

# Dr. Heather Tracy, Ed.D.

- Doctor of Education (2014) in K-12 Leadership
- Master of Education (2001) in Human Development & Psychology, Focus: At-Risk Adolescents, Culture & Human Development
- Honors Bachelor of Arts (2000) in French & Psychology

## Contact:

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## Professional Biographical Statement

- Completing a BA in Psychology was only the first step in specializing as an at-risk adolescent psychologist and educator. During graduate school at Harvard Graduate School of Education, I homed in on the state of at-risk adolescents as an area of focus. Interested in nontraditional learners, I studied neuropsychology for instructional differentiation, individual differences in learners, school reform for at-risk populations, and various psychological and cultural perspectives on at-risk populations.
- In 2002, I spent 11 months as a volunteer teacher for WorldTeach at a K-6 school in rural Costa Rica, where I learned fluent Spanish in a full immersion situation – living with a homestay family, teaching at school, and with no English-speakers in sight.
- From November 2002 until December 2004, I set up and directed the academic program at Coronado Academy, a therapeutic boarding school for 30-40 teenagers – transitioning their correspondence learning curriculum into a teacher-taught, relationship-based academic program.
- In 2005, I co-founded and served as the Academic Director and Executive Director for New Summit Academy Costa Rica, a therapeutic boarding school for at-risk teen boys, and I continue to lead this program today.
- In 2014, I completed a Doctor of Education degree in K-12 Leadership and focused my dissertation on risk and resilience in adolescence as well as what school environments could do to promote the social and emotional foundations of cognitive development.
- I have taught various subjects from English to Social Studies, various age groups (elementary, high school, and college), and diverse cultural backgrounds (both native English speakers and ESL students). Most importantly, I am passionate about helping young people identify their own motivation and methods for engaging in life-long learning and growth in the most holistic and integrated way possible.
- Since the completion of my dissertation in 2014, my intellectual and experiential explorations have been focused on co-developing the Supportive Immersion model – an educational paradigm focused on integrative learning and growth by means of empathically connecting and collaboratively empowering to create process-based scaffolding for integrative growth opportunities for people. Our vision is to mainstream Supportive Immersion methods to reach a broader range of youth who would benefit from supportive, immersive growth experiences to develop the 21<sup>st</sup> Century PROPS skills.
- My presentations have focused on Supportive Immersion applications for professionals at conferences, including the National Association of Therapeutic Schools And Programs (NATSAP), Independent Educational Consultant Association (IECA) and the Young Adult Transition Association (YATA). Supportive Immersion has had a very positive impact on professionals and families as a way to implement transformative experiential learning opportunities that result in integrative growth. Supportive Immersion can be applied in therapy, education, parenting, and more.

## Profile

**Objective** I aim to provide leadership in learning opportunities that align with my philosophy and beliefs that support humanistic and holistic education which encompasses the physical, social, emotional, psychological, cognitive, and collaborative needs and strengths of adolescents and young adults.

**Availability** For consultations, presentations, publications, program development and workshops.

## Key Skills: Highlighted qualities and characteristics include, but are not limited to:

- Visionary leadership & organizational development, including program start-up & development
- Branding (or re-branding) & marketing (both interpersonal networking as well as development of curriculum, program organization and website and marketing materials)

- Integrative development – balancing big picture vision and goals with detail-oriented operational needs.
- Leadership in accreditation processes, including school improvement planning & follow through reporting
- Teaching: strengths-based, learner-centered methods that incorporate social, emotional and executive functioning skill-building (including brain-based teaching, PBL, etc), curriculum planning & implementation, and professional development facilitation for educators and psychologists.
- Analytics, complex problem-solving skills, creative solutions, & reflective assessment.
- Strong work ethic, passion, and dedication to mission and goals
- Organizational skills, including managing multiple departments and projects at one time.
- International travel and cultural immersion
- Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote, Publisher) as well as easy use of various database programs, social media, and website builders.

