

# LEADING EDUCATORS ANNUAL REPORT 2016





## LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

As we mark the end of another incredible year, I am pleased to share with you the remarkable progress that Leading Educators has made in schools around the country. We began this year with a clear purpose – to dramatically increase our impact on the quality of teaching and learning that happens in classrooms – and we fulfilled that mission in partnership with teachers, school administrators, and district leaders who share our vision of great schools for all students.

Over the past 12 months, we have reflected on our own programming, solicited input from a variety of partners, and examined the research and best practices in the field to critically assess the way we do our work. As a result, we refined our model to build on the key organizational, structural, and cultural conditions that we know are essential for success. At the core of this evolved model lies a sharper focus on job-embedded professional learning for teachers, rigorous content aligned to state standards, and an anti-bias framework that underscores our belief that all children deserve the best that our educational system has to offer, no matter their background.

In our quest to meet our goals, we worked in Kansas City, Missouri, New Orleans, Memphis, and Washington, DC to strengthen teachers’ content knowledge, instructional skill, and leadership development. Our work in Washington, DC was particularly significant since, not only did we support teacher leaders from 27 charter schools – including all 10 campuses of the AppleTree Institute – but we also embarked upon an ambitious partnership with Washington, DC Public Schools (DCPS) to launch the LEarning together to Advance our Practice (LEAP) initiative. Through LEAP, Leading Educators played a critical role in the design and delivery of high quality content to support DCPS’ goal of instructional improvement for teacher leaders from all 115 of its schools. This large-scale engagement represents an exciting turning point for Leading Educators and marks the first time that the impact of our model of leadership and professional development has been shared across an entire district.

Based on the success with DCPS, we are excited by the opportunity to build other system-wide partnerships, and we believe that this is one of the smartest ways to maximize impact with as many teachers and students as possible. In the meantime, we continue to critically reflect on our approach, examine our data and results with honesty and transparency, and challenge ourselves to provide schools and systems with the tools, resources, and support that they need to build a solid base of distributed leadership, high quality instruction, and strong student outcomes. We look forward to your continued support in this work.

