

Theme music ([00:01](#)):

Please listen carefully.

Taylor Pardue ([00:06](#)):

Welcome to the NC State Philanthropy Podcast, telling the world how we Think and Do through the support of our friends, alumni and more. I'm your host, Taylor Pardue.

([00:21](#)):

On this episode, we're discussing the Darla Buchanan Scholarship, a new need-based scholarship awarded to NC State undergraduate students who are studying elementary education and are committed to advancing diversity in the teaching profession.

([00:36](#)):

First up, I'm joined by Matt Friedrich, Executive Director of Development for the College of Education, to discuss why the founding donors chose to support NC State, why they named their scholarship as they did and the impact they're already having through the College of Education.

([00:50](#)):

Then, I'm joined by elementary education major Carla Gibson to discuss how she, as one of the scholarship's first recipients, has been enabled to Think and Do during her time with the Pack.

([01:11](#)):

Thanks for joining us today, Matt. Just to kick things off, tell listeners a little bit about yourself and what first brought you to NC State.

Matt Friedrich ([01:17](#)):

Sure. Thanks, and thank you for having me, Taylor. This is really exciting. I came to NC State about a decade ago as a student for the first time, actually 12 years ago. That was after a career in education as a teacher, and as somebody who was advancing a lot of teacher-preparation programs and realizing that there was this one university that just kept doing an amazing, amazing job in that field — and this is after working with quite a few of them. And, of course, as you can imagine, that was NC State, and I jumped at the chance to join NC State's College of Education as a graduate student. And they have not been able to get rid of me ever since.

Taylor Pardue ([02:00](#)):

We're glad to have you here. You were, as part of your overall duties, you were instrumental in bringing this new scholarship to bear. Tell us a little bit about the Darla Buchanan Scholarship, who it's named for and just kind of how that came about.

Matt Friedrich ([02:13](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah, this has been one of the most distinct pleasures of my time at NC State just because I admire so much what Darla Buchanan did and what others have done as a result of her legacy. So, just to give a little bit of a perspective on Darla Buchanan's story, as backlash to the Brown v. Board of Education decision, luckily, schools were further integrated and a really good outcome, but there was backlash. All of a sudden, there were a lot of parents who had ... of parents of white students who all of a sudden were going to have black teachers, and there were a lot of people that were very uncomfortable with that.

[\(02:57\)](#):

And, as a result of it, quite a few black teachers were actually fired from their positions. And these were really high-performing teachers, but, unfortunately, that backlash had a real result for quite a few teachers — 4,000 teachers, one of whom was Darla Buchanan, who this scholarship is named after.

Taylor Pardue [\(03:18\)](#):

Tell us a little bit about how the donors first found out about Darla's story.

Matt Friedrich [\(03:22\)](#):

Yeah. Podcasts are great things to have. Malcolm Gladwell runs a podcast called Revisionist History. This is a podcast that was in season two called "Miss Buchanan's Period of Adjustment." That podcast was given that name because that was a line that came out of the letter in which she was told she was being fired. I think it was the superintendent in Topeka said, "We know what a period of adjustment this must be for you," and, basically, it was saying, "We don't want you because you're black, despite the fact that you're performing very, very highly. We know you're good for your students, but this is not something that we can continue."

[\(04:08\)](#):

So, Malcolm Gladwell's podcast inspired a lot of people, including the Darla Buchanan Scholarship's donors, and, fortunately for the students who are learning through this scholarship, and fortunately for our college, they made that investment in us. I'm also really, really grateful to Malcolm Gladwell. One of the people who has helped to amplify these scholarships is him himself. I think he inspired us, but in turn, we were able to actually inspire him by creating these scholarships. And he is a lead donor for it.

Taylor Pardue [\(04:38\)](#):

So, I've actually been able to speak to the donors. They've chosen to remain anonymous, which I think is just so sweet. They really want to keep the emphasis on Darla Buchanan, but, in addition to their lead gift, what was another great element of this is they invited other people to join them in giving to this fund. Talk a little bit about how one of our recent Day of Givings, the Pack really rallied behind this fund and how it's already being able to be awarded.

