

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Nashville Public School Educators Chosen to Drive Student Success through Teacherpreneur Program

*Amazon Sponsors Fourth Year, Advancing Innovation in Nashville's Public Schools*

**NASHVILLE, TENN. – Dec. 10, 2024** – The Nashville Public Education Foundation (NPEF) announced its fourth annual [Teacherpreneur cohort](#), with continued support from the program's founding partner, Amazon. Since 2021, the Teacherpreneur program has awarded educators nearly \$100,000 in cash prizes as well as additional seed money to advance their solutions in our public schools.

Teacherpreneur is a leadership development opportunity that helps Nashville's public school teachers formulate innovative solutions for challenges in public education. The participants identify a key issue affecting student outcomes, research the root cause of the issue and design a solution that helps ensure all students thrive. Participants then pitch their ideas to a panel of judges for a chance to win cash prizes and seed funding to support implementation of their ideas.

Some of the ideas being considered by this year's cohort members include leveraging technology for collaborative discussion during math instruction, addressing food insecurity through innovative community gardening practices, and incorporating dance and kinesthetic learning into other academic subject areas for greater student engagement. This year's cohort of educators includes:

- Celia Bowman-Jeffries, Antioch Middle School
- Raymond Boyd, Thomas A. Edison Elementary School
- Saul Calzadilla, John B. Whitsitt Elementary School
- DaKenna Goines, KIPP Academy Nashville
- JC Gordon, Cumberland Elementary School
- Jamia Lockmiller, Tusculum Elementary
- Nathanael Reveal, Martin Luther King, Jr. Magnet School
- Hayley Smith, Alex Green Design Technology Magnet Elementary School
- John Stayskal, KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle School
- Jennifer Caudle Williams, Thomas A. Edison Elementary School

"Teachers are passionate experts who are constantly generating and testing new ideas in their classrooms on a daily basis, and we need to do a better job listening to them and engaging them to solve some of our biggest challenges in public education," said **Katie Cour, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NPEF**. "Teacherpreneur sparks innovation and empowers teachers to leverage their classroom expertise and passion to drive meaningful change for our students."

The new cohort builds on last year's Teacherpreneur class, which included winning ideas focused on providing engaging literacy resources for multi-lingual students and families; ensuring students who are incarcerated in the juvenile court system receive necessary academic supports; and increase teacher retention by developing a cohort model for veteran teachers to collaborate and support one another's

professional learning. These concepts, along with a Community Favorite Award winner, received \$25,000 in prize money.

Past Teacherpreneur cohort winners have gone on to impact student learning in substantial ways upon completion of the program. Cohort 1 third place winner Addison Barrack created and now leads a team of educators to support students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) transition from the SIFE program to their zoned schools, increasing their attendance and academic achievement. Cohort 2 community favorite winner Kellee Hill created a curriculum that helps science educators better engage with multilingual students by translating and explaining STEM terms that are not easily accessible to English learners.

“Amazon is honored to be a part of the Foundation’s work to support data-driven, research-based solutions that make a lasting, positive impact on Nashville’s public schools,” said **Courtney Ross, Amazon’s Senior Manager of Community Engagement in Nashville**. “We’re proud to continue investing in the Teacherpreneur program and empowering educators to grow as leaders and change agents so students can thrive in the classroom.”

NPEF encourages the community to follow the cohort’s journey [online](#) and on social media as participants develop their concepts for Pitch Night. The community will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite educator-developed solution both online and in-person at Pitch Night.

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### **About the Nashville Public Education Foundation**

The Nashville Public Education Foundation (NPEF) is a nonprofit organization committed to ensuring every child can thrive in Nashville's public schools. NPEF works to improve student outcomes in Nashville’s public schools by identifying challenges and advancing evidence-based solutions. Since 2002, NPEF's role as a catalyst for transformation has yielded tangible results in areas such as teacher professional development, teacher compensation, principal quality and college access. Learn more at [nashvillepef.org](http://nashvillepef.org).

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