



PORTLAND TEACHERS PROGRAM
PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
BEAVERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

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LISTEN. LEARN. SERVE.

Spring 2013

The 2013 Graduates



Top from left: Chelsea Fuller, Yessica Hardin-Mercado, Sarah Shelton, Mercedes Munoz, Antoinette Volley; 2nd row from left: Celene Vargas Perez, Maria Hernandez, Cicely Rogers; bottom from left: Chris Wade, Isidro Interian, Chris Riser, Carlos Laguardia

"My participation in PTP has been significantly powerful in my life. I have been able to increase my awareness of problems surrounding the topic of education."

-Isidro Interian, 2013 Graduate

"PTP did not make a difference in achieving my goal of becoming a teacher. PTP is the difference. I needed character shaping. I needed endurance training. I needed a place to grow. I am extremely indebted to this program for its rigor and excellence. The financial aspect of PTP brought me to the college experience, but the core values of PTP kept me here."

-Mercedes Miller, 2013 Graduate

"PTP helped me understand the world through lenses that many people are afraid to look through. It helped me discover, understand and find myself. It taught me to work twice as hard as anyone else. It pushed and encouraged me to become the leader I am now."

-Celene Perez Vargas, 2013 Graduate

The 2013 graduates chose the Sankofa bird as the design for their t-shirt and Celebration invitation this year. This symbol is taught in the PTP seminar (originally by Kamau Sadiki), and comes from the Akan people of West Africa, who believe that the past illuminates the present, and that the search for knowledge is a life-long journey. The bird is portrayed as looking back over its shoulder; in its beak is an egg representing the gem of knowledge from the past upon which wisdom is based. It also signifies the next generation that will benefit from that wisdom. We must understand where we come from to know where we are going; we must know who we are if we are to create a better future. The 2013 graduates will help shape the future leaders of our communities. They have worked hard to prepare themselves, and they know that the real work is ahead of them. Following are reflections from a few of them.

"PTP helped me learn a lot about myself. I will forever be appreciative of the seminars, colloquia, even the assignments we were required to complete. They challenged me to question and think critically about myself and everything around me." -Yessica Hardin Mercado, 2013 Graduate

"I hope to make a difference for kids by creating a classroom where they are not only safe to bring their whole selves, but one where everyone's authenticity is necessary for everyone's learning and growth. I also hope to make a difference for kids by uncovering the relevance math has in their lives, and cultivating and encouraging their identities as mathematicians, and the mathematical literacy and habits of mind they need to act as mathematicians. Real education is the synthesis of created and acquired knowledge and experience, a synthesis that, when further alchemized, becomes wisdom. Education is the sacred act of transformation, the political act of re-visioning and re-making, an act of love and fellowship, a dare to accept, a challenge to be faced, a dangerous call that must be answered."

Cicely Rogers, Middle School Math



"Taking into account individual interests and needs, I hope to create a learning experience for my students based on accommodation and adventure. I want to offer students a creative way of learning while assisting them in being the best that they can be. Through the application of critical thinking and personal development, education gives individuals the tools they need to live, learn and grow. As an educator, I believe it is my role to arm my students with the tools they will need in life, while also being a constant advocate and role model for them. The expectations I have for my students to reach enlightenment and success are infinite. There is nothing better than watching an individual overcome life's trials and blossom. Teaching is more than a job or a career; it is a lifelong commitment to humanity and evolution."

Sarah Shelton, Special Education

Everyone deserves access to the tools they need in order to reach their full potential. The needs and outcomes of each individual will vary. Unfortunately, inequity has been ingrained into our culture, and the common belief in both our schools and our society is that if the children do not succeed it is because they, or their communities, are lacking, when in reality we have not given them the tools they require to be successful. These tools include but are not limited to nutritious meals and access to real food, a home and a neighborhood free of detrimental conditions, and a political administration that values the education of its children. The sign of an evolved and truly progressive society is that its education system includes the experiences and cultures of all its members."

Antoinette Volley, Elementary

"I decided to become a teacher for two reasons. First and foremost, I wanted to show my sons and granddaughter that whatever they choose to do in life, they can do. I have also chosen this path because as Langston Hughes once said, "if you consider yourself a responsible person and you see an ill in our society, as a responsible person it's your duty to fix it." I believe education is the next step to enlightenment and community. It is so vast and open with potential; I want to offer my desire to learn and my imagination; I want to give students new insights into the mathematical world, a different way to think about the world that is interesting and engaging."

Chris Wade, Elementary & Middle School Math

"I plan to encourage a craving for knowledge within all my students. I will set high expectations for my students and go to great lengths to bring out their potential and confidence. As a Spanish immersion teacher I like to celebrate the Spanish language. When I grew up I was told not to speak Spanish in school and was made to feel less than my peers. I want my students to feel proud of who they are and their language. I want my students to be bilingual and bicultural individuals."

