



MILLION DOLLAR  
**TEACHER**  
PROJECT



**Benji's  
Field  
Note:  
Great  
teachers  
change  
everything.  
Let's keep  
building.**

# Nine Years of Impact.

**A Decade on the Horizon.  
2025–2026 ANNUAL IMPACT  
REPORT.**

**REMEMBER: TEACHING  
CREATES ALL OTHER  
PROFESSIONS. THIS IS WHY WE  
ADVOCATE FOR OUR TEACHERS!**

**Thanks  
to you,  
the  
best is  
ahead.★**



# Nine Years Behind Us. A New Chapter Ahead.

BENJI SAYS... "Before I show you where Year Nine took us, I want you to hear from the person who started this journey."



Dear Friends, Partners, Educators, and Supporters,

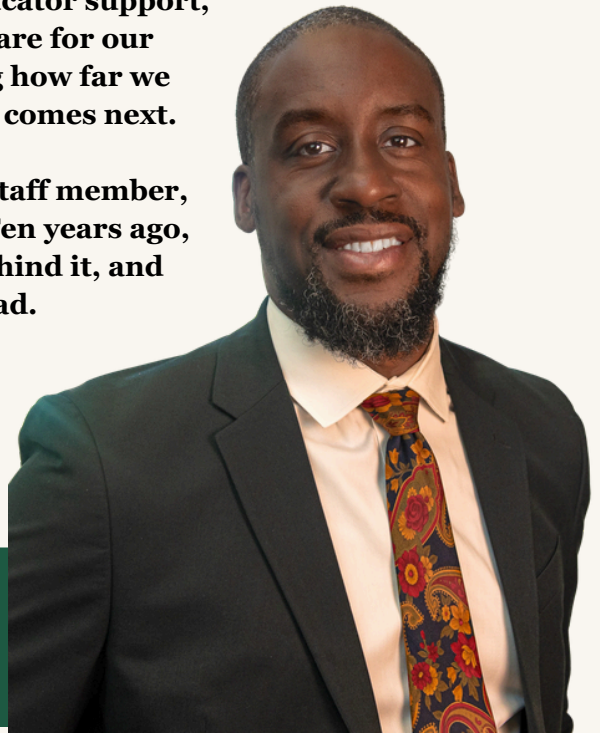
As I reflect on FY25/26, one belief remains at the heart of the Million Dollar Teacher Project: supporting students starts with supporting their teachers. This year, we continued expanding the ways we recognize, support, and invest in educators through our programs, partnerships, and community.

We also took an important step forward with A Teacher's Net Worth, an initiative designed to help educators better understand their compensation, benefits, and financial futures. This work reflects our growing commitment to supporting the whole educator and creating the conditions for great teachers to remain in the profession and thrive.

This year also marks an incredible milestone as MDTP enters its 10th year. What began with a simple belief that better outcomes for students require greater investment in teachers has grown into a decade of educator support, community partnerships, innovation, and impact. As we prepare for our Decade of Impact Celebration this October, we are celebrating how far we have come while using this milestone as a launchpad for what comes next.

To every teacher, partner, donor, volunteer, board member, staff member, and supporter who has been part of this journey: thank you. Ten years ago, we started with a belief. Today, we have a decade of impact behind it, and we are ready to build an even greater one. The best is still ahead.

With gratitude,



"Supporting students starts with supporting their teachers."

**Lloyd Hopkins**

CEO

Million Dollar Teacher Project

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lloyd Hopkins'.

**BENJI'S NEXT STOP → YEAR NINE**

Come on. There's a lot I want to show you.





## BENJI SAYS...

'I've got a lot to show you. Here's where we're headed.'

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That's where  
we're headed. →

# Every Story Has a Beginning.



## FOUNDING BOARD

### BENJI SAYS...

*"Before Year Nine,  
there was Year One.  
And before the  
programs, partnerships,  
and celebrations,  
there were people  
who believed teachers  
deserved more."*



In 2016, a group of leaders helped turn an idea into Million Dollar Teacher Project. Their early belief, guidance, and commitment helped create the foundation for the organization we know today.

# 2016

An idea takes root.

