

FY20 Results

Before 1st grade, a child may spend more than 10,000 hours in child care. Research tells us that children enrolled in high-quality early care and education programs in the first five years of life are more likely to be in a highly skilled job or 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 Arkansas, 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 Arkansas, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is administered by Arkansas Early Childhood Association. In FY20, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Arkansas helped 42 early education professionals increase their education.

Education

- T.E.A.C.H. recipients in Arkansas completed more than 260 credit hours last year.
- The average grade point average (GPA) for a T.E.A.C.H. recipient on an associate degree scholarship was 3.39.

Compensation

- The average hourly wage of a teacher on a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship was \$11.14.

Demographics

- 62% of recipients worked with 3-5 year old children.
- 45% of recipients worked with children under 3.
- 38% of recipients were women of color and/or Hispanic origin.
- T.E.A.C.H. recipients attended one of the seven different community colleges or one university offering early childhood degree programs in Arkansas.

T.E.A.C.H. recipients show 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, 4,087 of Arkansas'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® 2019-2020 Annual Program Report at tinyurl.com/y6ysy3n6.



FY20 Voices from the Field

"I was invited to attend a T.E.A.C.H. committee meeting and as the program was being explained I got excited. Returning to my program I called a short meeting with the staff and immediately they all wanted to become involved. A decision was made regarding the first teacher to apply that we would support from our program. At London Bridges we believe the better our teachers are equipped and educated, the more they have to offer our children who will have a better learning experience. We have always supported our teachers in pursuing their education for which we benefit. At this time, we have one teacher working on her associate degree with intentions to continue for her bachelor's. We have other staff that will follow very soon. I am so excited about what this program is doing, I have contacted programs that will benefit and encouraged them to get additional information."

-Johnnie Bridges, Director/Owner, London Bridges Child Care Center Inc.



"As a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipient, I am so grateful that I get to go back to school after so many years. I have always wanted to go back and further my education, but the T.E.A.C.H. program showed me that anything is possible when you believe in yourself. Another thing I love about the program is that you can go to school and work a full-time or a part-time job without having to choose between going back to school and keeping your job. It also allows me to still have time to take care of my family."

-Erica Hollins, T.E.A.C.H. scholar

"I started the T.E.A.C.H. program last Spring. By December of next year, I will be able to take the lead in my OWN classroom! This program has made it possible for me to do my full-time job while taking classes to advance my education. The benefits of the T.E.A.C.H. Program are amazing; providing 90% of tuition, book reimbursement, travel stipend, paid release time (for homework/school business) and an unlimited amount of support from so many amazing people who sincerely want nothing but the best for everyone in the program. Oh, and there are no student loans to pay off when you are done! Less stress makes for better focus which results in great grades!"

-Mary Carroll, T.E.A.C.H. scholar

"T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® has changed the face of the early childhood workforce in Arkansas. For so many years, early childhood teachers in our state have struggled with the increasing standards for teachers for programs like state-funded pre-K and Head Start. Many have wanted to go back to school but could not because of finances or work schedules. This program has offered first-time hope to many of our early childhood professionals. After just one year, we have 50 students enrolled at six different colleges in our state. These teachers have come together from all backgrounds, program types and levels of experience to earn their Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. We are proud of them and the programs that have chosen to sponsor them. As I am entering grades from the summer, I am so proud of the hard work and progress they are making toward their goal of a college education. And I am honored to be a part of the process."

-Paul Lazenby, T.E.A.C.H. Counselor

"The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship will be essential to the educational development of our recipients and to early childhood care and education in Arkansas. I have been overwhelmed with the response as word has spread about this new program in our state. This scholarship program is providing opportunities for individuals to attend college that otherwise would not be able to afford that cost. This first year has been a whirlwind of activity, but has been so exciting to be able to witness what the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Arkansas scholarship program is providing for early childhood educators."

-Jeff Dyer, T.E.A.C.H. Manager

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Produced in conjunction with the
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center