



Year One Impact Report



"Changing the face of who gets to *teach* gifted, so we can change who gets to *be* gifted"

From Our Executive Director



When I first learned about work of The BEE Project, I knew I had to be a part of this tremendous organization. As a parent of two gifted children who has faced fights having her own children identified as gifted in different states, who has herself grappled with concerns about how educators who don't share my children's cultural background might view them, the vision of changing the face of who gets to teach gifted so we can change who gets to be gifted resonated heavily with me.

Over the past year, we have:

- Hired our first full-time employee (me!),
- Recruited a board of directors to provide guidance and support to the organization,
- Applied for and formally been granted our Federal 501(c)(3) status,
- Held two cohorts of our flagship teacher fellowship program, designed to help Black, Hispanic and Indigenous teachers obtain their gifted certifications in support of our overall mission to increase the number of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous gifted teachers,
- Established a model to provide training in culturally affirming gifted identification and assessment, and how to serve the academic and social-emotional needs of diverse gifted students,
- Convened a national conference, Gifted in Color, and built a community to affirm and nurture educators of color in gifted education, and
- Launched a summer virtual learning series to build on the learnings from the conference.

I am most proud of the fact that five of our teachers from the second fellowship cohort came back as presenters at Gifted in Color – the students became the experts, and they were incredible! This was a powerful reminder of the importance of the work we do.

We have accomplished a lot in the first year, and we couldn't have done it without our advisers, partners, and other supporters. I remain excited about the opportunity to lead this meaningful work, and look forward to continuing to collaborate with you around the shared goal of increasing equity in gifted education and education overall to create the schools we want for all children.

Yours in advocacy,

Autumn A. Arnett
Executive Director
The Brilliance, Excellence and Equity Project

Year One By the Numbers

\$97,528

Amount raised through philanthropy and programming in year one

59

Teachers trained directly in The BEE Project's programs

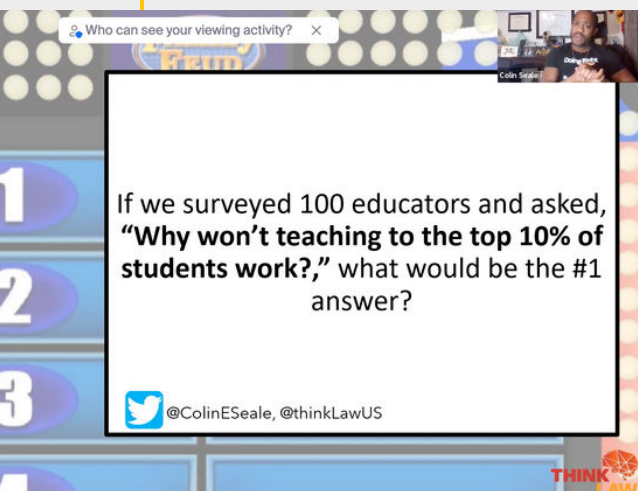
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Teachers who have received or are expecting to receive state gifted certification after participating in The BEE Project's fellowship program

3

Conference presentations by former BEE Project fellows after participating in our cohort

The BEE Project Teacher Fellowship Program



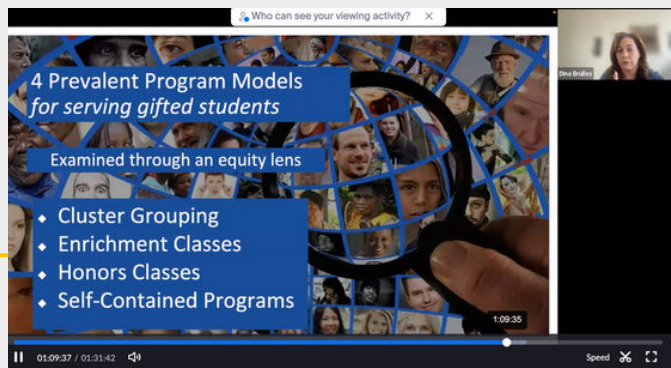
Cohort 1 of our signature teacher fellowship program marked the first official program of The BEE Project as an organization. Educators apply to be a part of our cohort, where they are paid a stipend to learn equitable practices for identifying and assessing giftedness in diverse populations and practical knowledge for how to serve their academic and social-emotional needs. At the conclusion of the cohort, we support them in the process of obtaining their gifted endorsement certificates and reimburse fees associated with credentialing.

Sessions are taught virtually by BEE Project staff and by leading experts in the field from both K-12 and higher ed.

