

Department of Teacher Education, College of Education
GAIL RICHMOND

DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS



(Left) Alycia Meriweather, Detroit Public Schools; (Middle) Gail Richmond, Michigan State University; (Right) Tom Bordenkircher, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, in front of the Spirit of Detroit city monument.

The Community Engagement Scholarship Award honors Gail Richmond, associate professor of teacher education, and the Detroit Public Schools for their partnership in constructing and implementing a model program designed to prepare and to support individuals with a commitment to improving the lives and well-being of children from high-poverty communities through the teaching of science and mathematics.

Dr. Richmond's research has focused on providing access to high-quality STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) experiences for young learners—both in and out of school. Further, her research has contributed to how educators conceive of and engage in science teaching across multiple settings and with diverse audiences. Finally, her commitment to applying her research findings to helping students from all backgrounds embrace science learning and the STEM fields has ensured that hundreds and hundreds of students are equipped to fulfill their dreams through science-based college pursuits and STEM careers.

While the details of her research work in this area are too great to explain fully, her commitment is perhaps best reflected in her 26 years as the director of the national summer STEM research program for high school students at MSU. Not only does she provide these 650 students with research guidance and opportunities, she provides them with the scientific responsibilities and skills to master research proposals, report writing, and presentation skills. These accomplishments, along with her direct involvement, help prepare them to apply to college and then to succeed. These students come from multiple racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; the investment she makes in the program and in them has created opportunities for success that the students have not only met—but met with great success, so much so that their confidence and new knowledge has helped them become part of the STEM community in their studies and in their careers.

Dr. Richmond's work has been supported by multiple grants, primarily from the National Science Foundation, and has been disseminated

in peer-reviewed publications and through various other venues. When not at work, Dr. Richmond can be found tutoring students or working on or around her farmhouse; she also is an active chamber and orchestral musician.

The MSU W. K. Kellogg Foundation Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows Program is a campus-community collaboration that provides integrated course- and field-based preparation; a year-long residency in a partner school; and ongoing professional support during the first three years of teaching. The goal of this collaboration is to prepare a new generation of STEM teachers who will actively engage individuals and organizations within their communities to help ensure the health and well-being of students, families, and communities; and to share research findings to enhance researchers', practitioners', and policy makers' understanding of factors critical for the development of effective and resilient educators. The Woodrow Wilson Foundation National Fellowship Program has been a financial supporter and an active collaborator in the design, implementation, and refinement of this work.

The Detroit Public Schools has been a core district partner, working with Dr. Richmond to identify and partner fellows with mentor teachers, to provide ongoing professional support to fellows and mentors, and to offer a wealth of site-based experiences to fellows to enhance their development of the knowledge and skills critical for effective teaching in challenging contexts.

This university-community collaboration provides an excellent example of the scholarship-guided outreach that Michigan State University is committed to as a land-grant university. Such collaborations are systematic, have practical and theoretical significance, and include a mutually beneficial relationship between MSU and a community partner. This particular partnership merits recognition for making a difference in the lives of under-represented Michigan youth and Detroit Public Schools as well as encouraging the pursuit of STEM studies and careers.