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- [UVEIconnect](#)
- [company/uvei](#)
- [UVEIconnect](#)
- [uppervalleyeducatorsinstitute](#)

Teacher Intern Program at UVEI



A teacher licensure program that incorporates experiential learning, strong mentoring and coaching, and support from fellow learners in a cohort model



Designed for aspiring teachers and career changers, working teachers, and paraprofessionals



Candidates develop and deepen their skills in lesson planning and assessment, engaging students, and building positive classroom environments



Audrey Richardson is the coordinator of the Literacy Educators Program.

UVEI Literacy Coordinator is a Thinking Partner for Educators

by Monica Nachemja-Bunton

The UVEI Literacy Educators Program supports teachers who want to be experts and teacher leaders in literacy. Audrey Richardson, the Literacy Educators program coordinator, brings experience and commitment to this work. Working within the UVEI Literacy program, Audrey delights in the opportunity to work with committed educators with a passion for teaching learners to read, write and think.

Partnerships for Literacy and Learning.

Audrey says that the “literacy bug” hit her when she became a literacy interventionist. “This role allowed me to see so much more inequities and richness in kids’ lives that we often don’t get to see because we are working in a larger scope.” She formed deep relationships with students bringing out their stories and experiences while

“I’m a thinking partner. I have some ideas and resources, but it’s really about partnering. It’s about facilitating the collaboration and reflection that are at the core of educator efficacy.”

— AUDREY RICHARDSON

Audrey came to UVEI after transitioning out of a decades-long public school career – as a high school English and ELA teacher, an interventionist, and instructional literacy coach and MTSS coordinator, primarily at Woodstock Union High School – to work with UVEI literacy candidates on advancing their literacy instruction, intervention, and leadership skills. Audrey is also a graduate literacy coordinator and lecturer for the University of Vermont and as the NEXIS project coordinator for

pushing their literacy learning forward.

This is where she felt the most herself, and where her definition of literacy, and equity in literacy, really began to take hold. Later, becoming a literacy coach, the richness of the literacy world expanded even further. In coaching educators, she points out that she’s not there to solve the problem or to do it for them, but rather to work with them.

“I’m a thinking partner. I have some ideas and resources, but it’s really about partnering. It’s about facilitating the

Literacy Educators Program at UVEI



A literacy specialist licensure program that incorporates experiential learning, strong mentoring and coaching, and support from fellow learners in a cohort model



Designed for working educators with a special interest in literacy



Candidates advance and deepen their skills in literacy instruction, assessment, intervention, and leadership

collaboration and reflection that are at the core of educator efficacy.”

Audrey brings a passion to her literacy work, both at UVEI and with educators in the field. She admits that this work can be challenging. “Systems are complex, and humans are complex.” She approaches the challenges with flexibility and a commitment to deep partnerships. “I really like the messy phase, when it feels like we’re failing but really, this is the hinge point. It’s the fun part; when we are bringing people together to make systems more human-centered and functional.”

In her time at UVEI so far, Audrey has been inspired by the way in which the UVEI program makes space for working educators to gain and leverage their expertise. She has witnessed countless ways in which these educators breathe life into culturally responsive literacy pedagogy, literacy leadership and equitable access for all students in Vermont and New Hampshire.



Equity-Centered Deeper Learning Isn't Just for Students

By Adam Norwood, EdD

THIS YEAR'S BARNES INITIATIVE topic of inquiry is *Exploring Deeper Learning Throughout Vermont and New Hampshire*. For school leaders Sara Rose and Brian Boardman, who were part of last year's UVEI Principal Internship cohort and are now Barnes co-researchers, deeper learning is not just for kids: it's a central part of their own professional learning!

which seamlessly translates into my daily work and interactions on site." When asked about the potential impact this work might have on school communities, Brian reflects on what he learned as a principal candidate last year and how that work manifests itself in the process of school improvement, "I've learned how to apply the theoretical knowledge of

"It's been exciting to envision how scaling our research and action will shift the culture of schools, potentially leading to better student and teacher outcomes."

— BRIAN BOARDMAN

Brian, PIP/MEd'24, assistant principal of Williamstown Middle and High School (VT), joined the project with a clear mission: to develop systems that support marginalized populations while fostering creativity and collaboration among educators. He believes every student deserves the opportunity to be their authentic self, and our responsibility, as educators, is to create systems that uphold this commitment to equity. Reflecting on his experience, Brian shared, "The time spent together offers a valuable mental reset and renewed motivation,

how schools improve. It's been exciting to envision how scaling our research and action will shift the culture of schools, potentially leading to better student and teacher outcomes."

Sara, PIP'24/MEd'25, has a passion for deeper learning that stems from her years of teaching science in Vermont, where she witnessed its transformative power firsthand. She described her excitement about the collaborative aspect of the Barnes Initiative. "The members of our group all bring different experiences and expertise," Sara noted.

"Our shared purpose makes us a great team." Additionally, Sara draws upon her experiences as both a PIP and MEd candidate to guide her work in this project, "I am also developing a better sense of the diagnose-and-design process that can drive change in our schools."

