

THOSE WHO TEACH:
CHANGING IMAGES OF
ALTERNATIVELY-CERTIFIED TEACHERS

MARLENE COLLINS

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BRIAN R. EVANS, PH.D.

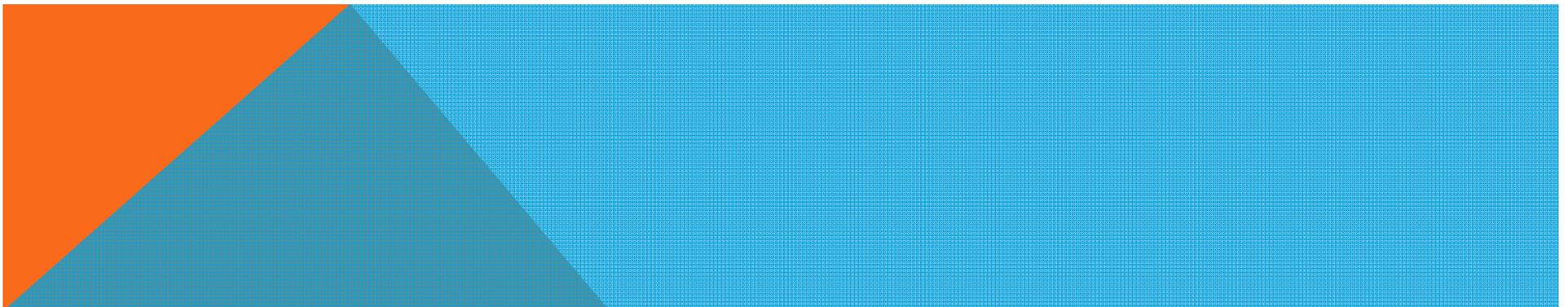
PACE UNIVERSITY

DELLA R. LEAVITT, PH.D.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

MARLENE & DELLA - SHARED EXPERIENCES

- We became teachers after careers in actuarial science (Marlene); computer and data communications (Della)
- We first met in 2003 when Marlene became a teacher candidate in a university-sponsored middle grades mathematics program for career changers
- Della was a staff member in Marlene's program
- From 1999-2002, Della taught high school mathematics and computer science teacher through a different university program in the same district



MARLENE & DELLA - SHARED EXPERIENCES

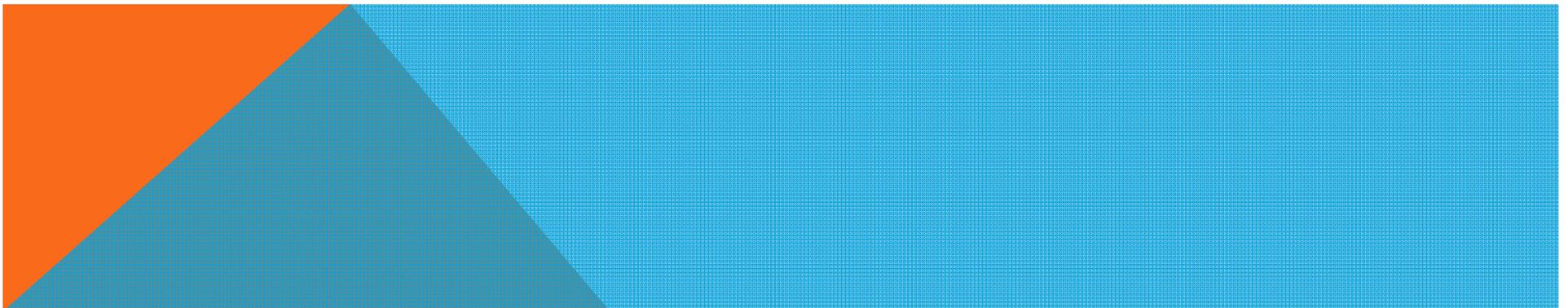
Presentations with other cohort members :

- At the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Meeting in Anaheim in 2005

“First-year urban teachers share the impact of collaborative video study”

