

# Tomorrow and Today, NJFEA



## From the Executive Director’s Desk

Dear Friends of the CFE,

As we begin the slide towards the end of what has been one of the most challenging school years in memory for educators, students, and parents alike, we would like to thank educators across the state for the incredible job they did under the most difficult of circumstances. Change is never easy, but educators—who know that growth requires you to be a little uncomfortable sometimes—embraced whatever restrictions and modalities were presented and figured out a way to make it work. Your dedication and professionalism are commendable, and we want to make sure that the next generation of educators can learn from the examples you have set.

Here at the CFE, the challenges of the past year also provided us the opportunity to try new things. We learned valuable lessons as we figured out how to host virtual conferences, launch new events, and collaborate virtually with a variety of honored education professionals. If you missed any of our activities, you can find video recordings of the events on the [“Resources”](#) page of our website, [futureeducators.tcnj.edu](http://futureeducators.tcnj.edu). Speaking of our website, the CFE site will be undergoing a redesign this summer to make it easier to navigate. Please bear with us while the construction takes place.

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## From the Executive Director's Desk (cont.)

Before everyone heads towards summer vacation, we hope that some of our students will consider applying to become an NJFEA state officer for the 2021–22 school year. Our future educators may need a gentle nudge towards leadership, so if you advisors have someone you think would be a great fit, please urge them to apply. Our other opportunity for students is the Future Educators Academy (formerly the Urban Teacher Academy). It will be fully virtual for this year and will take place June 28<sup>th</sup>–July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The theme is social justice in education, and we have a great lineup of educators ready to help students learn what it takes to be a culturally responsive educator. Both the NJFEA state officer and Future Educators Academy applications are on our website under [“Upcoming Events”](#).

We hope you all have a wonderful summer, you deserve it! As we schedule events for the 2021–22 school year, we will post updates onto our website. One event we will be holding again is our mini-conference within the NJEA Convention, so be sure to mark your calendars for November 4<sup>th</sup>!

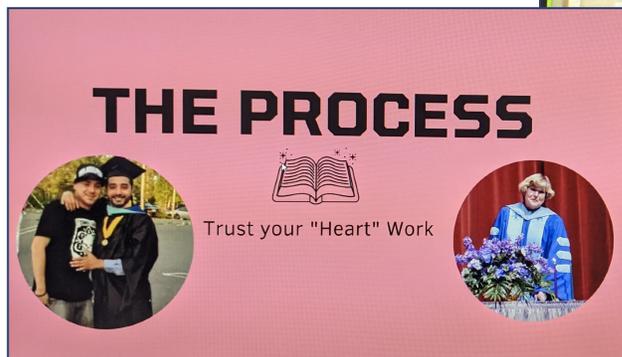
Yours in learning,

*Jeanne DelColle, Ph.D.*

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## March NJFEA Conference

Students got to kick off this virtual event with NJFEA's first pre-conference open house, featuring educator preparation programs (EPPs) from 13 New Jersey colleges and universities. Keynote speaker Angel Santiago (2020–21 NJ STOY) talked about his path to a career in education and the lessons that have served him as a teacher. He also discussed his Young People of Character (YPOC) initiative, which helps to develop leadership skills in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders through community service. Student ambassadors Alyse Lerner and Olivia Gray, later followed by Abigail Bordeau and Angelina Maffei, joined the conference to share what inspired them each to pursue teaching.



## March NJFEA Conference (cont.)

Students got the chance to attend a variety of breakout sessions, covering topics from inclusive classrooms and bilingual education to inquiry-based learning, mindfulness, and perspectives essential for teaching. The event wrapped with a college student panel featuring three great guests, pictured below:

- Marissa Realdine (top center), Stockton '21 grad in elementary education and former NJEA Preservice vice president
- Brian Reilly (bottom left), Seton Hall '23 expected grad in secondary education & math and former NJEA Preservice relations chair
- Brooke Martin (bottom right), TCNJ '21 grad in K–12 technology & engineering education

The panel discussion was facilitated by student ambassadors Amber Downs (top left) and Sahar Khan (top right). Videos from the conference's webinar sessions are available on our website on the [“Resources”](#) page.



