

The Leaders Digest



Emerging Leaders Participant Directory
2018-19



Emerging Leaders is a nine-month professional development program that transforms young professionals working in the public interest into invested nonprofit leaders. Participants develop the leadership capabilities, management skills, and confidence necessary to accelerate their careers while generating tangible results and lasting value for their organizations and the nonprofit sector.

The program employs experiential learning, professional experts and speakers to build management skills, leadership competencies, and sector-specific knowledge. The following learning tracks are woven together throughout the course of the program:

- **Self-Management and Self-Awareness**
- **Managing Others and Team Dynamics**
- **Nonprofit Management and Skill-Building**
 - **Leadership Beyond the Office**

Nonprofit professionals from any academic background are encouraged to apply.

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We encourage you to follow our Emerging Leaders throughout the year as they share their experiences on The Leading Edge blog: alumni corps.wordpress.com.

Please also connect with us online on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

The work of Princeton AlumniCorps is made possible by the more than 200 volunteers, 600 donors, and nonprofit partner organizations that support Princeton AlumniCorps' mission throughout the United States.

The 2018-19 Program Leaders for Emerging Leaders are Margaret Crotty and Elizabeth Lindsey. Princeton AlumniCorps' Executive Director is Kef Kasdin, and the Director of Programs and Strategy is Caryn Tomljanovich.

The Princeton AlumniCorps Emerging Leaders program is made possible by a lead grant from **American Express Foundation** through their leadership development giving program.

We are also grateful to The Burke Foundation and Harris Finch Foundation, which provided additional support for this program.

Program Leaders

Our volunteer Program Leaders are responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the Emerging Leaders program as it relates to the broader Princeton AlumniCorps mission and to the needs of the nonprofit sector.



Margaret Crotty, **New York City**

Margaret Crotty has served in executive leadership roles in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors in the areas of education, technology, and training. She is currently the Executive Director of Partnership with Children (partnershipwithchildreennyc.org), which serves New York City's most underserved children and works to stabilize and strengthen high-poverty public schools. In 2008, Margaret launched and ran Save the Children International's \$2 billion initiative to reduce child mortality in the developing world. Previously, she was the President and CEO of AFS-USA, which has provided intercultural exchanges for over 300,000 high school students since 1947. She also served as the VP and General Manager of a digital language education company, an independent business within the Reader's Digest Association, where she was brought in by the CEO to transform the business. Margaret spent seven years at the global corporation EF Education, the world's largest privately-held education company, and lived in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Paris. She was on the founding management team of EF's major online business and later served as President of EF's higher education business.

Margaret has also served as the Executive Director of a workforce development agency in New York City and Washington, DC. She has worked in Indonesia on two occasions, for McKinsey and Company and Save the Children. Margaret graduated with honors from Princeton University and earned an MBA from Harvard Business School. She serves on the boards of her Young Presidents Organization (YPO) chapter, the Glimpse Foundation, St. Mark's School of Harlem, and the Convent of the Sacred Heart. She is a Princeton Project 55 mentor and is a Special Advisor to Save the Children's EVERY ONE Campaign. Others would describe Margaret as interested, entrepreneurial, and energetic.



Elizabeth Lindsey, **Washington, DC**

Elizabeth Lindsey is the Executive Director of Byte Back, a Washington, DC based nonprofit providing technology career training to unemployed adults. Under Elizabeth's leadership, Byte Back's innovative training pathway is earning national attention and support.

Prior to joining Byte Back in 2015, Elizabeth served as the Chief Operating Officer of Groundswell, overseeing its evolution from a start-up into a nationally-recognized social enterprise. She earned her bachelor's from Swarthmore College and master's in public affairs and urban and regional planning from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. Elizabeth led development efforts for small, minority, and women-owned businesses for the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, and she helped develop workforce training programs for the DC Department of Employment Services.

Elizabeth serves on the Federal Communications Commission's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment and on the Board of Directors of The Workplace DC, the Goodwill Excel Center, The Engine Room, and the National Digital Inclusion Alliance. She competed in two WeWork Creator Awards pitch competitions, winning \$720,000 for Byte Back. As a recognized leader, Elizabeth was featured in the Washington Business Journal and named a 2017 Tech Titan by the Washingtonian. She won the DC Inno 50 on Fire award, New Power Woman of DC Tech award from DCA Live, and the Champion of Digital Equality Award from the Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council. She led a panel at SXSW in 2018 and was named a top 100 leadership speaker for 2018 in Inc. magazine. She also serves as an Organizer for DC Tech Meetup, with 23,000 members.

Elizabeth is dedicated to helping people thrive in a digital society and to creating a pathway to living-wage careers for thousands of people. People who know and love Elizabeth describe her as passionate, dedicated, and vivacious.

Program Facilitators

Program Facilitators serve as the lead designers and facilitators of the Emerging Leaders curriculum.



Yael C. Sivi, *New York City*

Yael C. Sivi is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Collaborative Coaching, www.collaborative-coaching.com

Yael plays multiple roles across professional contexts: she serves as an executive coach for leaders, a consultant for organizations and teams, and she is a psychotherapist in part-time private practice. Across these roles, Yael's focus is consistent: She seeks to understand the complexity of human behavior and supports human dynamics in the workplace to be more healthy and productive. Yael brings over seventeen years experience working in Fortune 1000 companies, non-profit organizations, and government agencies – with the aim of increasing the emotional intelligence, consciousness, and psychological safety of our interactions at work.

Yael has worked on numerous global and domestic assignments. Current and past clients have included American Express, Boehringer Ingelheim, Citibank, Coca-Cola, Deutsche Bank, Genentech, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, NASA, NYSE/Euronext, New York Foundation for the Arts, Ogilvy, Partnership for Children, Princeton AlumniCorps, Securities Industry Institute, Success Academy, United Nations, US Forest Service, WL Gore, World Bank, among others.

