



Ami Hanaoka

3rd Grade, Aspire Berkley Maynard Academy
Resident: Jenessa Hefler

Hometown: Englewood, CO
of Years Teaching: 9
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 4

Why I Teach at Aspire: I like that I am able to meet my students' needs in all subjects at a level that is most beneficial to their learning. Using the standards as a guide to develop curriculum tailored to my students has helped me grow as a professional as well as meet my students' needs. And, of course, the people at Aspire are amazing! The consistent hard work and dedication to the students that you see with everyone on staff is unbeatable.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: It's wonderful to have another set of capable hands in the room who knows the students just as well as you do and is able to help them in the ways that they need help. Every student is getting so much more attention in areas of growth as a result.



Amy Youngman

7th-8th Grade Humanities, Aspire ERES Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Daniel Shapiro

Hometown: San Jose, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 4

Why I Teach at Aspire: I most like Aspire's drive towards excellence. I have seen Aspire expand, improve, and critically analyze feedback in an effort to become better. I am drawn to stay in the organization because of the amazing teachers, classified staff, principal and school community that I am blessed to work with. Aspire provides the framework, the tools, and the technology through which I can improve my craft and help students make big gains each year.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate the opportunity to have a fully-invested, hard-working adult in my classroom who has a heart for my students and a passion for the teaching profession. It has been wonderful to be able to map out a long term plan of improvement and gradual release that promises to ensure success for both my resident and my students.



Ashley Sen

2nd-3rd Grade, Aspire Port City Academy
Resident: Saumirah McWoodson

Hometown: Stockton, CA
of Years Teaching: 5
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 5

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love the "College for Certain" attitude within Aspire, as well as the flexibility to teach students what they need with as many resources as I can find. But, the most beneficial piece of Aspire, I believe, is the high expectations and small group instruction.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: Being my first time involved in ATR, I can already sense that it is a superb program that prepares energetic people to be great educators within Aspire. Residents are obtaining skills and experiences that they would likely never have in a traditional credential and student-teaching program. As the mentor, I am also seeing myself as a more cognizant person; really thinking about what I am doing, and why, as I explain it to my co-teacher. It's a great experience for both parties involved!



Ben Feinberg

5th Grade English, Aspire Junior Collegiate Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Christian McGrail

Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
of Years Teaching: 5
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 4

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love the student-centered college going culture and propels our students toward success!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I love working with future teachers to set them up for immediate success in the classroom.



Claire Hawley

1st Grade, Aspire ERES Academy
Resident: Susan Summerfield

Hometown: Cleveland, OH
of Years Teaching: 8
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 7

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love the students and the families we serve. I have a deep commitment to free public education.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate the way in which ATR has caused me to reflect upon my practice.



Dea Inguito

2nd Grade, Aspire Huntington Park Charter School
Resident: Danielle Soto

Hometown: Los Angeles
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: I'm drawn to the amazing staff, students, and families who are committed to a common vision and mission. I can't imagine working anywhere else!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate my co-teacher, Danielle Soto. I'm impressed by her willingness to learn and I'm very excited to have another teacher by my side in our classroom.



Diana Puccio

Kindergarten, Aspire Vincent Shalvey Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Tonia Arevalo

Hometown: Newport Beach, CA
of Years Teaching: 28
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 14

Why I Teach at Aspire: I was originally drawn to Aspire because I saw that the teachers involved shared the same vision and work ethic that was focused on student achievement. I wanted to work with teachers that were excited to work and share best practices and strategies. These principles are the same reason I stay with Aspire today. Furthermore, the teachers at Vincent Shalvey are not only colleagues, but dear friends. We are a family!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I began my teaching career as an intern in Newport Mesa with an amazing mentor. The start she gave me has been long lasting and I wanted to do the same for new teachers coming into the profession. Working with my resident, Tonia, will allow me the opportunity to share my knowledge and passion for children and their learning. I have known Tonia for the past two years as she has been a guest teacher in my classroom. I look forward to our new partnership and growing friendship as we begin teaching our new group of students in their first steps to college.