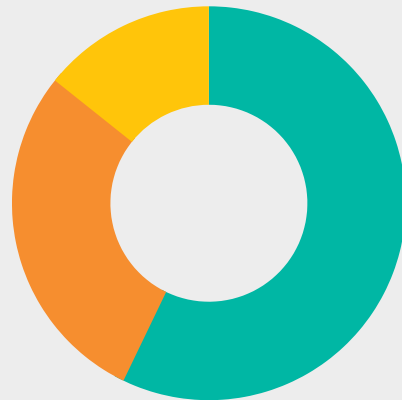
Our program evaluations and participant surveys show they leave with increased awareness of the existing inequities in gifted education and a better understanding of how to meet the needs of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous gifted students, as well as those who may have other exceptionalities or come from low-income households or households where English may not be the first language.

Post-course evaluations also showed participants left the cohort encouraged to adopt a multidimensional concept of giftedness, and motivated to reconsider their thinking about the relationship between students' behavior and giftedness.

Evaluators found a shift in participant beliefs from deficit-based pedagogy toward asset-based pedagogy and helped them to shift their teaching and instruction towards differentiated instruction, student autonomy, student collaboration, and critical and creative thinking skills.

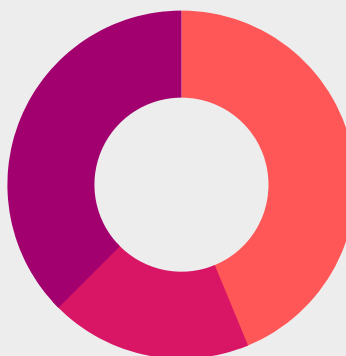


Cohort 1 By The Numbers



Cohort 1 consisted of 14 ethnically diverse participants who represented 7 districts around Arizona. There were two men and 12 women. Eight identified as Hispanic, four identified as Black, and two multiracial (1 Hispanic and Native American, and 1 Mexican & Vietnamese).

Mid-Career Teachers
37.5%



Seasoned Teachers
43.8%

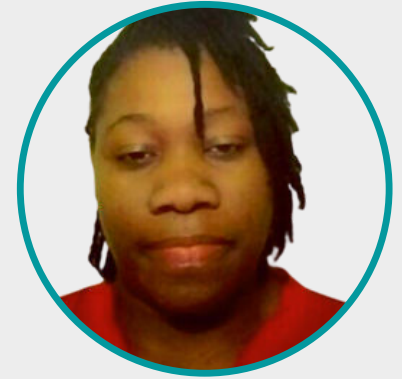
Novice Teachers
18.8%

Though the majority of BEE Project participants in the first cohort had over 15 years of classroom experience, most had no previous experience with gifted education. Of the 16 participants, 11 (or about 70%), were not previously involved in gifted or talented programs. Among those who had previously taught in gifted programs, one had 18 years with gifted programs, and the other four had 3-4 years of gifted education experience. Most were elementary school teachers (K-6), and many taught multiple grade levels.

Cohort 1 Testimonials

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The weekly session were very engaging; facilitator brought the content to life through a variety of prompts, real life situations and collaboration. It has become the place where I feel comfortable to unload my concerns and receive real solutions that can be applied to my practice immediately.



- Kemille Gordon-Davis
6th Grade Teacher, Buckeye Elementary School District



The best part about the BEE Project is the fact that I will obtain my gifted endorsement and learn about diversity, equity and inclusion. Every teacher should be trained to implement and identify teaching strategies for every learner, whether they are gifted, twice exceptional, ELL or accelerated. Any teacher who identifies as Black or Brown could and would benefit from this cohort on so many levels.

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- Deanna Celaya
6th Grade Teacher, Tempe School District

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The BEE Project was a life-changing experience that every teacher should be a part of. It has exceeded all expectations of a g/t program, and it was so engaging. It's been amazing seeing teaching through a different lens, rather than the way I was "taught" to teach.



- Alexxa Martinez
4th Grade Teacher, Tempe Elementary School District

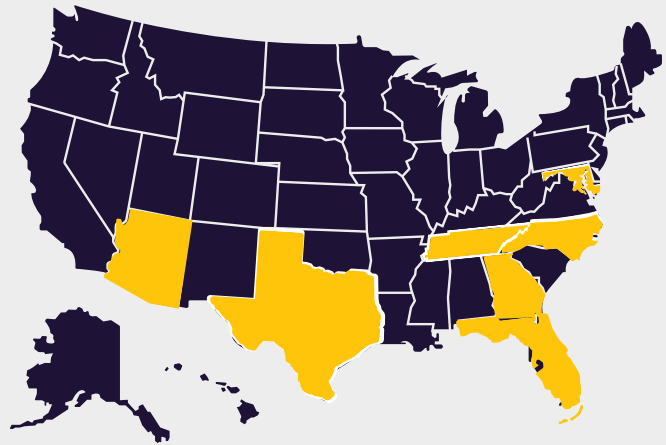


I have learned so many new different strategies that I've implemented in my class and will continue to do so, moving forward. I am able to implement them even though I don't have a gifted classroom because I do have a few gifted students but it also allows me to be able to help the students that are below grade level because it tells me exactly where they are. This program teaches you how to view giftedness through a completely different lenses.

