

## FY19 Results

Before first grade, a child may spend more than 10,000 hours in child care. Research tells us that children enrolled in a high-quality early care and education program in the first five years of life are most likely to be in a highly skilled job or in college at age 21. Ensuring quality early care and education for children today ensures a viable workforce for the future and a strong American economy in the long run.

The quality of early care and education a child receives is directly linked to the education and compensation of early educators. In Nebraska, many early educators do not have higher education degrees and many earn less than \$12 an hour. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program awards educational scholarships to early education professionals in an effort to address the key issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover in the early education workforce. All T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships link increased education with higher compensation and retention. Scholarship recipients and their sponsoring early care and education programs share the cost.

In Nebraska, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is administered by Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children. In FY19, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA helped more than 154 early education professionals in the state increase their education.

## Education

- Recipients on associate degree scholarships completed an average of 15.7 credits per contract.
- Recipients on bachelor's degree scholarships completed an average of 17.8 credit hours.
- T.E.A.C.H. recipients in Nebraska completed more than 1,585 credit hours last year.
- The average grade point average (GPA) for a T.E.A.C.H. recipient working on their associate degree was 3.38; the average GPA for a T.E.A.C.H. recipient working on their bachelor's degree was 3.53.

## Compensation

- The average hourly wage of a teacher on a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship was \$12.98.
- The average increase in earnings for a T.E.A.C.H. recipient on an associate degree scholarship was 9%.
- The average increase in earnings for a T.E.A.C.H. recipient on a bachelor's degree scholarship was 10%.

## Retention

- For associate degree scholarship recipients the average retention rate was 93%.
- For bachelor's degree scholarship recipients the retention rate was 100%.

## Demographics

- 68% of recipients worked with 3-5 year old children.
- 49% of recipients worked with children under 3.
- 28% of recipients were women of color and/or Hispanic origin.
- T.E.A.C.H. recipients attended one of the six different community colleges or two universities offering early childhood degree programs in Nebraska.

## Personal Impact

- In a survey of T.E.A.C.H. recipients, 100% indicated they would recommend T.E.A.C.H. to their peers; and 100% of their employers would recommend T.E.A.C.H.

T.E.A.C.H. recipients show a dramatic dedication to remaining in their professions with turnover rates that are far less than the national turnover rates of 30-40%. This year alone 13,351 of Nebraska's children benefitted from consistent early education and care provided by better prepared early childhood educators.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Initiative is heralded by experts in the field as a national leader in creating solutions for early childhood education workforce challenges. National outcomes can be found in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGES® 2018-2019 Annual Program Report:

<https://bit.ly/380Xhly>.

## FY19 Voices from the Field

Christina Dominguez graduated at the end of the Fall 2018 term with her Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK). Christina was first awarded a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship in the Summer 2008 term for an associate degree at Northeast Community College (NECC) in Norfolk. She began work on her bachelor's degree in the Spring 2012 term at UNK. Christina then completed 74 more credits while working full time as a head start assistant teacher in West Point. She is also a wife and mother of two children.



"I graduated from high school in 2001. I had no idea what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. So I decided to 'take a year off.' That year quickly became two and soon five. I found myself married with a baby on the way, and a mortgage to pay. Basically put, life set in. When I had my son in 2005 I couldn't see myself returning to CNA work. The sadness of nursing homes and the crazy hours weren't what I wanted for my life. However, I still hadn't found my calling.

My sister in law told me about a job opening at Head Start. My niece was in Head Start at the time and she only had wonderful things to say about the program. I was hesitant, but she convinced me to give it a try. I was hired in March of 2006. I fell in love with the job right away. Teaching children academic skills was great, but I especially enjoyed being a role model for the children. I liked being a consistently caring adult that was there to support them through it all. Within a few years, I knew I would be a teacher for the rest of my life. I was content being an aide, but I secretly wanted more. I loved the idea of going to college, but I felt overwhelmed and scared. Could I pay for it? Could I balance it all? How do I even enroll?

A coworker told me about the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship. I asked her a lot of questions. I was intrigued but I was convinced that everything she was saying was too good to be true. I decided that if this was anything like she was saying I wanted to at least give it a try. I called T.E.A.C.H. and filled out my application. T.E.A.C.H. helped me to find a college that offered all my classes online. They answered all my questions and they helped me every step of the way. The advisors at T.E.A.C.H. made me feel so supported!

I started college at Northeast Community College and within 3 years I graduated with my associate degree. There were semesters that I wanted to take a lot of classes and T.E.A.C.H. supported me. Then, there were semesters I couldn't handle more than a class or two and T.E.A.C.H. supported me then too! The graduation from Northeast was exciting but I knew in my heart I wasn't done yet. I took a break from college so I could spend time with my infant daughter.

Then I decided to go to UNK for my bachelor's degree. Once again, it took me about 4 years to finish my degree at UNK. I had the pleasure of student teaching at my kid's school and I graduated last Friday on the 14th of December, with honors. My mom wouldn't have missed it for the world; my husband took off work, and I took my kids out of school for my graduation. It was their accomplishment too. After all, they stood by me and supported me through my long journey.

I know in my heart that none of my college journey would have happened without the T.E.A.C.H. program. The T.E.A.C.H. program helped me every step of the way. The ladies at T.E.A.C.H. were so supportive and amazing to work with. I still think that the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship is 'too good to be true!' However, I will forever be grateful that this scholarship is, in fact, true. I feel blessed beyond measure."

– Christina Dominguez, T.E.A.C.H. graduate

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