



BUILDING BRIDGES

A ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL INITIATIVE

2026 SUMMER TEACHING & LEARNING INSTITUTE





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SUMMER TEACHING & LEARNING INSTITUTE

Welcome to the fourth annual Building Bridges Summer Teaching & Learning Institute, a six-day residential experience that grows the next generation of educators and supports them across the arc of their careers. The Institute brings two groups together into one community — undergraduate scholars from HBCUs exploring a path into teaching, and early-career educators already building their practice in independent schools — for a week of identity, purpose, craft, and connection.

In this shared space, learning flows in every direction. As you share your stories, refine your practice, and challenge one another to grow, know that you are building more than skills—you are constructing a permanent network of support for your entire career. Welcome to St. George's, and welcome to Building Bridges.

Dwayne Pina,
Building Bridges Program Director

WELCOME!



It is my pleasure to welcome you to St. George's Building Bridges Summer Teaching & Learning Institute. Building Bridges creates opportunities for learning and exploration, the strengthening of networks, and the broadening of professional avenues. St. George's is truly excited to host this pivotal program, providing opportunities for early career educators and students from historically Black colleges and universities to learn more about independent schools. My colleagues and I are excited to meet you and partner with you in the days and years ahead.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael C. Wirtz'.

Michael C. Wirtz, *Head of School*



PARTICIPANTS

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

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HOSPITALITY

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Director of Hospitality

Christine Paiva,

Assistant Director of Hospitality

FACILITATORS

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Co-Head of School

Dr. Gretchen Boger, St. George's School

Dean of Academics, Director of the Merck Center for Teaching

Mark Boswell, Pipeline Cooperative

Executive Director

Olutosin Burrell, Olu Burrell Consulting

Global Executive, Leadership Coach

Justin Cerenzia, The Episcopal Academy

Buckley Executive Director, Chair for Teaching & Learning

Tia Coachman, Affirma Consultancy

Founder & CEO

Dr. Terrance Mitchell, Morehouse College

Director of Academics & Strategic Initiatives

Anika Walker-Johnson

Building Bridges Facilitator

Andrew Ward, The Moody Street Group

Partner, Financial Advisor

PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS/ADVISORY GROUPS

Ja'tavius Anderson,
Science Teaching Fellow
Nativity Preparatory School

Emmanuel Daring,
Math Interventionist
Berkeley Carroll School

Chryss Moultrie,
Fifth-Grade Teacher,
Centennial Academy
Founder and CEO, VUED

Chyra Williams,
STEM Faculty
St. George's School

Adrienne Dailey '28,
Early Childhood Education Major
Clafin University

Soliel Atterberry,
Robotics Teacher
Gilman School

Kassidy Barnes '27,
Communications Major
Tuskegee University

David Allen '28,
Education Studies Major
Morehouse College

Shyra Gamble '27,
Early Childhood Education Major
Clark Atlanta University

Kayla Banks '25,
Elementary Education Major
Howard University

Jordan Freeman '26,
Education Studies Major
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La'tresa Middleton '28,
English Education Major
Clafin University

Makayla Lindsey '27,
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Alcorn State University

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Kimarra Smith '27,
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Benjamin Linzy '26,
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David Kairu,
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Nativity Preparatory School

Moriah Jenkins '28,
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Clark Atlanta University

Nakiah St. Fleur '27,
Elementary Education Major
Morgan State University

Kimberly Mallari '27,
Special Education Major
Howard University

Brooklyn King '25,
English Major
Howard University & George Washington University

Kailey Johnson '27,
Early Childhood Education Major
Clark Atlanta University

Heaven Upshaw-Peters '27,
Elementary Education Major
Howard University

Rayquan Strickland '27,
Music Major
Morehouse College

Donald Morton,
History Teacher
Peddie School

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English Major
Howard University

