



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2012

## Growing Our Own

Well-Educated New Mexico Teachers=Well-Educated New Mexico Children=Well-Educated Citizens and Workforce



**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®  
NEW MEXICO**

(Teacher Education And Compensation Helps)

A Project of the New Mexico Association  
for the Education of Young Children (NMAEYC)

*T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® New Mexico is a licensed  
program of Child Care Services Association  
of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.*

## Why T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEW MEXICO?

T.E.A.C.H. plays a vital role in improving the quality of early care and education for New Mexico's youngest children. The first years of life are when young people's brains are growing fastest, and these children deserve our best teachers and caregivers. Patterns of lifelong learning created in the early years — in cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains— last a lifetime.

Most early childhood teachers in New Mexico haven't had the opportunity to study child development and early learning formally. Most are paid low wages. T.E.A.C.H. helps give them the opportunity to attend college and provides scholarship support and financial incentives to make it possible.

T.E.A.C.H. is designed for teachers already working in early care and education centers, family child care homes, Head Start centers and NM PreK sites. It helps teachers throughout New Mexico to get degrees - Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's - in early childhood education WHILE they are working.

The new knowledge is put into practice immediately, while teachers are able to continue working in their programs with the children and families they know. In cooperation with a teacher's employer, T.E.A.C.H. offers tuition and textbook support, travel stipends, a bonus

upon completion of each one year contract and paid release time from work.

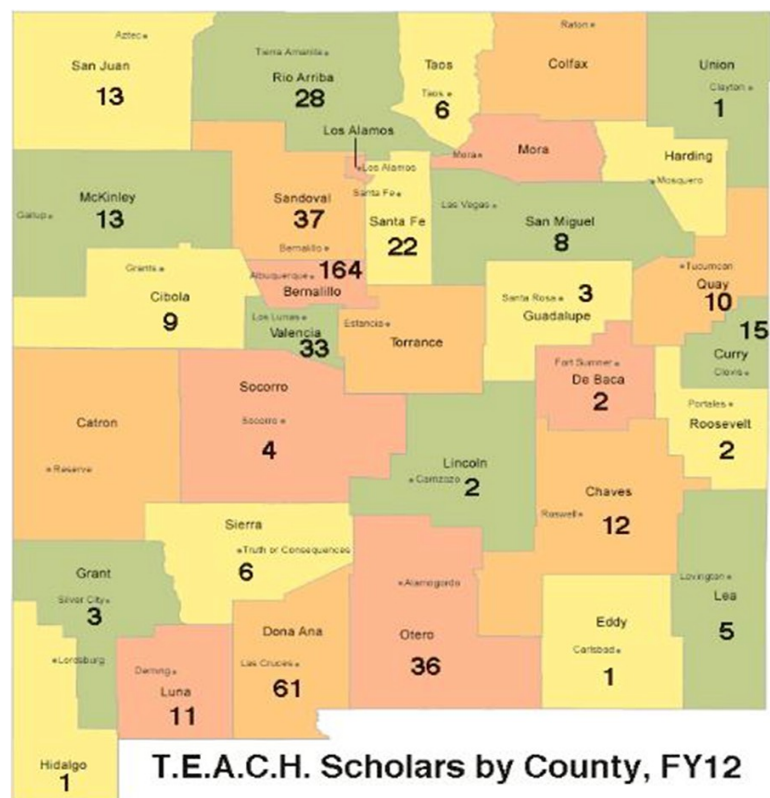
T.E.A.C.H. works with the AIM HIGH program, the STARS quality rating system, NM PreK, and other statewide efforts to boost overall quality of care and education for New Mexico's most vulnerable children.

New Mexico is one of 23 states that offer T.E.A.C.H. scholarships

through a national program operated by Child Care Services Association in Chapel Hill, N.C., where T.E.A.C.H. began.

National data, collected over the last 18 years, show that T.E.A.C.H. scholarships increase teacher education, boost teacher compensation and reduce teacher turnover. Similar data for T.E.A.C.H. results in New Mexico are presented in this brochure.