## Education

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|---------------------|---|
| <b>2009 to 2014</b> | <p><b>Ed.D. Doctorate in Education, K-12 Leadership</b><br/> <b>JONES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</b>, CO (now Trident University)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed coursework on educational philosophy and policy, ethics, leadership, community collaboration and integration, instructional leadership, resource management, and research methodologies.</li> <li>• Dissertation published focused on risk and resilience in adolescence and how and why holistic factors in educational settings can be improved to facilitate student success.</li> <li>• Completed coursework and practicum hours for educational administrator licensure in Colorado, USA, but unable to acquire official licensure due to being employed internationally.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2000 to 2001</b> | <p><b>Ed. M. Master of Education, Concentration in Human Development &amp; Psychology with a Focus in Culture &amp; Human Development</b><br/> <b>HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION</b>, Cambridge, MA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed coursework in educational research methods, at-risk children and adolescents, culture and human development, educational theory and philosophy, school reform for at-risk children, and neuropsychology and instructional design for individual differences.</li> <li>• Completed participant-observer research (as a part of a team delegated throughout the BPS system) for one year in a public high school to evaluate transition programs implemented to aid underachieving inner-city students who were at risk to not pass the MCAS (high stakes graduation tests).</li> <li>• Masters Program Advisor: Howard Gardner, Author and Creator of Multiple Intelligences Theory.</li> </ul> |
| <b>1996 to 2000</b> | <p><b>B.A. Honors Bachelor of Arts, Double Major: French, Psychology</b><br/> <b>SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY</b>, St. Louis, MO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated Summa Cum Laude &amp; Honors</li> <li>• 1 of 10 recipients of the Presidential Scholarship, a 4-year, full ride scholarship based on achievements in academics, leadership, and service.</li> <li>• Honors Program (4 years)</li> <li>• Junior year study abroad in Lyons, France, and Université de Lyons II</li> <li>• Student Government, Great Issues Committee (1 year)</li> </ul>   |

## Work Experience

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| <p><b>Pathfinder Gap Program – Costa Rica</b><br/> <b>Co-Founder, Education &amp; Marketing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Co-founded and developed programming of a Supportive Immersion gap semester program for young adults in Costa Rica</li> <li>✓ Directed and implemented admissions and marketing (development of website, brochures, tours, events, etc.)</li> </ul> | <p><b>2023 to Present</b></p> |
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**Supportive Immersion Institute****2016 to Present****Executive Director, Co-Founder**

- ✓ Co-developed Supportive Immersion theory and model with Dr. Danny Recio, PhD, to update 21<sup>st</sup> Century skill model for youth today [www.supportiveimmersion.com](http://www.supportiveimmersion.com)
- ✓ Directed and implemented admissions and marketing (development of website, brochures, tours, events etc.) from 2005-present
- ✓ Presented at various conferences (YATA, NATSAP, etc.) on supportive immersion applications

**Sibanye Gap Program – South Africa****2017 to 2020****Co-Founder, Education & Marketing**

- ✓ Co-founded Supportive Immersion summer program for young adults in South Africa
- ✓ Co-facilitated a 2-week student trip to Sibanye in March 2017 and final 2 weeks of the 2018 summer program
- ✓ Directed and implemented admissions and marketing (development of website, brochures, tours, events, etc.)
- ✓ Serve on the Board of Directors

**The Bridge - Costa Rica****July 2012 to Present****Executive Director, Co-Founder**

- ✓ Co-founded therapeutic gap community for young adults
- ✓ Directed and implemented admissions and marketing (development of website, brochures, tours, events etc.) as well as assisted in program development.