Ivy Valant

2nd Grade, Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School
Resident: Jacquelyn Lynch

Hometown: Birmingham, Michigan
of Years Teaching: 7
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 5

Why I Teach at Aspire: I enjoy the collaboration that is prevalent at Aspire, and especially EPACS. I love who I work with and feel honored to serve the East Palo Alto Community.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate the way that I am forced to reflect on my own teaching practice and continue to grow as a teacher.



Jai David

9th Grade Integrated Science, 10th Grade Biology, 12th Grade Anatomy, Aspire California College Prep Academy
Data Driver
Resident: Rachel White

Hometown: Oakland, CA
of Years Teaching: 3
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 3

Why I Teach at Aspire: I absolutely LOVE working with my colleagues, the students and families!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: The opportunity to grow as a leader and gain a new and fresh perspective from residents.



Janet Yang

1st Grade, Aspire Firestone Academy
Resident: Christine Yang

Hometown: Walnut, CA
of Years Teaching: 3
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 3

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love working for Aspire because I truly believe that we provide the opportunities these students deserve. We teach and instill in our students the tools to not only become great scholars but also to become good people. Aspire's College for Certain motto is a constant reminder for the students and myself that we all share a common goal, all students can reach this goal, and we have each other to lean on and support through this journey.

I continue to work for Aspire because of the constant collaboration, sharing of best practices, support from all levels, and most importantly the immeasurable differences we make in these children's lives daily.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate the opportunity to share my teaching practices and inspire someone who is just as enthusiastic and excited about being in the classroom as I am. I am quickly realizing that in order to clearly explain the details and reasoning for my practices, I have to have a true understanding of how and why I run my classroom the way I do. This pushes me as an educator, and I love this challenge! The leadership opportunity, partnership, and professional growing opportunities are all reasons why I am so excited to be a mentor this year.



Jay Stack

4th Grade, Aspire Berkley Maynard Academy
Resident: Gina Perlite

Hometown: Philadelphia, PA
of Years Teaching: 7
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 7

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love the work ethic, supportive nature, and collaborative mentality of the people here. I get to work with and learn from some of the best teachers in the game!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I really appreciate the levels of support offered to teachers before they enter the classroom. Collaborating on everything from lesson plans to daily routines to individualized instruction will be super helpful!



Jeff Griffith

3rd Grade, Aspire Summit Charter Academy
Resident: Danita Thomson

Hometown: Modesto
of Years Teaching: 12
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 7

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love the community feel at Summit, the support that we give each other, and the way we treat each student as an individual.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I have really enjoyed getting to know my resident and learning from the other mentors and advisors.



Joanna Bottrell

3rd Grade, Aspire Inskip Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Carla Caviness

Hometown: Glendale, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love that Aspire serves the students that need it most, and I love being a part of revolutionizing public education!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I most appreciate my co-teacher, and how well ATR has prepared her to begin our school year! It's so clear that she received a solid foundation in Education Theory from her summer seminar and is ready and willing to hit the ground running with me!



Juan Enriquez

8th Grade Algebra and Physical Science, Aspire Centennial College Preparatory Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Lia O'Neale

Hometown: Los Angeles
of Years Teaching: 13
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: What I like about Aspire most is the energy and work ethic that all our teachers bring to improve learning.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I look forward to the tremendous opportunity for learning to occur with two teachers in the classroom.



Lindsay Fena

2nd Grade, Aspire Vincent Shalvey Academy
Resident: Daniel Wolfe

Hometown: Stockton, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: What I like most about Aspire are the relationships I have formed with my colleagues. There is collaboration not only within grade level teams but also between the entire staff. I'm confident that they really care about me as a person, as I do them. There is a feeling of unity that goes beyond the classroom, where lasting relationships have definitely formed.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate having an extra body to work with in my classroom. I never knew how nice it would be to have another set of eyes and hands. My resident and I have formed a good working relationship built on trust, respect, and vulnerability.