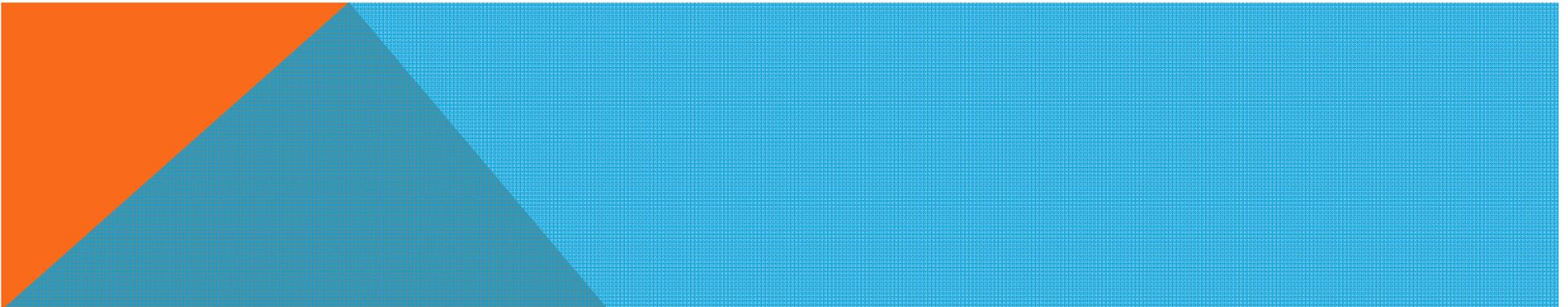
- *At University of Illinois at Chicago in 2009*

Six years later: A conversation with teachers in an urban district



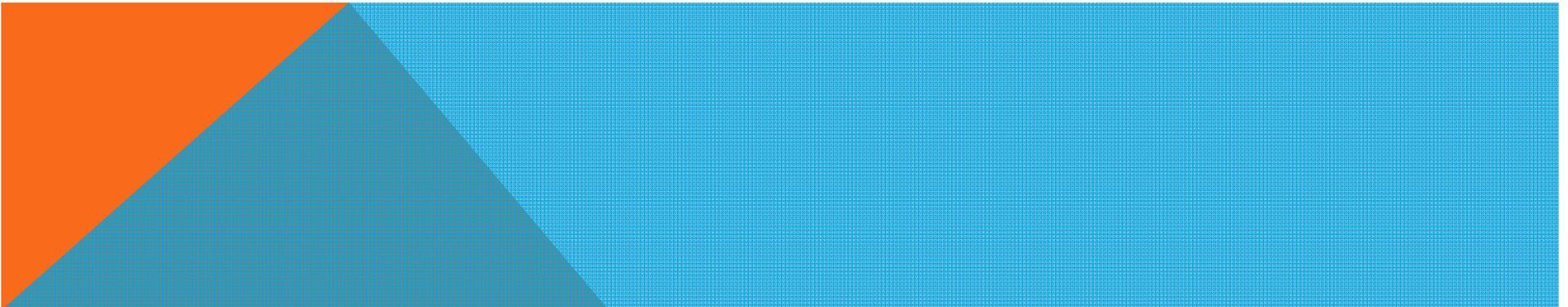
SHARED EXPERIENCES

- Our commitment to teaching and education include being close to our own children's public school experiences
- Marlene's daughter is a sophomore at the same selective enrollment high school where my son graduated four years ago



