Guest Editors' Introduction:
Diversifying the Teaching Force

By Christine Sleeter & Yer Thao

This special issue of *Teacher Education Quarterly* explores how teacher education programs can help to diversify the teaching force, mainly by featuring programs that have done so. It is widely recognized that the demographic gap between students and teachers is large and growing. In 2004, enrollment in U.S. public schools was only a little more than half White (57%), and a little under half students of color (16% African American, 20% Hispanic, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2% "other"); 19% of students spoke a language other than English at home (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). By contrast, the teaching force was 84% White, 8% African American, 5.5% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Early career teachers are a bit more diverse than the teaching profession as a whole (78% White, 22% of color), with teachers of color concentrated in urban schools (Shen, Wegenky, & Cooley, 2003).

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We view this demographic gap not as a permanent natural condition, but rather as a social creation that has historical roots, and that can be changed. Ironically, for example, when schools were segregated prior to the Civil Rights movement, African American students were taught mainly by African American teachers. Beginning in the 1960s, while desegre-

gation was intended to make schools more equitable and responsive to communities of color, because Whites perceived Black schools and teachers as inferior, numerous Black schools were closed and almost 40,000 Black teachers and administrators lost their positions (Milner & Howard, 2004). Rather than re-working desegregated schools around principles of equity and multiculturalism, generally White educators maintained institutionalized schooling processes that continued to benefit Whites more than communities of color. The production of teachers today reflects continued institutionalized White privilege.

Race does not determine teacher quality. However, race, ethnicity, and language shape the nature of experiences teachers bring to the classroom, as well as insights they bring to the teaching profession at large. Currently, largely because of the demographic gap, students of color are much more likely than White students to be taught by teachers who question their academic ability, are uncomfortable around them and their families, and do not know how to teach them well.

White teachers are more likely than teachers of color to hold lower expectations for Black, Latino, and American Indian students (Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Pang & Sablan, 1998), and often have more difficulty forming constructive relationships with students of color than with White students. White teachers are less likely to build relationships with families of color than are teachers of color. White teachers generally assume that underachievement of students of color, particularly African American students, is due to their families not valuing education (Irvine & York, 1993) rather than to factors under control of classroom teachers. Lacking familiarity with communities students of color come from, many White teachers are unable to build bridges between students and curriculum, but then view students' lack of engagement as disinterest in learning. White teachers who are ill-equipped to teach students of color, particularly those in low-income communities, often seek jobs elsewhere as soon as they can, leading to high levels of teacher turn-over in many urban and poor rural schools. Teacher education can and should prepare White teacher candidates for diversity; but, as the most segregated racial category in the U.S. (Orfield & Lee, 2005), Whites tend to enter teacher education with very limited cross-cultural experience and knowledge, curbing the extent to which preparing them will address the issues above.

Preservice teachers of color tend to possess a richer multicultural knowledge base, and greater commitment to multicultural teaching, social justice, and providing children of color with an academically challenging curriculum (Dee & Henkin, 2002; Rios & Montecinos, 1999; Su, 1997). In addition, teachers of color also play a valuable role in helping White students understand diversity, as well as serving as role models for students of color. Teachers of color can inspire students of color to follow their footsteps and break down the cultural isolation that is common to White students (Miller & Endo, 2005; Gordon, 2000; Mwangaza, 1993). The growing population of students of color creates a demand for more teachers of color. Currently, students of color are not motivated to become teachers due to lack of

social, economic, peer, and personal support. Over a decade ago Mwangaza's (1993) research cautioned us that veteran teachers of color are leaving the profession and young teachers of color are not entering it because of burn-out/exhaustion and frustration. Teacher education programs need to have a long-term commitment to financial and social support for teacher candidates of color, and a better understanding of dilemmas they face while going through their training. Teaching is a low pay profession that nevertheless has numerous requirements: admission criteria such as test scores and grade point average, other academic standards and institutional expectations, and financial costs (Mwangaza, 1993; Kemple, Murnane, & Willett, 1995). Meeting numerous requirements for a low-pay career, in and of itself, can be discouraging.

Teachers and teacher candidates of color struggle due to lack of adequate support. Often, candidates of color do not have pleasant experiences in teacher education programs that reflect mainly Euro-American values and perspectives. It is important to include the voices of teachers of color, rather than ignoring and disenfranchising them, so they can be part of the teaching profession. Miller and Endo (2005) argue that, "teacher education programs should model showing respect for students of color, welcoming their contributions, and encouraging them to become engaged in the classroom" (p. 8). Sheets (2004) adds, "Teachers of color must be provided opportunities to transfer their prior knowledge of culture to pedagogical content knowledge" (p. 164). Teacher candidates of color need to have positive learning experiences through their training in teacher education programs. Therefore, teacher education programs need to develop a conceptual framework that has a vision to admit and support students of color, in addition to White students, helping them to succeed in all stages of their teacher preparation.

By failing to recognize the norms and values that students of color bring into teaching, teacher education programs give the message to people of color that they are not wanted. Students of color need mentors for guidance, role models to inspire them, and education programs that model respect and encourage them to become engaged in the classroom. Branch (2001) states that teacher education programs that create environments empowering students of color are likely to graduate more teachers of color. Similarly, Miller and Endo (2005) note that issues students of color face in teacher education programs stem from classes that are taught by instructors and populated by students from homogeneous rather than heterogeneous backgrounds. Therefore, students of color often have the experiences of being isolated, misguided, and lonely while they prepare for a career of teaching. This gives a message to them that teaching is not a welcoming profession for them.

