

#3a: N. Cutlip, MIT

***How has your time volunteering and observing informed your decision to be a teacher?***

The time spent in schools has been so positive, making me feel this is where I need to focus my energy and time. Students, families and staff seem to respond well to me, and I honestly feel I can make a difference. After so much transition that comes along with military life, I would like to be part of something lasting; a long-term investment in students, families, a community. Through my work as a volunteer, room parent, Paraeducator, and Family Engagement Liaison, I see opportunities to connect with and support students, families and colleagues. My hope is to implement all that I've learned, be part of a collaborative team, and work as a positive force in the lives of the students that I hope to teach someday.

#3b: N. Cutlip, MIT

***Describe an experience working with youth and how it influenced your decision to be a teacher.***

While working as an ELL Paraeducator with the Evergreen School District I met Miss Odalys, a first grade ELL student. She was initially very shy, hesitant to participate, and preferred to stay in the background. With the professional development training I received and my prior education, I developed a strategy (In collaboration with her Gen Ed teacher) to support her learning. Over the school year, Odaylys' parents and I formed a strong bond, helping to increase their trust of the school and participation in conferences and school events. We worked to increase her confidence and independence, using her "Word Book," "walking the walls" for support, and developed her pride in being a bilingual student. I saw a quiet child, who had been embarrassed of her limited English proficiency, come out of the shadows and shine. What a privilege it was to work with her! She taught me a lot 😊.