

From birth to age eight a child's brain is developing faster than at any other time in their life. The experiences a child has in those first eight years provide a foundation for their future. Children who receive high quality early learning experiences are more likely to live healthier lives, earn higher wages and contribute to society.

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 \$15 an hour. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program awards educational scholarships to early education professionals to address the key issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover in the 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, the **Arkansas Early Childhood Association** administers the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program. In FY23, the program helped **376** early education professionals increase their education. T.E.A.C.H. recipients show powerful dedication to remaining in their professions with turnover rates far less than the national average. This year alone, **16,765** of Arkansas's children were cared for in settings who participated in T.E.A.C.H.

Education

- Recipients on associate degree scholarships completed an average of **16.56** credits per contract.
- Recipients on bachelor's degree scholarships completed an average of **20.5** credits per contract.
- Recipients in Arkansas completed more than **4,868** credit hours.
- The average grade point average (GPA) for a recipient on an associate degree scholarship was **3.26**.
- The average GPA for a recipient on a bachelor's degree scholarship was **3.51**.

Compensation

- The average hourly wage of a teacher on a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship was **\$13.59**.
- The average increase in earnings for a recipient on an associate degree scholarship was **11.98%**.
- The average increase in earnings for a recipient on a bachelor's degree scholarship was **11.54%**.

Retention

- For associate degree scholarship recipients, the average retention rate was **91%**.
- For bachelor's degree scholarship recipients, the average retention rate was **93%**.

Demographics

- **66.5%** of recipients worked with 3-5-year-old children.
- **47.6%** of recipients worked with children less than 3 years old.
- **31.9%** of recipients were people of color and/or Latinx, and an overwhelming majority of all recipients were women.
- Recipients attended one of **14** community colleges or **4** universities offering early childhood degree

Personal Impact

- In a survey of recipients, **99%** said they would recommend T.E.A.C.H. to their peers, and **99%** of their employers would recommend T.E.A.C.H.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program 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 WAGE\$® 2022-2023 Annual National Program Report.





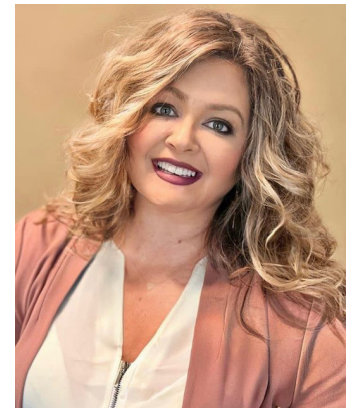
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Arkansas FY23 Voices From the Field



The opportunity T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Arkansas has given me leaves me speechless! And I'm so grateful! Two years ago, life was changed forever for me and my girls... and in having to start over, I decided to go to school. It was the best decision I've made. In the last two years, I've learned to stand on my own two feet and learned about my self-worth. I hope I've inspired my own children to know that no matter what life throws at you, you can pursue your dreams and they can come true. My job and this opportunity bring me much joy. I love my students! I love being able to pour into them and inspire them to be their very best as they move up to other preschool classes and beyond. To know that I helped shape their minds, gave them support, encouraged them, helped teach them and loved them during their time with me brings me unspeakable joy! And none of this would be possible without the INCREDIBLE college instructor I had. She believed in me and saw my heart and my talents in a time in which I was searching for who I was after my life was forever changed. It would not be possible without T.E.A.C.H. either. I would never have gotten this far, especially being a single mother. Thank you so very much!

– Rachel Mathews, T.E.A.C.H. Graduate

In May 2023 I graduated with a Master of Science in Early Childhood using the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Arkansas scholarship. With an online program, it only took me 18 months. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship is what made it possible since I work full time during the week. As an owner and director, the classes that I have taken have really helped me to better navigate through the daily responsibilities of running a program. I learned more in the last year and half than I learned in my 30 years of experience in the field and that has helped me to improve my business. I am so glad that this opportunity was here through the T.E.A.C.H. program or I probably would not have ever done this at my age. It has motivated me to keep going as I am now working on my doctorate in education. I currently have nine employees also in the T.E.A.C.H. program, including my daughters. Our scholarship counselor is wonderful at her job. She is kind, encouraging and always happy to help my teachers. The changes that I have seen since my teachers started with the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program have improved our program immensely and our teachers' growing confidence in the classroom is proof. I am excited to watch these ladies grow as teachers! Our sweet kids will be the benefactors of their hard work!



– Stacy Phillips Pipkins, T.E.A.C.H. Graduate



In the spring of 2023, I reached my first educational goal of receiving a Certificate of Proficiency in Early Childhood Education. Upon completion, I was recognized for earning a spot on the Chancellor's and Dean's List for completing my courses and maintaining a 4.0 GPA. I am currently working towards my next goal of receiving an associate degree in early childhood education. This would not be possible without the support and guidance that I have received from T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Arkansas, specifically from my scholarship counselor. After not being enrolled in college courses for ten years, I was a bit hesitant and nervous when this opportunity was presented to me. However, I know that this opportunity was given to me for a purpose of bettering myself for my family, the students I encounter and the childcare staff I supervise. Through my educational journey, it has been made clear that this is exactly what I am meant to be doing with my life and my passion for early childhood education has flourished with the help of my wonderful professors and classmates. I have learned so much through my educational journey this past year! I have learned a lot about myself and about education. My experiences have taught me a great deal of discipline and time management, which are both essential in this profession. I have also learned different teaching strategies and methods that will help me grow as an educator and in return, benefit my students. I have studied the different developmental stages that children go through and ways that we can actively support and enhance their development. I can provide a positive and nurturing

learning environment for all students, no matter their background or learning ability. I have really enjoyed applying my knowledge to a real-world childcare center and seeing how effective these practices can be!

– Abby Heird, T.E.A.C.H. Scholar

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