



What MSI Teacher Candidates Say About Virtual Environment Teaching /
Giving Thanks / Grant Opportunity / RFP on "Research for Virtual Exchange"

11-19-20

It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack.

— Germany Kent, award-winning journalist

As Thanksgiving and the season of giving comes upon us, the BranchED Team is taking this opportunity to take note of things for which we are grateful.

We are grateful for BranchED participants for it was you who gave us our purpose.

We are grateful to BranchED investors because you had faith in our mission and our dreams of what could be.

We are grateful to our team members and remote co-workers for it is their drive and passion that takes on the challenges to propel our participants to higher heights.

And finally, we are grateful for our families for their support, understanding and love.

We give our unconditional thanks and gratitude to all of you for who you are and all you do.



LESSONS FROM BRANCHED'S FALL 2020 LEARNING SUMMIT: WHAT MSI TEACHER CANDIDATES SAY

November 10-11, 2020, BranchED held its virtual Fall Intensive Learning Summit themed, “Together We Flourish: How to Show Up for Candidates through the Pandemic and Beyond.” Through BranchED’s well-developed sessions, educator preparation program (EPP) faculty and leaders were also able to learn from teacher candidates. In one session, participants were able to

hear first-hand comments about what Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) teacher candidates have experienced in virtual teaching environments during the COVID-19 pandemic. These comments about K-12 experiences also inform EPP instruction, providing insight into how the programs can better support the candidates. Here is a sampling of what MSI teacher candidates were sharing:

Rocio Pena, who is earning her Master's in Educational Administration from Texas A&M International University and who is an experienced teacher, explained, "We need to focus on that authentic engagement piece in an online platform. We can't just talk and lecture for 60 to 90 minutes ... It needs to be authentic and meaningful for the kids."

Meena Duguay, candidate for a Master of Teaching degree at the University of LaVerne, mentioned that a number of students started online and really did not know their other classmates. As a result, she assessed, "We need to make time for students to be able to socialize online. Of course, academic



rigor is important, but also having a relationship with your peers is so essential. We have to find ways to make use of those online platforms to do that."

Caleb Franklin, an Alabama A&M University senior majoring in Special Education, told EPP participants, "We have to keep thinking of new strategies to keep our students motivated, in the classroom, at home and in life in general."

Karla Velarde, a Texas A&M International University candidate for Master of Education and fifth-grade teacher in the Laredo Independent School District, explained that sometimes the online technology is equally challenging for both the student and educator. "One of the things that I shared with my students from the very beginning is don't get frustrated, don't give up and I'm not going to give up on you," she said, adding, "... With all the technology and apps and bells and whistles that have been rolled out in the last couple of months to help us help these students, I was very honest with them from day one. Hey, I don't know this, but I'm going to learn it and we're going to learn it together." Her approach was that being open with students and understanding that they sometimes will be frustrated, intimidated and challenged, was best to be honest and not to "pretend to know it all." Most of all, she imparted, let students know that you are there to learn it with them.

After the Fall 2020 Learning Summit concluded, participant Amber Bechard, Ed.D., an Associate Professor of Education, Chair of the Special Education Program and Associate Director for Literacy and Outreach at the Center for Neurodiversity, Learning and Wellness at LaFetra College of Education, shared, "*I gained valuable insight and connected with like-minded colleagues from across the country. The hands-on tools I gained will have an immediate impact on my teacher preparation classes.*"

MORE BRANCHED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Don't forget to register for BranchED's upcoming professional development opportunities. Please join us for the following offerings:

Community Conversation Among MSI EPP Leaders

When: **Friday, Nov. 20, 2020 at 1 p.m. CST**

Format: Virtual

RSVP: [REGISTRATION REQUIRED](#)

The goal for community conversations is to sustain the space where Leaders of Minority Serving Institution Educator Preparation Programs can connect with their colleagues, discuss current realities and pressing considerations, share what is working, collectively problem solve, and identify opportunities to collaborate.



Centering Inclusion in Online Instruction

When: **Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020 at 2–3:30 p.m. CST**

Format: Virtual

RSVP: [REGISTRATION REQUIRED](#)

Friends and colleagues of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) will explore “inclusion” in online instruction and take away actionable practices to apply to their respective context. This session is **limited to 20 participants**. Contact Sedef Smith, Ph.D., at drsmith@educatordiversity.org with questions about this opportunity.