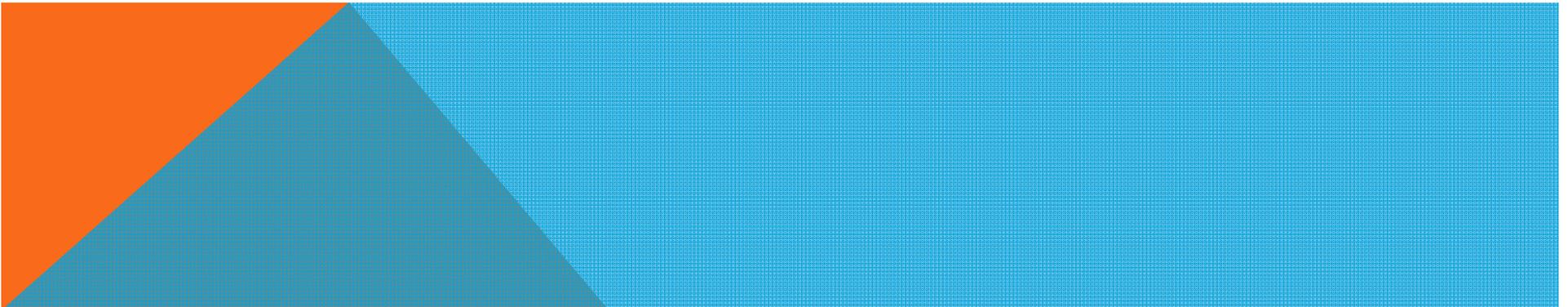
OUR STORIES

- Teachers' stories rarely heard by policy-makers nor within academia
- Data-driven local and national policies hold teachers accountable for students' achievements with limited strategies under teachers' control
- Pressures on teachers mount as teachers are measured solely by their students' performance on standardized tests
- Less protections for new teachers than others



MARLENE COLLINS

- I was educated in the Chicago Public School system
- Worked as an Actuarial Analyst for 15 years
- Decided to become a teacher after the 9/11 event , after I reflected about my real contribution to life

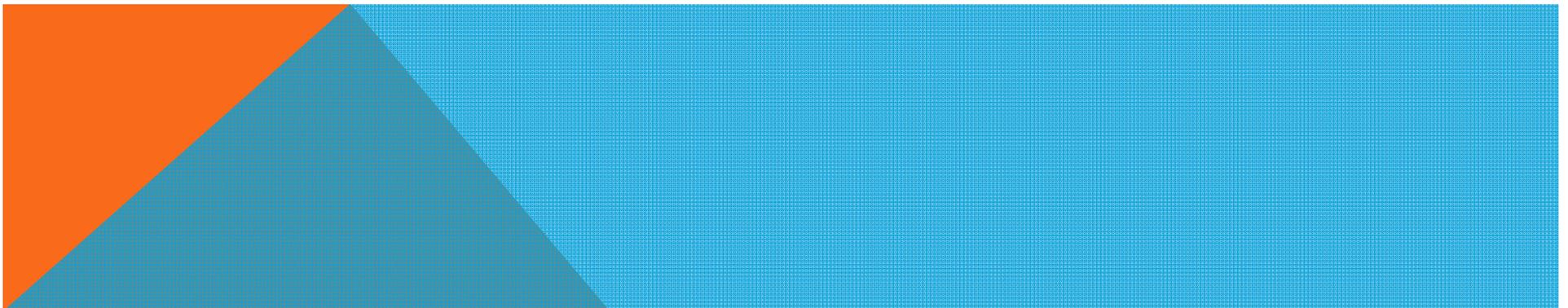


MARLENE COLLINS

Nine years later,

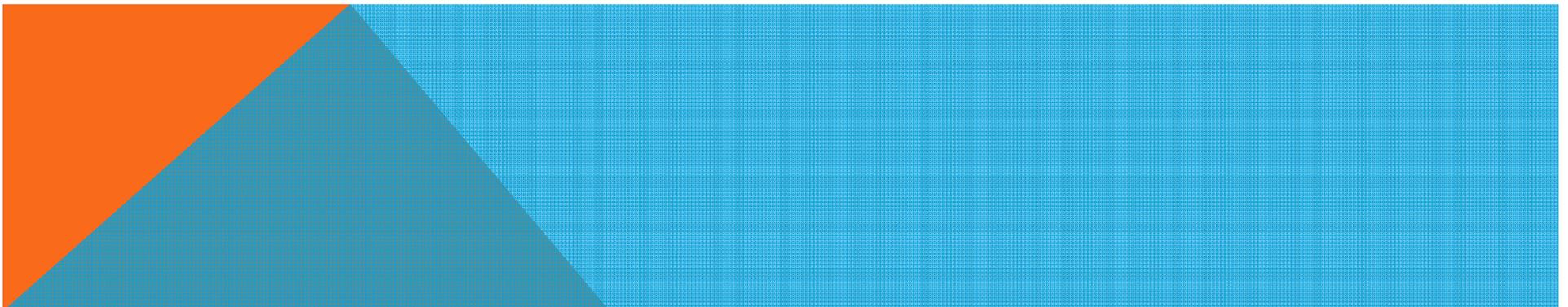
Things that I reflect upon daily:

- How to best to serve my 32 students per class (four math, one reading) who test between 2nd grade and 10th grade levels?
What does differentiation mean?
- How do I motivate my students?
- Am I making a difference?



