# ON THE FastTrack

February 2026 - Issue #25

## MONTHLY UPDATE: CELEBRATING NEVADA'S EDUCATORS

This month, we celebrate the powerful theme of creating legacies through a shared passion for education and extending kindness—values that define who we are and the work we do together, and are shared by our community partner, Nevada Gold Mines.

Having recently passed 100 days of school for the current academic year, we pause to reflect on the incredible growth and connections that have taken shape in our classrooms. We are also thrilled to welcome the launch of our Spring 2026 semester and extend warm greetings to the many new participants who have recently begun their journey with the Teacher FastTrack Recruit program.

February is Black History Month, and we take this opportunity to honor the legacy of Clark County School District's African American educators whose contributions have shaped generations. We are especially proud that several of our current mentees work at five namesake schools, where they have the privilege of nurturing their passion for education under the influence of these iconic champions.

This month also invites us all to celebrate kindness, friendship, and passion. We are excited to share a truly unique story of two mentors who embody all three in spades, reminding us of the profound impact that genuine connection can have on our lives.
As you read through this issue, we leave you with this timeless wisdom: *"Educating the mind without educating the heart, is no education at all."* — Aristotle

Let these words inspire you to spread kindness this month and beyond.

**Current Cohort DATA**

* data based on mentoring connections from 8/1/25 to 12/3/25

| 1,704 Hrs | 4896 | 1006 |
|---|---|---|
| Connection Time | Tasks Completed | Meetings Attended |

## Where History Lives: African American Namesake Schools in CCSD

Across Clark County School District, schools named in honor of African American leaders stand as lasting tributes to the individuals who shaped education and opportunity in Southern Nevada. These namesakes represent excellence, resilience, and a deep commitment to ensuring that all students—particularly those from historically underserved communities—have access to high-quality education.

Together, CCSD's African American namesakes tell an important story—one of progress, representation, and collective responsibility. They affirm that Southern Nevada's educational landscape has been shaped by leaders who believed deeply in the promise of public education and worked tirelessly to make that promise accessible to all. As students walk through the doors of these schools, they inherit a legacy that continues to inspire excellence, leadership, and hope for future generations.

This month, we celebrate the 25 African Americans whose impact on not only their immediate community, but the entire Silver State, continues within the halls of the schools that proudly bear their names.

let's celebrate BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## Path to UAP

### Future Licensed Educators Joining Teacher FastTrack Recruit

*representative of participants in the Nevada Forward Undergraduate Pre-Apprenticeship program who have begun participation in the Teacher FastTrack Recruit Program as of 1/1/2026

PEF Teacher FastTrack

***Teacher FastTrack Recruit*** addresses the teacher shortage crisis by helping to identify school employees who dream of becoming a licensed teacher and providing invaluable wrap-around support while they complete a teacher apprenticeship program at UNLV. We also mentor hundreds of new teachers during the first three years in their own classrooms through our Teacher FastTrack Retain program.

## *A SHARED PATH: A JOURNEY OF TEACHING, MENTORSHIP, AND LOVE*

*Mentor Spotlight:*
**Bernadette & Brian**

When you walk through the halls of Wallin Elementary, you can feel something special in the air—a sense of purpose, compassion, and community that extends far beyond the classroom walls. At the heart of this vibrant learning environment are Brian and Bernadette, a married couple whose dedication to students and mentorship exemplifies the very best of what it means to teach. Brian's path required courage—walking away from a successful sales career to return to college and pursue what he always knew was his calling. *"Teaching wasn't a fallback plan,"* he reflects. "*It was always the goal, representing something important to society and essential to my happiness."* Bernadette's journey began with inspiration from her high school British literature teacher, Mr. Kraft, whose animated, costume-clad lessons sparked her love for education. After 20 years in CCSD and earning her GATE endorsement, she continues to pour her heart into shaping young minds. Their love story began at the same school where they both taught, and their relationship has been enriched by their shared commitment to education. *"It is great that we can problem-solve together,"* Bernadette says. *"Brian is such a wonderful resource and has so many great solutions."* Brian is equally admiring: *"Her ability to share her experience and knowledge is what sets her apart. She listens well, cares so much, and is always willing to spend time sharing her thoughts and ideas."*