Yael has been the lead facilitator for Princeton AlumniCorps' Emerging Leaders New York program since its launch seven years ago. She loves working with emerging leaders and brings a holistic understanding of who they are, what's important to them, as well as the specific challenges they face, as leaders and as young adults. Drawing on adult development theory and her expertise in Gestalt psychotherapy, Yael sees professional and personal growth as two sides of the same coin; this mindset deeply informs her leadership development work – with emerging and seasoned leaders alike.

Others describe Yael as warm, curious, and reflective.



Hilary Joel, *Washington, DC*

Hilary Joel is an executive coach and management consultant with over 25 years of experience across numerous industries. She is the founding principal of WJ Consulting, LLC (www.wjconsulting.com). Hilary has partnered with the leadership and management of scores of nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government agencies to help them advance toward their own definitions of professional and organizational success more deeply, intentionally, quickly and sustainably than they could on their own. Hilary focuses primarily on nonprofit organizations, providing one-on-one coaching, leadership development, team/retreat facilitation and guidance in organizational effectiveness to nonprofit leaders, their teams, and their boards. She has partnered with the Executive Directors, management teams and boards of international as well as national and local social sector organizations. Before starting her own coaching and consulting firm, Hilary spent a dozen years with management consulting firms focused on corporate clients in a range of industries. Her responsibilities included strategic planning, business analysis, and implementing management best practices.

Hilary holds a BA degree in Economics from Princeton University and an MBA degree from Harvard Business School where she was a Baker Scholar. After receiving her MBA, as the Charles M. Williams Research Fellow, she co-authored 11 business school case studies on a variety of management issues. Hilary graduated from the Georgetown Leadership Coaching Program and is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC) with the International Coach Federation. She is a certified administrator of several assessment tools, such as Myers-Briggs, DiSC, The Leadership Circle(T) 360-feedback profile, and CCL's Skillscope 360.

Hilary's passion for a strong nonprofit sector extends into her personal and volunteer life. She is a cofounder, and board member of Compass, a consortium of MBA alumni who provide pro bono management consulting to nonprofits. She also serves as Vice President of the Board of CollegeTracks, which helps low-income, first-gen-to-college high school students enter and succeed in college. Those who know Hilary well would describe her as positive, insightful, and supportive.

Program Staff

Program Staff are Princeton AlumniCorps employees who coordinate the recruitment and application process for the Emerging Leaders program. They collaborate with the Program Facilitators to design, evaluate, and amend the program each year, ensuring that it accomplishes AlumniCorps' mission of mobilizing people, organizations, and networks for the public good.



Kef Kasdin, **President and Executive Director**

Kef is Executive Director of Princeton AlumniCorps. She began working with AlumniCorps as a volunteer in 2010 when she piloted and led the expansion of AlumniCorps' ARC Innovators program, which provides opportunities for experienced professionals to do meaningful pro bono projects in the nonprofit sector. She oversaw the expansion of the program from a pilot in New Jersey to operations in New York, DC and New Jersey as well as a doubling of the number of ARC Innovator annual projects. Kef joined the Board in 2012 and became active in all of AlumniCorps' programming. She was instrumental in developing two strategic plans for the organization, including the most recent plan approved in February 2017. That plan recognizes AlumniCorps as a network of about 2000 program alumni, 500 organizations, and 200 volunteers. AlumniCorps seeks to mobilize that network for the public good while also enhancing and expanding current programs and launching a Bold Idea – a deep dive into a topical social issue that will provide opportunities for collaboration across the AlumniCorps network to effect key policy or other systemic changes.

In addition to her AlumniCorps responsibilities, Kef is Board Chair at Rachel's Network, a vibrant community of women at the intersection of environmental advocacy, philanthropy and women's leadership. In that capacity she advises the President and works closely with the staff, board and members on implementing Rachel's Network's strategic plan calling for collective action on key environmental issues as well as progress on women's leadership. Kef has previously served on other nonprofit boards in leadership roles, including Jewish Family & Children's Service of Greater Mercer County and Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Kef also created and has taught the introductory "Foundations of Entrepreneurship" course at Princeton University, where she mentored 50 Princeton undergraduates per semester, inspiring them to launch innovations that can create value and make a difference in the world. Earlier in her career, Kef held senior leadership roles at 3Com Corporation, a data networking company, including general manager of a \$1 billion division. She became a technology-startup consultant in the late 1990s, a venture capitalist in 2000 and a founding general partner of Battelle Ventures, where from 2003 to 2015 she led the firm's investments in clean energy and started several companies based on U.S. Department of Energy Lab technologies.

Kef holds a B.S.E degree in operations research from Princeton University, with a certificate in science and policy from the Woodrow Wilson School, and an MBA from the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University. Close friends would describe Kef as collaborative, empathetic, and resilient.



Caryn Tomljanovich, **Director of Strategy and Programs**

Caryn joined Princeton AlumniCorps in November 2013 and focuses on growing and strengthening AlumniCorps programs across the country. Prior to joining AlumniCorps she worked for both the Hunterdon Land Trust and the Hunterdon Art Museum as Director of Development. At both organizations, she was responsible for grant writing, event planning, direct appeals and major donor strategies. She previously helped start the Upstate Institute at Colgate University working with faculty and administrators to develop the Institute's strategic plan and structure their summer fellowship program. Her work there involved connecting students and faculty with civic engagement projects in the Central New York region, and working with nonprofits throughout the region on their strategic plans. Prior to the Upstate Institute, Caryn worked for the Partnership for Community Development where she focused on downtown and small business development in Hamilton, NY. She also spent time teaching adult micro-enterprise classes throughout the beautiful Finger Lakes region of NY, and managing a micro finance revolving loan fund while at Worker Ownership Resource Center (WORC). Caryn applied her expertise to develop and teach online undergraduate and graduate level grant writing classes for Excelsior College. During her career she has developed and helped implement strategic plans for a variety of nonprofit organizations in multiple sectors.