### Number of scholarship recipients per county



T.E.A.C.H. Scholars by County, FY12

### T.E.A.C.H. Staff

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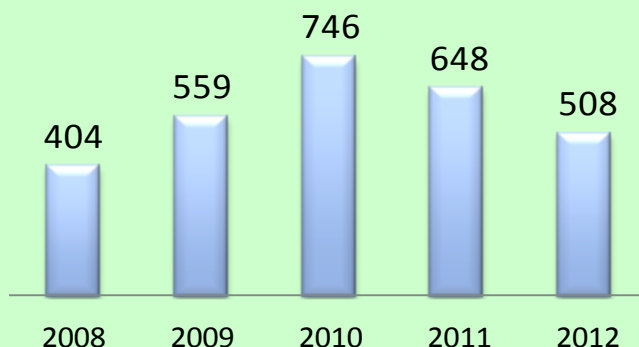


# T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Components...and Results

## 1. Scholarship

T.E.A.C.H. offers financial support to pay for classes, books, and travel, as well as paid release time from work. The number of scholarships was increasing each year until the recession reduced state funds available to T.E.A.C.H.

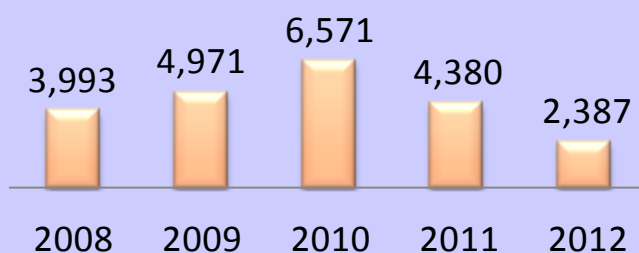
### 1. Number of Scholars



## 2. Education

T.E.A.C.H. makes it possible for teachers to gain knowledge about child development and early learning in college classes. They can put their new knowledge and skills into effect in their classrooms immediately.

### 2. Number of Credit Hours Completed



## 3. Compensation

T.E.A.C.H. rewards teachers with a bonus upon completion of each contract, encourages employers to increase pay for employees who achieve more education, and works to get higher compensation and greater respect for early childhood teachers through its advocacy efforts.

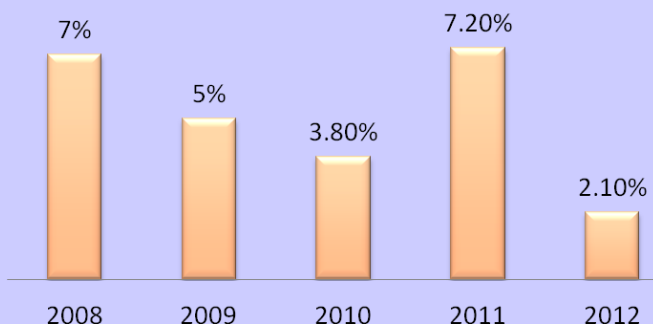
### 3. Increase in Pay



## 4. Commitment

T.E.A.C.H. expects scholars to commit themselves to continuing to work at the programs sponsoring their scholarships and with the families and children with whom they are connected. Teacher turnover nationwide is as high as 30 to 40 percent in early childhood programs because of low pay.

### 4. Turnover Percentage



## T.E.A.C.H. Benefits NM PreK Program Children, Teachers

Monessa Zamora is not in her NM PreK room this particular day at The Children's Garden in Las Cruces. She is in a three-year-olds room, helping out there. By the way the children respond to her you would think she was their regular teacher. She moves easily from reading a book surrounded by children to having a pretend dinner in the play kitchen area or talking about care for a baby doll.

She wasn't expecting to be an early care and education teacher, she said. "I didn't even consider this field until a person who knew me interviewed me.... I just have loved it ever since."



That person was Shannon Bracamonte, who worked at The Children's Garden and to whom Monessa is related. Initially, Monessa thought it would be a temporary job. "I got my foot in the door, and Shannon moved on afterward." Monessa has been at The Children's Garden for five years.

