



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Give a “LIFT” to Aspiring Marquette Educators

Marquette University prides itself on developing extraordinary teachers who will make a significant difference in the classroom and the world. In recent years, though, for a variety of reasons, including the public devaluing of teaching as a profession, we have experienced a dramatic decline in young people entering the field. Our College of Education has witnessed this shift firsthand: from 2011 to 2016, our incoming freshman class of Education majors has dropped by fully 60%. Enrollments are at an all-time low, and by a notable margin.

The looming negative impact of this trend on generations of our state’s school children and their families figures to be nothing short of profound, especially if the decline continues. The exceptionally talented teachers we are well known for developing here deeply touch the lives of tens of thousands of school children over the course of their careers. When fewer Marquette teachers inhabit classrooms, schools and children suffer, because our graduates exit our programs as master teachers. They are true game changers, and principals and superintendents will tell you as much.

A significant challenge in recruiting teachers to the profession is financial. College of Education students pay the same tuition as those in other Marquette colleges who will graduate with the promise of significantly greater compensation. And, many of the parents of our Education majors find themselves sacrificing a great deal in order for their children to complete their rigorous training with us.

Adding to the challenge and need, while our school-aged population is becoming increasingly more diverse, just the opposite is happening with the teaching workforce. Consequently, fewer and fewer African American and Hispanic children will have role models of their own to admire and emulate. Making matters worse, aspiring teachers of color often require more financial help.

And this threat to the teacher pipeline is happening at a time when the state can expect to educate some 10,000 more children by the year 2020.

Ironically, opportunities for employment as teachers have never been better. Just as the number of new teachers is rapidly dwindling, an aging workforce of veteran teachers are now exiting the profession at historic rates. As a result, our P-12 schools must soon weather a perfect storm of supply and demand, one that is tracking toward an acute shortage of high quality teachers at best and a genuine crisis at worst. The swath the storm is cutting carries major implications not only for student achievement, but also educational costs, and the long-term economic well-being of our region and state.

With the LIFT Scholarship Program, an acronym for “*Lasting Investments in the Future of Teaching*,” we hope to incentivize enrollment in our teacher education programs by offering notably more financial assistance. These new sources of support will make our students’ emergence as teachers more affordable and help them, along with their families, reduce the notable debt load that most have after completing their world class preparation with us.

Please consider giving our Marquette University Education majors, the profession of teaching, and our school children and their families, the LIFT they all deserve.