



TC Spotlight

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*Ask many questions,
meet lots of people
and work with others
on research projects.*

- **Hometown: Berkeley,
California**

- **TC Tokyo Group 24**

- **Currently a PhD**

**Candidate at University
of Auckland, Faculty of
Education and Social
Work**

What drew you to TC initially? It was actually accidental that I fell into the teaching profession to start. My undergraduate work was not related to education, but after five years working at various schools, being in front of students and holding certain responsibilities on par with other school teachers, I found myself feeling severely under qualified. I found that being a teacher was a fulfilling role for me, deep down I knew I was getting more serious about my career path. It wasn't until a senior teacher, who was both a mentor and friend of mine, at one of the schools I was working at, encouraged me to enroll in a masters course. That begins my story with Teachers College...

What's a favorite memory from TC? My absolute favorite memories from Teachers College were the days when we had to get together with our study groups to prepare for our final course presentations. It was always at those moments that I felt enriched by others, involved in collaborating, sharing and learning along with my peers. I remember the first time I presented in front of my classmates, and how that was a pinnacle in my growth as both an educator and a person. Those assignments, though at times quite challenging, were critical learning experiences for me. I value having those experiences to this day.

What teacher has had a lasting effect on you? I would have to say Dr. Bill Snyder, who advised and assisted me, all the way through from the application process to the day of graduation. Bill was most definitely a key figure in my academic success and I still remember, after certain class discussions we had in his Second Language Acquisition course, the profound feeling of - we certainly don't know as much as we think we know. Dr. Gregory Glasgow who also advised me on my MA thesis and taught us Sociolinguistics where we learned strategies to tailor social awareness learning and critical pedagogy into our curriculum. Professor Dr. Deryn Verity who taught a most fantastically rigorous English pedagogical grammar course I will never forget. Dr. Maria Torres who taught Teacher Inquiry. Professor Dr. Vivian Lindhardsen, who taught Second Language Assessment and introduced me to the complex world of measurement and assessment. Lastly, Professor Emeritus Dr. John Fanselow, without whom we wouldn't have had the tremendous opportunity of joining Teachers College in Japan. It is my hope that these words of remembrance will be taken as a tribute of my utmost care and respect for these professors whom have made an invaluable contribution to my educational and professional life.

What motivates you? That we live in a constantly evolving world growing smaller as the distances between us seem to shrink, it seems now more than ever we live in times in which we cannot afford to fall asleep at the wheel in terms of putting forth new ideas for co-constructing truly

democratic and transformative social spaces. Certainly it was the Teachers College community that sustained me and gave me the foundation of the power of teacher collaboration towards improving the quality of our practice, our schools, and our impact in preparing the younger generations for what's ahead in the future.

What is the secret to your success?

I wake up every morning and I visualize the day ahead of me, where I want to be, and the frame of mind I want to be in. I jog about 3-5km per day and cycle everywhere, I am very keen on lots of physical activity but not to the point of injury. I enjoy hot baths and strong coffee. When I go to sleep, I am thankful for the gifts of the day and the power to wake again tomorrow and do it all over again.

What advice do you have for others starting at TC now?

My advice to you: Ask many questions, meet lots of people and work with others on research projects. Explore what interests you and irks you. Don't be afraid to read widely, as your readings become a part of your thesis work.