"I think probably my favorite thing (about being a teacher) is the children's ability to grow from day to day and what they teach me, like a different point of view, because they all come from different backgrounds."

Monessa has been taking college classes in Early Childhood Education with a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship, supported by The Children's Garden.

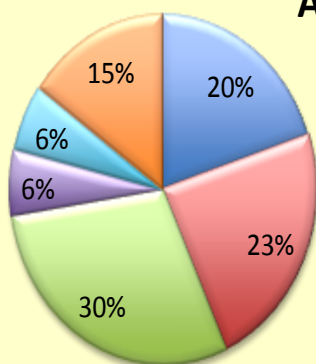
"I'm a junior now and need to do two or three classes and submit a portfolio to start my student teaching blocks," she said. "I think college classes are very, very helpful. I can use a lot of what I learn in the PreK classroom. ... They go hand in hand."

She said she recently took a multicultural education class, "and it was a real eye-opener," she said. It made her much more aware of cultural differences, and she even noticed different things about her own children. A single mom, Monessa has a daughter, 11, and a son, 5.

She enjoys being in the state-funded NM PreK classroom for 4-year-olds because she gets special training through the state for that job.

(cont. on p. 6)

### Auspices of T.E.A.C.H. Scholar Programs



- Head Start
- Independent Non-Profit
- Taxpaying
- Municipal
- Religious Sponsored
- Public School



T.E.A.C.H. scholar Amanda Olsen plays with infants at Alpha School in Las Cruces, NM.



## Infant/Toddler Teacher says, "Every Day is Something Different"

Julia Toro's early childhood journey began with an eye-opening experience as a high school student in her home city of Medellin, Colombia. Her teacher took a group of students into a low-income area of her city to visit a child care center. Julia was touched by the children she visited and the poverty she witnessed. "It made me very thankful for the good life I have. It made me interested in helping young children." This excursion planted the seed that is now flowering into her career.

Julia is an infant/toddler teacher at Learn and Play Child-care in Albuquerque. One recent day she was providing sharp observations of one of the three special-needs infants in her classroom to an early interventionist visiting the child (she typically has five or six infants to care for). She also was blowing bubbles with the infants, reading books to them, and playing outdoors. Watching the warm, caring, and attentive way Julia Toro interacts with her children, it's fun to imagine how far she has come—geographically and professionally—along her early childhood path.

Seven years ago Julia moved from Colombia to the United States with her mother. The move has been a challenge in some ways. "I still miss Colombia and feel homesick sometimes." Yet, she has become attached to the U.S. and comfortable with her life here.

Two years ago Julia began her work with young children and openly expresses excitement with the variety in her workday. "Every day is something different," Julia says, smiling, when asked what she likes about interacting with young children. "When you work at an office it is the same day after day. Here, you never get into a routine. Each day there is something new. A child is learning a new word. Another child is learning to walk." She continues, "Children are always thankful."

As a single mother, Julia says her job at Learn and Play has been a blessing. She is grateful to center owner Marlene McKittrick for hiring her when she was pregnant and for encouraging her son, Ethan, now 21 months old, to be enrolled at the center. It is important to Julia that she gets to spend her workday together with Ethan.

The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship Julia has just started will be a big help to her. She is grateful to T.E.A.C.H. for the financial support and encouragement to further her education.

Julia envisions monthly lunches with parents, teachers and children to foster greater participation of families with the center and its staff. "The first five years are the most im-



portant," she says and feels that children's development will benefit from more active involvement by the parents with the center.

Julia, who easily converses in English, is taking Early Childhood Education courses in Spanish and English. She is part of the bilingual cohort at Central New Mexico Community College and says it is an amazing program. The knowledge gained in her courses she is able to apply in her classroom to benefit her children. One of her courses highlighted the importance of making meals a special and fun activity for the children. She applied this dynamic to her classroom and found that it dramatically improved the eating habits of her children. One girl went from drinking only one ounce of milk per feeding up to five ounces as a result.

