“It’s nice to know that I’m going to laugh every day when I go to work. Something fun is going to happen, and I’m going to enjoy myself in some way. All of the hard work that goes into planning and grading is mitigated by how fast time flies when you’re actually working with kids.”
What made you decide to pursue teaching?
A lot of factors really came together. Primarily, I have a younger brother who I felt was consistently failed by the education system because of his learning disability. I went to college with a very politically-minded social agenda, and knew I wanted to enact positive change in the world. Over the course of my studies, I really came to realize that education was the forefront of economic inequality in the country and that it would be the most effective place to make that change.

Why did you choose UChicago UTEP?
I went to UChicago for undergrad and knew I wanted to stay in Chicago and serve my city. It was clear that UTEP paid attention to the individual, personal level of teaching. It was a no-brainer for me really.

What have you carried from UTEP throughout your career?
The commitment to teaching as activism is a big part of it. The idea that education and our social-political landscape are so closely connected so that everything from curriculum to interactions with our students needs to be tailored to social justice. That’s something I really got from UTEP that I don’t imagine I would have gotten from other programs.

- Lloyd Wafer, UTEP 2008