**Juan Kingsbury**  
CEO  
Career Blindspot

**Wiley Larsen**  
Program Manager  
Postdoctoral Affairs Office at  
ASU

**Kristine Morris**  
Superintendent  
Union Elementary School  
District

**Bill Pankey**  
Consultant

**Erica Schwartzmann**  
Partnership Manager  
Arizona State University

**Colin Seale**  
Founder/CEO  
thinkLaw

**Chanel Dudoit**  
Community Development  
Microsoft

**Carol Farabee**  
Consultant

**Jared Greenberg**  
Manager  
Uncle Louie's Restaurant

**Ryan Hamilton**  
Realtor United Brokers  
Group

**Lynnette Harris-Scott**  
Consultant

**Jessica Heart**  
Owner  
Heart2Heart PR

**Lloyd Hopkins**  
CEO/Founder  
Million Dollar Teacher  
Project

BENJI'S NEXT STOP → GUIDING YEAR NINE



# Big Missions Need Good Guides.

MILLION DOLLAR TEACHER PROJECT  
2025–2026 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT.

## GUIDING YEAR NINE

### BENJI NOTICED...

‘A mission doesn’t move forward on good intentions alone. It needs people willing to ask hard questions, make thoughtful decisions, and keep the destination in sight.’



Throughout FY2025–2026, MDTP’s Board of Directors helped guide the organization through Year Nine while preparing for the opportunities and responsibilities of its next decade.

### BOARD MEMBERS

**\*\*IMAGES ABOVE ARE  
NUMBERED FOR  
NAME REFERENCE\*\***

1. LLOYD HOPKINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
2. RHONDA BOWMAN, BOARD CHAIR
3. RON WASHINGTON, VICE CHAIR
4. MICHELLE ALVIS, SECRETARY
5. JONATHAN MASON, TREASURER
6. JENNIFER MORALES
7. KYLIE ELIZABETH
8. DAVID SCOTT

## GUIDANCE TODAY. POSSIBILITY TOMORROW.

BENJI’S NEXT STOP → THE TEAM BEHIND THE WORK



# Meet the People Who Made Year Nine Move.



## BENJI SAYS...

'These are some of the people I saw turning ideas into emails, events, classroom visits, partnerships, programs, celebrations, and plenty of very long to do lists.'



## OUR TEAM OF STAFF, INTERNS, AND VOLUNTEERS



Putting the mission in motion every day. Learning, contributing, and bringing new perspective to the work.

|                 |                           |                 |                               |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| KASHUNA HOPKINS | SHANIA ANDREWS            | LAURA SIMON     | MICHAEL WANG                  |
| MICHELLE LLC    | ALEXANDRA FALLON          | KELSEY BOBIAN   | CHRISTINA SELBERG             |
| LORNE HOPKINS   | JUSTICE TURNER-EL         | ANNIE BURNETT   | TISHA MARIE PELLETIER         |
| KLARISSA PARKER | TREVOR SANDOVAL           | RACHEL GILLIAN  | ISIS COMMA                    |
| SAM SHAMMAH     | NAVODITH PADINZHARA MANOJ | JUSTINE PARNELL | + MANY MORE. WE APPRECIATE    |
| IVAN ROBLES     | TIM HONAN                 | KINDRA MAPLES   | EVERYONE THAT GAVE ANY TIME   |
| GINGER MARSH    | JAZMINE COLE              | KAREN OLIVER    | TO SUPPORT MDTP & OUR MISSION |



## TEACHERS ARE THE HEART OF THE MISSION. PEOPLE POWER THE WORK.

BENJI'S NEXT STOP → [YEAR NINE](#)

You've met the people. Now let me show you what happened.



# NINE YEARS IN...

One question still guides the work.

# WHAT DO TEACHERS NEED?



## BENJI SAYS...

Nine years in, I've learned something: the best place to start is still with teachers themselves.

For nine years, Million Dollar Teacher Project has worked to elevate the teaching profession through recognition, compensation, and support.

But programs aren't where the story begins. Teachers are.

So throughout Year Nine, we kept asking the question that has shaped this work from the beginning: What do teachers need to thrive?



**TO BE SEEN.**  
Recognition



**TO BE SUPPORTED.**  
Support



**TO BE INVESTED IN.**  
Compensation

**Teachers are not  
the end of the strategy.  
They are the beginning of it.**

**BENJI'S NEXT STOP → OUR MISSION IN MOTION**

Now let me show you how MDTP turns that listening into action.