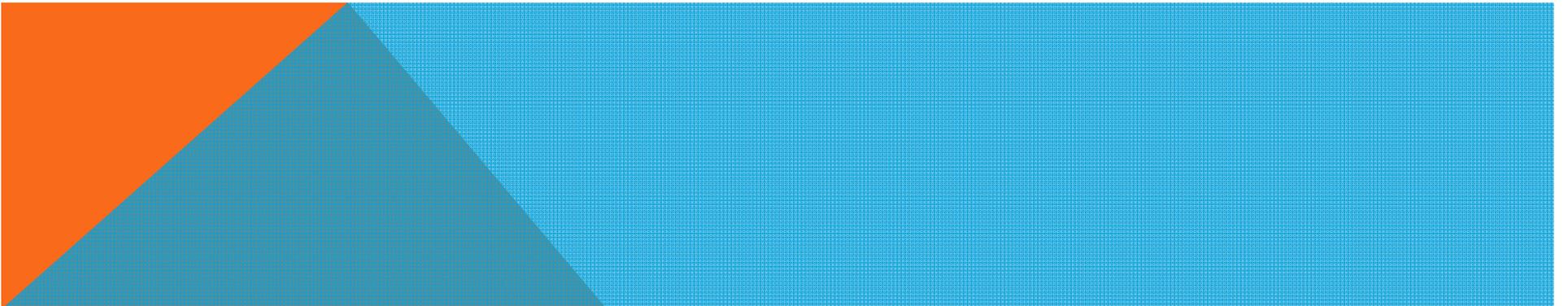
MARLENE COLLINS – REASONS I CONTINUE TO TEACH

1. I still believe I am effective in reaching most students
2. I believe that I am a good role model to my students. Many students lack good role models at home, and so I function not only as a teacher of mathematics, but also as a teacher of behavior and etiquette
3. Strong support team: colleagues; friends and family
4. I think, if not me, then who?
5. All students deserve excellent mathematics teachers.



MARLENE COLLINS - REFLECTIONS

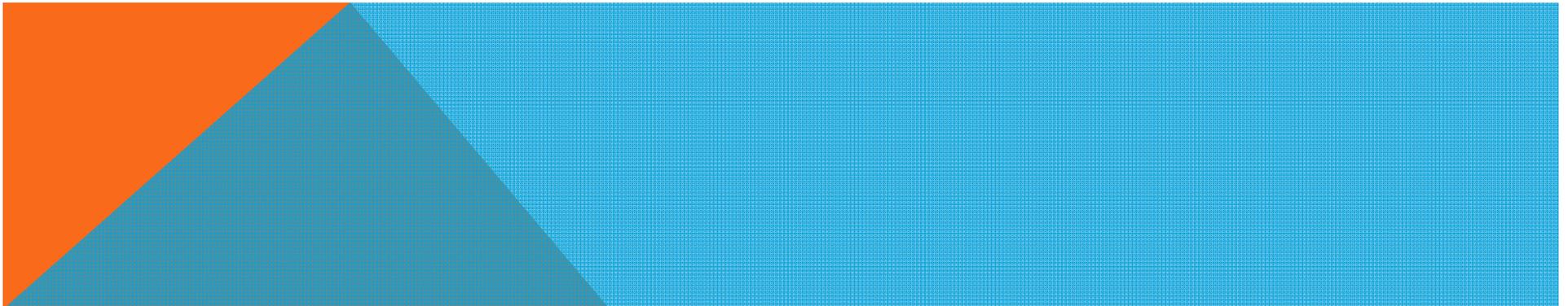
1. Teaching is a tough career.
2. I love teaching, it's just some of the other pressures that are taxing.
3. As long as I feel that I am making a difference in most students' lives then I will consider myself a success.



DELLA LEAVITT

Echoing Marlene's statement: *Teaching is a tough career.*

I was a high school teacher for three years, became a doctoral student and full-time project staff member.



