

AUGUST 2023

What's The Buzz?

BETTER ENVIRONMENTS TO ELEVATE EDUCATORS



WELCOME TO THE HIVE!

Every teacher's journey starts within school walls. We've all been there - planning lessons, delivering instructions, managing classrooms, building relationships, grading papers... and often, doing it all alone, without the right support. We've seen this from every angle - as teachers, union members, stewards, colleagues.

We realized that if we didn't act, this exodus would lead to an irreparable impact on the education system and student achievement. Today, 45% of U.S. public schools have at least one teacher vacancy (NPR, 2023). It's a grim reality, but not surprising. We've seen the imbalance - heaps of efforts and funds poured into recruiting teachers, but barely any into keeping them. So, we decided to make a difference.

We founded Better Environments to Elevate Educators (BEEE) to bridge the gap between teacher recruitment and retention. We're here to support teachers with professional development and growth opportunities from peers who get what it's like in the classroom. And for those who choose to leave teaching, we're here too. We believe in supporting their transition, not stigmatizing it. We want them to recognize their potential - their classroom skills are more marketable than they might think. At BEEE, we're here for all teachers, past, present, and future.

Newsletter Highlights

Welcome To The Hive

Meet The Founders

Interviews

August Events

Give Your Support

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FOUNDATION

MEET THE FOUR FOUNDERS OF BETTER ENVIRONMENTS TO ELEVATE EDUCATORS



ALEXANDRIA MARTIN

Alexandria teaches at Miami Carol City Senior High School as an English Instructor and has been teaching for 18 years. She is committed to advancing the lives of students and improving the future of education. Alexandria co-coordinates Miami Carol City's Silver Knights Program, with 13 Silver Knight winners and 23 honorable mentions. She was honored by The City of Miami Gardens for her work with Silver Knight and is one of South Florida's most promising educators.



ALEXANDRA ROSA-O'NEAL

Meet Alexandra Rosa! Armed with a bachelor's and master's degree in psychology, along with a master's certification in Life Coaching, Alexandra has created "The Blooming Sunflower" - empowering individuals to transform their lifestyles. Though we are sad to see her step down from BEEE, we extend a warm congratulations in her new business ventures and wish her the best of luck with her private practice.



NICHOLE DINO

Nichole graduated from Florida International University with a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication, with a concentration in Account Management. She has been teaching English at Miami Carol City Senior High School for 18 years and is a strong advocate for educational change. She has been a part of United Teachers of Dade for 18 years and has been a Steward for 9 years. In 2022, Nicole co-founded the BEEE Foundation where she now strives for teacher advocacy.



KALYN LEE

Kalyn graduated from The University of Alabama and received her Bachelor's in Political Science and Masters in Communication Studies. She has been an effective secondary educator for 5 years and has 7 years of professional teaching experience. In 2017, she joined Teach for America and taught English at Miami Carol City Senior High School. She now teaches at Broward College and Miami-Dade College within the Department of Communications. She is passionate about operational excellence, empowering team members, and ensuring that equity is prioritized within the education system.





MAGGIE WALSH: FROM EDUCATOR TO UM LAW STUDENT

By Samantha Sheradsky

Maggie Walsh was an English educator at Miami Carol City Senior High School for two-and-a-half years. During that time, she prepared 9th graders for English language curriculum using effective lesson plans and weekly assessments. She left back in 2021 after she didn't feel safe and was not being supported as a teacher. Walsh is now a full-time law student at University of Miami where she brings in her professional skills to advocate social justice.

Q: What inspired you to become an English teacher at Miami Carol City Senior High School?

A: My first job was as a camp counselor and then I worked with the counselors in training, which were like the oldest campers. I realized that I really enjoyed working with that age group. I figured out that I wanted to work more with that mentorship role.

I wanted to pursue teaching and figure out how to do that. I ended up joining Teach for America. I know there's a lot of CFA, but I valued the resources and continued growing with professional development on my own. I really just loved working with kids and the energy is just so much fun.

Q: With having more than 2 years of educational experience, how did you prepare your students when it came to the English language curriculum?

A: I very much relied on talking to other teachers and other mentors at Coral City to develop the strongest curriculum. A lot of it is just letting students figure things out on their own and explore with writing.

One of the things that I think both [Kalya Lee] and I did in the English department was be successful in teaching. We didn't really lecture that much because that's really not effective teaching. We were just focusing on student-led learning. I think the best way to prepare students is to just have them continuously practice reading and writing until they become stronger.

Q: How did you guide your students into becoming stronger learners?

A: I think a lot of it is about thinking aloud and metacognition. It sounds a little silly but I encouraged my students to read a sentence and think about what the author feels.

I think it helps students realize how they're supposed to be thinking when they go over sentences. Some of these habits become so ingrained in me. Even as a law student, I'm reading and annotating text because modeling it is so important.

Q: Have you developed new skills throughout the process of going from teaching high schoolers to being a law student?

A: The weirdest thing for me to do when I started law school was transferring from the teacher position to a student. I forgot how to be a student. I was used to standing up in front of the class and being my best self. I had to relearn how to fit inside and become the person that is being guided.