# Three Ways We Show Up for Teachers.

Everything MDTP does begins with a simple belief: when teachers thrive, students and communities are better positioned to thrive alongside them.

**BENJI SAYS...**

Teachers don't need just one kind of support. So MDTP shows up in three.



1

## RECOGNITION ✨

*See them. Celebrate them. Tell their stories.*

Recognition creates intentional opportunities to celebrate educators, elevate their stories, and remind teachers that their contributions are seen and valued.

*We see you.*



2

## COMPENSATION ↗

*Invest in the person behind the profession.*

Compensation expands the resources and financial opportunities available to educators, addressing both immediate needs and long-term financial wellness.

*We invest in you.*



3

## SUPPORT ○

*Put capacity back into classrooms.*

Support places people, resources, partnerships, and tools around teachers so they can devote more of their time and energy to students.

*We stand beside you.*

RECOGNITION

+

COMPENSATION

+

SUPPORT

TEACHERS THRIVE

STUDENTS

.

FAMILIES

.

COMMUNITIES

## Three pillars. One teacher-centered mission.

Together, Recognition, Compensation, and Support guide MDTP's work to recruit, retain, and celebrate educators serving Arizona communities.



**BENJI'S NEXT STOP → RECOGNITION**

Let's start with something teachers deserve more of: being seen.



RECOGNITION ♦  
**WE SEE YOU.**

# Because Great Teaching Deserves to Be Seen.



**BENJI SAYS...**

**Teachers spend so much time cheering everyone else on. This chapter is about cheering for them.**

Recognition is more than celebration. It is an intentional reminder to educators that their work matters, their stories matter, and their contributions are seen.

## **Seen. Valued. Celebrated.**

Recognition says: "Your work did not go unnoticed."

**SEE THEM. → CELEBRATE THEM. → TELL THEIR STORIES.**

### **HOW WE CELEBRATED YEAR NINE**

**ADULT FIELD TRIP** Joy belongs in the work, too.

**ONE IN A MILLION** Extraordinary educators deserve extraordinary recognition.

**TAKE A TEACHER TO LUNCH** Sometimes appreciation begins with a seat at the table.

**BENJI'S NEXT STOP → ADULT FIELD TRIP**

**First stop? Recess for the grown-ups.**

◆ RECOGNITION

THE FOURTH ANNUAL ADULT FIELD TRIP

# Teachers Deserve Recess, Too.



*Adult Field  
Trip  
2025*



**BENJI SAYS...**

**Teachers spend all year planning for everyone else.  
So for one night, we planned something for them.**

**Year Nine began with one of MDTP's signature celebrations:  
the Fourth Annual Adult Field Trip.**

**Educators stepped away from classroom demands and into  
an evening created for connection, laughter, play, and the  
simple joy of being celebrated.**

**Community partners, sponsors, and volunteers helped  
make the experience possible, reminding teachers that an  
entire community was ready to show up for them.**

**FOR ONCE, THE TEACHERS  
GOT THE FIELD TRIP.**



# Some Teachers Leave Their Mark Everywhere.

Meet the educators Benji spotted during Year Nine.

**BENJI SAYS...**

Recognition isn't really about awards. It's about stopping long enough to notice the people doing extraordinary things every day.

## Wilson Elementary



**MS. MARIA OLGUIN**



**MS. KATHLEEN WOMACK**



**MS. M CHAPMAN**



**MR. CESAR SANCHEZ**

◆ RECOGNITION

TAKE A TEACHER TO LUNCH

**YOU ARE SEEN.**

**YOU ARE VALUED.**

**YOU ARE APPRECIATED.**



**Pull Up  
a Chair.**



**BENJI SAYS...**

**"Teachers spend so much time making sure everyone else has what they need.**

**Sometimes the community gets to say: this time, we've got you."**



Take a Teacher to Lunch created intentional moments for educators to pause, connect, enjoy a meal, and receive something they deserve more often: appreciation.

With support from volunteers, businesses, and community partners, ordinary school days became opportunities to remind teachers that the people around them see their work and value what they bring to students every day.