Julia says the work makes her happy: "I can really improve people's lives." The lessons she learns in college courses not only help her at Learn and Play but make her a better parent as well. "These classes teach you and open your eyes. They are not just for teachers but for anyone who is helping raise children."

## Monessa Zamora Story (continued from p. 4)

"In the last two years, they have really gotten in and trained us about early learning indicators," she said. NM PreK teachers - whether in community programs like The Children's Garden or in public school settings - must assess children in natural ways, as they play and do activities, on a set of early learning indicators to monitor progress.

Monessa said she likes doing parent trainings, too, and recently did a Learning Through Play training for parents. She also took part in a Celebrating Young Children Fair at Doña Ana Community College's Central Campus. The fair will take place again in April 2013. It is put on by an early childhood professionalism class at the college.

What is challenging for her about being a teacher?

"I think sometimes just remembering the children all have their different levels of ability and you have to individualize so they all get the maximum benefit from their time with you."



### "I am Here for the Children" says NM PreK Teacher

It's show and tell at Son Shine Learning Center in Albuquerque inside Julia Wolfe's NM PreK classroom. Princess wigs, superhero masks, talking stuffed animals, and other beloved items are being presented among her group of 4-year-olds.

Julia is like a conductor in this show and tell performance -- encouraging shy children to present their objects, opening up respectful space for each child to be heard, instilling confidence in her class by affirming their choices and engaging the 4-year-olds conversationally. Her passion, skill, and good energy make this a special occasion to observe.

And Julia is observing too. For the state-funded NM PreK program, Julia keeps careful documentation of 23 Essential Indicators (EI's) that chart a child's development throughout the year. On this particular day she is writing information in her notebook to assess verbal skills. She is documenting the exact sentences her children are using, looking at how many words are in each sentence. She is also looking to see if they are using connecting words.

This documentation helps Julia assess the unique talents and needs of her children and share that information with parents. It also helps her with the challenge of building a curriculum tailored to each child. "The most important step is form-

ing a good relationship. It takes time to earn a child's trust." This personal bond with each child allows Julia to craft a supportive, fun, and challenging learning environment.

In addition to being an educator, Julia is also a student at Central New Mexico Community College in the Early Childhood Education degree program. She has a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship through the NM PreK Program of the Children Youth and Families Department. "T.E.A.C.H. makes it possible for me to go to school."

Julia is one of 192 educators in NM PreK-funded classrooms who have T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, including 38 in public schools and 154 in community programs like hers.

She likes being around the educators in her cohort at CNM. "The people in your classes often have great ideas to share with you for your own classroom." The courses she takes have given her knowledge she applies at Son Shine. In a literacy course for example she was exposed to the word wheel--an activity for introducing rhyming words and the sounds of individual letters--and incorporated it into her curriculum.