Matt Friedrich [\(05:06\)](#):

Absolutely. Yeah, I would say that's actually one of my favorite parts about this job is the stories that we get to tell. These donors came to me after hearing the Malcolm Gladwell podcast, about Darla Buchanan. I know you're going to be referencing it in the podcast notes, but they were looking for a chance to make an impact, and they chose to do what they've done. But on Day of Giving, we were actually able to tell that story of Darla Buchanan, and the fact that we have donors at NC State who were doing something in her name, but also to have an impact on the teaching profession now, and the types of people who are able to have access to becoming a teacher. So, we told that story on Day of Giving, and you're exactly right; the Pack really rallied around this.

[\(05:54\)](#):

What started out as one scholarship, now is four scholarships, thanks to not just those donors amplifying their original gift and gift commitment, but also different sets of people who have heard about the impact of a scholarship like this and why we need further diversity in the teaching force. They've seen that need, and they've invested in us, and I am really happy to say we have some fantastic

students who are benefiting from this. And, in turn, we have a lot of students around North Carolina that are going to benefit from those teachers.

Taylor Pardue ([06:26](#)):

Well, talk a little bit about that. So, why is our College of Education such a perfect fit for this scholarship?

Matt Friedrich ([06:33](#)):

Yeah, I do believe we are the perfect fit for this. We're a land-grant College of Education, so we're constantly thinking about how can we have an impact on all areas of the state, any corner that needs us, and especially thinking about where are their high-needs communities, school systems that may be getting left behind based on systemic forces, based on geography, based on whatever it is. But there are lots of school systems around North Carolina that need our help.

([07:03](#)):

What this scholarship is allowing us to do is take a look at the pretty serious issue when it comes to the diversity of our teaching profession right now in North Carolina. I'll throw some stats at you, if you don't mind.

Taylor Pardue ([07:15](#)):

Absolutely.

Matt Friedrich ([07:15](#)):

52% of the students sitting in our classrooms, our K-12 classrooms in North Carolina, are non-white. At the same time, only 20% of our teachers are non-white. So, we're really out of balance is what this means. Our students sitting in our classrooms do not see themselves represented in the people who are teaching them, and that actually has all kinds of ramifications when it comes to student achievement, progression into college and other forms of higher education. So, what this is going to do through NC State is it's going to help us build further diversity and show how important that diversity can be in the classroom.

([08:01](#)):

What we are seeing, and this is research that's been led by our College of Education as well as the University of Tennessee, is, when we have diversity among our teachers, it can really have an impact on student learning. So, again, I'm going to throw another stat at you here, but I think it really paints a picture. When a black student in North Carolina has even one black teacher by third grade, that student is 13% more likely to go to college. When that same student has two or more black teachers, and basically, when she's seeing herself represented among the leaders of her classroom, she's actually 32% more likely to go to college.

([08:50](#)):

So, this has a demonstrable impact on student learning and student achievement. I would actually maybe even say the flip side of that is that when we don't have diversity, there's a lot of opportunity that we are missing. So, my hope is that the Darla Buchanan Scholarships and other efforts in our College of Education are going to have an impact on that issue.

Taylor Pardue ([09:11](#)):

Talking about our College of Education, how it's such a perfect fit, I think sometimes people don't really understand the need that our education students have financially. Talk a little bit about the financial burdens that some of them face coming into this profession.

Matt Friedrich ([09:29](#)):

Here's the long and short of it. Right now, we have a lot of people who would love to become teachers, but just the simple realities of their financial situation do not allow them to come to NC State. Those who do find a way oftentimes have to take out really big loans. Actually, well over half — about two-thirds — of the students at NC State's College of Education right now have a demonstrable financial need. That means that their family doesn't have enough to be able to support all the costs of attendance, and so, as a result, they turn to loans. Ideally, they turn to scholarships when we have them available, but most often, they are turning to loans. We think that the average NC State Education graduate graduates with \$30,000 in debt. What that then does is it forces them to pay back those loans on a teacher's salary, and you can see where I'm going here.