She earned a BA in Economics from Connecticut College and a Masters in Public Policy with a focus in Community Development from Rockefeller College at SUNY Albany. In her free time you can find her baking, running, biking and hanging out with her family. Friends describe Caryn as compassionate, optimistic, and proactive.



Soraia Francisco, **Program Associate**

A native of Portugal, Soraia graduated from Rutgers University and served in multiple U.S. cities as a two-term AmeriCorps member. In her first term of service, she provided disaster relief and long-term recovery for communities impacted by Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Sandy. She then moved to the West Coast to serve as an AVID tutor in Federal Way, Washington, where she served elementary, middle, and high school students. For the next three years, she continued to build relationships with and serve at-risk youth, as a School Outreach Coordinator for Communities In Schools. She values a holistic approach to her work within a community, and one of her passions is facilitating comprehensive, trauma-informed sexuality education. She is a current M.Ed. student at Widener University's Center for Human Sexuality Studies on the Sexuality Education track. Some of her areas of interest are consent and communication (for both youth and adults), LGBTQ competency and issues, survivorship sexuality, and professional development for healthcare professionals. In her free time, she loves to hike with her dog, craft snail mail, and unpack social constructs with friends over a meal.

New York Emerging Leaders

New York's Emerging Leaders cohort consists of 16 young professionals who work for nonprofit organizations located in New York and New Jersey. The 2018-19 cohort will be the seventh group to participate in Princeton AlumniCorps' Emerging Leaders program in New York. The New York cohort is facilitated by Yael Sivi (Collaborative Coaching).



Vashti Barran, [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org)

Vashti works at DonorsChoose.org, a crowd-funding website that empowers public school teachers to create projects for their classroom needs. The organization also encourages anyone who can give as little as one dollar to bring those ideas to life. She works on the operations team where she manages, develops, and improves relationships with the vendors that teachers can select resources from when they create their projects.

Before joining DonorsChoose.org, Vashti earned her B.A. in Economics from Hunter College. She is a first-generation college student and is really inspired by her work because she is a product of the New York City public school and public college system. In her free time, she loves to volunteer and is currently a mentor coach with America Needs You, where she works closely with first-generation college students at Laguardia Community College on their personal, professional, and academic goals. She also enjoys meditation, yoga, drinking tea, and doing arts and crafts. Whether she's in a downward dog or trying to paint the inside of a vase, Vashti is attentive, compassionate, and loyal.



Betsy Cohen, [Youth Communication](https://www.youthcommunication.org)

Betsy serves as the Deputy Director of Youth Communication, which equips and empowers educators with real teen-written stories and a literacy-rich training model to engage struggling youth and build their social and emotional learning skills. At Youth Communication, Betsy leads the organization's growth strategy, partnership recruitment, and new program development.

Betsy has several years of experience working to expand the opportunities and resources available to NYC public school students, teachers, and school leaders. Prior to joining Youth Communication in 2017, she worked as the Director of Development for the Center for Supportive Schools—another organization that supports social and emotional learning in New York City public schools.

She also worked on the development team at Success Academy Charter Schools, as a grants and funding researcher at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and as an English Teaching Assistant in France. She earned a Master's Degree in Theological Studies from Harvard University and a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Emory University. Those who know her describe Betsy as warm, diligent, and thoughtful.



Francisco Cruz, [Peer Health Exchange](#)

Francisco Cruz works at Peer Health Exchange (PHE) as NYC's Program Director. Peer Health Exchange is a national non-profit that recruits and trains local college volunteers to deliver a skills-based curriculum around sexual and mental health to help others develop the skills to make good health choices. At PHE, he manages NYC's program, the NYC program team, and works with the Executive Director to plan for future growth and impact. He also manages the team on Summative Evaluation efforts while building and maintaining external partnerships with the Department of Education, the Department of Health, community partners, and other critical program partners.

Prior to PHE, he earned two B.A.'s from CUNY- Lehman College. Shortly after, he joined Teach for America where he taught English, Language Arts, and Special Education to seventh grade students. While in the classroom, he incorporated concepts from his background in Psychology and Philosophy to facilitate developing critical thinking skills. Following his experience as a teacher, he wanted to get experience in helping the day-to-day operations of a school and joined the administrative team of a charter school in Brooklyn. These experiences made him more aware of the large institutions that influence the everyday lives of students and the systems that limit the work being done in schools. This pushed Francisco to want to work towards systemic change with a focus on social impact to ensure that schools are prioritizing teaching skills that are pertinent to a child's development. Francisco is curious, solutions-oriented, and tenacious.



Miriam Edwin, [The Doe Fund](#)

Miriam works at The Doe Fund, a transitional housing and work training program for homeless and formerly incarcerated men that seeks to break the devastating cycles of incarceration, homelessness, poverty, and recidivism. As the Director of Education and Training, she oversees literacy classes, computer classes, and occupational training programs in five sectors. She strives to provide her clients with the hard skills, soft skills, and industry-recognized credentials necessary to obtain living wage jobs in New York City.

Before coming to The Doe Fund, she earned a Bachelor of Arts from Emory University and had worked in mental healthcare settings. She recently completed a Master of Arts degree, with a focus in Urban Education, at the CUNY Grad Center. Her thesis highlighted best practices of successful prison-based workforce development programs and college-in-prison programs around the country and proposed a model for a statewide public college-in-prison program in New York. She is a curious and conscientious bibliophile.