Both Brian and Bernadette understand the transformative power of mentorship because they've experienced it themselves. Brian credits Monica Stone, his cooperating teacher, who *"believed in my ability long before I fully believed in myself. That's the power of mentorship. No one gets better alone."* Bernadette found her mentor in Lori Anderson, who guided her by posing suggestions as questions, allowing her to find her own teaching style. These experiences shaped how they approach mentorship today in the Teacher FastTrack Recruit program. Brian focuses on building confidence by treating mentees as people first, creating safe spaces where vulnerability leads to growth. "*You can teach skills and strategies, but you cannot teach commitment,"* he observes. Bernadette connects with mentees over shared experiences—time management, juggling school and work, and balancing life's demands. Together, they help aspiring educators navigate the path to licensure with wisdom and practical support. Their message about the program's impact is powerful: "*We often think about the people throughout time who were denied a chance because of their financial situation or because they lacked confidence. On both of those fronts, we think this program is incredibly important. When all of those pieces come together, and those resources are invested in the right person, you set the stage for a teacher to positively impact thousands of students, colleagues, and families over the course of a career. That is exactly what this program is designed to do."*

As our conversation draws to a close, Brian shares a reflection that captures the essence of both his teaching philosophy and his life: *"The most important thing I want to leave people with is that everything good in my life has come from surrounding myself with wonderful people. When I went looking for a partner, what mattered most to me was finding someone who was beautiful on the inside, and those values came directly from my family. So I believe that when you have the right support system in your life, everything else becomes far more enjoyable. And if you can take those same values into whatever work you do, you will make the world a better place."* Bernadette's response is simple and perfect: "*Brian couldn't have said it any better. Love him!"* Their story is a testament to the power of passion, partnership, and purpose in education. Through their work as educators and mentors in the Teacher FastTrack Recruit program, they are helping to ensure that Nevada's classrooms are filled with confident, compassionate, well-supported teachers who will inspire the next generation of learners. Thank you, Brian and Bernadette, for your dedication, your wisdom, and your unwavering commitment to students, mentees, and each other.

***Click here for the full article***

## *THANK YOU, NEVADA GOLD MINES: INVESTING IN NEVADA'S TEACHERS AND STUDENTS*

The Public Education Foundation is proud to share that Teacher FastTrack (TFT) has been awarded a $250,000 grant from Nevada Gold Mines (NGM) to support and expand our work addressing Nevada's longstanding teacher shortage. This generous investment reflects NGM's deep commitment to Nevada's communities, schools, and students—and to the educators who serve them every day.

Thanks to support from partners like Nevada Gold Mines, almost 200 new teachers mentored by PEF are already serving students across the state. During the 2024–2025 school year alone, TFT Recruit supported 232 aspiring teachers statewide, including participants in Washoe County, rural communities, and 20 future teachers in Elko County—an area of particular importance to NGM and the communities it serves.

NGM's continued investment builds on its earlier seed funding in 2022 and directly supports mentor and mentee stipends, helping aspiring teachers overcome common barriers such as testing fees, childcare, transportation, and educational materials. These resources are essential for paraprofessionals, guest teachers, and school employees who are already dedicated to students and are working toward becoming licensed educators.

Nevada Gold Mines' partnership plays a critical role in strengthening the teacher pipeline and improving retention—ensuring that classrooms are led by well-prepared, supported, and committed teachers. We are deeply grateful to NGM for standing with PEF and Teacher FastTrack as we work together to ensure every Nevada student has access to a high-quality, passionate educator.

PEF
Teacher FastTrack

**Contact Teacher FastTrack**: tft.recruit@thepef.org
**Grant Hanevold:** grant.hanevold@thepef.org | (702) 271-6008
**Ashlie N. Randolph:** ashlie.randolph@thepef.org | (702) 799-1042 Ext. 7468
**Jessica Rodriguez:** jessica.rodriguez@thepef.org | (702) 271-7422