([10:26](#)):

The chain reaction is that we end up losing a lot of people. We're not able to retain them as teachers because they're having to pay back those loans on a pretty modest salary, and so, they end up getting picked off into other professions that allow them to pay that back, and that investment that we've made in preparing the best educators in North Carolina, we're not able to capitalize on it. And, by extension, a lot of our students in our classrooms aren't able to benefit from these great teachers that we're preparing. All that is to say that the more we have scholarship support, the more we are able to retain teachers, put great teachers into the classroom, and put them into the communities that need them the most.

Taylor Pardue ([11:12](#)):

So, we mentioned earlier about NC State being a public university and really striving to help the people of North Carolina, and the world at large, to see the impact of the real-world education that goes on here, not just in the College of Education but our education in general. I think it's so important, like you said, to help these young teachers-in-training, not just for their own benefit, but, you know, teaching really is a fundamental aspect of North Carolina life. Everyone at some point in their age is affected by these teachers, and I think that really shows that public university mindset of how we are impacting the state on the ground level and trying to help, really, all of our citizens.

Matt Friedrich ([11:55](#)):

Yeah, we're very, very proud of what's happening in this College of Education. We believe that we're preparing the best teachers in North Carolina, and that does show up on all kinds of things. Licensure exams, principals surveys of how satisfied they are with the teachers who are in their schools. It even comes back to our own alumni's ratings of the value that they got from this education. But one of the things that I think I'm the most proud of is that we're an institution that's constantly looking at what are the issues facing North Carolina communities today, whether that's here in Wake County or up in Halifax County or whatever part of the state we would choose to take a look at. But we're looking for how can we, going back to the NC State mantra, how can we think about those issues and do something about them? So, that Think and Do mindset really permeates the entire College of Education.

Taylor Pardue ([12:55](#)):

Thank you again for coming on today, Matt, and telling us a little bit more about this important scholarship. I'll be sure to include a link in the show notes to a full story on the Darla Buchanan Scholarship's founding and just some giving links and different things to like Malcolm Gladwell's podcast. So listeners, please check that out when you can. But thank you again, Matt, for coming on.

Matt Friedrich ([13:12](#)):

Thank you so much, Taylor.

Taylor Pardue ([13:21](#)):

On this Philanthropy 101 segment, we're discussing how to give to NC State. The reason why someone gives to NC State is as unique as they are, but how they go about doing it can be surprisingly simple and straightforward. Perhaps the most common ways to give are via credit card, cash or check. Giving via credit card is particularly easy because donors can make an online gift right now by following the specific gift links they wish to benefit. NC State employees also have a quick and easy way to give via payroll deduction, which can be made through a monthly contribution funded by the Pack member's paycheck.

([13:55](#)):

Some of the other and even more beneficial ways of giving to NC State include gifts of securities such as stocks or bonds and outright gifts such as real estate, artwork or equipment. These methods are invaluable ways to support the Pack and come with several additional perks for the donor, including potentially bypassing capital gains taxes and honoring or remembering a loved one. However you choose to give to NC State, you are making a difference that will last a lifetime or even longer. To learn more about how to support the Pack, please visit go.ncsu.edu/how2. Now, back to the show.

([14:41](#)):

Thank you so much for joining us today, Carla. Just to kick things off, tell us a little bit about yourself, your early life and how you first came to be part of NC State.

Carla Gibson ([14:49](#)):

Thank you for having me. So, starting off with early life, I've grown up my entire life in Belmont, North Carolina. It's a small town right outside of Charlotte. Going on like a backstory, how I got to NC State is I always wanted to be a teacher or do something with kids. So, it's always started from like teaching or going into other careers that deals with kids, but then it always ended up back to teaching. And one of the programs through NC State I have to give dedication to is the LIFT program, the Leadership Institute for Future Teachers. That helped me meet so many different people who also wanted to become teachers and also gave me more perspective into the teaching life and then into what I could be after teaching, going up into like the higher careers and administration, stuff like that. I'd never actually thought of applying to NC State; it wasn't on my school list, but then after seeing how well their College of Education was and how much I actually did like the school, I ended up applying. And then here I am today.

