

A clinically rich residency program for Teaching Assistants (TA's)

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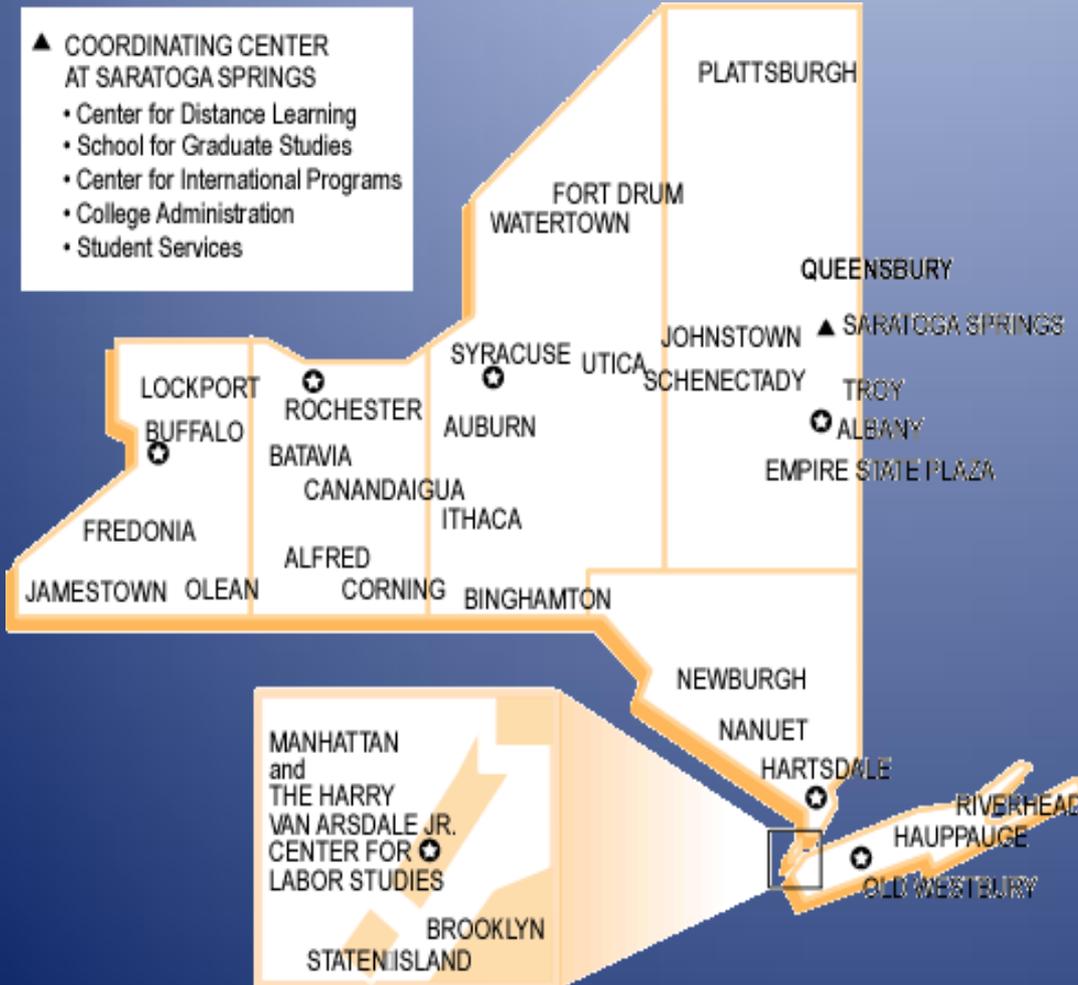
Overview: Clinically Rich Residency

- Over the past several years, there has been a call for increasing the clinical preparation of teachers in the United States (e.g., Berry, et al., 2008; NCATE, 2010; NRC, 2010).
- NCATE (2010) convened a Blue Ribbon Panel of experts in 2010 to identify the gaps between “how teachers are prepared and what schools need” (p. ii).
 - increase in clinical hours for teacher candidates
 - putting practice at the center of teacher education

Residency Program Development

- Developed/Implemented without external funding.
- The Residency Program was designed to accommodate:
 - Those SUNY/ESC students who are volunteering their time in the Residency placement for the full school year
 - Those employed as Teaching Assistants in the partner school districts
- Leads to Adolescent level (7-12th) grade certification in ELA, Social Studies, Math, Spanish, French, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, and Earth Science.