Xavier Woodhouse '27,
Education and Sociology Major
Morehouse College

Linguo Ren,
Math Teaching Fellow
Nobles & Greenough School

Cydni Sylvester '27,
Education Major
Alcorn State University

Marchellos Scott,
Learning Commons Coordinator
Stevenson School

PARTICIPANTS

VISITING FACULTY

Thomas Allen, Taft School

Dean of Community, Justice, and Belonging

Peter Asaro, Landmark School

Director of Faculty Recruiting & Hiring

Robert Churchwell, St. Christopher's School

Director of Diversity, Inclusion & Community

Carolyn Conforti-Browse, Blair Academy

Dean of Campus Life & Student Leadership Programs

Nola-Rae Cronan, Carlthorp School

Head of School

Edgar DeLeon, Nobles & Greenough School

Associate Dean of Students

Maya Drye, Taft School

Recruitment Manager

Christian Garris, Nativity Preparatory School

Head of School

Lucy Goldstein, Episcopal High School

Dean of Faculty

**Dr. Monica Green Robertson,
Claflin University**

Assistant Vice President for Honors & College Experience

Jim Hamilton, Peddie School

Head of School

**Freda Hicks, North Carolina Central
University**

Clinical Placements, Partnerships, & Licensure

Dr. Demeturia Kelly, Claflin University

Educational Technologist

Ellen Lee, Stephen Gaynor School

Chief Financial Officer

John McVeigh, Holderness School

Head of School

Stella Mulatu, Stephen Gaynor School

*Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion,
Chair of the Arts*

Richard Mutts, Kingswood Oxford

Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging

Noel Pardo, Mother Caroline Academy

Director of Advancement

Nadine Riggs, Mother Caroline Academy

Director of Secondary School Placement

Matthew Roach, Peddie School

Associate Head of School

Tabitha Smith, Alcorn State University

Associate Professor of Education, MAT Coordinator

Jason Sport, Middlesex School

Chief Officer for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

ITINERARY



Monday, July 27

5 PM	Arrival & registration
6:30 PM	Welcome dinner
7:30 PM	Campus walking tour
8:30 PM	Advisory (groups form) – Atrium, Academic Center

Tuesday, July 28

8 AM	Breakfast – King Hall
8:45 AM	Opening: program & capstone overview – Atrium, Academic Center
9:30 AM	CliftonStrengths — Olutosin Burrell Atrium, Academic Center
11:15 AM	Defining Your Why — Dr. Gretchen Boger Davenport Room, Nathaniel Hill Library
12:45 PM	Lunch – Pickles Deli – Arden-Diman-Eccles Common Room
1:45 PM	Activity – Making Identity Visible
3 PM	Showing Up Whole: Culture as Expansion — Dr. Terrance Mitchell Atrium, Academic Center
4:45 PM	Advisory
6 PM	Dinner/S'mores – Bottega Bocconi – Front Lawn

ITINERARY

Wednesday, July 29

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| 8 AM | Breakfast - King Hall |
| 8:45 AM | Advisory - Atrium, Academic Center |
| 9:30 AM | BICEPS Workshop — Tia Coachman
Atrium, Academic Center |
| 11:15 AM | Modern Grading for Equity — Mark Boswell
Atrium, Academic Center |
| 12:45 PM | Lunch - Moving Dough Pizza - Arden-Diman-Eccles Common Room |
| 1:45 PM | Your Financial Future — Andrew Ward
Atrium, Academic Center |
| 3 PM | Documentary: <i>Counted Out</i> + discussion
Madeira Hall, Drury/Grosvenor Center for the Arts |
| 5 PM | Advisory - Drury/Grosvenor Center for the Arts |
| 6 PM | Dinner - Nacho Mammás — Front Lawn |



ITINERARY

Thursday, July 30

8 AM	Breakfast - King Hall
8:45 AM	Advisory – Atrium, Academic Center
9:30 AM	So You Got an Offer... — Varghese Alexander Atrium, Academic Center
11:15 AM	From Algorithms to Access: Teaching & Learning in the Age of AI — Justin Cerenzia Memorial Schoolhouse
12:50 PM	Group Photo - Milo Ryan Study Hall (<i>Wear School Gear</i>)
1:15 PM	Lunch - Gansett Wraps - Arden-Diman-Eccles Common Room
2 PM	Building Bridges Overview Presentation
2:30 PM	Networking event
5 PM	Advisory - Atrium, Academic Center
6 PM	Dinner/Ice Cream Social - O'dinis Portuguese Cuisine – Front Lawn

Friday, July 31

9 AM	Continental Breakfast – Arden-Diman-Eccles Common Room
9:45 AM	Advisory - Atrium, Academic Center
10:30 AM	Surviving to Thriving: Self & Collective Care — Anika Walker-Johnson Atrium, Academic Center
12 PM	Capstone Studio (work time)
1 PM	Lunch - Mindy's Asian Cuisine
2 PM	Explore Newport
6 PM	Newport Craft Brewing — Dinner & Celebration

ITINERARY

Saturday, August 1

10 AM	Breakfast – Acai Bowls – Arden-Diman-Eccles Common Room
10:45 AM	Advisory
11:15 AM	Program Closing
12 PM	Bagged to-go Lunch - Departure



SESSIONS



OVERCOMING THE PATH OF [MOST] RESISTANCE: WHY LEVERAGING YOUR STRENGTHS IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS Olutosin Burrell

In this insightful and interactive session, participants will receive a collective debrief on the CliftonStrengths Finders Top 5 Assessment while discussing both feedback and feedforward in how to leverage their strengths in all the spaces they occupy, including the classroom.