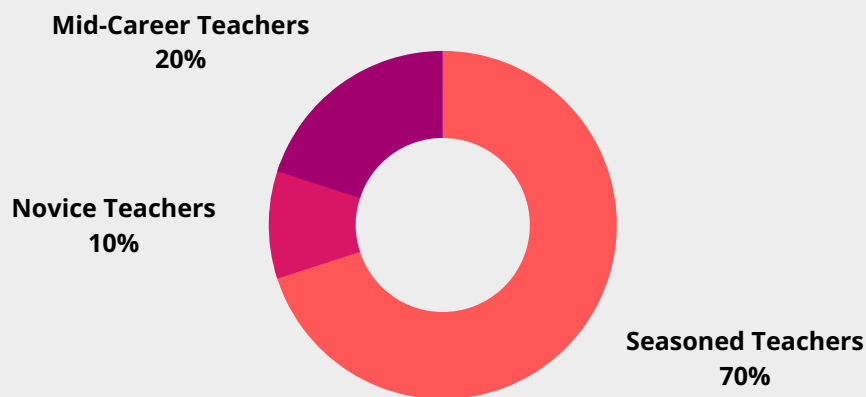
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- Jorge Meza
5th Grade Teacher, Osborn School District

Cohort 2 By The Numbers



Cohort 2 consisted of 10 Black and Hispanic/Latina educators representing 7 states and the District of Columbia. Eight hailed from traditional public schools, one from a community charter school and another from an alternative discipline facility.



Though the majority of Cohort 2 fellows participants in the first cohort had over 10 years of classroom experience, most had no previous experience with gifted education. All 10 participants teach in culturally/linguistically diverse schools and all reported having high populations of students from low-income backgrounds.

Cohort 2 Testimonials

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This was an awesome opportunity for me to learn. I grew as an educator because of this program. This cohort has opened my eyes regarding gifted education. Knowing the history and the perception of who was considered gifted has been fascinating.

- Alisha Ford

Elementary Teacher, Memphis-Shelby County (TN) Schools



This cohort helped me expand my thinking beyond the generic checklist we, as teachers are given to recommend students for gifted services in my county. It also afforded me with ways to extend my learnings to families and colleagues. I enjoyed the transparency and candid dialogue that was exhibited thanks to your comforting yet professional presence as a facilitator. It allowed us to be our authentic selves throughout the cohort.

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- Altamese Larkins

Elementary Teacher, Fulton County (GA) Schools

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These discussions and information are highly valuable to my growth as an educator who wants to transform the system and learning experiences for my scholars. This is not the pedagogy we receive in schooling but it's so necessary.

- Courtney Burns

6th Grade Teacher, Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Schools



I really didn't know what to expect because this is all so new to me, but I am blown away by what I am learning. If I was going through the 190 hours PD for gifted through my district only, I would be so bored and probably wouldn't feel prepared to have a career in the gifted field. I am so thankful for this opportunity. the content has been so beneficial, but the group discussions, the caliber of professionals in the cohort, and how we take the content to new levels sharing our experiences is what I really enjoy.

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- Maggie Dominguez, Ph.D.

1st Grade Gifted Teacher, Tucson (AZ) Unified School District

Gifted in Color Conference

In April 2023, we partnered with Huston-Tillotson University to convene the inaugural Gifted in Color Conference. We gathered for three days on the campus of Austin's only historically Black institution as we unpacked how power and privilege impact who gets to be brilliant in the United States – and what we can do to change the narrative.

Session Topics Included:

- Invisible Inequities in Assessment Programs: Disrupt Your Assessment Programs to Meet All Student Needs
- Identifying and serving undocumented students in gifted education
- Achieving Community Culture through Empowerment, Support, and Self-Advocacy
- Create the Classroom Culture You THINK You Already Have
- Intellectual and Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Black Children
- Understanding and Overcoming Trauma in the Gifted Classroom Environment



The conference aimed to not just teach best practices but build community for educators of color intentional encouragement to dig into ourselves and be whole. A for us, by us space centering the needs and experiences of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous educators, it was a beautiful, one-of-a-kind experience in culturally affirming professional development.

