



# NC State's Northeast Leadership Academy Named Exemplary Educational Leadership Preparation Program

NC State's Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) is pleased to announce that it has been nationally recognized for its innovation and quality by being selected by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) to receive its 2014 **Exemplary Educational Leadership Preparation Program Award** (one of only two programs nationally to receive this distinction).

The UCEA is a consortium of the nation's leading leadership preparation programs and is committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders. Its Exemplary Educational Leadership Preparation Program Award was established to celebrate exemplary programs and encourage their development.

The UCEA Executive Committee and UCEA Consortium Selection Committee, made up of individuals with strong expertise in educational leadership preparation, reviewed and evaluated the nominees. They considered factors such as high functioning and actively engaged district partnerships; rigorous recruitment and selection; strong coherence among program mission and other components of program design; effective support structures; faculty capacity; authentic and intense immersion in field operations; and strong outcome evidence of program effectiveness.

**EXCELLENT LEADERS. EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS. ENRICHED COMMUNITIES.**

## About NELA: Preparing Excellent Leaders

The Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) is an innovative school leader preparation program designed to develop principals as instructional leaders who drive improvements in student achievement in northeast North Carolina's rural, high-need schools.

**In partnership with 13 local school districts,** NELA Fellows earn their Master of School Administration from NC State University and a North Carolina principal license.

*Almost 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of America's schools are rural & nearly 1/2 of NC's students attend rural schools.*

NELA's program is **Radically Different from Traditional MSAs**. The rigorous, research-based program requires participants to demonstrate their leadership skills through solving authentic school problems with the support of executive coaches. NELA

teaches participants powerful mindsets and skill sets that are changing the trajectory of historically low-performing schools. Program experiences are customized to focus on turnaround principles for rural, low performing, high-poverty schools and communities. Classes and trainings are held at sites in northeastern NC.

Over \$14 million dollars in external funding from a combination of philanthropic, state, and federal grants has been secured to support the work of NELA, of which \$6.7 million from the USDOE is currently supporting the latest iterations of the project, NELA 2.0 and NELA-DST.

In addition to the UCEA award, NELA has been recognized at the local, state, and national levels by organizations at the vanguard of educational leadership preparation as well as in journal publications and by media outlets including:

- *Education Week*
  - [http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/08/04/37rural.h29.html?tkn=VLLF39OBNrzT9ezptAMNBnHC1YrGs\\_oFFRFR&cmp=clp-edweek](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/08/04/37rural.h29.html?tkn=VLLF39OBNrzT9ezptAMNBnHC1YrGs_oFFRFR&cmp=clp-edweek) and
  - [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rural\\_education/2013/10/nc\\_state\\_university\\_wins\\_grant\\_to\\_expand\\_training\\_for\\_rural\\_school\\_leaders.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rural_education/2013/10/nc_state_university_wins_grant_to_expand_training_for_rural_school_leaders.html)
- The Center for American Progress
  - <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2014/07/01/93015/the-changing-role-of-the-principal/>
- *Planning and Changing*
  - <http://education.illinoisstate.edu/planning/articles/vol43.shtml>
- *UCEA Review*
  - [Volume 54 Number 2, Summer, 2013](#)

### What makes NELA unique?

NELA's intensive, highly-selective cohort model combines coursework with supervised internship experiences and places an emphasis on connecting to the local community and data collection and analysis at the school level.

- **Strategic Recruitment & Performance-Based Selection**

Multi-step selection process that includes a daylong Assessment Day full of experiential events in which candidates must demonstrate their skills, knowledge and dispositions.
- **Personalized Leadership Training & Action Pedagogy**

Multiple diagnostic tools, including input from mentors and coaches, are used to identify areas for improvement and to create comprehensive action plans. An inquiry-action based approach and instructional rotations at all levels of schooling are used to examine developmentally appropriate teaching and learning.
- **Full-Time Summer Community Internship & Making a Difference Locally**

Participants complete a six-week internship in a community agency and develop and deliver professional development for teachers, create resources for parents and teachers and write grant applications to fund needed programs locally.



Visual Demonstration to Students of How Much They Improved:  
List of Middle School Names by School Performance  
Video: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/yrfqlthzxcg458za/2013\\_valueadded.m4v](https://www.dropbox.com/s/yrfqlthzxcg458za/2013_valueadded.m4v)

- **Executive Coaching and Mentoring**  
Fellows are paired with both a school-based internship principal mentor and an executive coach (retired expert principals and superintendents); participants are supported over the internship year and beyond.
- **Distinguished Leadership in Practice (DLP)**  
In partnership with NC's Principal and Assistant Principals Association, participants and their principal mentors complete DLP to strengthen skills of practicing school leaders simultaneously with aspiring leaders.
- **Specialized Training**  
Participants experience a variety of specialized trainings that are beyond a set of anchor courses (e.g., Facilitative Leadership, Crucial Conversations, Conflict Resolution, Understanding by Design, Common Core, digital storytelling, etc.). Through a series of semester-long field-based projects, Fellows also learn about child, adolescent, and adult developmental and cognitive psychology. NELA-DST has a specific focus on leadership for literacy development.
- **Full-Time, Yearlong Internship**  
Yearlong, full-time internship in the second year is focused on a data-driven problem of practice. A logic model is developed to measure and evaluate strategies that are employed.
- **Early Career & Transitional Support**  
Graduates continue to receive executive coaching and convene post-job placement to continue learning, receive just-in-time support and build professional networks.

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In addition to the recognition that the Exemplary Educational Leadership Preparation Program Award bestowed on NELA, UCEA also provides a cash award to the program and NELA will be recognized at a session during the 2014 UCEA Convention, on the UCEA website, and through a case-study publication, *Exemplary Programs in Educational Leadership*.

For more information on the Northeast Leadership Academy, please contact the Principal Investigator and Director of NELA,

**Dr. Bonnie Fusarelli** ([bonnie\\_fusarelli@ncsu.edu](mailto:bonnie_fusarelli@ncsu.edu)).

Please also visit the NELA 2.0 project website at: [go.ncsu.edu/nela2.0](http://go.ncsu.edu/nela2.0)



**NELA FELLOWS: COHORTS 1, 2, 3, & 4**