BranchED Winter Open Education Resources (OER) Retreat for Teacher Educators

When: **Tuesday-Wednesday, Dec. 8-9 from 2-4 p.m. CST** (both days)

Format: Virtual

RSVP: [REGISTRATION REQUIRED](#)

We invite you to the BranchED Winter OER Retreat for Teacher Educators, “*Develop Equity-Oriented Open Educational Resources for your Next Class.*” During this hands-on, two-day retreat, participants will explore resources in OER Commons, evaluate OER with an equity lens, and practice using tools for curating, evaluating, and authoring OER. At the end of Day 2, participants will have a draft of an instructional resource and a plan to finish revising it for use in an upcoming teacher education course. **Registration deadline is Monday, Nov. 30, 2020.**

TOOT YOUR HORN...

- **Alabama A&M University** – Located in Normal, Ala., this public historically black land-grant institution recently announced its “Males for Alabama Education (M.A.L.E.)” initiative. The M.A.L.E. initiative is being coordinated by the institution’s College of Education, Humanities and Behavioral Sciences and its Department of Teacher Education and



Leadership. Among its goals is to recruit undergraduate and graduate male students who express an interest in teaching students within Alabama's public PK-12 schools and to provide up to two years of tuition assistance for undergraduate juniors and seniors and up to two years of tuition assistance for graduate students. Well done Alabama A&M!

- **University of Texas Rio Grande Valley** – With multiple campuses throughout the Rio Grande Valley region of Texas, UTRGV, is a Hispanic serving public research university and



member of the University of Texas System that was featured as one of only three case-study institutions in Education

First's [*Scaling High Quality Teacher Residencies*](#), published October 2020. BranchED

President and CEO Cassandra Herring, Ph.D., was among the co-authors of this strategic report. Bravo UTRGV!

- **Virginia State University** – This historically black public land-grant university in Ettrick, Virginia, recently launched an [*Educational Justice Journal \(EJJ\)*](#).



Billed as filling a crucial need, the publication will be a peer-reviewed, subscription-based central resource for literature focused on addressing inequity in education. The inaugural issue is scheduled for publication this December. Congratulations VSU!

We are excited to share your news with your peers through the *BranchED Bulletin*. Please take a moment to tell us more about your institution's programs that are making a difference in your students' lives, such as exemplar dual credit programs, early career pathway programs, and residency programs. If your EPPs are being recognized in publications, online communities, podcasts, or print and broadcast media, send BranchED a message with the information to: info@educatordiversity.org. We look forward to hearing about your amazing programs and sharing them with the broader BranchED core community. The deadline to submit news for the next issue is **Monday, Nov. 30, 2020**.

GRANT TO IMPLEMENT EDTHENA VIDEO OBSERVATION PLATFORM

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) understands that the rapidly changing context for teaching during COVID-19 is creating new challenges for ensuring a high-quality teacher education experience. This is why the organization is entering a partnership with Edthena to enable grants for AACTE members to implement this research-proven video technology.

As the Spring 2021 semester rapidly approaches, program faculty must ensure their programs are ready to quickly adapt. Implementing the Edthena video observation and collaboration platform may be the solution. In this time of challenge and need, here are some of the ways the Edthena platform can help:

- Practice pedagogical skills within a methods class

- Virtually observe master teachers for field experience
- Regularly supervise candidates during student teaching

Go to the AACTE site for [FAQs and details](#). The AACTE and Edthena partnership will provide up to **20 programs** with a grant of up to **\$25,000** to implement Edthena for the upcoming Spring 2021 academic term. The [application](#) deadline is **Monday, Dec. 7, 2020**. Grantee announcements will be Dec. 14, 2020.

MAKE AN IMPACT AND CELEBRATE "GIVING TUESDAY" ON DEC. 1

Created in 2012, Giving Tuesday is a global day of generosity unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and it takes place on **Dec. 1, 2020**.

While [GIVING TO BRANCHED](#) is an option to consider, you are encouraged to support an organization or cause of your choosing.

On Giving Tuesday, people can show generosity in a variety of ways: help a neighbor or friend, advocate for an issue, share a skill, or simply demonstrate an act of kindness.



BRANCHED BULLETIN PUBLICATION NOTICE

The *BranchED Bulletin* will go on publication hiatus during the week of Nov. 23-27, 2020, in observance of the Thanksgiving holidays, and will resume publication dissemination during the



week of Nov. 30. BranchED Operations also will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27. The BranchED Team wishes the members of our Minority Serving Institutions a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving!