PULL UP A CHAIR → SHARE A MEAL → MAKE A CONNECTION → CELEBRATE A TEACHER



# Giving Teachers Something Priceless:



# CAPACITY.

## BENJI SAYS...

"I learned something this year: sometimes the best way to support a teacher isn't to give them more. It's to give something back."



## TIME.



**MORE TIME TO PLAN.  
MORE TIME TO TEACH.  
MORE TIME TO CONNECT.  
MORE TIME TO RESPOND.**

# What Could a Teacher Do With More Time?



## BENJI WONDERED...

What if supporting teachers didn't always mean giving them something else to do?

What if we helped take something off their plate instead?



# 1,314

MORE TIME TO PLAN.  
MORE TIME TO TEACH.  
MORE TIME TO CONNECT.  
MORE CAPACITY TO RESPOND.

## HOURS GIVEN BACK TO TEACHERS



# It Takes a Village.

Now You  
Can **Wear It.**

SHOW UP.  
SPEAK UP.  
WEAR IT.  
**TEACHER  
FAN.**

You don't have to be in the  
classroom to stand  
behind the people who are.

## **BENJI SAYS...**

'Wait... you can **WEAR**  
being a Teacher Fan?'

Okay. I like where  
this is going.



MDTP's social enterprise gives supporters another way to show up for educators.  
Through Teacher Fan apparel and merchandise, community members can wear their  
support, amplify the mission, and represent the village surrounding teachers.

TEACHERS → TEACHER FANS → COMMUNITY → IMPACT

## **BENJI NOTICED...**

'A village isn't just who's in the classroom.'

BENJI'S NEXT STOP → INNOVATION

It's everyone  
who shows up  
for teachers.



# The World Is Changing. Teachers Are Learning With It.

What about what's next?

## 12 WEEKS.

One inaugural AI4Teachers cohort.  
Measurable growth.

**BENJI  
WONDERED...**

What happens when teachers get the time, tools, and confidence to learn something new?



**+104%**   **+343%**   **+154%**

AI KNOWLEDGE

CONFIDENCE TEACHING AI

LIKELIHOOD OF TEACHING AI

**BEFORE** Learning what AI can do. → **AFTER** Building confidence to teach with it.

**Knowledge changes confidence.  
Confidence changes practice.**



# A Teacher's Worth Doesn't Fit Inside a Paycheck.



## BENJI SAYS...

"I thought I could understand a teacher's worth by looking at a paycheck. Turns out, I needed a bigger piece of paper."

## THE FULL PICTURE



A TEACHER'S  
**NET WORTH**

**Financial  
wellness  
IS teacher  
support.**

**\$407,242.50**

MULTI-YEAR INVESTMENT  
to launch A Teacher's Net Worth

During Year Nine, MDTP received a \$407,242.50 multi-year grant from the Arizona Community Foundation's Ellis Center for Educational Excellence to launch A Teacher's Net Worth, an initiative designed to help educators better understand the full value of their compensation and strengthen long-term financial wellness.

*The valued consultants leading  
this initiative are:  
Dr. Suzanne Zentner  
Dr. Kent Scribner*

**FINANCIAL WELLNESS**

**RETIREMENT**

**BENEFITS**

**SALARY**

# Stories Have Power.

Pull up a chair.  
Teachers are talking.

"Data can tell us  
what is happening.

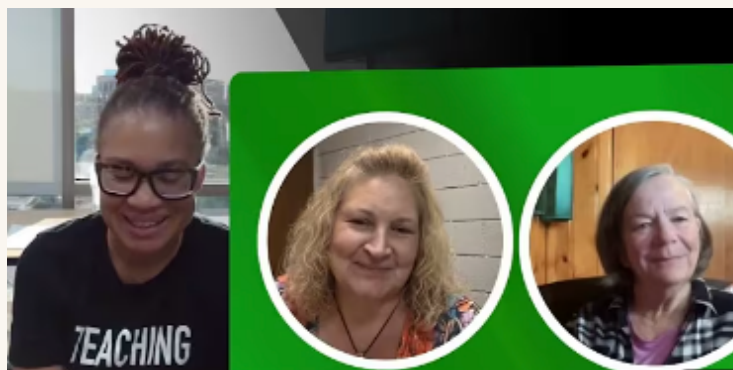
Teacher stories help us  
understand what it  
*feels like.*"

**Watch Season 4 of Teachers'  
Lounge podcast by clicking the  
following link:**

**MDTP YouTube Teachers'  
Lounge Season 4**



The Teachers' Lounge — a listening platform  
where educators share what the work really feels like.



