



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Impact Announces 2021 National Cohort of Opportunity Culture Fellows

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.— Public Impact announces with pleasure the seventh cohort of Opportunity Culture Fellows, made up of eight principals who have achieved strong results in their schools and districts.

Fellows provide support to their cohort, take one another's ideas back to their schools, write columns or lead webinars about their experiences, and speak locally and nationally about their Opportunity Culture roles. Their feedback and leadership are invaluable in helping to improve the Opportunity Culture initiative, and all materials related to it. Last year, for example, fellows shared their expertise in these [webinars](#) and [columns](#).

This year's fellows come from Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, Illinois, Maryland, and North Carolina:

- **Matt Cowan**, school leader of Compass-Midtown in Memphis, Tennessee
- **Victoria Groomer**, principal of Gentry Primary in Gentry, Arkansas
- **Susan Hendricks**, principal of Ross Elementary in Odessa, Texas
- **Virginia "Ginger" Hiltz**, principal of Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy in Chicago, Illinois
- **Angela Jones**, school director of Caldwell-Guthrie Elementary in Memphis, Tennessee
- **Christin Reeves**, principal of Emerson Elementary in Midland, Texas
- **Amanda Rice**, principal of Hazelwood Elementary Middle in Baltimore, Maryland
- **Julie Shields**, principal of Bearfield Primary in Ahoskie (Hertford County), North Carolina

"Opportunity Culture Fellows provide strong leadership to their schools, and we saw the many ways this eased the transition when schools went remote last spring," said Sharon Kebschull Barrett, the Public Impact vice president who oversees the fellowship, working closely to learn from fellows' experiences through interviews and column writing. "This fellowship gives them an opportunity to lead and advocate for a stronger profession well beyond their own schools. We are excited to have a cohort this year focused on principals, to use their feedback to keep improving Opportunity Culture for other school leaders."

The national Opportunity Culture initiative, founded by Public Impact and now in more than 45 sites in 10 states, extends the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students, for more pay, within schools' recurring budgets.

Research indicates that Multi-Classroom Leadership, the foundation of an Opportunity Culture, helps teams of teachers produce substantially higher student learning growth than in typical schools. [Multi-classroom leaders](#) (MCLs) are teachers with a record of high-growth student learning and leadership competencies who lead a small teaching team, ensuring strong lessons and teaching methods through [frequent, on-the-job development](#), while continuing to teach part of the time in various ways. School teams redesign schedules to provide additional school-day time for MCLs' teams to plan and collaborate.

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About Public Impact

Public Impact's mission is to improve education dramatically for all students, especially low-income students, students of color, and other students whose needs historically have not been well met. We are a team of professionals from many backgrounds, including former teachers and principals. We are researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who work with leading education reformers.

Learn more about an Opportunity Culture on the OpportunityCulture.org website, which provides free Opportunity Culture tools, educator [videos](#) and [columns](#), and [instructional leadership and excellence resources](#). Funding for development of resources to help schools design and implement Opportunity Culture models and support teachers taking on new roles has been provided by [national foundations](#).

For more information, please visit <https://www.opportunityculture.org/>. To arrange an interview with Public Impact, contact Sharon Keschull Barrett at Sharon.Barrett@publicimpact.com; 919.590.4154.