

# Kite and Leaf...

The good news  
email from TCS!

## Nurturing the Next Generation of Educators

**T**he world needs more progressive teachers! As a small school with limited turnover and a very specialized approach, we realized we needed to create opportunities to work with the wider community of educators. While we have also hosted student teachers in the past, we hoped to specifically tap into the talents and energy of young teachers of color and teachers from underrepresented groups for a semester-long paid internship program. Once word got out we were looking to create new partnerships, we expanded to include interns receiving class credit and even more student teachers. This semester, we're proud to welcome four student teachers/interns into our classrooms.



**Ms. Toni Nunn, Student Teacher**



**Ms. Lisa Marquez, Student Teacher**



Ms. Lia Cucinella, Intern



Ms. Vanessa Campos, Intern

### **Collaborating with Internship Programs**

Ms. Angela Whitacre de Resendiz, a veteran teacher at TCS, worked alongside Ms. Christina Martin in establishing the new intern program, including: reaching out to partnering institutions like Chicago State, Elmhurst, and Dominican Universities; formulating goals and guidelines for the programs; and working with the interns and student teachers both in the classroom and in separate check-in meetings to answer questions, provide feedback, and plan together.

Ms. Toni Nunn was selected and hired as the first intern in the pilot program and, thanks to a partnership with Chicago State University's Department of Education, is able to complete both the paid internship (15 hours/week) and her student teaching credits simultaneously.



Ms. Toni Nunn, student teacher, engages 3rd graders in group discussion

“My journey over the last two months has been life-changing. I have been stretched and challenged so much. This experience has taught me what happens when you fully create a student-centered, democratic culture in the classroom. The places where a lesson could go are limitless. The students

astound me daily with what they can produce when the expectations are set high. Ms. Angela has been a superior cooperative teacher and every day I am amazed at the wealth of knowledge she has concerning educating students. She truly models the TCS way as the "teacher being the curriculum." I look forward to taking what I have learned here at TCS into the classroom in the near future.”

Additionally, TCS has another student teacher: Ms. Lizbeth Marquez, who is a student at Dominican University. “Walking into The Children’s School, I experienced a new curriculum that I had never heard of before. Yet when it was time to start teaching with Ms. Coria, I found support, and felt a welcoming commitment from her and my knowledge is enhanced each day. It has been delightful to observe how Ms. Coria designs activities that the students are interested in but also challenges their thinking. I have observed the openness with which students share their ideas with others and how they approach voting for a class name among other things. Through this full-time observation and teaching, I can say I have gained an understanding of what The Children’s School is about. Through this class, I have been able to build relationships with the students and also the teachers. Although at first I was confused on how things worked, I now have the confidence to plan and incorporate lessons with the curriculum, which makes me happy.”



**Ms. Lizbeth Marquez, student teacher, reads a story to 1st/2nd graders**

While developing the program, TCS also entered a partnership with Dr. Ayanna Brown and Elmhurst University’s Middle Level English Language Arts (MELA) to welcome student interns completing an independent study course with this former TCS parent. This innovative new program offers not only middle-level English Language Arts licensure but also K-12 reading specialist licensure.

Dr. Brown explains, “The model we use is co-teaching, where they watch,

learn, and support. Then, a gradual shifting where they co-plan with the teacher and then assume some lead-teaching responsibilities. This includes instruction, feedback, conferencing, etc. We are flexible and want our teacher candidates to learn about teaching writing while experiencing a process model, rubric development, and developmental feedback.”



Ayanna F. Brown, PhD

TCS currently hosts two interns from the program, Ms. Rosalia Cuccinella and Ms. Vanessa Campos. Ms. Lia is spending about 4 hours each week with Ms. Angela in 3rd grade and Ms. Campos is doing the same with Mrs. Nitzsche in 4th/5th grade... *(continued)*

[Read the Rest of This Story Online Here](#)

## Alumni Spotlight: A Project Mindset for Life!

**P**roject-based learning creates lifelong project-based thinkers. Our grads often do very well in high school, college, and in their careers, because they can identify their goals and employ a step-by-step plan to meet them. Take this example from our grad, Jonny Hugh:

After school was closed due to the pandemic in early 2020, Jonny missed being in the woodshop at OPRF where he attends high school. He decided to set up a workshop in his garage. Once he completed the workshop, he thought it was time to attempt to make a real effort at a boat. He drew up plans and about a month later, he launched the boat on a warm June day at a small lake outside Chicago.



Lined with his favorite product, FlexSeal, and painted his favorite color, red, he had named it "El Tercero," as it was his third try building a boat over his lifetime. He only sailed the boat that one time. He always hoped to give it to someone who would use it.

That's when the spark hit! He donated it to the Riverside outdoor play space at The Children's School, where kids can now sail it every day.

We're not only ecstatic about the colorful addition to our courtyard, we're over-the-moon that it's from one of our former students. One of Jonny's teachers, Mr. Will Hudson, was amazed when he saw the skiff: "Wow! He did it! He always said that someday he wanted to make a boat!"



Jonny continued to work with wood that summer, making a table and other handy things, and he will be pursuing a woodworking capstone project at school next semester before he graduates. He spends his free time at stage crew

and creating music; he plays several instruments such as the banjo and guitar.

As for his future plans? Jonny intends to take a gap year to study woodworking in-depth then attend college to study psychology. For anyone who remembers him from his TCS days, he still wears a hat every day, but nowadays it's a cowboy hat.

Thanks, Jonny! We're so grateful for your gift and you are welcome to come sailing here any time.

## Halloween Photo 2021