For educators to design equity-centered deeper learning experiences for their students, they must experience it for themselves. Through authentic job-embedded experiences in the Principal Internship and MEd degree programs, and collaborative research with colleagues in The Barnes Initiative, Sara and Brian have embarked on their own deeper learning journey. Moving forward, through the networking and design development of the Barnes Initiative, their findings will be tuned and shared with the wider community as we all work to improve student outcomes.



The Barnes Cohort 2025.
Brian Boardman (PIP/MEd '24)
and Sara Rose (PIP '24/MEd '25)
are on the right.

Principal Intern Program at UVEI



A principal licensure program that incorporates experiential learning, strong mentoring and coaching, and support from fellow learners in a cohort model



Designed for educators in a variety of leadership roles



Candidates develop and deepen skills in school leadership and management, teacher learning, curricular leadership and school climate

Alumni News

Gerlisa Garrett, MEd & Barnes Initiative '21, is a sixth grade science and ELA teacher at Stowe Middle School in VT, where she has brought nature- and place-based learning to her science classes. Last spring, Gerlisa piloted a nature-based unit where she held every class outside, and this year she is adding monthly outdoor days. She did this work in conjunction with Shelburne Farms' programming for educators. Read about it at shelburnefarms.org (search for Gerlisa).



Peter Ginsbury, TIP '10, is in his 11th year at the Jackson Hole Community School in Jackson, WY. Peter teaches 9th and 12th history and runs the fall backpacking orientation program at the school.

Colby Hescock, PIP '21 & MEd '22, has recently been named the next assistant principal of Rutland Town School in Rutland, VT. Colby has taught math at Rutland Town for the past nine years, and will move into his new role this summer.



Kevin Hicks, PIP & MEd '23, is in his second year as principal in the Alstead Attendance Area in NH, where he previously taught for 28 years. In this role he is responsible for four different schools! One of his priorities has been incorporating K-4 interventionists into the schools, and they are already seeing growth as a result of the targeted interventions. Kevin says he feels very fortunate to have gained knowledge and leadership skills from both UVEI and from his current colleagues.



Alexis Nelson Schleicher (above), TIP '10, is the humanities teacher at New England School of the Arts (NESA). NESA serves grades 6-12 and fosters collaboration, expression, and personal growth through a STEAM-centered, arts-integrated curriculum. In her first year at NESA, she has been a part of the inaugural team that has established a nurturing environment for students and staff alike while employing a positive growth mindset.

Violet Nichols, PIP, C&A & MEd '18, has been the superintendent of the South Burlington School District since 2022. In partnership with students, staff, and the community, she has implemented cost and energy savings measures and has worked to support mental health and student learning. She also opened a therapeutic alternative program and expanded multilingual supports.



Christine Osgood, TIP '12, is a special educator at Windsor School in Windsor VT, and is completing her 12th year in the district. Christine is also in the process of completing a certificate program in

neurodiversity and inclusion through Vermont Higher Education Collaborative.

Deb Setterlund, PIP '23, and **Alexis Leclair**, PIP & MEd '23, have been working together at South School in Londonderry, NH where Deb serves as the principal and Alexis is the SPED director. Recent school-wide practice improvements have resulted in a dramatic improvement in state testing scores, and the school just won the NH EDies Elementary School of Excellence Award.

Caty Sutton, PIP/C&A '17, was recently appointed superintendent of the Hartford School District in VT, after having served as secondary curriculum director, then interim superintendent, in the district.

Jackie Tolman, PIP '14, has been named as the next superintendent of the Orleans Central Supervisory Union in VT. Since completing UVEI, Jackie has held various leadership positions in Vermont districts as principal, director of curriculum, and acting superintendent.

Aron Tomlinson, PIP '23, is director of workforce development at the Hartford Area Career & Technology Center. He has also been appointed to a 3-year term on the State of Vermont Workforce Development Board as a champion for the Underserved Groups/Youth sector.



Congratulations!

Congrats to the licensure program alumni who have earned MEd degrees through UVEI this year.

- Barbara Barton, TIP '08
- Keegan Harris, TIP '14
- Kim McFarland, TIP '15
- Dan Thomas, TIP '18
- Carrie Fitz, TIP '21
- Cecile Smith, TIP '22
- Anna Fuller, Literacy '23
- Karen Dyer, TIP '23
- Hallie Grossman, TIP '23
- Fabiola Hammond, TIP '23
- Ann McCarthy, TIP '23
- Nathaniel Schwartz, TIP '23
- Brian Boardman, PIP '24
- Jillian Cook, PIP '24
- Heather Win, PIP '24



Cora Churchill, TIP '23, is in her second year of teaching first grade at Elm Hill School in Springfield, VT, where she was a paraeducator, and then an intern, for three years. "Something I feel pretty proud of is that I'm patient with myself and with my students, which comes from a good community and from my time at UVEI," she says. Reflecting on her career overall, she says that relationships are a priority. "If I can make a welcoming environment where kids feel safe and cared about, then I know I'm having an impact." To read more about her first year, go to uvei.edu and search for "Churchill."



Upper Valley
Educators Institute

194 Dartmouth College Hwy.
Lebanon, NH 03766

Annual Newsletter Enclosed!



Upper Valley
Educators Institute



Partnering with schools through
licensure programs, degree programs,
and professional education



Donate online
to support
teacher
scholarships

