



# Lauren Walsh

## Jumpstart Team Leader, 2004-2005

## Pearson Teacher Fellow, 2005-2007

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*Lauren Walsh has served over 300 hours of service with Jumpstart. She was a Corps member and team leader at the University of Rochester.*

*Lauren went to become a Pearson Teacher Fellow in Washington, DC while also pursuing her master's degree in education. She plans to continue working as an early childhood educator throughout her career.*

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**I originally** went to the University of Rochester with the intention of becoming a therapist. I was truly intrigued by the topic of psychology, so I decided to major in this subject and minor in classics. I spent my free time working at the fitness center and playing volleyball. I was on my way to reaching my goal of becoming an effective therapist.

My decision to join Jumpstart my senior year completely altered and changed the course of my career path. The first month of my senior year I saw an advertisement for Jumpstart posted on the wall. I had some tutoring experience and I welcomed the opportunity to work with children as a work-study position. I joined and trained as a Corps member for about a month before being promoted to team leader. I had an amazing time working with the children and other Corps Members. I loved my work, and unlike many other seniors, I spent the majority of my free time doing things that would promote Jumpstart's cause. The influence my team and I had on our children was priceless. Our partner children were able to express themselves better. They learned about books and how to love and appreciate them. They learned letters and how to make and keep friends. My team and I knew our partner children were prepared to succeed in Kindergarten and future endeavors.

I absolutely loved my work and decided to go into the education field instead of pursuing a career in psychology. The Pearson Teacher Fellowship was a perfect way to get the support I needed to succeed in the classroom as I

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started to pursue this career path. I applied to the Pearson Teacher Fellowship because I loved the philosophies the program had and wanted to continue supporting Jumpstart's cause. Reflecting on my two years in the Fellowship, I can easily say I truly enjoyed my valuable work. I have influenced the lives of many children and have been inspired and thrilled at their successes and accomplishments. I have learned so much about this

profession and myself from my children. I know my students will be well prepared for their next year of schooling. Some of them are already meeting first grade learning standards!

It will be hard for me to say goodbye to some of my children at the end of the year, as many prepare to transition into kindergarten. We've built such strong relationships over the past few months, and I'm looking forward to hearing how they do from the children's parents. While I've been teaching through the Pearson Teacher Fellowship, I have also been attending Marymount University and pursuing my Master's of Education in Elementary Education (preK to 6th grade). I will complete this degree in the fall of 2007 after a semester of student teaching, and I know that it will better prepare me for where my career path will lead me. After I graduate from Marymount, I will either continue to teach or work with preschool centers as a Curriculum Manager or Director, while finding a way to continue to support Jumpstart's cause. Regardless, I know that my experiences through Jumpstart and the Pearson Teacher Fellowship will continue to influence my educational philosophy and undoubtedly inform my future career path.