

BOWDOIN COLLEGE
2021 Distinguished Educator Award
Leroy R. Gaines '02

Leroy R. Gaines, distinguished member of the Bowdoin Class of 2002, you are leading an “inclusion revolution” in the public schools of the San Francisco Bay Area. Drawing upon your personal experience, you have mobilized the schools and the community to ensure that classrooms are safe and inclusive places for all students, regardless of their race, gender, class, or sexual orientation. In so doing, a Bowdoin friend notes, you have “had a profoundly positive impact on hundreds of young boys and girls.”

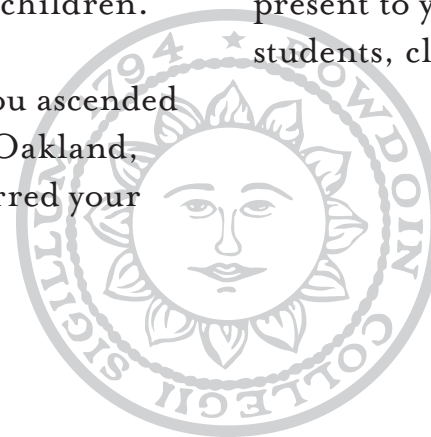
After graduating from Bowdoin, you began your career in education by joining Teach For America, immediately establishing yourself as an influential and inclusive presence in classrooms and schools. After three years of teaching, you enrolled in Teachers College of Columbia University, where you earned a master’s degree in education leadership. Through your involvement with Partners in School Innovation and Our Family Coalition, two nonprofit education organizations, you continued to advocate for inclusivity in schools, develop your leadership skills, and provide support for other teachers and administrators in the effort to improve the lives and academic prospects of Bay Area schoolchildren.

In 2010, only eight years after graduating from Bowdoin, you ascended to the position of principal at Acorn Elementary School in Oakland, California. In your first year as principal at Acorn, you spurred your

students to achieve the highest gain in reading scores in the school district. Four years later, you and Acorn were recognized by the Human Rights Campaign with a “Welcoming Schools Seal of Excellence Award.” Throughout your nine years as principal of Acorn, you have been lauded as a champion of academic achievement and inclusivity for all students, particularly impoverished students and students of color.

In 2019, you widened your reach even further by becoming executive director of the Bay Area branch of New Leaders, a professional organization that develops and empowers principals and other education leaders to lift up students through policies and practices that foster inclusivity and academic achievement. Through that role and your leadership as chair of the board of Our Family Coalition, you continue to drive schools and educators to ensure that all students, particularly the most vulnerable, are able to reach their full potential.

For your remarkable commitment to and impact upon schoolchildren in the Bay Area, particularly students of color, impoverished students, LGBTQ students, and other vulnerable populations, we are proud to present to you the 2021 Distinguished Educator Award. We join your students, classmates, friends, family, and colleagues to honor you.



CLAYTON S. ROSE
President of the College

June 2021

MATTHEW F. ROBERTS '93
President of the Alumni Council