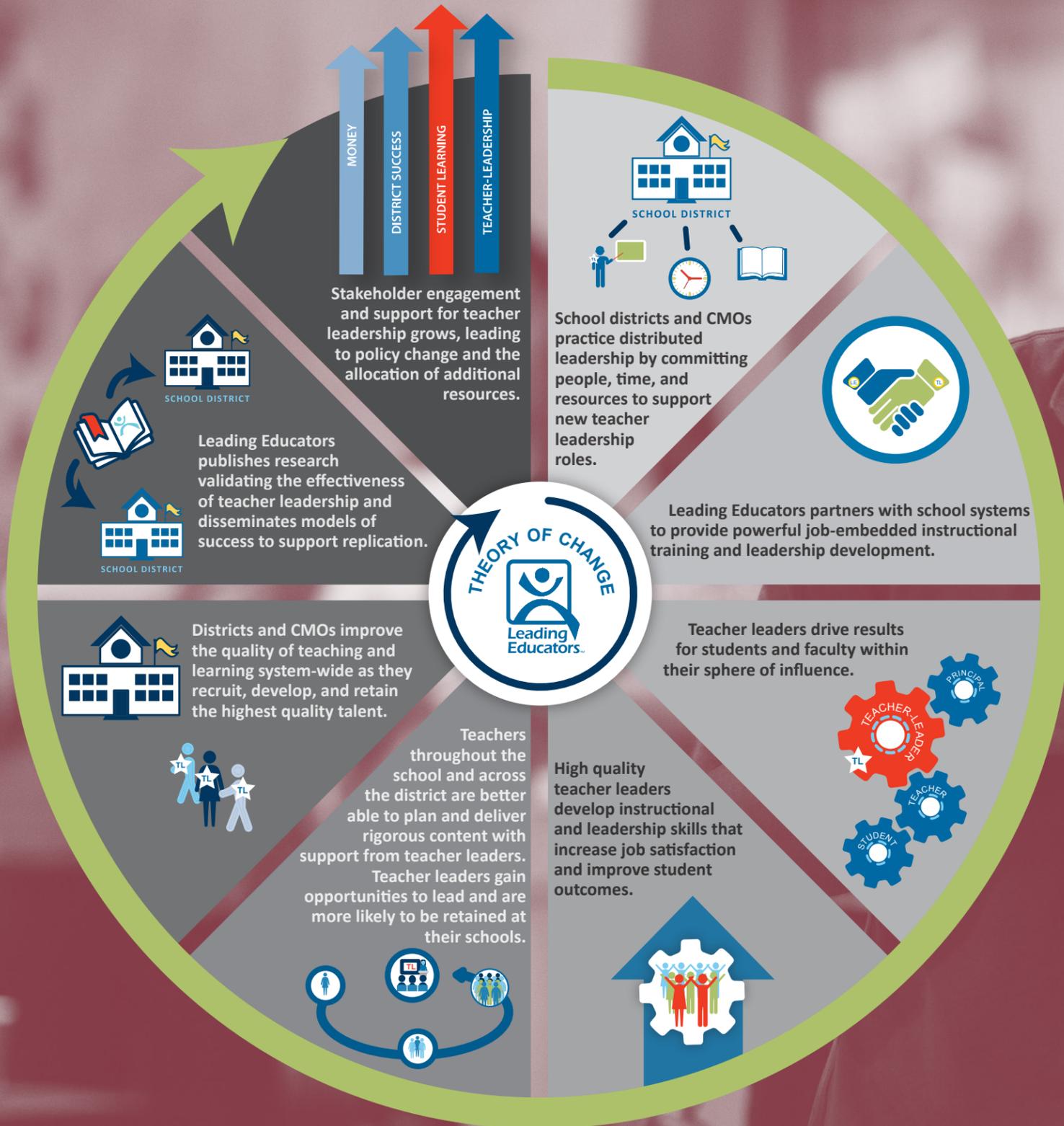
Yours Truly,

Jonas Chartock, Ed.D.  
Chief Executive Officer



**Since 2008, Leading Educators has served more than 1,300 teacher leaders in New Orleans, Kansas City, Memphis, Washington, DC, and other cities in Louisiana, Illinois, Connecticut, Colorado, Texas, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New York. During the 2015-2016 school year, Leading Educators served over 450 teacher leaders, who led approximately 1,800 teachers, and collectively impacted almost 86,000 students.**

# THEORY OF CHANGE



# STUDENT DATA

**59%**

of graduating Fellows led their teams to meet challenging goals for student achievement, reaching a minimum of:

↑ an average of 1 year's growth

OR

**80%** of students who achieve proficiency

OR

**1/4** gap closure between their school's performance and the highest-performing local school.

**29%**

led their teams even further to achieve significant impact, reaching a minimum of:

↑ an average of 1.5 years' growth

OR

**80%** of students who achieve proficiency

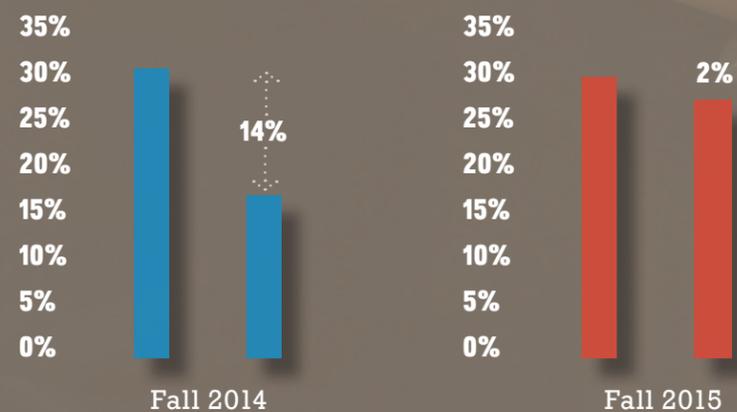
OR

**1/3** gap closure between their school's performance and the highest-performing local school.

# STUDENT OUTCOMES



In 2015, Leading Educators Fellows in New Orleans and Kansas City closed over three-quarters of the math achievement gap between their students and national performance on the Northwestern Evaluation Association (NWEA) college readiness benchmarks. Students showed growth equivalent to two additional months of instruction.



# FELLOW PROFILES



**Andrew Owens**  
 Memphis Cohort 2015 · 5th Grade English Language Arts (ELA), Grade Level Leader · Promise Academy Charter School

**Fellowship Perspective:** My name is Andrew Owens, and I am a native Memphian. After graduating from Mitchell High School in 2001, I received a Bachelor’s degree from Bethel College in McKenzie, TN. I began working in the Memphis City School System as an In-School Suspension Assistant from 2007 until 2009, and I began teaching after earning my Master’s degree from Union University in 2010. I joined Leading Educators’ Fellowship program in 2015, and the learning during my first year has been incredible. From sessions on team-building to setting team goals and resolving conflict, the program offers valuable and practical takeaways that I can implement immediately. Outside of school, Leading Educators provides support within a learning community that enables me to grow and develop as a teacher and a leader. I love being a part of Leading Educators.

