



**Branch Alliance**  
for Educator Diversity

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**Media Contact:**  
Haley Townes  
[htownes@wearereally.com](mailto:htownes@wearereally.com)  
909.697.5799

## NEWS

For Immediate Release

### **Four Minority-Serving Institutions Across the Country Selected to Participate in Rigorous 3-year Program to Enhance Teacher Prep**

*Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity launches third cohort of Transformation Center on Sept. 17*

AUSTIN, TEXAS — As Americans begin a new school year amid an ongoing pandemic and racial reckoning, equity in education is at the forefront of the national dialogue. A leader in producing high-quality educator preparation programs, [Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity \(BranchED\)](#) launched its third National Teacher Preparation Transformation Center Cohort on Sept. 17 to foster diverse, high-quality educators at four minority-serving institutions (MSIs) across the United States.

Through BranchED's one-of-a-kind [Quality Preparation Framework](#), Azusa Pacific University, Pacific Oaks College, Texas A&M University–San Antonio and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke will spend the next three years strengthening their educator preparation programs (EPPs) to better prepare highly effective and diverse future educators. This research-based framework sets a higher standard for teacher preparation. Utilizing 48 data points, this framework ensures there is improvement throughout the three-year program to cultivate teachers who are capable of addressing students' racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds effectively.

"BranchED is dedicated to addressing critical issues of educational equity, and that begins at the institutional level," said Dr. Cassandra Herring, BranchED Founder, President, and CEO. "We know that minority serving institutions train more diverse educators at a disproportionate rate, so we are glad to have these four institutions joining our third Transformation Center cohort to build equity-empowered, high-quality programs. Through this partnership, we can equip more future educators with the tools needed to enter, persist, and graduate as teachers who can implement a high-quality education for all students."

The previous two cohorts attended the launch event to welcome the new cohort into this unique community of practice and shared the transformation their EPPs received through this partnership with BranchED. These cohort connections will serve participating institutions and their respective school district partners by giving them access to enhanced resources and professional development, network with others, share data and learn from each other to move forward with sustainability and innovation.

BranchED's National Teacher Preparation Transformation Center is rooted in the organization's work to redefine what constitutes quality educator preparation. BranchED and its MSI partners are committed to a shared vision that quality and diversity are inextricable. BranchED's larger goals include both diversifying the teaching profession and intentionally addressing critical issues of educational equity for all students.

## Remarks from Cohort Participants:

### **Azusa Pacific University**

“The three-year partnership with BranchED, Azusa Pacific University, and Azusa Unified School District is an exciting opportunity to build on our mutual and strong commitments to preparing diverse educators for diverse classrooms. BranchED's coaching model, coupled with our gifted faculty and district partners, will provide significant momentum to advance our teacher candidates' impact and influence. Education changes the lives of students, their families and communities.”

#### **Dr. Anita Henck**

Dean of the School of Education at Azusa Pacific University.

### **Pacific Oaks College**

“Promoting diversity is essential to move beyond 'tolerance' toward true inclusion and acceptance. Such promotion needs to be done intentionally and sensitively to enable students to learn how to relate to differences. Differences do not have to be a problem, barrier, or threat. Understanding diversity has multiple benefits for personal development. Funding from the Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity will allow us to enrich our curricula, to prepare educators who will be ready to teach and further promote diversity and inclusion for the next generation.”

#### **Dr. Jack Paduntin**

President, Pacific Oaks College & Children's School

“The Transformation Center will allow Pacific Oaks College to examine how the complexities of culture, diversity, and academic achievement impact identity formation and long-term success because learning extends beyond cognitive development. Pacific Oaks College will benefit from the Transformation Center because we will have ongoing support and continuous improvement coaching to improve Student Learning Outcomes. The opportunity to implement humanizing pedagogy, develop partnerships, and understand others in terms of their beliefs, values, attitudes, and actions will have a lasting impact on our college.”

#### **Dr. Jerell Hill**

Dean, Pacific Oaks College School of Education

### **University of North Carolina Pembroke**

"With a long history of preparing the next generation of educators for Southeastern North Carolina, UNC Pembroke is honored to be a part of the National Teacher Preparation Center. Our faculty, staff and students work daily to create powerful experiential learning opportunities immersed in the classroom experience that will positively impact the diverse and inclusive communities we serve and our participation in this program will advance our effectiveness in that area."

#### **Dr. Loury Floyd**

Dean, UNCP School of Education

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### **About BranchED**

Based in Austin, Texas, [Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity](http://www.educatordiversity.org) is the first and only nonprofit organization in the nation dedicated to strengthening and growing educator preparation at Minority Serving Institutions, with broader goals of both diversifying the teaching profession and intentionally addressing critical issues of educational equity for all students. BranchED is expanding its reach into K-12 by supporting principal coaching and development. For more information, visit [www.educatordiversity.org](http://www.educatordiversity.org).