Kandasi Griffiths, [Gradian Health Systems](#)



Kandasi works at Gradian Health Systems, a non-profit medical technology company that seeks to equip low-resource hospitals with reliable devices, paired with local training and maintenance globally. At Gradian, her portfolio spans market research, maintaining communication with clinicians and technicians, serving as a liaison for customers and partners, as well as program management of nation-wide activities, primarily in Francophone regions.

Prior to Gradian, Kandasi worked with nonprofits both in the US and internationally as an international development contractor and executed conferences for UN-partner organizations specializing in international education and global poverty reduction initiatives. She has managed operations and logistics for USAID-funded projects, increasing public healthcare access and effectiveness in Afghanistan, Jordan, Tanzania, and Indonesia. Throughout her career, she strives to create more globally inclusive, innovative, and sustainable approaches to development challenges through public and private partnerships. Kandasi holds a BA in Politics, specializing in International Relations, and certificate in French Language and Culture from Princeton University. Kandasi is passionate, dependable, and inquisitive.



Sohaib Hasan, [DoSomething.org](#)

Sohaib works at DoSomething.org, a non-profit dedicated to increasing social and civic engagement among young people by engaging them over web and SMS with social impact campaigns. Sohaib is the Director of Analytics at DoSomething, overseeing efforts to build and maintain the analytics warehouse, as well as efforts to provide the organization with quantitative and qualitative, actionable insights.

Before joining DoSomething, he earned his B.A. from New York University and his M.S. from Clemson University. From there, he spent 2 years as the chief analyst at the Mayor's Office of Data Analytics, which instilled a passion for utilizing his skillset for social good. After a brief detour as a data scientist for a FinTech startup, he joined DoSomething. Sohaib hopes to make a positive impact on the world by communicating hard to discern truths in a layman friendly manner to make the fact based case for social change. Sohaib is driven, curious, and analytical.



Akilah King, [Room To Grow](#)

Akilah is the Executive Director at Room to Grow NY, an organization that offers coaching, material goods, and community connections to support parents as they activate natural strengths and expand their knowledge so children thrive from the start. Room to Grow's vision is that one day all parents will have the resources they need to unlock their families' potential and become champions for babies and their communities.

Prior to joining Room to Grow in 2015, Akilah worked in research at the renowned Hospital for Special Surgery and conducted research and fundraised for its affiliated nonprofit, the Foundation of Orthopedics and Complex Spine (FOCOS). While at FOCOS, Akilah was a member of the team that opened the first, modern orthopedic hospital in West Africa. She also served as the Grants and Public Policy Graduate Intern at Susan G. Komen Greater NYC from 2014 to 2015. Although she has spent extensive time working abroad in Africa, Akilah's graduate education channeled her passion for global health into a passion for local community health, leading her to Room to Grow. Akilah holds a Master's in Public Health from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and a Bachelor's degree from Brown University. Her younger sister would describe her as thoughtful, aesthetic, and conscientious.

Mikaela Levons, [Princeton AlumniCorps](#)



Mikaela Levons is a native of Jamaica who has been passionate about civic engagement since high school. She currently serves as the Development and Communications Associate at Princeton AlumniCorps where she acts as 'storyteller in chief,' mining the vast network of 2,000 program alumni to craft messages that mobilize people and organizations for the public good. Previously, Mikaela was the Membership and Communications Coordinator for New Jersey's Center for Non-Profits, the state's only umbrella organization for the charitable sector. Before working at the Center, she was the grant writer for New Jersey After 3, a \$15M public-private partnership dedicated to expanding and improving afterschool opportunities for children across the state.

Mikaela came to the United States as an international student and received a B.A. from Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in 2004. She continued exploring her passion for effecting systemic change through the non-profit sector by earning a M.Sc. in Non-Profit and NGO Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania in 2010. She currently serves on the board of a non-profit operating in rural Jamaica and spends significant time and energy enriching the spiritual lives of women in her local church community. She and her husband live in Ewing, NJ with their three young daughters where she's learned to be unflappable, empathetic, and comedic.



Jessica Macias, [Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America](#)

Jessica is a college guidance counselor at Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA), a national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to identifying and developing the academic and leadership potential of exceptional public high school students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. At LEDA, Jessica guides 50 high school seniors through the college admissions process, helping them to build balanced college lists, prepare strong applications, and submit all financial aid requirements. In addition to this work, Jessica leads a small college guidance team during the organization's summer residential program, developing their ability to facilitate weekly workshops and conduct individual counseling meetings with students.

Jessica earned her B.S. in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Miami before joining Teach for America in 2011. She taught English and Reading to ninth and tenth grade students at Miami Northwestern Senior High before relocating to New Haven, Connecticut, where she taught an 11th grade college guidance course at Achievement First. Her experience working with students from underrepresented backgrounds brought to light the importance of helping them break down barriers to higher education, so she joined LEDA in 2017 to help students navigate the college application process. Passionate, adventurous, and enthusiastic, Jessica plans to one day start her own college access program in Miami to better serve the needs of students in her own community.



Melissa Martinez, [Coordinated Behavioral Care, Inc. \(CBC\)](#)

Since 2015, Melissa has worked with Coordinated Behavioral Care, Inc. ("CBC"), a leading healthcare non-profit providing comprehensive care coordination services to both adults and children on Medicaid throughout New York City. Melissa, in her capacity as Director, supports CBC's largest and longest standing program, Health Homes, with close to 50 community-based organizations that provide care management. CBC's infrastructure facilitates and supports effective care coordination services that improve its members' health status and lower the cost of care by reducing avoidable hospitalizations and emergency service visits.