It is understandable that teacher education programs in predominantly White institutions need to have different types of services available to support teacher candidates of color without marginalizing them. Teacher education programs must create sustainable education environments so students of color do not burn out quickly (Branch, 2001; Miller & Endo, 2005; Sheets, 2004). For example, to address

negative experiences students of color have in the predominantly White teacher education program at Indiana University, Bennett, Cole, and Thompson (2000) created Project TEAM to support them. Project TEAM encourages students of color to speak out, and it provides a supportive academic atmosphere for them within the predominantly White institution. We do not want students of color to lose hope in the field of teaching and no longer want to pass on the positive story of becoming teachers to potentially qualified or interested minority pre-service teachers.

While there is considerable attention to how teacher education programs can prepare predominantly White populations to teach diverse learners, far less attention is given to diversifying the teaching population. Colleagues sometimes tell us that little can be done because the reasons people of color tend not to go into teaching are so complex (see Gordon, 2000). But the existence of efforts to diversify the teaching population serves as testament that change is possible, and offers glimpses into what can be done. Both of us have had some experience with such programs, and are aware of many others. Many such programs are in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-serving institutions, where they reflect the normal way things are done. Other programs, such as Project TEAM, are found within predominantly White institutions. Some such programs are the subject of research and have become somewhat visible (e.g., Brennan & Bliss, 1998; Shade, Boe, Garner, & New, 1998), but many are unknown to a wide audience. For this special issue, we decided to bring together reports about a diversity of programs that can illustrate what can be done.

In the first article, Pia Lindquist Wong, Harold Murai, Margarita Berta-Ávila, Lisa William-White, Susan Baker, Adele Arellano, and Adriana Echandia examine the Multilingual/Multicultural Teacher Preparation Center in the Bilingual/ Multicultural Education Department at California State University, Sacramento. This program, in which about 75% of the teacher candidates are of color, has been in operation for over 20 years. It is not an alternative program, and as such, it illustrates exceptionally well how recruiting and preparing diverse teachers can be the norm and how a program can prepare candidates to support diverse learners and work for justice when they become licensed teachers.

The second and third articles discuss two Pathways to Teaching Careers Programs, a national effort begun in 1989 to diversify the teaching population. Kam Fui Lau, Evelyn B. Dandy, and Lorrie Hoffman discuss the Pathways program at Armstrong Atlantic State University, which involved collaboration with the Savannah-Chatham County Public School District, and has successfully certified 105 teachers, 85% of whom were African American. The article reports research identifying the most significant components that contributed to the program's success. Karen Sakash and Victoria Chou discuss "Project 29" at the University of Illinois at Chicago, which was designed to prepare bilingual teachers in the Chicago Public Schools; it has produced 145 teachers to date, three-fourths of whom are Latino. Although it began as an alternative program, it has become institutionalized

within the college, and has influenced other teacher education programs there, a process their article discusses.

In the fourth article, Belinda Bustos Flores, Ellen Riojas Clark, Lorena Claeys, and Abelardo Villarreal discuss the Academy for Teacher Excellence, which involves collaboration between the University of Texas at San Antonio and San Antonio College. Designed to increase the number of Latinos going into teaching, this program works with incoming freshman, drawing on research on college student retention and Latino teacher recruitment, retention, and success, to build a pipeline into teacher education. The article reports an analysis of multiple sources of data that identify recruitment and retention strategies that seem most effective.

The fifth article, "A Bridge for Our Tribal/University Partnerships to Prepare Indigenous Teachers" by Carolyne J. White, Jennie de Groat, Louise Lockard, and Samantha Honani helps us understand the importance of building bridges between the cultures of Navajo and Hopi nations and university teacher education programs to create meaningful learning environment for the students from American Indian communities. The authors share the work of Hopi Teachers for Hopi Schools, and Learn in Beauty, two programs that have reached out to the Indigenous people. They also share struggles to produce native teachers in Arizona.

In the sixth article, Jason G. Irizarry provides a full description of one of many existing teacher preparation programs for teachers of color in a predominantly White institution in an urban setting. This program, called "Project TEACH," established a strong partnership with communities of color to "home-grow" teachers. Irizarry describes the roles and responsibilities that Project TEACH has strived to fulfill in meeting the need to produce more teachers of color.

In the seventh article, Tara Stevens, Mary Frances Agnello, Janie Ramirez, Aretha Marbley, and Doug Hamman describe the important changes as well as the initial evaluation of the effectiveness of a program called Project FUTURE in Texas that partners with Texas Tech University. This project recruits students to the teaching career starting from the sixth grade and continues to support these students through high school and the first year of college.

In article eight, "Analyzing an Urban University's Diversity Dilemma," Melodee Landis, Angela Ferguson, Ana Carballal, Wilman Kuhlman, and Sandra Squires describe their research focusing on understanding why many people of color do not want to enter the teaching profession. These authors emphasize the need for college programs to support students of color and recruit them into the career of teaching, taking into account local pressures that work against diversifying the teaching profession.

In the final article, Ana María Villegas and Danné E. Davis reflect on the eight articles above. Drawing on their experience working to diversify the teaching population, they extrapolate lessons and insights from the articles in this collection. As they emphasize, the shortage of teachers of color has a real impact on the education of students of color, but we actually know quite a bit about how to address this shortage.

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