*Led by the Kaptivating Kashuna  
Hopkins with stories shared by  
Kimberly Fern and Bridget Larkin*



**benji's field note:**  
**"i stopped counting  
data points  
and started  
listening."**



# Strengthening the Organization Behind the Mission.



*BENJI NOTICED...*

*"Before a mission can grow bigger, the people carrying it have to grow, too."*

9 → 10

building the foundation

preparing for what's next.



## EXPANDING THE CONVERSATION

**A Piper Fellowship for a decade of impact.**

Founder and Executive Director Lloyd Hopkins was selected as a 2022 Virginia G. Piper Fellow, investing in the leadership, perspective, and capacity that will help MDTP grow into its next decade.

## LEARN.

## LEAD.

## CONNECT.

## GROW.



BENJI'S NEXT STOP → COMMUNITY



# Impact Comes Back Around.

BENJI NOTICED...  
'SOME THINGS  
YOU PLANT DON'T  
COME BACK  
RIGHT AWAY.  
BUT SOMETIMES,  
YEARS LATER,  
YOU LOOK UP  
AND REALIZE  
THEY GREW.'

## 2018 INTERN.

Raymond joined MDTP as an intern, gaining nonprofit experience while building professional skills and confidence.

MDTP invested  
in him.

### Benji's Field Note

That's the thing  
about community:  
what we invest in  
people has a way of  
growing.

## VOLUNTEER. ADVOCATE. HE CAME BACK.



Today, Raymond is MDTP's  
first alumnus volunteer and  
serves as a huge advocate.

## Impact returns.

*And it's amplified.*

Sometimes support  
begins with  
a relationship.

Sometimes it  
begins by removing  
a barrier.

Both begin when

## someone chooses to show up.

**BENJI'S NEXT STOP → OUR PARTNERS**







BENJI NOTICED...



**Benji's Field Note**

There wasn't just one set of wings carrying this work. Every contribution looked different. Every contribution moved the mission forward.

"I thought I was following one story. Then I looked around. There were a whole lot of people helping carry this work."



**TIME.**

Volunteers & classroom support



**RESOURCES.**

Supplies, meals & essentials



**EXPERTISE.**

Professional growth & training



**INVESTMENT.**

Grants, sponsorships & financial support



**VOICE.**

Advocacy, storytelling & community amplification

**It takes  
all of us.**

MDTP  
+  
TEACHERS  
+  
COMMUNITY

**FOUNDATION  
FUNDERS**

**CORPORATE &  
BUSINESS  
PARTNERS**

**SCHOOL &  
DISTRICT  
PARTNERS**

**IN-KIND  
PARTNERS**

**COMMUNITY  
PARTNERS**

Teachers are  
at the heart.  
Community  
surrounds  
the work.

**TO EVERYONE  
WHO SAID YES  
TO TEACHERS:**

**THANK YOU.**

Every contribution looked different.  
Every contribution moved the mission forward.

**BENJI'S NEXT STOP →  
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP**

# The Next Chapter Starts Here.

**BENJI LOOKED BACK...**

“Nine years.  
That’s a lot of  
classrooms,  
celebrations,  
conversations, hard  
days, bold ideas,  
and people who  
kept showing up.”

9

years of learning,  
growing,  
listening &  
showing up

10

**a decade of  
impact**

**LISTEN. → STRENGTHEN. → EXPAND.**

**WHAT COMES  
NEXT?**

Deepen what works.  
Expand what is possible.  
Strengthen the community  
around teachers.

**RECOGNITION COMPENSATION SUPPORT**

## THE MISSION CONTINUES.

**SEE TEACHERS.  
INVEST IN TEACHERS.  
STAND BESIDE TEACHERS.**

### Benji's Final Field Note

A milestone isn't the end of  
the story. It's a place to look  
back, spread your wings, and  
decide where you're flying  
next.