## Speaker Series

CFE's March Speaker Series event highlighted social justice in the classroom. The session featured educator and activist, Sharif El-Mekki. Mr. El-Mekki is the CEO and founder of the Center for Black Educator Development, which exists to ensure there will be equity in the recruiting, training, hiring, and retention of quality educators that reflect the cultural backgrounds and share common socio-political interests of the students they serve. In his presentation, El-Mekki covered conditions and trends regarding teacher diversity, their effects on Black educator development, and how his center is working to bring about positive change. Like our moderator, Kimberly Dickstein-Hughes, Mr. El-Mekki started out on the track to becoming a lawyer before finding his place in education. He credits a former Philadelphia teacher, Dr. Martin Ryder, with making him aware of the impact he could have and the lessons he could learn himself as an educator. To hear more about El-Mekki's journey and his views on activism in education, [watch the recorded session](#).

## Speaker Series (cont.)



**Sharif El-Mekki**

literacy in educators. Mr. Belasco is an English teacher at LCMR High School and was the 2019–20 Cape May County Teacher of the Year. Through The Mindfulness Classroom, Belasco leads guided meditation classes for teachers and beach sessions in Cape May. In this session, the speakers discussed how emotional and mental wellness can affect the teaching and learning experience and influence equity in education. [Watch the full discussion](#) to learn more.

**Thomas “T.J.” Belasco**



For the final speaker series event of the 2020–21 school year, we invited Alisha De Lorenzo and Thomas “T.J.” Belasco to share their experience with social and emotional learning (SEL). Ms. De Lorenzo is a former public school educator and the founder and owner of Living YES, LLC, through which she provides professional training focused on developing emotional

**Kimberly Dickstein-Hughes**



**Alisha De Lorenzo**



## College & Career Readiness Workshop Week

In late May, CFE hosted a week of panels and sessions with 16 education professionals, who shared the knowledge they each gained from their personal and professional journeys. The lineup of speakers included university deans and chairs, K–12 administrators, teachers of uncommon subjects, educational support professionals, and a parent educator. Check out the [bios for these amazing speakers](#) and [watch their sessions](#) for key advice to help you future educators gear up for college!

Thank you to our NJFEA student ambassadors for creating fun and insightful questions for the speakers across all of our activities!

## College & Career Readiness Workshop Week (cont.)

The Most Important People in the Building: Educational Support Professionals Panel  
Jeanne DelColle (top left), Kimberly Scott-Hayden (top center), Stacy Yanko (top right),  
Marquisha Reynolds (bottom left), and Steve Beatty (bottom right)



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### NJFEA Chapter Highlights

Curious about how other chapters have been wrapping up the 2020–21 school year? Our NJFEA student ambassadors will fill you in! If you're interested in connecting with these chapters to collaborate for the next academic year, [email us!](#)

#### **South Brunswick High School** **Abigail Bordeau**

The NJFEA chapter at South Brunswick High School is ending this school year with a bang! We held our last Saturday Morning Mania event of the year in mid-May; It was the first in-person event we've held since last year. We were very excited to finally see the kids we've been working with since the beginning of the year. The kids were excited to see us, too, and each other. Our chapter's board members were also happy to finally talk face-to-face. We've planned and executed so many meetings and events over Zoom, so it was great to see everything pay off in the kids' smiles. We took the opportunity to do some outdoor sports and activities with the kids to get them moving, especially after a long year of sitting in front of a computer screen! It bene-

fited not only them, but also the board members, who enjoyed soaking up the sun. Chapter members who didn't feel comfortable attending the in-person event got the opportunity to create a Google Slides presentation on any topic in education to present to the rest of the club. The only requirements for the topic was that it was unique and taught us something we didn't know (for example, uncommon educational professions, specifics of the college admissions process, and how curricula are made). Lastly, we're finalizing plans to donate bags of stuffed animals, books, and homemade blankets to our local Social Services. It feels great to give to a charitable cause and to know, as future educators, that we're helping to support today and tomorrow's students in more ways than one.



