

New Associate Director Named at Macalester's Center for School Change

Sonal Desai-Redd, an expert at working with students, faculty and families, has been selected as the new Associate Director of the Center for School Change (CSC) at Macalester College. Joe Nathan, CSC director announced the selection after a search that drew several dozen applications from eight states and two countries.

"Ms. Desai-Redd has been asked to keynote a Minnesota Department of Education conference because of her success in 'turning around' a failing school," said Nathan. "She brings terrific experience, considerable talent, and great passion to her work. She will help CSC make a clear, measurable difference with young people, schools and families. We're delighted that she agreed to join us." She will begin working with the CSC on July 26, 2010.

Desai-Redd has extensive, successful experience working with families and public schools. For seven years with Wilder Foundation, she taught parenting classes to young people, and developed community partnerships to support families. For six years with the Osseo Public Schools, she helped create and run programs for students and staff. Most recently, she has received acclaim for her work as principal of VOA Phoenix High School, a Minneapolis Public School contract alternative school. Minnesota Department of Education staff praised her work at this school, which "turned around" a troubled school and helped many young people with whom traditional schools have not succeeded. Working with Phoenix High School staff, students and other groups, Desai-Redd helped many young people not only graduate, but also apply for and enter some form of higher education.

Desai-Redd earned a B.A from the University of Minnesota, an MA in Management from Cardinal Stritch College and completed K-12 administrative licensure from St. Mary's.

Desai-Red commented, "I feel it is important to create systems and school cultures which welcome and engage learners; improve effective management of human and financial resources; and increase the connection, engagement, and support of families and communities. I hope to bring my expertise in these areas to the CSC."

CSC, a 23-year-old organization, is located at Macalester College. CSC works at the school, community and policy levels to help make major measurable improvements in student achievement, and in numbers of young people who believe that they can and should help work for a better world.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 1,958 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism and civic engagement.

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