Gifted in Color Testimonials

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Although it was too short, this conference was one of the best ones I've ever been to. All of the sessions were thought provoking and challenging in the best ways. ~ Gifted in Color 23 attendee

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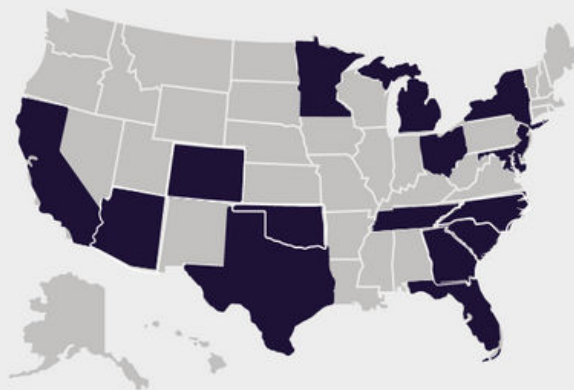
The sessions were extremely informative and the connections were tremendous. The ability to collaborate at the conference and after was and has been special. ~ Gifted in Color 23 presenter and partner

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I initially went to connect with other educators of Gifted Students. What I walked away with was something much more transformative than I could have imagined. I made connections, but I also learned so much from fellow attendees and the presentations were top-notch. ~ Gifted in Color 23 attendee

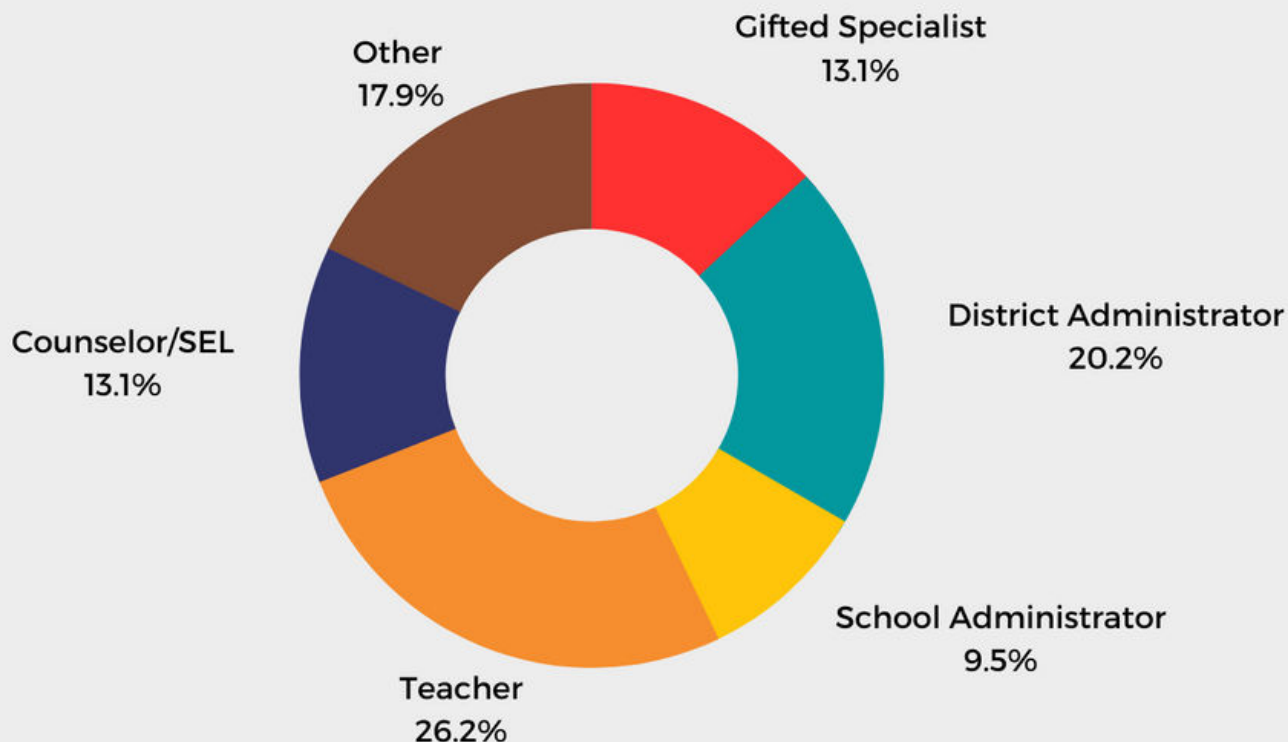
GIC '23 By the Numbers

22



Over 100 people met on the campus of Huston-Tillotson University for Gifted in Color '23. Attendees represented 22 districts and 5 universities and hailed from 16 U.S. states.

Attendee Roles



Partner With Us to Go Bigger and Better in Year 2!

The BEE Project is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to support the brilliance of students of color and their families through a teacher diversity lens. We work to increase the number of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous educators certified to lead gifted and talented programs across the country while also making sure educators of non-color are equipped to recognize the brilliance of their Black, Hispanic and Indigenous students.

Our work is made possible through the support of our many partners and supporters who are passionate this work.



Scan the QR Code to schedule time to speak with The BEE Project's Executive Director, Autumn A. Arnett, about how we can work together to increase equity and representation in gifted education.