Prior to CBC, Melissa worked for nearly five years at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine's Psychosocial Oncology Program managing quality of life studies and interventions to support underserved cancer survivors in the Bronx. She is dedicated to service that improves lives and empowers individuals and urban communities. She holds a MS in Applied Social Research from Hunter College, as well as a BA from Amherst College. Hailing from the most ethnically diverse corner of the world, Queens, Melissa is inclusive, collaborative, and ever hopeful.



Evelyn Moon, [Center for Supportive Schools](#)

Evelyn Moon is a Training & Project Manager with Center for Supportive Schools, based out of their Princeton, NJ headquarters. Center for Supportive Schools develops, disseminates, and promotes peer leadership, advisory, and other evidence-based K-12 solutions that enable and inspire schools to fully engage students in learning. Also, the organization helps to better connect students to their schools, motivate and equip students to make decisions responsibly, and accelerate academic achievement. For the last 6 years, Evelyn has served as a supervisor, facilitator, and technical assistance provider. She coordinates training events and supports school administrators, faculty, and stakeholders to successfully implement CSS's solutions.

Prior to joining CSS, she worked as an assessment coordinator with the American Institutes for Research and served as an adjunct professor at New York University. She received her bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, Douglass College and her master's degree from New York University, Steinhardt.

When she isn't working to make schools more safe, supportive, engaging, and inspiring, she enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter, writing, or being a big kid at a comic convention. Her friends would describe her as funny, optimistic, and focused.



Rene Morgan, [Achievement First](#)

Rene is the Operations Associate of the Charter Network Accelerator program at Achievement First. The Charter Network Accelerator is an intensive 18-month cohort-based training program for senior leaders of charter management organizations across the country. Her range of responsibilities include project management, operations, team systems/data, and knowledge management/sharing.

Previously, she was an administrator at the Harlem Children's Zone. As Dean of School Culture, she managed a team of change agents committed to the non-instructional needs of the scholars and school. Rene directly managed school data and systems, family engagement, discipline, and attendance. She also worked closely with the school deans, school counselor, and social worker to ensure scholars were receiving the necessary supports to be successful. Rene holds an undergraduate degree in Sociology from Howard University and a master's degree from Teachers College, Columbia University in Sociology and Education. Those closest to Rene would say she is passionate, loyal, and proactive.



Sooah Rho, [Student Success Network](#)

Sooah works at the Student Success Network, a network of youth development and education nonprofits working together to ensure every student has social and emotional intelligence to succeed in life. At SSN, she leads the Elevating Youth Voice program which trains both youth and adults to put youth at the forefront of change.

Sooah has always been passionate about elevating voices we often do not hear. While she currently tackles decision making and power structures in the social sector, she had the same passion while teaching in Oakland. Her personal experiences crossing cultural and language barriers, as well as the experiences of her students, motivate her to never let others go unspoken for. Sooah is authentic, strong, and passionate.



Dadjie Saintus, [Columbia University Medical Center](#)

Dadjie has a professional background in fundraising, health, and education. She works in the Office of Development at Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC). CUIMC is an academic medical center providing international leadership in patient care, basic, preclinical, and clinical research; medical and health sciences education; and community service. To advance this mission, the Office of Development cultivates relationships with grateful patients, alumni, donors, and partners and raises approximately \$200 million annually. Dadjie works on a team staffing the CUIMC Board of Advisors, who provide strategic direction for the organization and manages special projects to support the education, research, and clinical programs at the medical center.

Dadjie previously worked with GBHealth, an organization which mobilizes the business sector to advance global health and began her career teaching third grade in the Bronx, NY through Teach for America, an organization dedicated to closing the educational achievement gap in underserved communities. She completed an MPA concentrating in international policy at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and earned her BA in Psychology from Harvard College with a language citation in French. She is from Boston and enjoys film, the arts, volunteering, and traveling. In all that she does, Dadjie is passionate, considerate, and driven to pursue excellence.



Neelam Sakaria, [Echoing Green](#)

Neelam supports the annual search and selection efforts for the Fellowship team at Echoing Green. In this role, she project-manages work flow, external communications, data, and systems for the annual selection process. Prior to joining the team, she supported the NYU Leadership Fellows program, a leadership development program for undergraduate students. Curious to no end, she has also spent time exploring the Tel Aviv startup scene and reading up on refugee & asylum policy as a research assistant for Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. Neelam holds a BA in Global Liberal Studies, focusing on politics, human rights and international development, and a BA in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, both from New York University. Outside of her spreadsheets, you can find Neelam at Prospect Park with her bike, a dog, or a book.



Katherine (Katie) Shuman

Most recently, Katie worked as a Program Manager at Literacy Trust, an education non-profit aimed at leveraging what already exists in school communities to increase educational capacity and provide access to literacy intervention in NYC schools. With Literacy Trust, she managed over 200 reading coaches with the NYC Department of Education's Universal Literacy Initiative, providing remote and in-person support and professional development sessions targeted to their needs in using Reading Rescue™, Literacy Trust's signature intervention program. During her tenure with the organization, Katie also managed 5-17 school partnerships per year, overseeing all aspects of program quality, including on-site coaching and professional development for each school's team of instructors.

Before coming to Literacy Trust, Katie earned her B.S in Childhood Education from SUNY Cortland and her M.A. as a Reading Specialist from Teachers College-Columbia University. She taught as a Reading Specialist in Brooklyn at a K-8 school for six years, where she worked directly with struggling readers and writers and supported fellow educators in their literacy teaching. In this role, she witnessed firsthand the power of effective literacy instruction and the challenges many school communities face in ensuring that quality instruction is in place. That experience was a catalyst for Katie to work toward providing equitable access of effective literacy instruction for all school communities - children, teachers, and families. When not pursuing educational initiatives, you can find Katie coaching for Figure Skating in Harlem, an organization for girls of color that combines access to figure skating and essential educational opportunities. Both on and off the ice, Katie is passionate, purposeful, and authentic.