I think it's easy after watching teachers during professional development. They're the worst students because they don't want to hear what anyone else has to say. Teaching myself to sit in the classroom and figure out how to interact with other students was also something I really had to relearn.

Q: How do you still practice leadership and responsibility in law school as you did within the classroom?

A: I am a law review editor, which means that I was elected by the editors to be the person that grades the two other people that write articles. I'm the person that helps them write more. I'm supposed to guide their writing and edit it. I help them with the revising process, which is exactly what I was doing as a teacher.

Helping people and writing workshops was my favorite thing just because having students talk to each other and develop ideas was really cool and powerful to see. I was really excited for the opportunity to do that again. It did not necessarily have to include teaching the basics of writing, but being able to help people dance their ideas was what I was the most interested in. Having a leadership role through law school was a great opportunity for me.

Q: I saw that you are really big on social justice. Can you elaborate more on what you do to advocate towards social justice?

A: I'm working now at a law firm that deals with people who aren't paid correctly in discrimination and harassment, which is very much an advocate role. When you leave teaching, you have to find new ways to do it. As a union organizer, I was advocating for my members. I was also working on helping and mobilizing people. Learning more about the most effective ways of advocacy is something I've learned that really helped me become a better, more informed advocate.

I think being a teacher has made me a better oral advocate. When you're presenting, being a teacher is perfect because you gain a lot of confidence and learn how to speak in front of people. It's one of the best things I've learned to apply.

Q: Would you ever go back to teaching or do you want to stay in law?

A: I would have loved to. It's a lot of emotional teaching and it's emotionally draining. I didn't want to teach it and now I don't really want to go back to the classroom. Especially because I am pursuing my law career. I think that's also something that I need to be in this law field where I feel like I'm being respected for my expertise.





INTERNING AT THE HIVE

By Samantha Sheradsky

In May 2023, I received an email from my Florida Atlantic University professor regarding an internship opportunity at the BEEE Foundation as their Communications intern. While researching this internship, I was amazed to know that the company is dedicated towards providing informative, useful resources for educators who feel unsupported within the classroom. I applied to the internship with an urge to gain more experience in social media content creation while also applying my journalistic skills. I did an interview with the Communications team and was accepted into the team two days after! When I was granted this opportunity, I was super excited to work together with this team and bring in new, exciting ideas to the company.

My creative skills and content knowledge have improved tremendously with the help and motivation from my BEEE team. I have been able to apply myself and my journalism skills to create new content and ideas that would benefit the company. With the work I am doing with this internship, it is my mission to support educators who work hard to bring education to our children. I am dedicated to provide these educators with proper resources and material that they need to thrive in and outside of the classroom.

As I extend my knowledge in content creation and web management in this internship opportunity, I have become more interested in creating social media content as an influencer. This opportunity has been an amazing way for me to expand my knowledge on writing for a company and making their brand well-known within the community of education.





Help Create Impact by donating to Better Environments to Elevate Educators

YOUR MONEY AT WORK



Your donation will help us organize and conduct professional development programs. These programs will focus on topics that provide teachers with the knowledge and skills to improve their teaching practices and student outcomes.



Your donation will facilitate networking opportunities for educators to connect with their peers and share best practices, create a community of educators who are passionate about improving education, we can foster collaboration and teamwork among teachers.



Your donation will help us provide educational resources such as books, online courses, and instructional materials to assist educators in their professional journey, ensuring that every teacher has the necessary tools to succeed.

WHY CHOOSE US?

BEEE is led by teachers creating content for teachers that helps retain qualified educators it also benefits students.



DIAMOND BEEE \$100,000+

- Thank you letter
- Donor Impact Letter
- Brochure Recognition
- Branded Merchandise
- Website and Socials Recognition
- Specific Campaign Recognition
- Exclusive Event Invitations



PLATINUM BEEE \$50,000-99,999

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- Donor Impact Letter
- Brochure Recognition
- Branded Merchandise
- Website and Socials Recognition
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- Donor Impact Letter
- Branded Merchandise
- Website and Socials Recognition
- Exclusive Event Invitations



SILVER BEEE \$1,000-9,999

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- Donor Impact Letter
- Branded Merchandise
- Website and Socials Recognition
- Event Invitations



BRONZE BEEE \$500-999

- Thank you letter
- Donor Impact Letter
- Branded Merchandise
- Event Invitations



POLLINATOR BEEE \$5-499

- Thank you letter
- Donor Impact Letter
- Event Invitations

AUGUST EVENTS



TEACH FOR AMERICA



Overview: In partnership with Teach fo America, BEEE Foundation will provide an IPEGS Professional Development for new teachers.

Date: August 3, 2023

Time: 11:20-12:50 PM

Location: Booker T. Washington Senior High School

MIAMI-DADE URBAN DEBATE LEAGUE



Overview: In partnership with the Miami-Dade Urban Debate League, BEEE Foundation will provide professional development to educators on how to maximize debate during yearly evaluation

Date: August 2, 2023

Time: 10 AM-12 PM

Location: Hialeah Miami Lakes Senior High School



MILES ACADEMY

Overview: In partnership with Miles Academy, BEEE Foundation will present to parents on how to ensure their scholar is prepared for the upcoming school year.

Date: August 19, 2023

Time: TBD

Location: Florida International University

