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FUTURE TEACHERS HEAR MAGIC WORDS: 'YOU'RE HIRED'

NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS WOOS GRADUATE STUDENTS.

by [Kelli Caplan](#) | November 21, 2024*Read time: about 2 min*

A typical Friday morning took an exciting turn for students in the [Master of Arts in Teaching \(MAT\)](#) program when a team from Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) burst into their classroom with a life-changing surprise: job offers for all!

With contracts in hand, NNPS officials made career offers to 27 MAT students.

The offers came as a result of the strong partnership forged between NNPS and the MAT program. NNPS administrators have been so consistently impressed by the high-quality teachers the MAT program turns out and the impact they make in the district's classrooms that they try to recruit as many Christopher Newport graduates as possible each year.

"We want you to bring your passion for education to Newport News Public Schools," Dr. Nina Farrish, Director of Human Resources for NNPS, told the excited Captains.

In all, four MAT students set to graduate in the spring signed on the

spot, and several others are strongly considering the NNPS offer.

One of the students who said “yes” was Cailyn Moffitt, an MAT candidate who has been observing and co-teaching in the district at Hidenwood Elementary School. She wants to stay in Newport News after graduation, inspired by the school system and diversity of its student body.

“I’m really excited. This is where I am most at home,” said Moffitt, ‘24 [Philosophy](#).

The strong alliance between NNPS and CNU’s MAT program has thrived since 2004.

“CNU’s collaboration with NNPS is co-beneficial,” said Dr. Jean Filetti, director of the Teacher Preparation Program. “CNU's Teacher Preparation Program benefits from the expertise of retired and current NNPS employees, who teach several of our graduate classes and serve as cooperating teachers and supervisors for our candidates during their internships. NNPS also employs many CNU graduates, who commit to teaching for this dynamic and diverse school district, and enrich the lives of local students for years to come.”



The MAT program is a five-year plan in which students can earn a bachelor’s degree, then in the final year, complete all required graduate-level professional courses and a 14-week teaching internship. If students already have a bachelor's degree either from CNU or another university, they can complete the MAT in three semesters.

MAT students are placed in schools all over the city, where they learn best teaching techniques and develop relationships with both the students they teach and the teachers who mentor them.

“I feel like I belong here,” said Kiana Green, who is a Teacher in Residence at Yates Elementary School. Green happily accepted NNPS’ job offer.

For Katie Bouch, ‘24 [Psychology](#), becoming a teacher is a family affair, as both of her parents are teachers in Virginia Beach. She jumped at the offer to teach in Newport News, where she has been a Teacher In Residence and has fallen in love with the second-graders she teaches at Sanford Elementary School.

“I feel very proud,” Bouch said. “I grew up surrounded by teachers. Their passion for teaching inspired me.”

Extending job offers to CNU students is a priority for NNPS, said Kim Hammond, training and development coordinator for NNPS. The education the Captains receive is stellar, she said, and they bring their knowledge and passion to the classroom.

“CNU has the best prepared teachers,” Hammond said. “The program is so wonderful.”

Historically, about 25 percent of the Captains offered jobs by NNPS accept. Newport News Public Schools educates 27,000 students at 41 schools.

“It truly is a great partnership,” said Dr. Karyn Ward, Associate Director of the Teacher Preparation Program.