**New Summit Academy Costa Rica****December 2004 to Present****Executive Director, Co-Founder, Teacher**

- ✓ Co-founded therapeutic boarding school for at-risk adolescent boys in December 2004
- ✓ Taught English classes for 2 years, Psychology class for 6 years
- ✓ Served as the Academic Director and Registrar from 2005-2010
- ✓ Facilitated and advised in transition planning and college application support for students through 2010
- ✓ Conducted trainings and workshops on Multiple Intelligences learning & teaching styles
- ✓ Directed and implemented admissions and marketing (development of website, brochures, tours, events etc.) from 2005-present

**Coronado Academy Costa Rica****November 2002 to December 2004****Academic Director & English Teacher**

- ✓ Set up and directed the teacher-taught academic program (transition from correspondence courses)
- ✓ Completed course progression and graduation plans for students
- ✓ Communicated academic progress with families and students
- ✓ Taught English classes

**World Teach Costa Rica****January 2002 to November 2002****Volunteer English Teacher**

- ✓ Designed & implemented ESL curriculum for elementary students
- ✓ Coordinated cultural events
- ✓ Lived one year in full Spanish immersion with a homestay family

**Languages****English**

Native language  
100% fluency in all areas

**Spanish**

Fluent comprehension  
Fluent speech  
90% fluency in writing  
Living & working in Costa Rica since  
January 2002

**French**

Fluent comprehension  
Intermediate speech  
Studied & lived in France (1 year)

## Presentations & Publications

- Danny Recio, PhD, & Heather Tracy, EdD. (2023 Summer) Finding the Path to Mental Fitness. *Forum: Discussing international education (Summer)*, 12-14.
- Heather Tracy, Ed.D., and Martin Naffziger, M.Ed. (2020 Jan 7). "From Solos to Snapchat: Guiding Re-Entry into a Technological World." Presentation at NATSAP 2020 Annual Conference: Indian Wells, CA.
- Kurt Youngberg, Danny Recio, and Heather Tracy. (2020 January) "Supportive Immersion: The Use of Transformative Cross-Cultural Experiential Learning to Address Societal Trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*.
- Heather Tracy, Ed.D., and Martin Naffziger, M.Ed. (2019 May 09). "Why (and How) Nontraditional Education Must Become the New Traditional." Presentation at IECA 2019 Conference: Chicago, IL.
- Heather Tracy, EdD. (2019 April 18) "The Benefits of a High School Psychology Class." Blog published at Edutopia.org at <https://www.edutopia.org/article/benefits-high-school-psychology-class>
- Heather Tracy, EdD. (2019 March 13) Beyond Addiction: How to Help Your Teen or Young Adult Overcome Anxiety, Depression, Drug Use and Thrive in Their Life! Video Interview Series Hosted by Sally Dyer, based in Colorado, USA. Published online 2019 April 16.
- Mario Duran, MS, and Heather Tracy, EdD. (2018 February 02). "Control + Power: How do we balance administrative need for structure and risk management with student need for empowerment and agency?" Presentation at NATSAP 2018 Annual Conference: Tampa, FL.
- Danny Recio, PhD, Heather Tracy, EdD, and Andy Myers. (2017 October 19) "Growing Up in the Age of Complexity: Why old paradigms for growth no longer work for Hyper-Connected Youth." Presentation at Young Adult Transition Association (YATA) 2017 Annual Conference: Coeur d'Alene, ID.
- Heather Tracy, Ed.D. and Danny Recio, Ph.D. (2017 January 23). "To Surf or Not to Surf? The Benefits and Risks of Allowing Internet Use in Therapeutic Programs." Presentation at NATSAP 2017 Annual Conference: Tucson, AZ.
- Martin Naffziger, M.Ed., and Heather Tracy, Ed.D. (2016 February 11). "An Integrated Approach to Executive Functioning." Presentation at NATSAP 2016 Annual Conference: La Jolla, CA.
- Martin Naffziger, M.Ed., and Heather Tracy, Ed.D. (2015 February 06). "Why Do I Have To Learn This? Structuring a Course through Goal-Driven Learning to Re-Engage Students While Strengthening Executive Functioning." Presentation at NATSAP 2015 Annual Conference: Nashville, TN
- Heather Tracy, Ed.M., Karen Nelson, and Bryan Marks (2012 May 21). "The Pros and Cons of a Therapeutic Experience Abroad." Podcast on LATalkRadio facilitated by Lon Woodbury. [http://www.strugglingteens.com/artman/publish/printer\\_WRI-BN\\_0120526.shtml](http://www.strugglingteens.com/artman/publish/printer_WRI-BN_0120526.shtml)

## References

Available upon request