WELCOME TO
NEW YORK

OPPORTUNITY BEGINS WITH EDUCATION

TEACHFORAMERICA
Welcome to New York

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Dear 2019 Corps Member,

Congratulations on being admitted to Teach For America’s 2019 New York corps! We’re busy developing, in our corps and in their classrooms, the leaders NYC needs, and we would love to have you bring your talents to the greatest city in the world.

Now is a pivotal moment to commit to working for educational equity while developing your own leadership. NYC is renowned as a beacon of opportunity, but we will never live up to that label as long as our education system, which is the foundation of our social, economic and political systems, continues to produce highly predictable outcomes based on race, class and zip code. NYC is a mosaic of vibrant communities, each full of potential; but opportunity is not distributed evenly among them. At TFA–NY, we choose to focus our attention and resources on our city’s most vulnerable students. Our aim is to keep them at the center of the progress we’re making, rather than the margins, to which they’re so often relegated.

The TFA-NY network (corps members, alumni, partners, supporters, and staff) comprises more than 6,000 people who are as diverse as NYC itself. We are united by our shared belief that leadership in and outside of schools, across sectors at all levels, is the key to ensuring access to opportunity for all New Yorkers. Each of us has deeply personal reasons for joining the movement. For me it’s the radical notion that “making it” does not require leaving your community (physically or mentally); that kids in the Bronx (where I’m from) can be successful and choose to stay. If you join us, I’m sure your experience and perspective will make us stronger.

The offer to join the corps in the largest school district in the country is an invitation to change lives, your students’ and your own. It’s a big decision. We’re here to support you as make it. We’ve already chosen you. We hope you choose us. If you do, I look forward to welcoming you in June.

In partnership,
Charissa Fernández
Executive Director
JOINING OUR DIVERSE NETWORK

MEET THE CORPS MEMBERS YOU’LL BE WORKING WITH

Maribeth White
2018 New York Corps, Early Childhood Educator at Brooklyn Kindergarten Society

Why New York?
I’m a native New Yorker and a graduate of NYC public schools. This is where I was first exposed to educational inequity and where I began my work in education and youth services. My family enrolled me in a school far from our home because the schools in my neighborhood were underfunded and underperforming; they were New York City’s forgotten schools. I chose New York City because it is my home and I’m committed to ensuring students who look like me and come from communities like mine get access to an exceptional education.

How are your leadership skills developing through your classroom experience?
I’ve learned that as a teacher, you have to be a leader throughout your school, not just in your classroom. I’ve pushed myself to be innovative in my classroom and encouraged fellow teachers to push themselves to excel in their work. I’ve done my best to take my experiences from Relay and Institute into my school to create opportunities for growth among students and staff – ensuring we adhere to important city and state regulations around curriculum and student safety, as well as creating lesson plans that are culturally responsive and easy for families to adapt into at-home learning.

Brendan Batton
2017 New York Corps, Special Education Teacher at Eagle Academy for Young Men of Harlem

Why New York?
As a native New Yorker, I felt it was my obligation to teach in New York City and be a role model for young people. I’m a licensed social worker, and previously worked with boys in foster care, or in the juvenile justice system. Now, I am a special educator at Eagle Academy for Young Men of Harlem.

Where are you seeing your students grow?
I’ve seen my students grow emotionally, socially, and academically since I started teaching. Conferencing with students has allowed me to build rapport with them and let them know that I not only see them as students, but as young men. My students have grown as leaders – some have become mentors for others, and other students are leading by example. It is important for them to see that leaders do not always have to be loud, but can lead in silence and by example. I’m honored to work with my students and be a member of the New York corps.

Keun-Woo Lee
2017 New York Corps, Early Childhood Educator at Sharon Baptist Head Start

Why New York?
I joined Teach For America because I believe inequality is an umbrella issue that especially affects education. It is cyclical and there is a lot of evidence that vast inequities can be mediated through education. I chose to teach in New York City not only for its vibrant culture and diversity, but also because of citywide initiative to make Early Childhood Education a priority.

How are your leadership skills developing through your classroom experience?
As an educator of such young children, I have really learned how to think on my toes. I am constantly reading the energy level of the room to adapt activities. If I am losing my students’ interest, or if they do not understand a concept, I know I have to improvise. Pre-school may seem like all fun, but making each activity an intentional learning experience is a challenge in itself and I have grown as a leader because of this.
JOINING OUR DIVERSE NETWORK

ALUMS IN THE NEW YORK REGION

ELIZABETH MELVILLE
2013 New York Corps
Special Education Math Teacher, ReStart Academy

Why New York?
New York City is a place intensely rich with culture, diversity, and life. Seemingly paradoxical, New York is also plagued by extreme racial and economic inequality. Teaching in communities thriving under these conditions is one of the most personally and politically meaningful things one could possibly do.

