



# A Lesson in Becoming

What urban teaching candidates  
can learn from community youth  
development

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# Urban Teacher Preparation at MSU

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- 2 semesters of fieldwork in an urban school

1st semester: 60 hours observing, tutoring, teaching

2nd semester: full-time student teaching

- 2 semesters of coursework on-site in an effective urban school



# All Stars Project

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- Privately-funded, multi-program, outside of school model for inner city youth development.
- All Stars works in and builds two inter-connected kinds of community:
  - We go into existing communities and create developmental experiences there.
  - We build a broad “development community,” bringing young people together with business professionals, artists, middle-class and affluent volunteers to create a new kind of community, not defined by identity or geography.



# At the All Stars Project, “Play is the thing.”

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All Stars programs don't teach young people anything in the traditional sense. Programs focus on the social, cultural and creative development of young people. Performatory approaches — play, improvisation and performance are used in the All Stars as the critical tools for youth development.



# Our Story

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- How Bonny and Cindy met and decided to work together
- How we planned the work and what we needed to put in place in our respective organizations



# Components of Fieldwork in the All Stars Project

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- Development School for Youth
- All Stars Talent Show
- Youth OnStage!
- Conversation with All Stars young people at the All Stars headquarters



# Reflections from MSU students on the All Stars experience

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1. Impact of contact with urban young people outside of school
2. Helping young people transition from outside of school to inside of school and vice versa
3. Implications for classroom teaching

# Impact of contact with urban young people outside of school

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- It calmed me down. These were just adolescents...my future students were no longer this collage of categorizations and imaginations that I had been forming both in life and at MSU.
- The more contact I had with the people who were my future students, the more textured my understandings of them became and the less likely I was to base those understanding on stuff I read or imagined.



# Helping young people transition from outside to inside of school

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- It gives them that much-needed opportunity to extend what they are learning in the classroom into the real worlds and what they are learning in All Stars back into the classroom.
- The students I met seemed so comfortable with themselves in any environment.



# Helping young people transition from outside to inside of school

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- All Stars provides students a glimpse into the real world and shows them that it is not unreachable.
- Students grow and learn so much in [outside of school activities] that they end up bringing back to the classroom.



# Pedagogical Practices

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- I love the All Stars' concept for the ensemble performance. It helps students to see beyond themselves in so many ways. Students are more than individuals, more than their neighborhoods, more than their race, more than what society expects of them.
- The care they provide for the kids is amazing because they have the expectation for every one of them to succeed in their life.

# Implications for teaching

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- It has been a way to get me to think about how to create such a nurturing learning environment within my classrooms and possibly school.
- I will continually look for each student's interests, skills and abilities to find ways of allowing my students to experience successes and through them grow more confident that they can venture out among the mainstream of life and business.

# Implications for teaching

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- I plan on incorporating performance into my teaching strategies by having students present to the entire class probably on a daily basis.
- The idea that students that may not have much interest and participation in the classroom setting, do still have interests and things that get them excited.

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- Thanks for the opportunity to see the kids of Newark from another angle!