Washington, DC Emerging Leaders

Washington DC's Emerging Leaders cohort consists of 16 young professionals who work for nonprofit organizations located in the Washington metropolitan area. The 2018-19 cohort will be the eighth group to participate in Princeton AlumniCorps' Emerging Leaders program in Washington, DC. The Washington, DC cohort is facilitated by Hilary Joel (WJ Consulting).



Ruba Afzal, [Literacy Council of Northern Virginia](#)

Ruba works with the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia (LCNV), the largest and oldest community-based adult literacy organization in Virginia. LCNV teaches 1,500 adults the English language each year through a variety of programs and support services. Ruba leads efforts to build awareness and support for the organization among nonprofits, government, and corporate sector entities to ultimately enable program growth, student and volunteer recruitment, and customized fee-for-service classes for the private sector.

Before coming to LCNV, Ruba enjoyed working in the international development arena with global and local agencies, ranging from the United Nations to small non-profits in different parts of the world, cultivating collaborative partnerships among communities and stakeholders to organize and advocate for their interests. She is a first-generation American, fluent in Arabic, a published photographer, and mother of two. Ruba has followed an unconventional career path, motivated by finding a way for her talents and passions to support social justice locally and globally. Ruba has a BSc in Biology from University of Maryland and an MA in International Development and Environment from Duke University. Ruba is genuine, collaborative, and exploratory in all interactions, and you'll often find her enjoying a great meal - and a good laugh - with family and friends.



Jamilah Al-Bari, [DC Central Kitchen](#)

Jamilah works at DC Central Kitchen, the nation's first and leading community kitchen that operates social ventures targeting the cycle of hunger and poverty by training marginalized adults for culinary careers. At DC Central Kitchen, she works in the Culinary Job Training program as the Employment and Retention Specialist. Her job is to build relationships in the culinary industry to help graduates of DC Central Kitchen's Culinary Job Training program find sustainable employment and support them throughout their career pathways.

Born and raised in Washington, DC, she earned her Bachelor's in Human Ecology from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Jamilah first came to DC Central Kitchen in 2012 as a student to acquire her Food Handler's License/ServSafe Certification so she could start a catering business. After graduating from the Culinary Job Training Program, she worked for two years in the restaurant food industry. During this time, she was also a member of DC Central Kitchen's Board of Directors, then was offered the newly created job as Evaluation & Retention Coordinator at DC Central Kitchen. This job allowed her to keep in touch with many graduates who had gone through the Culinary Job Training Program just as she did. Now promoted to be the Employment and Retention Specialist, her job is helping adults facing high barriers to employment gain successful internships, job development, meaningful employment and careers. Jamilah is driven, responsible, and compassionate.



Alexis (Norma) Brown, [Digital Pioneers Academy](#)

Alexis has a B.S. in Engineering from the University of Pennsylvania. Upon graduation, she joined Teacher For America and taught for four years. Alexis then joined Management Leadership for Tomorrow as Program Manager of Ascend, a college persistence and career readiness program serving low-income and first-generation students. Alexis also has a great interest in STEM and taught a summer class with Summer Math and Science Academy (SMASH) through the Level Playing Field Institute (LFPI). Alexis regularly volunteers and teaches with the Horizons at Maret, a school-year Saturday and summer enrichment program for DC public school students.

Alexis is now the Special Assistant to the CEO at Digital Pioneers Academy (DPA), a new public charter school in Southeast DC. As Special Assistant, Alexis' roles include special projects, such as launch year start-up functions, project management, and liaison for staff, partners and board, and executive assistant to the CEO/principal. Alexis is very excited to embark on this journey at DPA with Emerging Leaders and our cohort. She fervently believes that to dismantle systematic oppression that currently drives inequity in the US, there must be a continued effort to eliminate the educational and opportunity inequities that deprive low-income families from gaining economic stability and ultimately generational wealth. Alexis believes her personal and professional purpose in life is to create systemic change, addressing inequity through leadership in mission-driven organizations. Alexis describes herself as optimistic, altruistic and hard-working.



Emma Byrne, [The Literacy Lab](#)

Emma serves as Program Director for The Literacy Lab, a nonprofit with a mission to close the literacy achievement gap for low-income students. The Literacy Lab places rigorously-trained, full-time tutors in high-need schools to serve children ages three to grade three who are struggling to read proficiently. In her role, Emma leads the team responsible for The Literacy Lab's program implementation and management.

After graduating from West Virginia University with a Master's degree in Secondary Education and a Bachelor's degree in English, Emma lived in Guanajuato, México, where she helped to launch the country's first 4-H & Youth Development program. Since joining The Literacy Lab in 2012, Emma has overseen the growth of the program to serve students across five cities: Washington D.C., Springfield, MA., Baltimore, MD., Kansas City, MO., and Richmond, VA.

Emma loves her dumb dogs and her cute husband, who would all describe her as confident, hard-working, and optimistic.



Molly Crosby, [Planned Parenthood Federation of America](#)

Molly works at Planned Parenthood Federation of America, an organization committed to protecting and providing access to quality health care for millions of people. At PPFA, Molly works on the Digital Fundraising & Supporter Engagement team, helping raise money online, get supporters to take meaningful digital actions, and support affiliates who run their own (cool!) digital programs.