## NJFEA Chapter Highlights (cont.)

### Passaic County Technical Institute Olivia Gray

It's been an unusual experience having few, restricted physical interactions with the outside world, especially for young children, who rely on these social interactions to help progress their development. Using the insights that we've gained over the past year, our NJFEA chapter brainstormed system reforms that could help create a better and healthier society for the country's youth. Our chapter advisors and president also provided us with opportunities to attend virtual workshops to learn how to become effective teachers (in physical and virtual spaces) and how to stay involved with the children in our communities. We've also explored the causes and effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), discussing how traumatic experiences, such as the pandemic, influence children in the short- and long-term. Recently, we talked with juniors from William Paterson University's education program about their college journeys so far and the ways that WPU has been preparing them for careers in early childhood education. These activities and experiences have helped our chapter members to better understand the world of education overall.



### Union County Vocational Technical High School Victoria Pereira

For the past few months, the UCVTS chapter of NJFEA has been hard at work with fundraising and event planning. In just three weeks, we raised over \$1,300 through our Krispy Kreme sale! This money will be allocated towards scholarships for seniors and a lending library for the child development preschool. We also recently hosted an Academy Night for our juniors, where we celebrated their three years in the Teacher Education Academy and reflected on their accomplishments so far, as they prepare for dual-enrollment at Kean University in the fall. In the coming weeks, all members of the Teacher Education Academy will be polishing up their student portfolios, which will include an authentic cover letter, resume, awards, recognitions, and their best works. Although school scheduling and regulations have been very unpredictable, our NJFEA chapter has been working hard to remain optimistic during these times. We hope to return this fall in full swing with fundraising, recruiting, events, and so much more!

## Tomorrow's Teachers Class Updates

If you're interested in the Tomorrow's Teachers course at your school, or looking to implement the course, our ambassadors share their year-end experiences below! [Email us](#) to connect with any of these classes for the next academic year!

### Sayreville War Memorial High School Alyse Lerner

Like everyone, the senior class at Sayreville War Memorial High School has experienced a rough, isolating year, but things are finally looking up. Our school is providing seniors with an outdoor, COVID-conscious prom, a day trip to Black Bear Lake, a breakfast and barbeque, and an in-person graduation! Some of the students, including myself, are also participating in a powderpuff flag football game, where a group of senior girls play against junior girls. I'm so excited to end high school with these much-needed activities and to start a new chapter in my life! In my Tomorrow's Teachers class, we just finished creating and presenting our own lesson plans. Our assignment was to plan an activity for a specific grade level and

subject and to present it to the class as the teacher. I chose to focus on second-grade writing and delivered an opinion-based writing lesson using the OREO method. Some of the other topics my classmates covered included fractions, plant and animal cells, and spelling. It was really fun and helpful to see the different ways that other students incorporated online learning platforms into everyday learning. Overall, I've enjoyed and gained a lot from my Tomorrow's Teachers class. I'll take many of the things that I've been taught this year with me into my own classroom someday.

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### Delsea Regional High School Madison Jacobs

The Tomorrow's Teachers class at Delsea Regional High School has been working efficiently during COVID to try and get the full experience this course has to offer. Our teacher, Dr. Assini, worked with the principals at local elementary schools to put together online observations through Google Meet. The district's middle school also allowed us to observe classes in person, following COVID safety precautions, to get the experience of direct student engagement. Our Tomorrow's Teachers class has continued to work with IEPs, lesson plans, and learning disabilities/barriers. Each student picked a grade and subject and created a full lesson plan to teach to the class (as if the class was in that grade level). We're now creating a

presentation on a learning barrier to share with our classmates, as if they were our coworkers. Although this year has been tough for everybody, we worked together to make the most out of our course experience. If one thing is for certain, our class is ready to take on what's ahead on the path to becoming educators.



