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**“ALL OUR KIN” CO-FOUNDER AND KEY SUPPORTER RECOGNIZED FOR  
INNOVATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WITH TOP ALUMNI HONOR**

*Nonprofit Co-Founder Janna Wagner (New York '95) Named Recipient of Teach For America's 2019 Peter Jennings Award for Civic Leadership; Alumni Sammy Politziner (New York '99) Recognized for Key Support of Organization*

**NEW YORK, September 25, 2019**—Teach For America named All Our Kin co-founder and chief learning officer Janna Wagner (New York '95) as the recipient of the prestigious Peter Jennings Award for Civic Leadership, and recognized All Our Kin board member Sammy Politziner (New York '99), for his role in supporting the organization. All Our Kin's innovative model works simultaneously for women's economic empowerment while expanding early childhood education opportunities in Connecticut and New York.

The Peter Jennings Award—established in 2007 and named in honor of the late ABC News anchor and longtime supporter of Teach For America (TFA)—is presented annually to TFA alumni who embody the organization's core values and whose work led to significant change for excellence and equity in education in the last year.

“Peter believed in Teach For America, because he believed in the power of public education. He knew that equal opportunity depends on educational opportunity and that Teach For America was relentless in pursuit of that for all kids,” said Kayce Freed Jennings, who presented the award to Wagner at an event in New York City. “At this time of uncertainty in the nation and the world, he would have valued more than ever how leaders are tackling the challenges we're facing head-on, and in ways that will endure long beyond their tenure. This year's winner embodies Peter's hopes and the reasons he became so passionate about Teach For America in the first place.”

Wagner and her co-founder Jessica Sager founded All Our Kin in response to the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, known informally as Welfare Reform. The law was controversial at the time, and many advocates argued it forced many low-income mothers to stop serving as their children's primary caregivers and instead seek employment outside the home; many of these women often struggled to find well-paying employment, as well as affordable, high-quality childcare in their communities. All Our Kin aimed to solve both issues by training mothers of young children to run their own home-based childcare programs, which in turn increased the quality of early childhood education opportunities available to the community.

Today, the group primarily works with providers who are already running home-based child care programs. The nonprofit helps these providers to get licensed, run their businesses more effectively, and raise the quality of care and instruction that children in the programs receive. Independent analyses have shown that All Our Kin's work leads to higher income for providers and higher scores on assessments that measure quality in family childcare settings, which have been shown to correlate strongly with positive outcomes for children. Recently, All Our Kin began expanding, and the group has plans to begin operating in three to five new sites over the next five years.

“Janna and Sammy embody the pursuit of educational equity and excellence: the collective leadership, the fierce passion, the innovation, the courage, and the unwavering belief in our students and lifelong dedication it will take to reach the day when every single child in America has the educational opportunities they deserve,” said Teach For America CEO Elisa Villanueva Beard (Phoenix Corps ’98). “These qualities of leadership, courage, and commitment were also hallmarks of the award’s namesake, Peter Jennings. He was a visionary who understood that if we invest in and embolden our youngest, America’s best days will lie ahead.”

Previous Peter Jennings Award for Civic Leadership recipients include:

- **2018:** Heather Anichini (Chicago-Northwest Indiana ’02), President and CEO, Chicago Public Education Fund
- **2017:** Jeffrey Riley (Baltimore ’93), Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
- **2016:** Sophia Pappas (New Jersey ’03), Former CEO, Division of ECE, New York City Department of Education
- **2015:** DeRay Mckesson (New York ’07) and Brittany Packnett (D.C. Region ’07), Activists
- **2014:** Kaya Henderson (New York ’92), Former Chancellor, D.C. Public Schools; Kevin Huffman (Houston ’92), Former Tennessee Commissioner of Education
- **2013:** Julie Jackson (New Jersey ’94), Chief of Schools Officer, K-8, Uncommon Schools
- **2012:** Rhonda Kalifey-Aluise (Houston ’92), Executive Director, KIPP New Orleans; Sarah Newell Usdin (South Louisiana ’92), Board Member, Orleans Parish School Board; Kira Orange Jones (South Louisiana ’00), Former Executive Director, Teach For America–Greater New Orleans
- **2011:** Mike Johnston (Greater Delta ’97), Former State Senator, Colorado
- **2010:** Tim Daly (Baltimore ’99), Founding Partner, EdNavigator
- **2009:** Jeremy Beard (Los Angeles ’95), Head of Schools, YES Prep Public Schools; JoAnn Gama (Rio Grande Valley ’97), Co-Founder, President, and Superintendent, IDEA Public Schools; Tom Torkelson (Rio Grande Valley ’97), Co-Founder and CEO, IDEA Public Schools
- **2008:** Cami Anderson (Los Angeles ’93), Former Superintendent, Newark Public Schools
- **2007:** Michelle Rhee (Baltimore ’92), Former Chancellor, D.C. Public Schools

More information about the Peter Jennings Award for Civic Leadership, winners, and finalists can be found [here](#).

#### **About Teach For America**

Teach For America works in partnership with urban and rural communities in more than 50 regions across the country to expand educational opportunity for children. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding leaders to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. Today Teach For America is a force of over 60,000 alumni and corps members committed to profound systemic change. From classrooms to districts to state houses across America, they’re reimagining education to realize the day when every child has an equal opportunity to learn, to grow, to influence, and to lead. For more information, visit [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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