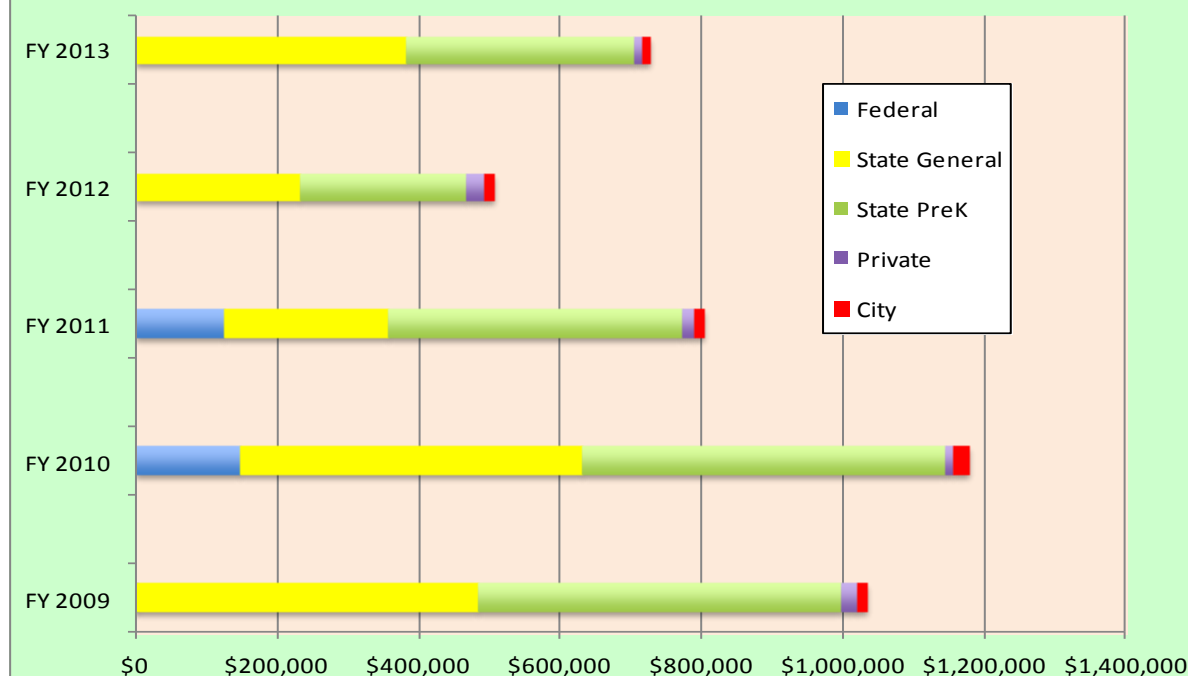
Julia enjoys knowing that she makes a difference. "I am here for the children. As long as I am making a difference in a child's life, that is what counts." One of her greatest rewards is having past students return to see her. "Sometimes I have 21-year-old former students of mine come back to visit me. I remember these students by name."



Britton Goodwin, a T.E.A.C.H. scholar paints with children at Alpha School in Las Cruces, NM.



## T.E.A.C.H. Funding Over the Years



### State Gets \$1.34 Value For Every \$1 Invested in T.E.A.C.H.

New Mexico has figured out a way to get more bang for its buck. Each dollar the state invested in T.E.A.C.H. in Fiscal Year 2012 attracted another 34-cent investment in developing the resource of New Mexico's early care and education teachers.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the state of New Mexico itself provided the core support for T.E.A.C.H. with a total of \$468,421 through the Children, Youth and Families Department. This was done through NM PreK and through another grant for educators in birth-to-five early care and education centers and family child care homes not connected with NM PreK. (The Public Education Department did not have a grant to T.E.A.C.H. for NM PreK in FY 2012, but resumed funding the scholarships in FY 2013.)

The state leveraged 34% in additional money because of the contributions private and public early childhood programs pay through their share of scholarships (\$90,221), payments for a portion of tuition and book costs by the scholars themselves (\$34,028), contributions by a pri-

vate foundation and donors (\$23,008) and allocations by municipal governments (\$11,903). Additionally, beyond the 34% in dollars, there is also the value of volunteer efforts by members of the NM Association of the Education of Young Children that are vital to the T.E.A.C.H. program.

Each dollar the state invested thus had the effect of a \$1.34 investment in improving the quality of Early Childhood Education through the further education of teachers, most of whom entered the field with little or no college education in child development and early learning and literacy.

The direct grants for T.E.A.C.H. reached a peak in FY 2010 with a total of \$1.2 million available. With resources at that level, the program was able to engage 746 early educators across the state in scholarships. Grants dropped in FY 2011 to \$805,000 and in FY 2012 to \$503,332 because of reduced state revenues due to the recession. The number of scholars dropped to 648 in FY 2011 and further to 505 in FY 2012. The extent of help each scholar got also was reduced, limiting how many classes

scholars could take with T.E.A.C.H.'s support, and reducing bonuses.