ESC Residency Program Development



ESC's Statewide Reach

Partner schools and districts for the pilot year of the Residency include:

- Buffalo City School District
- Albany City School District
- Ballston Spa School District
- Schenectady City School District
- Glens Falls School District
- Marte Valle High School (NYC)
- New Dorp High School (NYC)
- Syracuse City School District

Clinically Rich: TA Track

- For the past three years the clinically rich residency program (MAT) at SUNY/Empire State College has been providing a track for Teaching Assistants (TA's).
- Coinciding with the wave of Residency programs, Grow Your Own (GYO) programs have also experienced increased support as a way of recruiting teachers from traditionally underrepresented groups (Madd & Schultz, 2009).
 - The TA track addresses the national calls to increase clinical teacher training
 - Focuses on increasing the numbers of certified teachers from traditionally underrepresented groups.
 - In addition, TAs know their schools, their students and their communities
 - This model allows TAs to keep their current salary and benefits while pursuing their Master's degree with only an eight week LOA from employment.

Residency Program Overview

- TA track: Clinically rich residency
- Year 1: TAs complete MAT coursework while maintaining their current employment within their home school district
- Year 2: TAs continue coursework while also engaging in a year-long Residency in their district with a critic teacher in their content area.
 - 1 period a day with an 8 week leave of absence to do “immersion”

Research Participants

- 4/17 of the residents (or 24%) who took part in the pilot program during the 2011-2012 school year were full-time TAs
- 8/39 of the residents (or 21%) who completed the program from 2011-2013 were full time TAs
- Our quantitative analyses for year one included all residents (n=17), not just TAs, due to our small cohort size
- Our qualitative analyses include year two residents

Results

- **SURVEY**
- Students were asked how confident they felt in their ability to do a variety of teaching tasks that were tied directly to the rubric.
- 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree
- *Significant outcomes were uncovered when pre and post program survey responses were compared.*

Survey results (continued)

- Residents demonstrated a significant gain in confidence over the course of the program (2011-2012) in specific areas of best practice:
- 1) Engaging students in the content scale consists of 11 items (3.1 to 3.5 pre to post) $p \leq .000$
- 2) Helping students effectively interact with new knowledge scale consists of 8 items (3.1 to 3.6 pre to post) $p \leq .000$
- 3) Helping students to practice and deepen their understanding of new knowledge scale consists of seven items (2.9 to 3.7 pre to post) $p \leq .000$

Survey results (continued)

- 4) Classroom management/procedures scale consists of 5 items (3.0 to 3.5) $p \leq .001$
- 5) Effective relationships with all students and families scale consists of 6 items (3.0 to 3.5) $p \leq .000$

TA Interviews

- The following are brief summaries of two interviews conducted with our TA's who have completed the residency program. Their responses provide a profile of the typical students who apply to and complete the residency TA track.

TA #1

- *TA#1 is a 47 year old White female who has been a TA for 13 years in a high need school district that has been identified as a “district in need of improvement” by the State. She has lived in this community for her entire life. She mentioned the challenge of balancing coursework and her job but also noted how she was able to put theory into practice by doing the course work while she was in the classroom. She said that knowing the routine, the kids, and the expectations before starting her residency placement made the process much more seamless. She commented that “working in your own community offers many benefits. Adults, students, teachers and administrators know you. You feel connected and part of a group. You want to help your community prosper and watch students grow and become productive people.”*

TA#2

- *TA#2 is a 33 year old African-American female who has been a TA in a high need urban district for the past 8 years. She lives in this community and does extensive community service work outside of the school. She found the TA track valuable because she could keep her TA position, while spending time with a critic teacher who was a content area expert. Balancing her job and course work was challenging but she found that the value of the clinical experience coupled with support and guidance from graduate faculty made the experience worthwhile. This candidate felt very strongly about the importance of teachers coming from and understanding the communities they work within. "Teachers who come from the communities in which they live are already stake holders in their community. Assuming this role means they understand the needs of the population they are teaching. They have relationships with many of the families because they shop, worship, and live where their students live. Having such a strong connection encourages the educator to build relationships, and make connections that can benefit their students beyond the four walls of their classroom."*

Discussion of the data

- This program supports two current models of teacher training:
 - increased clinical experience for pre service teachers (NCATE, 2010; NRC, 2010)
 - GYO and the recruitment and retention of teachers from traditionally underrepresented groups (e.g., Madd & Schultz, 2009)
- Our research results provide evidence that the residency model is an effective way to train new teachers
 - Our results are aligned with some of the research already conducted on clinically rich residency programs (e.g., Jagla, 2009; Papay, et al., 2012; Solomon, 2009)

Discussion of the data

- Strong data to support that our residents gained a higher sense of confidence around best teaching practices (engaging instruction, classroom management) over the course of the program (Marzano, et al., 2011)
- The profiles of our two graduates highlight the value of the GYO model
 - the importance of recruiting teacher candidates from their own communities in terms of both investment and retention (Swanson, 2011)

Implications

- Increased program stability, as residents employed as TAs can keep their jobs (benefits and salary) for all but eight weeks.
- Addition to the literature on the effectiveness of residency models in fostering teachers' confidence and specific skills necessary for new teacher success
- Recent outreach efforts to School Districts and Community Colleges.
 - Development of a Combined BA/BS and MAT
- Questions?