Lisa Hoerner

5th Grade, Aspire Alexander Twilight College Preparatory Academy
Resident: Dayna Perez

Hometown: Orangevale, CA
of Years Teaching: 4
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 4

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love teaching at Aspire because of the high expectations we require of our students and ourselves as teachers. We are able to align our creativity and classroom data to design what works for our students. Plus we get to work with amazing people!!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate having another teacher fully invested in our students and the opportunity to co-teach with another person. It will also be great to work with the same person for the entire year!



Margarette Prella

6th-7th Grade Humanities, Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy
Student Council Advisor
Resident: Luz Escalante

Hometown: Riverbank, CA
of Years Teaching: 35
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 11

Why I Teach at Aspire: The collaboration among teachers is my favorite part of Aspire. I feel like I am part of a family at Vanguard.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: Having two teachers in the room for the entire year can only benefit the students, and we will have a new teacher the following year ready to go!



Maria Vizcaino

Kindergarten, Aspire Junior Collegiate Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Jennifer Sirkus

Hometown: East Los Angeles, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love that everyone is committed to children's education. We all have the same goals and always work hard. Our schools are smaller and it allows us to know our families on a deeper level.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I love that residents get to be in the classroom for a whole year. I feel that I didn't learn how to be a teacher until I was in a classroom of my own. They get to incorporate what they learn at seminar and use in the classroom.



Marivenus Magbitang Garcia

10th Grade Biology and 12th Grade Anatomy & Physiology, Aspire Pacific Academy
Lead Teacher and Data Driver
Resident: Benjamin Si Hyun Pae

Hometown: Canton, Michigan
of Years Teaching: 7
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 2

Why I Teach at Aspire: I value our organization's priority on student achievement. I respect and admire my colleagues for being driven towards serving the needs of our underperforming students and I thrive in this environment of support and collaboration. When I transitioned to Aspire from a district school I noticed a higher percentage of adults on campus with genuine enthusiasm and high expectations and standards for all students. Adults knew students by name and our school acted more like a community rather than an institution. All of these factors increase a student's academic achievement because they feel part of a team that is focused on their success.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I am excited to co-teach this year with Ben, my Teacher Resident, as we will balance my experience with his raw passion for teaching. Our students will greatly benefit from both of us in the classroom working as a team. Also, I appreciate the energy and enthusiasm of other Mentors and the support we receive.



Megan Monaghan

3rd Grade, Aspire Antonio Maria Lugo Academy
Lead Teacher, Data Driver
Resident: Shea Nairn

Hometown: Oceanside, NY
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

Why I Teach at Aspire: Everything done at Aspire is purposeful. Data is analyzed carefully and used to target the misconceptions of individual students, small groups of students, and entire classes. There is a huge support system for teachers and countless opportunities to collaborate with other teachers in a given school, across a region, and even Aspire-wide. You're never alone when you work at Aspire - you're part of a team, a family, where everyone has the same goal: work together to support students as they learn and get ready for college.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate how the Aspire Teacher Residency program allows both the mentor and the resident to grow as educators with the support of each other and the Regional Cohort. Students benefit tremendously by having more one-on-one and small group instruction as well as additional support from a second teacher. I'm excited and proud to be a part of ATR: reflecting on my own practice and helping a resident as he learns how to do the same!



Melissa Greene

3rd Grade, Aspire Tate Academy
Lead Teacher, Induction Coach
Resident: Dennise Reyes

Hometown: Rancho Cucamonga, CA
of Years Teaching: 5
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 3

Why I Teach at Aspire: I first decided to work for Aspire because I believed in the mission to catalyze change in underserved and underrepresented areas. Additionally, I believe it is imperative for teachers to share best practices with other educators, which Aspire supports and initiates. I have continued to work for this organization because I feel that I am a part of a family that is catalyzing change nation-wide. Together, we are truly providing an equitable education to those that need it most, and despite the odds, we are literally closing the achievement gap. I am proud to be a part of this change.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I love the idea of sharing and learning innovative teaching practices with my colleagues in the Residency program. Additionally, I appreciate the leadership opportunities and professional development that the program has to offer.