How has Teach For America impacted your career trajectory?
Teach For America gave me the opportunity to work with incarcerated youth over the past five years at ReStart Academy, and this motivated me to apply to a Fulbright where I studied youth incarceration in Brazil. I plan to continue working with these students for the rest of my career.

Jerrod Hill
2010 Atlanta Corps
Former consultant with Boston Consulting Group; currently at B2B Venture Capital Funds

Why Teach For America?
I graduated with my BS in mechanical engineering from The Ohio State in 2009. I planned to become an engineer, but the Teach For America offered something different. He offered me an option to spend two years or more working in education, and making a difference in the lives of students. That option won!

How has Teach For America impacted your career trajectory?
For an Ohio boy that knew nothing of the business or corporate world, Teach for America was a pivotal step in my career propulsion. Without Teach for America, I would not have met an extensive network of future lawyers, doctors, teachers, and politicians; been accepted into Wharton and Harvard business schools; and have a career in consulting and venture capital. Teach for America has truly opened doors for me.
OVERVIEW OF ONBOARDING

WHAT ONBOARDING MEANS TO US

Pre-service spans from when you accept your offer to join the corps to the first day of school, including attending Institute in New York. Your transition to the classroom will require significant time and energy as you undergo personal transformation experiencing the triumphs, the failures, the lessons, and the relationships you forge that will shape and define you in ways you can’t imagine. Ultimately, it is up to you to navigate this experience, but know that we are here to support you every step of the way. The New York team will be here to help you as you take on the responsibility of meeting New Your City and New York State employment, teacher certification, and TFA programmatic requirements so that you can have a profound impact on your students to accelerate their academic and personal growth as a classroom leader.

Please refer to the Teach For America Corps Member Handbook for information on the policies and expectations for all corps members. Please note that additional information about your specific Institute’s policies and procedures will be communicated throughout the year leading up to Institute.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING SUMMER TRAINING

• What is it? The New York region hosts a training known as “Institute” that takes place for 6 weeks during the summer (Dates: June 23 – August 3). Institute is a combination of learning experiences and summer school teaching under the supervision of veteran teachers.

• Where is it? Our institute is here in New York City. Our residential site is located in West Harlem, while our summer school sites are located in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn.

• Am I paid? Teach For America provides corps members’ housing and meals, as well as some transportation. Corps members do not receive a salary during this time.

• Where do I live? During training, New York corps members have the option to live on campus in a suite style dormitory. If they already have housing secured in NYC, they can live at home.

• Should my family come? The training schedule is very busy, and in some cases, corps members prefer to find alternate arrangements for children and families during training. Family accommodations are available at each of our sites - corps members are responsible for the family member’s travel, lodging, meals, and childcare costs.

Attending institute in its entirety is a requirement for all corps members. If you confirm your offer, more information will be shared with you soon.
ONBOARDING ACTION ITEMS AND TIMELINE

There are three major chunks of time during your Onboarding into the corps. Teaching is an immense responsibility and there will be many steps to take before you can enter your classroom this fall.

**Within 2 Weeks Of Accepting Your Offer**

Estimated Time Commitment: 8 hours

- Attend Pre-Service and Hiring webinars
- Complete surveys and required actions to begin transitioning to the New York corps
- Join community Facebook group

**Months Leading Up To Institute**

Estimated Time Commitment: 70 hours

- Study for and take certification exams
- Complete hiring action items
- Complete enrollment in Relay
- Complete fingerprinting and background checks
- Complete Institute pre-work

**1 Month Before Institute**

Estimated Time Commitment: 15 hours

- Begin Relay online coursework
- Complete Institute logistics action items
- Join Institute prep group call
- Book travel to arrive in NYC for Institute
Register for certification exams
- EAS exam: $92
- CST exam: $134-$179
  (depending on license area)

Certification exam test prep materials: ~$50
Certification workshops: $40

ESTIMATED TOTAL: $361

GRE exam: $205
DOE Fingerprints: $99-$135
ECE Fingerprints: $125*
AmeriCorps Fingerprints: $0
Transcripts (2 copies): $0-$40
  (depends on individual institutions)
Travel to NYC for hiring rounds: $70-$300
Demonstration lesson materials: $10-$30
TB test & physical: $0-$100

ESTIMATED TOTAL: $935

Book Travel to Institute: ~$300
Rent: $1500
Furniture: ~$350
Setting up your classroom: ~$250
Monthly MetroCard: $121

ESTIMATED TOTAL: $2,221

Apartment Search: $3,000
  (First & Last Month’s Rent)
Health Insurance: $200
TEACH Application: $50-$100

ESTIMATED TOTAL: $3,300

Relay tuition: ~$3,000

ESTIMATED TOTAL UP-FRONT CREDENTIALING COSTS: $696

ESTIMATED TOTAL HOUSING/TRANSITIONAL COST: $5,421

ESTIMATED TOTAL RELAY COSTS: ~$6,000 (over two years)
FINANCIAL TRANSITION

In addition to testing and certification, one of the most important pieces of your transition is planning for the financial transition of joining the corps. While Teach For America is not able to provide financial advice, as we are not financial advisors, we have pulled together resources and alumni tips that will assist you in planning for your transition.