**Accomplishments:** Andrew Owens believes that self-esteem goes hand-in-hand with academic outcomes, so he works to create safe learning environments for his students. Andrew sets up individual conferences to monitor his students’ development and creates action plans that respond to students’ specific areas of academic concern.

**Data:** Last year, Andrew’s students grew an average of 1.13 years on the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Growth Assessment.



**Rebekah Mills**  
 New Orleans Cohort 2015  
 Instructional Coach and Content Lead  
 Arthur Ashe Charter School

**Fellowship Perspective:** I spent the first 23 years of my life growing up in north Mississippi where I began my journey in social justice as a sociology major at the University of Mississippi. As a child, I “taught” my teddy bears and any neighborhood kids who would listen, so it was only natural that I move to New Orleans after college to take part in the growing education movement here. Living in this great city allows me to work closely with like-minded folks who want to help those in our community, whether building adult education, working with displaced women and children, or teaching in early childhood education. For the past four years, I have been dedicated to kindergarten, and am currently the K-2 Team Lead at Arthur Ashe Charter School.

**Accomplishments:** Rebekah’s primary goal for the year is to increase her K-2 students’ reading and writing skills so that 60% finish the year at or above grade level and 80% demonstrate mastery of foundational skills.

**Data:** Rebekah achieved solid gains with her students last year with an average growth of 1.06 years.

## EAST HIGH SCHOOL KANSAS CITY, MO

East High School was inspired by the experiences of a Cohort 2014 alumna to enroll a team from its English Department in Cohort 2016. The team included the department chairs and representatives from the special education department and the English as a Second Language (ESL) department. Together, with the enthusiastic support of their principal, this team worked with Leading Educators to identify the most effective and high-impact techniques for teaching to the new state standards.

The East High School team's focus was a series of trainings surrounding how best to use complex texts with students of all levels. The team has worked with the teachers in their departments to identify quality complex texts, and to develop strategies on how best to scaffold their use in classrooms and how best to support vocabulary development through the use of complex texts.

The East High School team is working to raise the level of achievement for all students at their school – including their ESL and special education students – on the Missouri Assessment Program, because they understand that literacy is a foundational building block for students to go on to success in school and in life.

## SAMUEL J. GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL NEW ORLEANS

At Samuel J. Green Charter School, school leaders understand the importance of teamwork and believe that Green staff provide valuable expertise that is key to student success. Teacher leaders guide and develop their grade level or content teams in high quality instruction, effective school culture, and the use of data-driven practices to achieve significant student results.

Leading Educators alumna, Denise Shillingsburg, has led a successful reading initiative at Green for the past three years. Her efforts have helped to improve Green students' assessment data so that more students begin the school year reading on grade-level. Last year, over 80% of Green students moved at least two grade levels on the STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress) assessment. Students can clearly articulate their STEP goals and the strategies they must master to move from one level to the next. By the end of the 2015-2016 school year, Green aspired to have 100% of 4th grade students' making an average of at least 1.5 years of growth on the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) reading assessment. The team at Green is excited about the continued progress they can make in reading instruction this year with the assistance and support of Leading Educators Fellows and alumni.

## APPLETREE PARTNERSHIP WASHINGTON, D.C.

The partnership between AppleTree and Leading Educators began in 2015 when three AppleTree Mentor Teachers participated in the Leading Educators program. These Mentor Teachers went on to drive increased student achievement on math and English Language Arts assessments. As a result of these gains, Leading Educators' engagement with AppleTree has grown to include 13 Mentor Teachers and one Instructional Coach who represent all 10 AppleTree campuses.

As our partnership with AppleTree continues, Leading Educators has helped to clearly define the roles and function of teacher leaders, utilizing a model of distributed leadership to lessen the load on principals and better position principals and teacher leaders, together, to drive initiatives that result in improved school culture and higher student achievement.

**Kelly Riling**  
Manager of Program Development and Partnerships  
AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter Schools

During the previous school year, Leading Educators trained our teacher leaders to coach others and lead teams of teachers. In doing so, highly effective teachers are able to improve the practice of their colleagues and increase the academic outcomes of a greater number of students.

The partnership between AppleTree and Leading Educators started in 2015. Three of 10 Mentor Teachers across eight campuses participated in the Leading Educators program during the 2015-2016 school year. Campus growth measured by our Math and English Language Arts assessments shows increased student achievement driven by the three Mentor Teachers participating in the Leading Educators Fellowship. This growth in student achievement led us to increase our partnership with Leading Educators. We now have 13 Mentor Teachers and one Instructional Coach participating in the Leading Educators program, representing all 10 AppleTree campuses.