Mercedes Lopez

1st Grade, Aspire Capitol Heights Academy
Sunshine Committee, Teambuilding Leader, Certified CELDT Trainer, Runners Club Organizer
Resident: Corian Po

Hometown: Merced, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 6

My Inspiration to Teach: I am inspired to teach because I am passionate about education and love working with children and young people. Working as an educator is extremely rewarding to me, and I feel fortunate to have found my calling in the field of education.

Why I Chose Aspire: I believe that education is a gateway to freedom, opportunity, and choice, and that high quality education should be available to everyone. Aspire's mission to provide excellent education to students in underserved communities, develop effective educators, and to create large-scale change in America's public schools drew me to the residency program.



Rosario Parra

7th-8th Grade English, Aspire Berkley Maynard Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Mia Costello

Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 2

Why I Teach at Aspire: I love Aspire because they support teachers by helping them grow as educators to provide a quality education for underserved kids.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I really appreciate ATR's initial mentor training; it really helped mentors from other schools collaborate on plans for their residents.



Ryan Grow

10th-12th Grade History, Aspire California College Preparatory Academy
Resident: Marcy Rosner

Hometown: Pleasant Hill, CA
of Years Teaching: 10
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 7

Why I Teach at Aspire: I like Aspire's mission of "College for Certain". I love the challenge of inspiring students and helping them raise their skills so they can go to college, thrive in college, and graduate from college.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: My resident is awesome!



Semi Park

4/5th Grade, Aspire Tate Academy
Resident: Contessa Cannaday

Hometown: Redondo Beach, CA
of Years Teaching: 6
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 2

Why I Teach at Aspire: I am privileged to work with a group of people who are professional, driven for success, and genuinely love children. I find myself growing as an educator, often challenged to be a better teacher. I see the difference we are making in each of these children, and it makes me proud to know that these children are on their way to success!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I love seeing the enthusiasm and the excitement that my resident brings to school. She is very determined, motivated, and ready to take on the challenge. It makes me thrilled to know that I have the chance to guide her to becoming a qualified teacher.



Susheela Nath

9th-12th Grade Biology, Chemistry, College Human Anatomy, Aspire Langston Hughes Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Christopher Brown

Hometown: Stockton, CA
of Years Teaching: 10
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 5

Why I Teach at Aspire: Teaching is not a job, it's a way of life, where you are continuously learning and being challenged. As teachers for Aspire we all share the same belief that every student has the potential for success. This potential is so exciting - each new year presents new challenges and new potential successes. Student success is what drives me as a teacher to continue to perform my very best each day. Teachers at Aspire do not write students off as being unteachable, instead we collaborate to teach to the different modalities of our students. I most like when each student we teach, who didn't understand a concept and then learned it through the help of our collaboration, finally says "Oh I got it." This is the most exhilarating feeling a teacher for Aspire can feel. We ASPIRE to INSPIRE by going beyond the call of duty.

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I appreciate the opportunity to work next to another individual that shares the same compassion and mission for working with our students. As a lifelong learner I am always looking for inspiration and guidance. Having a resident brings new ideas, great thoughts and different ways of doing things, which are fabulous both for me and my class.



Tawna Turner

1st Grade, Aspire Alexander Twilight College Preparatory Academy
Lead Teacher
Resident: Valerie Valdez

Hometown: Paradise, CA
of Years Teaching: 7
of Years Teaching at Aspire: 7

Why I Teach at Aspire: Every day I get to work with amazing, inspiring people and do what I love in a collaborative, supportive environment. I feel like the organization has vision and integrity; we really are doing what we say we're going to do!!

What I Appreciate Most About ATR: I love how it forces me to look closer at why I do things in my classroom. I enjoy having dialogue with an intelligent, reflective peer about ways to improve classroom practices and student learning. The ATR program is also a great benefit for my students; with two teachers in the room, we can finally provide the individual/small group interventions students desperately need.