Molly hails from the lovely Vashon Island, Washington (and yes, it's accessible only by ferry boat). After leaving the Island, Molly ventured to Wellesley College in Massachusetts where she focused on domestic politics and learning as much as possible about elections and campaigns. She spent a summer in DC and loved it (despite the weather being what it is) and has lived here ever since graduating from school. After a few years at a digital consulting firm (helping raise money online for progressive candidates and non-profits), Molly made her way to PPFA in 2016 to get involved in what she thinks is the most important fight right now: making sure every person can access quality, affordable health care -- no matter what. Molly is cheery, motivated, and punny.



Nicholas Farano, [Prevention of Blindness Society](#)

Nick Farano is the Public Relations & Fundraising Manager at the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, a community-based non-profit organization that has been dedicated to the improvement and preservation of sight for more than 80 years. His areas of responsibility include communications management, community relations, distinguished events, relationship management, donor stewardship, annual giving, and grants management.

Prior to joining the team at the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, Nick worked for the American Cancer Society in a variety of income development roles in Baltimore and Washington, DC, including peer-to-peer fundraising, corporate relations, and distinguished events. Nick earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Communication from Stevenson University and his Master of Business Administration in Project Management from Capella University. Nick serves as an executive committee member on the Stevenson University Alumni Association Board. Those closest to Nick would say he's trustworthy, empathetic, and encouraging



Erica Handloff, [Washington Center for Equitable Growth](#)

Erica Handloff is the Communications Manager at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, a non-profit research and grantmaking organization dedicated to advancing evidence-backed ideas and policies that promote strong, stable, and broad-based economic growth. At Equitable Growth, Erica manages media relations and digital engagement, leading the organization's efforts to elevate cutting-edge research to promote policies that better serve every American. She previously served as the Communications Associate, and prior to that, the Special Assistant to the Executive Director.

Before joining Equitable Growth, Erica worked as a Research Assistant for the Northwestern University Department of Sociology. She held an internship at the Center on Wrongful Convictions, an organization dedicated to righting miscarriages of justice. It was through this work that she strengthened her commitment to addressing systemic inequality through policy change. She graduated from Northwestern University with a B.A. in Sociology. In her pursuit of social change, Erica is passionate, creative, and vibrant.



Talia Harris, [Earthjustice](#)

Talia works at Earthjustice, a premier nonprofit environmental law organization that works to enforce laws that protect irreplaceable wildlife and wild places, ensure communities are safer, healthier places to live and work, and strengthen the rise of clean energy. At Earthjustice, she provides the Policy and Legislation office of Earthjustice with facilities management, accounts payable, computer/technological, human resources, and events support. She also acts as a communications liaison between the other regional offices and San Francisco headquarters on administrative, budget, human resources and other key operational issues. Lastly, she oversees the administration and functioning of Earthjustice's affiliated 501c4 organization, Earthjustice Action.

Prior to joining Earthjustice, Talia served as the Associate for the Economic Mobility and Poverty (Working Up) Project at Convergence Center for Policy Resolution. She also interned at The SEED Foundation with their College Transition & Success Program, and their Development and Expansion departments, and at The Aspen Institute with their Development and Youth & Engagement departments. Talia graduated summa cum laude from Trinity Washington University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society, IVY: The Social University, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In her spare time, Talia volunteers regularly with For Love of Children, a DC-based nonprofit, providing educational services and mentorship to high school scholars, and serves as a Graduate Ambassador for her high school. Regardless of the role she is in, Talia is determined, resilient, and compassionate.



Michael Lachance, [PYXERA Global](#)

Mike Lachance is a Program Coordinator at PYXERA Global, a non-profit that facilitates mutually beneficial partnerships between the public, private, and social sectors to tackle complex global challenges. He works primarily on the Joint Initiative for Village Enhancement, or JIVA project, which collaborates with smallholder farming communities in Rajasthan, India to build agricultural resilience and improve educational outcomes.

Before joining the PYXERA Global team, Mike taught entrepreneurship classes and advised small businesses for two years in Senegal as a member of the Peace Corps. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 2013 with a BA in Economics and Environmental Studies. Mike has also worked as an energy analyst for an energy consulting company and as a trip leader for Overland Summers, where he led intensive backpacking trips in the Alps and Pyrenees for small groups of students. Since moving to Washington DC, Mike has joined Toastmasters and is a founding member of PYXERA Global's Environmental Working Group. He speaks French and Pular, a Fula language spoken mostly in Senegal and Guinea. Others describe Mike as tenacious, kind, and adventurous- in addition to being a proud Mainer!



Ashley Montgomery, [Appletree Institute](#)

Ashley Montgomery works at AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School. Appletree operates six stand alone campuses and four partnership schools serving children in the District of Columbia who are in Prek3 and Prek4. AppleTree's mission is to prepare children to be successful in Kindergarten. At AppleTree, Ashley is the Operations Manager and supports Operation Coordinators located at stand alone campuses.

Before coming to AppleTree, she earned her B.A. from St. Mary's College of Maryland and worked for the National Academy of Sciences Marian Koshland Science Museum as the Assistant Operations manager. Ashley is positive, passionate and loves to learn.



Laetitia Morrisson, [KaBoom](#)

Laetitia began her career in the Public Relations world, but in 2012, she joined KaBOOM! as the Corporate Partnerships team's Coordinator. She has since risen through the ranks to become Senior Manager, managing a vast market and securing new and exciting partnerships for the organization. In her current role, she is responsible for securing new business and managing partnerships that support a variety of programs in the organization. She has successfully created both small cause marketing and large scale multi-year partnerships leveraging her strong communications skills to develop thoughtful and strategic relationships.

Laetitia embodies the mission of the organization through her playful nature and approach to her work.

Laetitia received her Bachelor's in Media Studies from the Catholic University of America and her Masters of Professional Studies in Corporate Communications and Public Relations from Georgetown University. Laetitia loves to explore the unique neighborhoods and activities in the city and spend time with her family in Bethesda where she grew up. She is a native of Côte D'Ivoire, was raised in the DC area and is fluent in French.