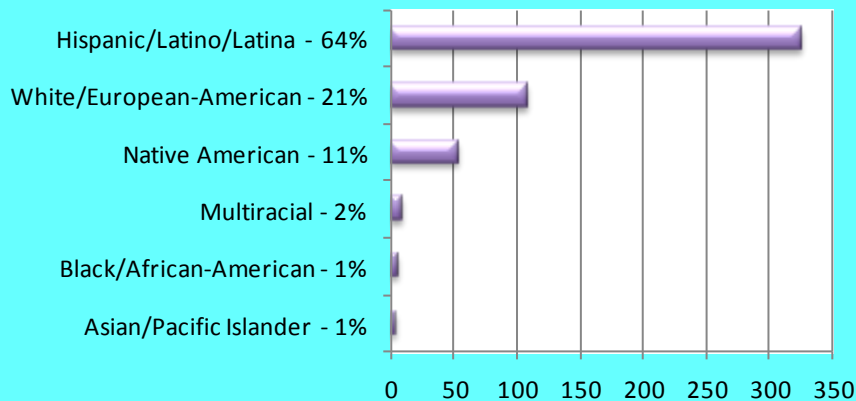
Fortunately, state revenues - and funding for T.E.A.C.H. - were back on the rise in FY 2013 and grants (public and private) to T.E.A.C.H. totaled \$718,988. That marked a 43% increase from the low point of funding. T.E.A.C.H. was able to serve all the eligible educators on its waiting list of 48 for scholarships in spring 2012 and the program has been able to continue to offer scholarships without waiting to people who qualify, including 38 public school NM PreK educators since the Public Education Department again allocated money for T.E.A.C.H.

A key - perhaps the key - to high quality programs for New Mexico's youngest children is well-educated and well-compensated teachers. T.E.A.C.H., in part using volunteer help from the NMAEYC, plays a major role in providing scholarships to those already working with young children so they can do an even better job in preparing children for school and life.

### Who Makes T.E.A.C.H. Possible?

*T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEW MEXICO is sponsored by: the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children (NMAEYC), the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), the NM PreK Program (jointly run by CYFD and the Public Education Department), the Brindle Foundation, the Kiwanis Club of Albuquerque, and individual donors.*

### **Ethnic, Racial Makeup of T.E.A.C.H. Scholars**



### **168 Early Childhood Education Degrees Awarded to T.E.A.C.H. Scholars Since 2004**

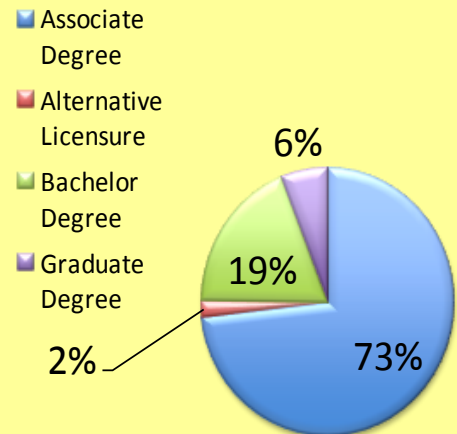
Associate's Degrees, 92

Bachelor's Degrees, 38

Master's Degrees, 27

Alternative Licensure, 11

### **Degrees Sought by T.E.A.C.H. Scholars**



### **Colleges and Universities**

#### **Attended by T.E.A.C.H. Scholars (Fy 2012)**

Central New Mexico Community College  
Clovis Community College  
Doña Ana Branch Community College  
Eastern New Mexico University  
Eastern New Mexico University – Roswell  
Eastern New Mexico University – Ruidoso  
Luna Community College  
Mesalands Community College  
New Mexico Highlands University  
New Mexico Junior College  
New Mexico State University  
NM State University – Alamogordo  
New Mexico State University – Carlsbad  
New Mexico State University – Grants  
Northern New Mexico College  
University of New Mexico  
University of New Mexico – Los Alamos  
University of New Mexico – Gallup  
University of New Mexico – Valencia  
University of New Mexico – Taos  
San Juan College  
Santa Fe Community College  
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute  
Western New Mexico University

For more information about  
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