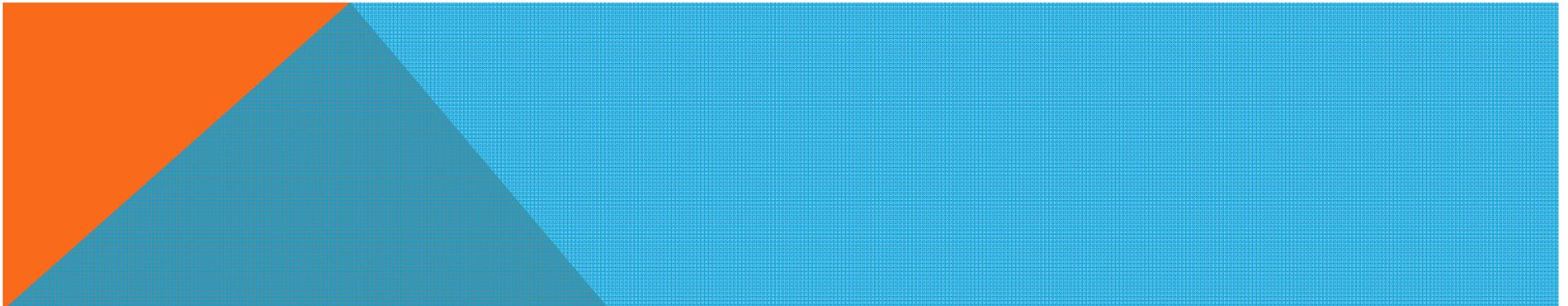
DELLA LEAVITT , PH.D.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION FIELD

Gained invaluable insights by traveling to 35 schools to observe 35 career-changers (Marlene was one) five or six times in their first full year

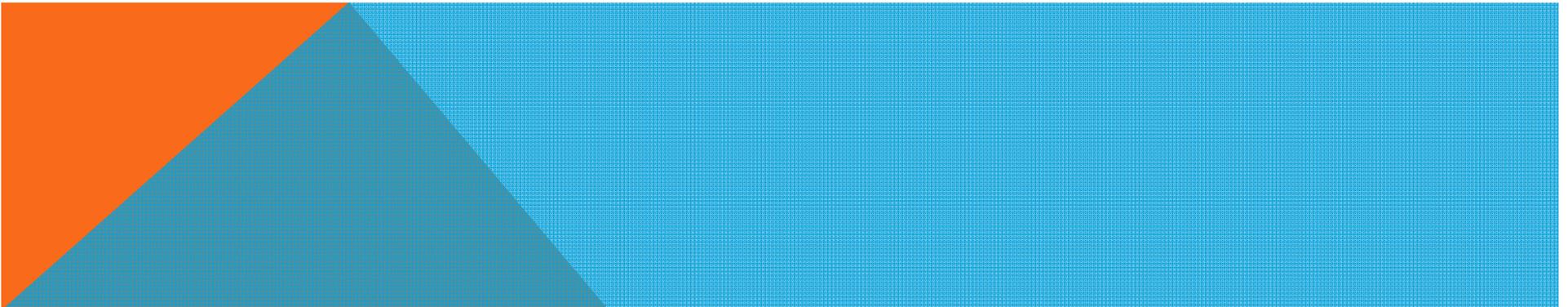
- *Students' mathematics learning*
- *Teaching in under resourced settings*
- *School supports (or lacks)*
- *Effects of district mandates*
- **Ph.D. University of Illinois at Chicago, 2010**
- **Currently, Research Associate at Rutgers University's**

