

MEET

MAUREEN
LAFEMINA



MASTER TEACHER:

MATHEMATICS

Undergraduate/ Graduate Degrees:

B.S. Mathematics & Masters
in Education (M.Ed), from
the University of California

Background: She has
taught high school math for
6 years, first in Los Angeles
and then for Boston Public
Schools.

**Focuses as a classroom
teacher:** Students building
critical thinking skills
through higher-order
questioning, cooperative
learning and classroom
investigations.

Role at CSU: She is a
Master Teacher and
currently teaches the Step I
course.

Quote to live by:

*"Some men look at things the
way they are and ask, "Why?" I
look at what could be and
ask, "Why not?"*
~ Henry Ford

MEET STEP I MASTER TEACHER: MAUREEN LAFEMINA

What is your favorite aspect of being a teacher:

The "ah ha" moment. That is the moment when a student has been working hard to understand and apply a concept and then...it clicks. It usually occurs after a series of questioning and some frustration on the part of the student. No matter how big or small the concept may be in the long run and no matter how obvious or subtle an individual students' "ah ha" moment is, it's a big deal. It means our students are engaged and learning. Being a witness to moments of achievement and a facilitator of learning has been my own "ah ha" moment.

"If I could reform education it would start with...."

...what students are taught and how they are taught. To do that, we need passionate, creative teachers with strong content knowledge. -- I am excited to be part of the CSUTeach team, working to make changes in education by how we train new teachers. I believe that by focusing on STEM education [as we] bring our students into the 21st century, we are headed in the right direction to improve student outcomes!

Students tend to have apprehension or negative views towards math and science. How do you think you can alleviate this?

I think it is crucial for teachers to learn early on about the previous classroom experiences of each student. If a student struggled previously in their math class, they're going to start off doubtful of their ability and the possibility for success. I believe a teacher's awareness of a student's academic, familial and social circumstances are the first defenses against disengagement...

What's the best advice someone ever gave to you?

...The hackneyed advice "don't smile until Christmas" has resonated with me, mainly because when I first started, I believed it. The students do not want a stoic teacher, but one who loves what they are doing, someone who is comfortable in the classroom and can communicate effectively with young minds. I have found, instead, that the best tool for engagement and classroom management, is to start off not pretending to be somebody you are not. Be consistent with expectations but show joy and excitement for student achievement. Be genuine!

Final thoughts:

When I was 18 years old I knew two things about myself: I loved mathematics and I loved teaching others. Given the opportunity to explore teaching early in college, I felt prepared to enter the classroom. Since that time I have come to understand teaching as much more than a profession, but a way of life and I am excited to be part of the process for a new generation of teachers.



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information.

SPOTLIGHT



Kristen Bentley & Shannon Phillips:

Representing CSU at the annual UTeach Conference in Austin, Texas

When: May 24 - 26, 2011

Where: The University of Texas at Austin

Poster Creation Guidelines:

Create a poster that illustrated the Functions and Modeling class.

- How well does the poster explain multiple aspects, assignments, & expectations of the course?
- Mathematical/Scientific content of poster
- Poster design
- Student responses to questions

I think the biggest take away is that the teaching community is so willing to help each other. I had the opportunity to meet so many in service teachers and professors that offered suggestions on everything from classroom management to structuring lesson plans. The support system was fantastic!

~**Kristen Bentley** on what she took away from attending the UTeach Conference

CSUTeach Students Win Poster Contest at Annual UTeach Conference

Instructions

CSUTeach
Cleveland State University
engaged learning

Students Today

Teachers Tomorrow

Lab Work

Results

Interpretation

Learning about Teaching in Functions and Modeling is a course designed to engage prospective secondary mathematics teachers in explorations and laboratory activities that will expand and strengthen knowledge and understanding of topics in the secondary mathematics curriculum.

The primary focus of the course centers around reading and analyzing data and applying mathematics in real-world situations.

In class explorations involve the use of multiple data representations, transformations, analysis techniques, and interconnections among topics in algebra, analytic geometry, statistics, trigonometry, and calculus.

Cleveland State University
engaged learning

This spring, CSUTeach students Shannon Phillips and Kristen Bentley attended the annual UTeach conference in Austin, Texas. With over 50 universities in attendance and a record-breaking 443 participants, the CSUTeach students represented their program exceedingly well and won 1st place in the poster design contest by creating a poster that best depicted their Functions & Modeling course (pictured above). In addition to winning the contest, while at the

conference they were able to attend educational seminars, participate in various workshops and discussions as well as meet other teachers and students involved in UTeach throughout the United States. "The conference was great, we got to meet teachers, UTeach Graduates that are currently teaching and there were seminars for everyone...." said Shannon. As the WeTeach president for CSU's student association, he attended many seminars focusing on WeTeach orientations and ideas for the group. Kristen was able to attend some workshops on teaching strategies and meet with many professionals at the same time. "I think the best part of the conference were the sessions that centered around actual classroom experiences. I attended an excellent, interactive session on classroom management," said Kristen. Visit the UTeach website for information on next year's conference - the winner could be you!