Yessica Hardin Mercado, Elementary



PTP Teachers Ms. Portillo and Ms. Briggs

The PTP Writing Project

With assistance from Scott Huff, recently retired Dean of Instruction at PCC Cascade, and Penny Thompson, Director of the Cascade Learning Center, PTP was able to provide PTP seminar students and a few others with quality writing assistance during winter and spring terms. Two dynamic writing instructors at Cascade, Chris Rose and Jane Zunkel, were given release time for one class for one term. That time was then devoted to individual writing conferences with PTP students. The instructors reviewed drafts of seminar assignments with students, as well as papers from other classes. Some students were also able to focus on preparing for the CBEST. Time was provided in seminars for short "Sentence CPR" sessions facilitated by Jane or Chris that focused on common grammar or punctuation problems. Several students also attended free grammar classes offered by Penny Thompson throughout the year.

Student Presentations

2012/2013

Systemic Oppression

Gabriela Sanchez, Allan Trinidad, Kamiko Jimenez & Tobias Witherspoon

Gang Violence

Kawanna Bolden, Sydney Melson, Angelica Ramos

Language Barriers, ESL

Felicia Buck, Mary Cha, Jimmy Boland

Building Math Confidence

Eric Ruiz & Ronnie Perry

Bullying

Josh Kim, Andy Guerrero & Victor Morales



Some of the PTP men (Anthony Lowery, Ronnie Perry, Paul Frazier & Alex Buckner---aka "Big Font Guy") converge at PSU and send this message via text: We love you Mama D!



Alexis Daley, Kawanna Bolden, Alejandra Nava, Blanca Strode & Ruth Ponce cheer on the dodge ball players at the annual PTP "power of play" day.



Sydney Melson wins the dance-off contest against pro dancer Jayme Causey



Miko Jimenez, Andy Guerrero & Victor Morales perform a skit--something to do with finding a prince?

Perceptions of Race

Emily Montano, Chrishana Retherford & Stefania Velazquez

Defining Success

Cynthia Otis & Ed Moss

Technology in the Classroom

Foster Liggins & Ruth Ponce

Nationally, people of color represent 45% of the student population, while only 17% of teachers are people of color. -(National Center for Education Statistics, 2010).

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People and Organizations We Admired This Year

■ Mrs. Nathan & the Nathan Family for believing in PTP, year after year after year, and for continuing to donate funds to help students with test fees, books and emergencies.

■ OnPoint Community Credit Union for providing funds for students to earn textbook and test registration funds through a PTP essay contest. The first round of winners received \$150 each and included Ronnie Perry, Cynthia Otis, Mary Cha and Cecilia Conroy. They each wrote about what success looked like through the lens of PTP values. The second OnPoint essay contest is underway.

■ Pastini Restaurants and co-owner Susan Bachel for donating \$50 gift certificates to the graduates again this year (that's \$600 worth of delicious food!). Next time you want to eat out, choose this wonderful business that supports our emerging educators (and has great food).

■ Preston Pulliams for listening; for modeling leadership as service; for making time to talk with students, and for his efforts to raise one million dollars for student scholarships at PCC.

■ George Pernsteiner for having integrity in all that he does, and for listening to and believing those who are most often ignored.

■ Bonnie Gray for courageous conversations, courageous actions, and building bridges.

■ Jeanne Miller for sacks of groceries, bags of fruit, endless supplies of chocolate, cheerful flowers, Friday night breaks, making sure the graduates have gift bags to mark their passage from student to teacher, and for the courage to seek donations! Thanks as well to her BF, Mike, for the photography.



Students who joined PTP this year:

Kyron Barrow, Kawanna Bolden, Felicia Buck, Kamiko Jimenez, Josh Kim, Foster Liggins, Sydney Melson, Emily Montano, Cynthia Otis, Stefania Ramirez Velazquez, Allen Trinidad, Jai Blair, Mary Cha & Gabriela Trinidad

■ Geoff and Donna Brooks, for contributing to the graduate gift bags, and for the general love and support.

■ Tracy Briggs and Cathy Parker at Woodlawn; Luci Cervantes Campbell at Scott School; Adrianna Moyola at Rigler; Candice Vickers at Roosevelt, all PTP alumni who took on student teachers in their classrooms this year.

■ Lionel Clegg, Curtis Wilson, Richard Cha, Aaron Moreno, and other PTP alumni who provided practicum placements and/or allowed students to visit their classrooms this past year.

■ Windy Wahlke for saving the PTP newsletter this year!

**"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."
-Jackie Robinson**



Luis Lopez, PTP elementary educator, makes time on a Saturday to talk with emerging teachers in the program.