



# TEACHING FELLOWS

## GROWING TEACHERS FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

### OVERVIEW

Winner of the 2011 Dick and Tunky Riley WhatWorksSC Award for Excellence in Education, the South Carolina Teaching Fellows program is designed to recruit high-achieving, talented high school seniors into the teaching profession and equip them to become effective and successful educators. The program is funded by annual allocation from the General Assembly. The selection process for Teaching Fellows is rigorous, with an emphasis on academic accomplishment, school and community involvement, and leadership skills. Students who wish to apply for a fellowship must complete an online application in the fall of their senior year of high school and submit recommendations related to the skills and attributes required for success in the program. All applications are scored by an initial screening committee. Up to 500 qualifying applicants are invited to participate in the Teaching Fellows regional interviews where they interview in front of a team of three educators, deliver a short presentation on an assigned topic, and write an essay in response to a prompt. Up to 200 Teaching Fellows may be selected, who will receive up to \$24,000 in yearly awards (up to \$6000 a year for four years) while they attend a Teaching Fellows Institution and pursue a degree that will lead to initial teacher certification. Additionally, Fellows are offered numerous professional development and leadership opportunities above and beyond those offered through the institution's teacher preparation program. Teaching Fellows also are involved with communities and businesses through various service projects and partnerships with local schools. Teaching Fellows must successfully complete 120 credit hours and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.8 during their undergraduate careers. A Fellow agrees to teach in a South Carolina public school one year for every year he or she receives the Fellowship. Should a Fellow decide not to repay the fund through service in the classroom, he or she is obligated to repay through financial means.

### TEACHING FELLOWS MAKE GREAT HIRES

This program not only recruits the best of the best, it prepares these future teachers to positively impact education in South Carolina. Since Teaching Fellows have agreed to teach in a South Carolina public school one year for every year they have accepted the fellowship funds, most are therefore indebted for four years of service to the state. Program data consistently show that a majority of Teaching Fellows who have taught for the required number of years to satisfy their loan through service are still employed in districts across the state. This retention rate is remarkable when compared to the attrition rate among teachers in the first five years of their career. Several studies have found that as many as 50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into the profession (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Annual program data can be found at <https://www.cerra.org/teaching-fellows-data.html>. Teaching Fellows engage in diversity education, leadership development, and advocacy training beginning their first year in the program. The experiences provided through the Teaching Fellows program help prepare these novice teachers to be leaders from the beginning of their careers.

### TEACHING FELLOWS INSTITUTIONS

Teaching Fellows must attend one of ten Teaching Fellows Institutions. Each Teaching Fellows Institution offers a unique program and varies in size and program organization. Incoming Teaching Fellows are encouraged to research and select the program, not just the college or university, that best fits their needs. Teaching Fellows is available at the following institutions:

Anderson University, Charleston Southern University, Coastal Carolina University, College of Charleston, Francis Marion University, Lander University, USC-Aiken, USC-Columbia, USC-Upstate, & Winthrop University