Kotheid Nicoue, [PYXERA Global](#)

Kotheid Nicoue works at PYXERA Global, a non-profit organization that brings together corporations and social sector organizations to solve global challenges. He is passionate about designing partnerships that leverage the resources of the private sector to build sustainable projects in communities around the world particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. In his role, Kotheid implements and manages global pro bono projects for multinational companies such as IBM and SAP where skilled corporate consultants are placed on global assignments to tackle social and business challenges. Through these programs, Kotheid designs projects that build the capacity of local organizations and provides opportunities for corporate employees to stretch their professional skills in emerging markets around the world. Kotheid's work with PYXERA Global has led him to support institutions in Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Morocco, Botswana, Tanzania, Nigeria and Indonesia.

Kotheid joined the Center for Citizen Diplomacy division of PYXERA Global as a Research Intern in September 2012 after graduating from the University of Iowa with degrees in International Studies and French. Kotheid also serves as a Commissioner and Executive Secretary on the Commission on African Affairs through the DC Mayor's Office of African Affairs. As a member of the Commission, he was appointed by the Mayor to serve as an advocate for African persons living in the district. As a native of Togo, he is fluent in three languages. Kotheid is driven, scrappy and kindhearted.



Candace Smith, [Urban Teachers](#)

Candace works at Urban Teachers, a rigorous teacher training program with the mission of preparing highly effective teachers who significantly accelerate student achievement in the nation's highest needs schools. In her current role at Urban Teachers, Candace manages a portfolio of school partnerships, provides ongoing support to residents and fellows, and ensures high quality program execution across all areas.

Before coming to Urban Teachers, Candace earned a B.A. in English from the University of Chicago and a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education from American University. She began her career in education as a Pre-K Resident Teacher at DC Prep. In this position, she fell in love with the Early Childhood grades. She moved to Friendship Public Charter School's Chamberlain campus, where she taught Kindergarten for five years, and served as grade level lead, curriculum fellow, and a member of the Early Childhood task force. She was a host teacher for an Urban Teachers' resident during its inaugural year in DC, and witnessed firsthand the tremendous growth possible through a rigorous residency model. She joined Urban Teachers to amplify her impact on excellent teaching, learning, and student outcomes in DC.

When not at work, you can find Candace cooking, cross-fitting, reading, or spending time with her husband, Henry, and 2-year old daughter, Caroline. Friends would describe Candace as driven, empathetic, and passionate.



Valentina Stackl, [EarthRights International](#)

Valentina holds a bachelor's degree in creative writing and political science and a master's degree in public health from the University of Michigan with a focus on communications, global health disparities, and labor. Previously, Valentina worked with farmworker organizations, supporting migrating laborers to address issues around equity, labor, and health. Currently, Valentina is the Communications Manager at EarthRights International, an international human rights and environmental justice organization. Valentina works with ERI's international offices on media, social media, storytelling, and other communications projects. She frequently works with affected indigenous communities in Latin America and Southeast Asia on storytelling projects, on supporting their narratives in media stories, and other communications projects. Valentina grew up in Austria and the Netherlands as a daughter to a political refugee from Chile and speaks English, Spanish, German, and Dutch. Valentina is dedicated to justice, equity, and ethical storytelling.



Hannah Urrey, [Educare](#)

Hannah Urrey is the Director of Development at Educare DC where she manages all aspects of the organization's charitable fundraising activity, as well as external communications and marketing. Prior to joining Educare DC in 2016, Ms. Urrey served as Associate for Communications in the Office of Gift Planning at the University of Maryland, College Park, and in various fundraising and communication capacities at Friends of the National Arboretum. She has a bachelor's degree in Theatre with a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Hollins University. Hannah is thoughtful, amiable, and resourceful.



Jessica Walker, [Miriam's Kitchen](#)

Jessica Walker works for Miriam's Kitchen, a homeless service provider working to end chronic homelessness in Washington, DC by providing various services from high quality meals to case management to housing. As the Director of Operations, Jessica oversees the organization's human resources, technology and facilities, as well as providing financial management.

Her professional background is in both for-profit and non-profit administration, and she has a passion for creating and maintaining culture within the workplace. Jessica firmly believes that effective and efficient operations play a key role in accomplishing the mission of an organization while retaining it's employees. Jessica finds joy in being able to support others which is exactly why nonprofit operations is a great fit. From the guests Miriam's Kitchen serves to her coworkers, Jessica loves being able to fully invest in those around her. Anyone who knows her would agree that she is genuine, adventurous and reliable.

Partner Organizations

2018 - 19 Partner Organizations

While the Emerging Leaders program is a personal development program, it is also designed to have an immediate impact on the organizations who support their staff's participation.

Achievement First	KaBOOM!
Appletree Institute	Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America
CBC Cares	Literacy Council of Northern Virginia
Center for Supportive Schools	Literacy Lab
Columbia University Medical Center	Miriam's Kitchen
DC Central Kitchen	Peer Health Exchange
Digital Pioneers Academy	Planned Parenthood
The Doe Fund	Prevention of Blindness Society
DonorsChoose.org	Princeton AlumniCorps
DoSomething.org	PYXERA Global
EarthJustice	Room To Grow
EarthRights	Urban Teachers
Echoing Green	Student Success Network
Educare	Washington Center for Equitable Growth
Gradian Health Systems	Youth Communications

We would also like to recognize the generosity of organizations who support the Emerging Leaders program by providing space for Princeton AlumniCorps to deliver programming in our cities of operation.

AppNexus
Covington & Burling
DC SCORES
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Ivins, Phillips & Barker
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Locus Analytics
McCarter & English



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