Teach For America covers many of your major expenses during summer training (e.g. food, housing) for all corps members. We also offer a Need-Based program to help you with some of your transition expenses. Packages are offered based on a corps member’s demonstrated need and the cost of transitioning to your assigned region.

Please check your Applicant Center under the Transitional Funding tab to learn more about Need-Based Transitional Funding and how to apply. The deadlines for applying and other helpful information related to your transition can all be found here.

If you have questions after checking out our resources, please attend an office hours to ask your questions. Please sign up for an appointment, and you will receive updates and reminders before your call. Register for Office hours here.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

IF I CONFIRM MY OFFER, WHAT CAN I EXPECT OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS?
You will engage in the pre-service phase of your commitment between now and the first day of school. You will focus on being certified, hired, and enrolled in our graduate school program. While we will provide the tools and support for this to happen, it is ultimately your responsibility to complete the necessary steps to become certified and eligible to teach in NYC.

WHERE DO CORPS MEMBERS LIVE?
Most corps members find housing during Institute or right after Institute. Corps members secure their own housing independently and often do so in the Bronx, Brooklyn, or Manhattan. A small number live in Queens, Long Island, New Jersey, or Staten Island. Given our hiring timeline, many corps members live in temporary housing until they have certainty on the location of their school, which is optimal since New York’s housing market moves quickly. Corps member commute time to their school is about an hour on average and can be up to 1 hour 30 minutes depending on where you decide to live.

IS GRADUATE SCHOOL A REQUIREMENT?
New York State requires that all teachers who are not already certified attend graduate school in order to obtain a teaching certificate that aligns with their teaching position. Unless you have a New York State teaching certification from a previous teaching program, you must enroll in and maintain good standing with our graduate school partner, Relay Graduate School or Education (Relay).

Relay is able to offer an affordable, high-quality program that is conducive to the schedule of a first and second year teacher. You will be enrolled in a Master’s degree program in your license area. Relay tuition is about $22,000. Teach For America offsets a portion of your tuition and corps members who are eligible to receive an AmeriCorps education award can use the award towards their tuition. Taking these factors into account, out-of-pocket expenses associated with attending Relay is about $6,000.

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS I CAN GET INVOLVED WITH THE MEMPHIS COMMUNITY?
Given the high costs associated with transitioning to the New York region and the financial commitments of joining the corps, we highly encourage corps members to apply for transitional funding. You are still eligible, and also highly encouraged, to apply even if you live in New York. The grants and loans are awarded on a need-based scale and are meant to support your transition (not cover the entire cost) to the corps.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO CORPS MEMBERS CHOOSE WHERE THEY TEACH?
By confirming your offer, you are committing to teach in schools where Teach For America and our partners believe you can have the biggest impact. You do not pursue vacancies on your own and will attend interviews facilitated by Teach For America determined by:
1. What you are eligible to teach according to New York State requirements
2. The need across the city from our school partners (Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan)
3. Your preferences, where applicable, and once the first two conditions are met Corps members will be able to share preferences with our pre-service team within the first two weeks of confirming their offer, but our first priority is to meet the needs of our school partners and their students. To this end, if you are offered a position from one of our school partners, you must accept the offer as that school has indicated they believe you are the right fit for the position they have available. If you receive more than one offer during the hiring period that you are participating in, then you may decide which offer to accept.

IS TEACH FOR AMERICA MY EMPLOYER OR CERTIFYING BODY?
No. You are an employee of your school district (NYC DOE), charter school, or Early Education Center (EEC). While we facilitate and manage the hiring process, Teach For America is not your employer. While we also facilitate certification and graduate school enrollment, we are not your certifying body. New York State, in conjunction with our graduate school partner, Relay, are your official teacher certification bodies.

WHAT SALARY AND BENEFITS DO CORPS MEMBERS RECEIVE?
Corps members are employers of the Department of Education (DOE), their charter school, or their Early Education Center (EEC). Beginning teacher salary reflects the higher cost of living in New York City compared to other cities. A first-year teacher can earn $44,000-$58,000 depending on their teaching position. The starting salary for the DOE is currently $56,711. Early childhood education salaries range from $44,000-$51,000, with most corps members earning $44,000. Charter school salaries range from $48,000-$58,000.

Corps members will have full medical benefits through their schools. Corps members hired in DOE schools will receive the same benefits as all other DOE teachers. Corps members hired in public charter schools or Early Education Center (EEC) will receive benefits offered by their individual school or site. Please keep in mind that benefits are available after the first day of school, regardless of if a corps member is hired in a DOE, charter, or EEC. Corps members should plan accordingly for insurance needs and finances over the summer.

WHAT IF I HAVE ANOTHER QUESTION?
Please do not hesitate to reach out to any New York regional staff member or email our pre-service team at newyorkregion@teachforamerica.org.