As our partnership continues, Leading Educators has helped to clearly define the roles and function of our teacher leaders, utilizing distributive leadership to lessen the load on our principals. With distributive leadership, our principals and teacher leaders are better positioned to drive initiatives resulting in higher student achievement, while leading Cycles of Professional Learning ensures our teachers are constantly honing their craft and growing as instructors to better serve the student population.

## LEAP PROGRAM FELLOWSHIP WASHINGTON, D.C.

Leading Educators has partnered with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) to support its innovative approach to distributed leadership. LEAP (LEarning together to Advance our Practice) is a critical component of DCPS' district-wide focus on instructional improvement so that every student across the city experiences engaging and challenging instruction every day. LEAP was designed around three guiding principles:

- **Content-specific programming:** LEAP helps teachers develop deep content knowledge and strategies to apply it in their classrooms.
- **School-based supports:** LEAP reflects and responds to the individual needs of the school, its teachers, and its students.
- **Adult-learning curriculum:** LEAP provides teacher leaders with tools and resources to meet the content and pedagogical needs of their teachers.

**LEAP Program Fellowship: Kelly Harper**  
Amidon-Bowen Elementary School, DC Public Schools

My adult leadership skills have grown immensely in the past several months through the LEAP program. Serving as a LEAP Leader has sharpened my own practice as a teacher, and I routinely use our weekly focus as my personal benchmark for instructional excellence. Additionally, serving as a LEAP Leader has extended my impact beyond my own classroom. My work supports approximately 150 children, far beyond my individual class. I enjoy having students from other classes tell me their reading successes and watching their eyes light up with passion when "Aha!" moments occur. If each brilliant child in every class I serve becomes a lifelong, voracious reader, we will see incredible gains in reading and writing.

I've seen the impact that LEAP has had on students and my peer teachers, and I want this work to become embedded into the cultural framework of our school. Learning innovative strategies, examining student work and data, and using student work to shift our practices are all cornerstones of effective teaching, and I would like to see these habits ingrained into the practice of all our teachers so that our work is self-sustaining.

As part of DCPS' new approach to instructional improvement, teachers engage in weekly cycles of professional development in small content-specific teams at their schools that include over 400 assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders across the city.

## TESTIMONIALS

“Having teachers in Leading Educators has helped improve the quality of our instructional coaching and teacher leadership at the school. [Leading Educators Fellows] really set the bar for modeling excellence in leadership. They are also able to deliver high quality professional development that improves teacher practice.”

- Danielle A. Singh, principal at Paul Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. on the 2016 Annual Principal Survey

“This is making me completely rethink how my parish teaches Algebra I and geometry. We do so much lecture/notes that we prevent kids from coming to an organic understanding of the concept. As I plan for the coming year, I am really thinking about ways to shift the work of learning to my students.”

- Emma Farrow, Baton Rouge Teacher Leader, Cohort 2014 Fellow on the 2016 Annual Survey

“This is the best professional development I have ever attended. All the sessions are very relevant, and moreover, can be used immediately upon returning to school. The information learned is very transferable to one’s professional life in school.”

- Noeleen Hay, New Orleans Cohort 2014 Fellow on the 2016 Annual Survey

“Leading Educators was a great experience, and I know that I am a stronger teacher, more effective leader, and I have tools to be an effective coach. I am a changed person at work. I believe in myself more. I am excited about what the future has for me and ... to help other teacher leaders become their best.”

- Jeanice B. Stewart, Washington, DC Cohort 2014 Fellow on the 2016 Annual Survey

## LEADERSHIP PROFILES



**JAY ALTMAN**

**Chairman of the Board Leading Educators, Founder of Leading Educators; Chief Executive Officer, FirstLine Schools**

Since 1990, Jay has partnered with like-minded parents and educators to provide quality educational opportunities for students in New Orleans’ open-admission public schools. He taught in the city for several years before co-founding New Orleans Charter Middle School. In addition, he co-founded the James Lewis Extension School, New Orleans Outreach, New Orleans Summerbridge, and Leading Educators. As director of education for London-based ARK schools from 2005 to 2008, Jay helped develop a British network of charter-like schools in complex urban environments, as well as two training programs – Future Leaders, focused on providing support to aspiring principals of open-admission schools, and Teaching Leaders to strengthen mid-level school leadership.



**Amy Rome**  
**Chief Program Officer**

Amy joined Leading Educators from the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), where she served as a principal and director of principals focused on teacher development programming and turnaround schools for a network of Chicago Public Schools. While at AUSL, Amy designed and implemented leadership development opportunities for teams at 32 schools. Prior to AUSL, she was a faculty member at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), where she founded and directed a graduate program preparing teachers specifically for high-needs school transformation. Earlier in her career, Amy served as an elementary teacher and teacher leader in Chicago Public Schools. Amy holds a B.A. in Chinese Language and Literature from the University of Iowa and a M.A.T from National Louis University, with a focus on minority language education. She has completed doctoral coursework at UIC in curriculum and instruction and urban school leadership.