NUMBERS

Participants in attendance at 5th annual conference:

443

Universities in attendance:

50

of states represented:

20

of students enrolled in UTeach programs across the country:

4767

Getting Involved

- Join the WeTeach student association
- Become a fan on facebook and learn about events, professional development opportunities and more.



CSU Teach Student Organization: **WeTeach@CSU**

WeTeach

As President of CSU's student organization WeTeach@CSU, Shannon seeks to expand the professional organization and build their community support. If you are interesting in collaborating with other CSU Teach students, join WeTeach@CSU today!

Meetings: Once a month

Contact: Shannon Phillips

Email:
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STEP 2 STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: AMANDA MIKOLAJSKI



"Seeing the bond and connection that teachers can make with students is what really made me what to get into this rewarding profession."

— **Amanda Mikolajski** on what made her want to teach

How did you hear about CSUTeach?

I heard about CSUTeach about two weeks before the semester started last fall from one of the College of Education advisors.

Describe your initial thoughts and reactions to Step 1/Step 2?

Step 1 and Step 2 were both great, eye-opening experiences to what teaching is like. I thoroughly enjoyed both because it allowed

me to get into the classroom early and realize that I love teaching!

What about science or mathematics appeals to you?

Since I plan on being a science teacher, *hands on inquiry* is what appeals to me the most... With science, I think it's great to let students explore lessons by seeing and touching as much as they can.

Why do you believe you will make a good teacher?

I believe that I will make a great teacher because every student deserves a chance. Letting students know that they are important and that their opinion matters encourages learning. If there was one thing that I would want my students to know as they leave my classroom at the end of each year, it would be knowing that they had a teacher who cared about each of them and their success.

What do you believe students in today's high school's need for quality instruction?

It's tough to teach science without any type of technology. As I noticed

throughout Step 1 and Step 2, there is not a lot of technology available for the students. Many of the students understood a certain topic by seeing what was happening verses reading about it.

What was the most difficult part about teaching during Step 1 or Step 2?

Without a doubt, the most difficult part about teaching during Step 2 was trying to figure out how to make the students who didn't care about learning, care, while trying not to take away time from the students who do care about learning. It's definitely not fair to take away time from the students who want to learn, but it's also not fair to ignore the ones who aren't paying attention. I think this will be a daily struggle, but I am determined to figure it out.

What was the best moment or period of time during your CSUTeach course experience so far?

Seeing the smiles and excitement on the kids faces during our lessons!

A Closer Look : CSU Teach Faculty & Staff



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Field Supervisor
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Upcoming Events

Sept. 10th, Saturday Meet Your Mentor Teacher Day

...

- Students from Step 1 and Step 2 will gather Saturday, September 20th to meet their mentor teachers and coordinate days and times for lesson observations and teaching. Details about the Step 1 & 2 experience will be discussed during this meeting and lunch will be served.

• Step 1 Students:

- **10:30am - 11:40am**
Presentations, Materials & Team Building
- **11:40am - 12:30pm**
Matching with your mentor teacher & discussion
- **12:30pm - 1pm Group Lunch**
Mentors, Step 1 & Step 2 students

• Step 2 Students:

- **1:00pm - 2:05**
Presentations, Materials & Team Building
- **2:05 - 2:55pm** Matching with your mentor teacher & discussion



Students are placed at nearby schools for their classroom observations & field placements. Some of the schools CSUteach students have been placed are listed to the right.

Mentor Teacher & Student Stats

CSUteach Area Mentor Teachers

Fall 2010

Participating Schools: 6

Active Mentors: 16

Spring 2011

Participating Schools: 21

Active Mentors: 30

Currently Enrolled Mentors:

Over 100

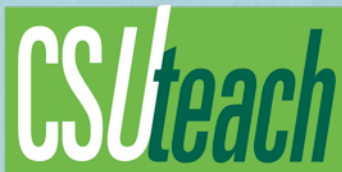
Current site schools:

Over 50

CSUteach Cleveland Area Partner Schools:

AJ Rickoff
Artemus Ward
Benjamin Franklin
Buckeye Woodland
Carl Shuler
Carylwood
Case
Clara Westropp
Danniel E. Morgan
DEC
Design Lab Early College HS
Early College at John Hay
East Clark
E=MC²
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Science & Medicine at John Hay
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SuccessTech Academy
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Thomas Jefferson
Wade Park
Walton
Whitney Young
Wilbur Wright
Wilson
Woodland Hills

CSUTEACH NEWSLETTER
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Cleveland State University
Cleveland, OH 44115

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:

- Contact Ms. Renee Overton

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

- Dr. Joanne Goodell, Dr. Debbie Jackson, or Dr. Robert Ferguson

Advising Questions/Information:

- Mrs. Courtney Nudell

• WETeach STUDENT ASSOCIATION:

- Shannon Philips

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