## Tomorrow's Teachers Class Updates (cont.)

### North Brunswick Township High School Sahar Khan

Recently, our Tomorrow's Teachers class finally began the long-awaited student teaching section! I decided to begin my student teaching experience with high school math—specifically CP Algebra I and II—since it was my favorite subject to learn as a sophomore myself. Before diving straight into teaching, I observed the classes to get a feel for how the classroom is run and what to expect. I assisted with little tasks, such as “Do Now” activities and homework reviews, to get more familiar with not only the students but also the different aspects of facilitating a class. To prepare for this classroom experience, we also created several different lesson plans based on the subject we planned to help teach. One thing I didn't expect was to be nervous! I'm typically the one to volunteer in class and help my peers, so I had assumed I would feel calm from the beginning. Fortunately for me, I have a super welcoming and patient co-operating teacher who doesn't mind helping me bring my ideas to reality. Overall, it's been such a fun and unique experience that I'd definitely recommend to anyone who's even a little curious about the world of education!

TO OUR STUDENT AMBASSADORS  
  
THANK YOU!

## Senior Shout-Outs



**Amber Downs**  
Winthrop University  
Elementary Education

“No matter the situation, always be unapologetically yourself. Life is too short to worry about how others think of you. Be true to yourself.”

**Madison Jacobs**  
Rowan University  
Elementary Education

“Live in the moment and don't take the time you're given for granted. The value of a moment isn't realized until it's only a memory. Four years is going to go by faster than you think, enjoy every second of it.”



**Sahar Khan**  
Rutgers University  
Pre-Law Track &  
working at my family's  
restaurant

“Don't shy away from hard work. Hard work is what will set you apart from the rest. If it were easy, anyone could do it. You are much more capable of what you believe, be confident, and rise up to your potential.”

**Alyse Lerner**  
The College of New Jersey  
Elementary Education

“Always treat others with kindness and respect; it will gain you many friendships, and you will make amazing memories along the way. Be confident in yourself and go achieve your goals and dreams. If it makes you happy, that's what's most important!”



## Resources

- Center for Black Educator Development: [thecenterblacked.org](http://thecenterblacked.org)
- 8 Black Hands podcast (featuring Ray Ankrum, Charles Cole, Sharif El-Mekki, and Chris Stewart): [citizen.education/8-black-hands-podcast](http://citizen.education/8-black-hands-podcast)
- Living YES, LLC: [alishadelorenzo.com](http://alishadelorenzo.com)
- The Mindfulness Classroom: [themindfulclassroom.offeringtree.com](http://themindfulclassroom.offeringtree.com)
- “Meet NJEA ESP of the Year Kimberly Scott-Hayden”: [njea.org/a-lifetime-of-giving](http://njea.org/a-lifetime-of-giving)

## About CFE

The Center for Educators (CFE) was established at The College of New Jersey in January 2010 as a collaboration between the New Jersey Education Association and The College of New Jersey to launch a new vision for statewide leadership in the identification, selection, and grooming of prospective future teachers, and to serve as an exemplary national model of future teacher development and recruitment.

The CFE was established to inspire, encourage, and recruit high school and middle school students who are considering teaching as a future career. The CFE especially seeks future educators interested in teaching in high poverty and hard-to-staff schools and/or high shortage subject areas such as math, science, special education, world languages, technology, bilingual and ESL. The Center believes that New Jersey’s students are entitled to have the best, highly trained teachers that reflect the demographics of the state and promote academic progress and social skill development. The CFE works collaboratively with schools, institutions, and agencies across New Jersey to develop exemplary models of future teacher recruitment.



**Jeanne DelColle**



**Wambui Gilbert**

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