NSF-Sponsored New Jersey Partnership for Excellence in Middle School Mathematics



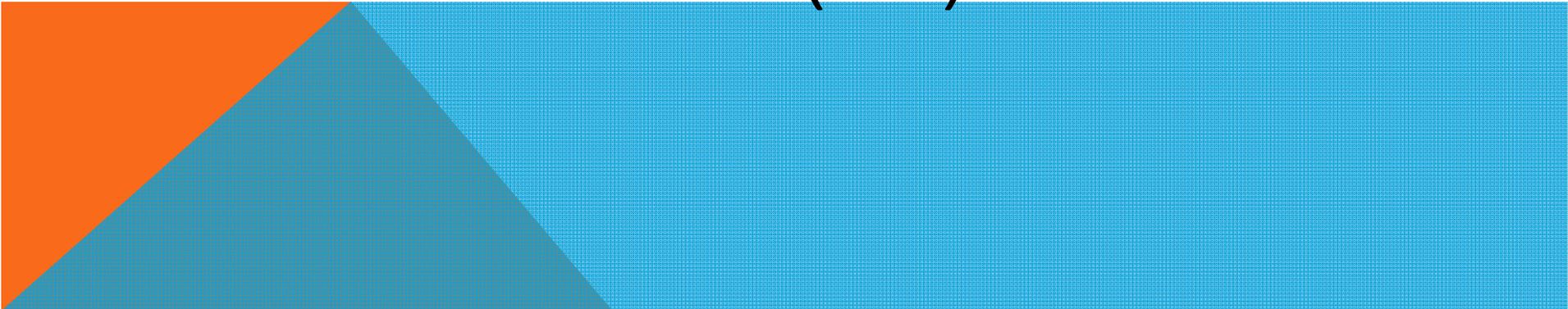
RETENTION

- 19 teachers began with Marlene in her cohort—15 finished after the first two years.
- The University sponsored 4 cohorts of this program—approximately 60 teachers total
- At least 12 remain in the classroom or serve as district coaches ,mathematics specialists; one community college teacher, one earned a Ph.D. and is a university professor



NYCTF AND TFA: A FOCUS ON TWO ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Focus on two particular alternative certification programs

- **New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF)**
 - **Teach for America (TFA)**
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NYCTF AND TFA BACKGROUNDS

- New teachers in the NYCTF and TFA programs are quickly immersed into the teaching profession over the course of several months in the summer.
- Alternative certification teachers receive a Transitional B license, which is a temporary and conditional teaching license, from the New York State Education Department that allows them to teach for three years before earning initial certification.
- Alternative certification teachers must pass standardized teaching examinations before teaching in September.

NYCTF AND TFA DIVERSITY

- For NYCTF: almost 50 percent are non-White teachers (NYCTF, 2011).
- For TFA: over 33 percent of TFA teachers are non-White (TFA, 2011), which makes the program somewhat less diverse than NYCTF.

NEW YORK CITY TEACHING FELLOWS

- Alternative certification program developed in 2000 in conjunction with The New Teacher Project and the New York City Department of Education (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, & Wyckoff, 2007).
- Program goal was to recruit professionals from other fields to supply the large teacher shortages in New York City's public schools with quality teachers.

NEW YORK CITY TEACHING FELLOWS

- There was a 7000 teacher shortage predicted for fall 2000, with a possible shortage of 25,000 teachers over the next several years (Stein, 2002).
- NYCTF grew from around 1 percent of all newly hired teachers from its beginning in 2000 to 33 percent of all new teachers by 2005 (Boyd, Loeb, Lankford, Rockoff, & Wyckoff, 2007).

NEW YORK CITY TEACHING FELLOWS

- NYCTF teachers represent about one-fourth of all New York mathematics teachers (NYCTF, 2011).
- As of 2011 there are about 9000 Teaching Fellows, which represents about 11 percent of all teachers teaching in New York (NYCTF, 2011).
- Retention of Teaching Fellows has been comparable to the retention of traditionally prepared teachers (Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2006).

NYCTF FOR UNDERSERVED STUDENTS

- Teaching Fellows generally teach in high-need urban schools throughout the city (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006).
- The mission of NYCTF is “to recruit and prepare high-quality, dedicated individuals to become teachers who raise student achievement in the New York City classrooms that need them most” (NYCTF, 2011).
- Since the inception of NYCTF program, achievement scores for non-White students have increased in New York (NYCTF, 2011).

TEACH FOR AMERICA

- Alternative certification non-profit organization formed in 1990 with the intention of sending college graduates to low-income schools to make a difference for the underserved students.
- Wendy Koop, TFA's founder, realized that many recent college graduates at highly ranked universities in the United States would consider teaching low-income students if given the opportunity (Koop, 2003).

