

Name: Michael Staton

Role: Founding Board Member

Statement of Intent:

My role on the governing board will be as one of the founding board members. With an extensive background in school and program founding moments, I can contribute perspective and guidance to help with a solid start – both avoiding pitfalls and setting up for success. With involvement from the early days of General Assembly, Dev Bootcamp, CodeHS, Year On, and Minerva University, my goal will be to assure maximum use of the Colearn model, meta-curriculum, and ESP services. In addition, I will try to shape best practice use of technology infrastructure, both proprietary and third party. Given the budget works better with some upfront financing, one of my responsibilities is to provide the needed upfront financing. As Colearn Academy Utah impacts more enthusiastic parents and community members, I aim to pass the role on to a community member.

Not-for-Profit History:

My exposure to charter schools has been continuous, and my strong professional networks should supplement any gaps in direct experience. In working with NewSchools Venture Fund to help them build an Education Technology investment practice, I was able to meet with leaders from many charter and non-profit organizations. I developed a strong friendship with the founder and CEO of Silicon Schools fund. One of my longtime colleagues at Learn Capital was on the board of HighTech High for quite some time, and another colleague was on the Board of Trustees of Harvard Graduate School of

Education. One of my colleagues now, and a supporter of Colearn, is a co-founder of Innovations Academy in San Diego.

While a public school teacher in Houston, TX from 2004-2007, I spent many hours over the span of a few years meeting with the founders of Yes! College Prep. In my early 20s, I worked part time for Grantsformation, and helped multiple charter schools secure grant dollars by creating long form written applications and plans.

I currently sit on the Colearn Academy Arizona Charter School non-profit board, and I am on the Board of Directors of Podium Education, which serves coursework in digital skills to tens of thousands of college students in the United States.

Employment History:

While at NewSchools Venture Fund, I helped initiate the capital formation and investment process which eventually became [Reach Capital](#). While at [Learn Capital](#), I helped lead investments into over 100 Education Technology organizations, currently used by over a billion learners around the world, (Coursera, Udemy, and Photomath are probably the most popular).

In terms of academic programs, I helped found Dev Bootcamp – the first workforce training program to train software engineering skills in 9 weeks. Dev Bootcamp graduated over 4000 students and placed 93% of them into technology jobs with an average starting salary of \$78K per year. I served on the Curriculum Advisory Board for the Kauffman Fellowship – an “Executive MBA” program for professionals working in Venture Capital and the finance of innovation. There, I helped shape their program and learning modalities. I was distinguished with the Jeff Timmons Award upon graduation, the award that was designated for the Fellow who showed outstanding leadership.

Throughout my post-teaching career, I have been a part of starting organizations and funding early-stage organizations, which has required the development of skills in finance and organizational management.

Education History:

I have an MA in International Development, and a BA in Geography with a minor in Asian Studies, both from Clark University. I was a certified teacher in the Houston Independent School District. Other than that, I participated in the Kauffman Fellowship.

I'm not sure that my education experience conveys the extent to which I am recognized as a thought leader in education, globally. Here are some YouTube reels of keynotes and panels that happen to be public: [Zest](#) (Malta), [The Future of Higher Education in a Digital Age](#) (NYU), [Slush](#) (Finland), [South Summit](#) (Spain), [Innovation Ed](#) (Thailand), [WISE](#) (Qatar).