**Sonya Anderson**  
**Senior Vice President of Storytelling and Development**

Sonya brings a wealth of strategic development, advocacy, and communications experience to the role of Senior Vice President of Storytelling and Development. Her diverse background in the non-profit world includes grant-making at the Ford Foundation, Oprah Winfrey Foundations, and Crown Family Philanthropies. Sonya also supported early childhood education initiatives at the Ounce of Prevention Fund where she led advocacy and engagement efforts at the local and federal levels. In addition, Sonya brings deep programmatic expertise in international education and has directed a range of development projects in countries such as South Africa, Ethiopia, Benin, Ghana, and Haiti. Sonya comes from a family of educators and began her professional career as a high school French and social studies teacher with the Mississippi Teacher Corps. Sonya holds a B.A. in economics and political science from Yale University, an M.A. in international affairs from the University of Ghana, and an Ed.D. in education planning and policy from Harvard University.

## STAFF PROFILES



## STAFF PROFILES



**Adan Garcia**  
Program Manager of the  
Washington, D.C. Region

Adan is responsible for executing all DC-based programming as well as regional communications and data management. Before joining the Leading Educators team, Adan worked as the Community Action Project coach for the Rawlings Undergraduate Leadership Fellows Program at the University of Maryland and as a program evaluation consultant with America Achieves. Adan received his M.P.P in Social Policy and Nonprofit Management from the University of Maryland-College Park and his B.A. in Political Science from the University of Arizona. As an advocate for arts integration and arts access, Adan is also involved in the D.C. theater community as a performer and administrator.



**Kelley Allenspach Ruyle**  
Program Manager of the  
New Orleans Region

Kelley is responsible for the execution of New Orleans-based programming, including project management, event planning, communications, and data management. Kelley is originally from Middletown, CT, and she relocated to New Orleans following her graduation from Boston University where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in magazine journalism. For over 6 years, Kelley worked in fund development and volunteer management, having most recently served as the Development Director with Boys Hope Girls Hope of Greater New Orleans. Kelley's experience as part of the inaugural class of the Greater New Orleans Foundation's Emerging Leaders program was a driving force behind her passion to work with Leading Educators. The program, designed to develop the leadership skills of middle managers with non-profit organizations, was life changing.



**Lilly Cruz**  
Director of Instructional Practice - Design

Lilly is passionate about supporting teachers and ensuring that all students have access to a quality school experience. She started her career in education as a Resident Teacher at the Academy for Urban School Leadership, a network within Chicago Public Schools that develops teachers through their Chicago Teacher Residency program and places them in neighborhood schools throughout the city. For over 12 years, Lilly served as a middle school ELA teacher, teacher leader, and Mentor Teacher. She then went on to become a Mentor Resident Coach for AUSL's Chicago Teacher Residency program. Lilly also served as an Assistant Principal at Pablo Casals School of Excellence before joining Leading Educators. Lilly lives in Chicago with her husband and two daughters.



**Saya Powell**  
Associate Director of LEAP Events  
and Operations

Saya is responsible for the operations and event management of Leading Educators' national summer institute and DC's LEAP summer training institute. Before joining Leading Educators, Saya worked for Teach For America's South Carolina region for two years as the Managing Director of Strategy, Talent and Operations. Prior to that, she spent a year teaching in Japan after holding roles as director and lead operations for national and regional TFA Institute trainings for over five years. Saya earned her B.A. in International Studies and Spanish from Trinity University in San Antonio, TX. She is excited to make DC home and to support school leaders in delivering an outstanding education for all students.

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## REVENUE

Service Revenue  
30.0%  
\$3,307,383

National Grants  
24.8%  
\$2,738,670

Memphis Grants  
3.6%  
\$403,033

Washington D.C. Grants  
3.3%  
\$364,606

New Orleans Grants  
6.4%  
\$703,561

Grand Rapids Grants  
31.7%  
\$3,500,000

## EXPENSES

Indirect Admin Costs  
9.5%  
\$804,806

Fundraising & Expansion  
14.0%  
\$1,193,289

Program Development  
12.3%  
\$1,044,939

Program Delivery  
64.2%  
\$5,465,341

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**LEADING EDUCATORS**

1824 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

New Orleans, LA 70113

**WWW.LEADINGEDUCATORS.ORG**

@leadingeds