TEACH FOR AMERICA

- TFA would develop into a teachers' corps that would allow new graduates at top universities, with an interest in teaching, to quickly begin teaching students in the communities with the highest need.
- The framework that developed was recent college graduates would commit to teaching for two years while taking coursework in teacher education, and they would serve in low-income schools throughout the United States in urban and rural communities.

TEACH FOR AMERICA

In the 2010 annual report TFA stated that there are over 20,000 TFA alumni throughout the United States (TFA, 2011).

Upon completion of the commitment to the program, TFA said that nearly two-thirds of alumni stay in the field of education, which is about 13,000, with about half of those alumni remaining in the classroom, which is about 6,500 or one-third of TFA alumni (TFA, 2011)

For those who stay in the classroom, about 90 percent teach in low-income communities (TFA, 2011)

TEACH FOR AMERICA FOR UNDERSERVED STUDENTS

- TFA’s mission “is to build the movement to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our nation's most promising future leaders in this effort” (TFA, 2011).
- TFA’s vision is “one day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education” (TFA, 2011).
- Although TFA places teachers in poor rural schools throughout some parts of the United States, in New York TFA teachers are in a high-need urban environment in the same type of schools with the same student populations in which many NYCTF teachers hold positions.

MULTIPLE STUDY RESULTS: ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION

- It has been shown that teachers can improve their content knowledge with a combination of course content and experience teaching in the field.
- It has been encouraging that despite lack of experience, the teachers maintained high levels of teacher efficacy beliefs in regard to personal teaching efficacy and student outcome expectancy.
- An interesting finding in the studies was the high level of teacher efficacy found for teachers who had lower content knowledge..

FUTURE STUDIES

Future studies need to examine

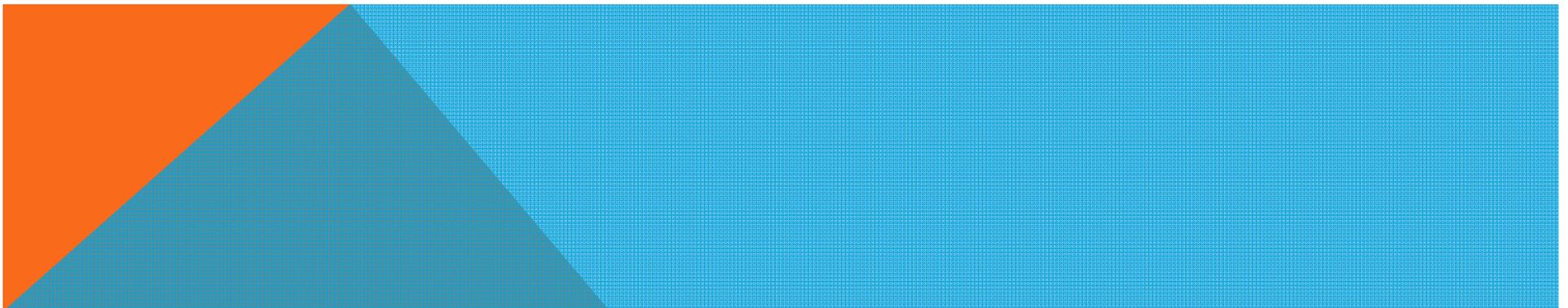
- teacher quality in cultural responsiveness,
- social justice orientation,
- ability to connect mathematics to the lives of non-White children, and
- teacher care and fostering of trust in the classroom

CONCLUSION

- Considering the call for high quality teachers, high stakes examinations, and accountability, now more than ever, we need to ensure that the teachers we certify are fully prepared to best teach the students.
- For the sake of urban students who have teachers in alternative certification programs, the certification of high quality teachers must continually be a high priority for policy makers, administrators, and teacher educators.

QUESTIONS?

1. What are your experiences with various alternative certification programs?
2. What is your role?
Career changer, teacher, teacher educator?
3. How do you see the niche for these programs in the development of future teachers?



THANK YOU

Della R. Leavitt, Ph.D.

Della.Leavitt@rutgers.edu

Brian R. Evans, Ph.D.

Bevans@pace.edu

Marlene Collins

Chicago Public Schools