DEFINING YOUR WHY Dr. Gretchen Boger

Job postings for independent school teachers often ask for a teaching philosophy statement – your essential guiding beliefs as an educator. But how do you know your core beliefs when you're brand new to teaching, and how do you write something authentic, compelling, and succinct? In this workshop we explore approaches to the task and draft (or re-draft) your first statement of teaching philosophy to make it stand out to employers while also serving as a true guidepost for you in your first years on the job.



SHOWING UP WHOLE: CULTURE AS EXPANSION, NOT EXCHANGE Dr. Terrance Mitchell

Prompt: What does it mean to carry your full self into unfamiliar spaces?

Context: Early-career educators often feel tension between authenticity and assimilation when entering independent schools. This session reframes culture as something that expands institutions, not something you must relinquish to belong.

Culture is not transactional, it is transformative.



DEEPENING LEADERSHIP: ADDRESSING OUR NEUROLOGICAL CORE NEEDS Tia Coachman

Addressing Our Neurological Core Needs, more affectionately known as The BICEPS Workshop, introduces attendees to the neuroscience-based, human social behavior framework of BICEPS coined by Paloma Medina. Attendees will be guided to understand the framework, applying it as a shared language to communicate experiences and problem-solving during moments of challenge, change or conflict. In this interactive workshop, attendees will experience a blend of visual and kinaesthetic learning through self-reflection, small group activities, and group discussion.

SESSIONS



MODERN GRADING FOR EQUITY Mark Boswell

What does a grade actually measure? Drawing on years of coaching schools nationwide in Grading for Equity, this interactive session examines how everyday grading practices can quietly undermine — or powerfully advance — accuracy, motivation, and belonging in the classroom. Participants leave with concrete, defensible practices they can name, try, and carry into any school they serve.



YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE Andrew Ward

Transitioning into a full-time role in education is an empowering milestone, but long-term career sustainability requires more than pedagogical excellence—it requires personal financial agency. For early-career educators and recent college graduates entering independent schools, understanding how to navigate income, savings, and institutional benefits from day one is essential to building lasting security.

Led by Andrew Ward, partner at the Moody Street Group and financial strategist, this practical and empowering workshop brings deep financial consulting expertise directly to our cohort. Designed specifically for young educators, “Your Financial Future” demystifies the path from financial literacy to advanced financial planning. Participants will explore actionable strategies for saving and managing money while learning how to maximize institutional benefit packages—including IRAs, retirement funds, and auxiliary perks—to lay a firm foundation for personal wealth alongside a rewarding teaching career.

SESSIONS



SO YOU GOT AN OFFER... Varghese Alexander

Receiving a job offer is a major milestone—but signing on the dotted line is just the beginning of your professional trajectory. For new college graduates and early-career educators, entering the independent school world requires learning how to evaluate an offer holistically, navigate institutional culture, and position yourself for sustained success from day one.

Led by veteran educator and Head of School Varghese Alexander, this interactive workshop demystifies the post-offer process. Participants will learn how to look beyond the base salary, evaluate a school's total value proposition, advocate for their professional growth, and leverage their unique skill sets to build a dynamic, high-impact career in independent education.



FROM ALGORITHMS TO ACCESS: TEACHING & LEARNING IN THE AGE OF AI Justin Cerenzia

This presentation examines the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and learning, with a focus on promoting equity and access in education. We will explore how AI technologies are shaping educational practices and discuss strategies to ensure these advancements support inclusivity. Through case studies and current trends, participants will gain insights into integrating AI effectively and ethically into their teaching environments.



FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING: SELF & COLLECTIVE CARE Anika Walker-Johnson

Teaching is demanding—and being a BIPOC educator in predominantly white spaces adds unique emotional labor. This workshop centers wellness, boundary-setting, and community care. Participants will reflect on personal and collective strategies for sustainability in their careers.

PIPELINE COOPERATIVE

We are a network of schools and educational practitioners of color from across the country who connect directly with local colleges in order to inform, mentor, and grow the next generation of teachers at independent schools.

BROADEN THE PIPELINE OF TEACHERS OF COLOR AT EVERY LEVEL.

- Create long term connections between independent schools and colleges/universities.
- Create a purpose for administrators of color to gather and calibrate best practices in hiring (and all things.)
- Strengthen the network between early career teachers of color and administrators of color to ensure the sustainability of the work.

Varghese Alexander, *Co-Head of School, Windsor School*. Varghese arrived at Windsor School in the Bahamas in 2021. A 20+ year veteran of boarding schools, Varghese has taught, coached, geeked out about technology, cooked for and helped onboard numerous faculty members into independent schools. He returned to the Klingenstein Summer Institute as co-lead teacher in 2013 and co-directed the program during his final three years of a 10-year run. Varghese is the founding director of Pipeline Cooperative.

Mark Boswell, *Executive Director, Pipeline Cooperative*. Mark Boswell is the Director of Curriculum & Instruction for Building Bridges and Executive Director of Pipeline Cooperative, a national network advancing educators through HBCU and community partnerships. Across two decades in education he has led at Marin Country Day School, Crystal Springs Uplands School, and The Galloway School, where he founded the BOLD Summit. As Senior Associate at Crescendo Education Group, he built the national coaching infrastructure for Joe Feldman's Grading for Equity — training 40+ coaches and delivering workshops to systems including LAUSD and NYC Public Schools. He holds an M.A. and Leadership Coaching credential from Columbia's Klingenstein Center and a B.A. from Emory. He also founded South Atlanta Farms and is pursuing doctoral work in education equity.

Jim Hamilton, *Head of School, Peddie School*. James A. Hamilton became Peddie's 17th Head of School on July 1, 2025. Previously the Head of School of Berwick Academy in Maine, Jim has spent his entire career in independent schools as a teacher, coach and school leader. In addition to his work at Berwick, he was the Associate Head for External Affairs at Brooks School in Massachusetts and the Director of Admission at St. George's School in Rhode Island. He began his independent school career at Brooks, where his first role was Director of Financial Aid and Associate Director of Admission.

Anika Walker-Johnson, *Building Bridges Facilitator*. Anika believes in the combined power of community-building and education to change lives, and that conviction is the foundation of her 20+ years of work in independent schools. Anika's roles as a classroom teacher, Director of Equity and Inclusion, Associate Director of Admission and Director of Residential Life have allowed her to develop relationships with key stakeholders whose mutual focus is to ensure students' ability to thrive inside and outside of the classroom. With the student experience always top of mind, Anika has promoted cross-cultural competency for school community members, facilitated community education events, served as a faculty and student mentor, and co-led recruitment and hiring strategies for increasing diversity among faculty and administrative hires. She has also explored additional professional interests by serving on and/or co-chairing a host of senior administrative and board-level committees that focus on areas that most directly impact student life. She also currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Nativity Preparatory School in New Bedford, MA (an independent, tuition-free school for boys in grades 5 - 8).

Outside of work, Anika enjoys spending time with friends and family, attending music concerts and plays, and discovering new experiences.

BUILDING BRIDGES NETWORKING EVENT

Thursday, July 30

On behalf of the Building Bridges team, we invite you to join us for our signature Networking Event of this year's Summer Teaching & Learning Institute.

This gathering moves beyond traditional recruitment to create an intentional space for mutual engagement and early, meaningful connections. It is an opportunity for independent school leaders and our dynamic cohort of aspiring HBCU educators to share insights and connect.

Your presence is vital as we work collaboratively to expand access, exposure, and enrich the independent school landscape.

We are grateful for your time, your leadership, and your continued partnership.

2 p.m. Building Bridges Overview Presentation

2:30 p.m. Networking Opportunity

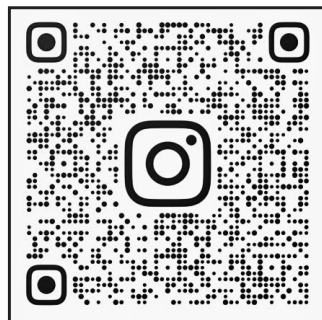
Participating schools include:



LEARN MORE



WEBSITE



INSTAGRAM

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

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Stephanie Paiva: (774) 488-6528