Taylor Pardue ([16:14](#)):

We're glad to have you. I know speaking to different teachers and students that I have over the years, sometimes they can point back to a certain teacher or teachers in their own past that inspired them to become a teacher. Is anyone like that in your life that you can kind of point back to and say they really made a difference, or was it just kind of a cumulative of all the teachers you had?

Carla Gibson ([16:38](#)):

Um, I would say a cumulative of all my teachers, I think. One thing I do have to go back to is my great-grandmother; she was a teacher, so she would give me and my sister some of her old stuff to play like teachers, stuff like that. And so, that also helped me. I really like doing this and stuff like that, while also just looking at my teachers over the years and how they taught in the classroom and how they enjoyed doing what they did. That also played a factor, like, this is something I really like doing. I like being at school, I like helping others. So, teaching does sound like a good fit for me.

Taylor Pardue ([17:28](#)):

So, tell us a little bit about what you're doing now at NC State, kind of what you're studying and learning about.

Carla Gibson ([17:35](#)):

So, I'm majoring in elementary education, but I'm minoring in psychology. For how I ended up in these programs, I'll start off with my minor. How I ended up with my minor is I had courses, I came in with credits, and so, being a College of Education student, you can't really rush all the process because you have to student teach, you have to learn how to student teach and then you get to student teach your junior and senior years. So, for me, since I had time on my hands, I ended up looking at different minors to help fill in the time and stuff that I think I would enjoy.

([18:15](#)):

And so, I was talking to Dr. White; she was with the College of Education at that time, and I was talking to her about different minors I could possibly do, and she suggested psychology because that helps just knowing and looking at different aspects and understanding children more, like, this might be how they're developing, especially with elementary education, because they developed so much throughout their time in elementary school.

([18:50](#)):

And then, with my major in elementary education, I haven't really started on any major classes with that yet, so I don't have a lot to speak on that so far, but I do have to say I was, last year, my first year, I was involved in State Village, so that helped me get out into the school system before my sophomore spring semester year.

Taylor Pardue ([19:20](#)):

Okay, great. And you, we talked a little bit about before we started recording, you had a busy summer this summer, too, preparing for your rising sophomore year, right?

Carla Gibson ([19:29](#)):

Yes. So, I've been busy working at the YMCA and taking a few summer classes, and I also work with Flight Learning Center, tutoring rising fifth graders.

Taylor Pardue ([19:46](#)):

So, part of how you came to be at NC State is your scholarship receipt. How did you find out about the Darla Buchanan Scholarship? Kind of the whole story of how you came to find out and be part of that.

Carla Gibson ([19:58](#)):

I found out about the scholarship through Dr. Anona Smith Williams. She's one of the associate deans in the College of Education. And I found out through like, going back to the LIFT program, that's how I met her and she pointed me toward the scholarship. And I do think being part of the LIFT program and learning to advocate and learning about the equity difference that we need in the classroom, making sure every student's, instead of having quality, also having quality, but also having equity. I do think that also helped play a factor into her recommending me for the scholarship.

Taylor Pardue ([20:44](#)):

You've kind of already spoken to this but, how do you want to use your minor and your major together in your future career? What are your plans, where you would like to live, where you would like to teach? What classes, as well.

Carla Gibson ([20:57](#)):

So, I'm not sure what I want to do with my minor. I might try to use it when I try maybe to go get my master's. I haven't quite decided on that yet, but if I do get my masters, it will probably be to go into the administrative part — so, to be, like, a principal. So, I think when I graduate I do want to stay in the Raleigh area or come back here to my home, Gaston County. It just depends on where I feel like would best fit me at that time, but this summer I've been working a lot with kindergartners, so that has been fun. So, that's a possible grade I want to teach, but I also don't mind teaching the older kids because I do like teaching, like working with the older kids at work also, because I get to do a lot more hands-on work with them, and I do like hands-on work a lot. So, that's something that attracts me more to working with older kids compared to the little kids.

Taylor Pardue ([22:11](#)):

That's a good point. Yeah. So, tell us a little bit about how this scholarship has helped you as far as attending NC State and participating in different things.

Carla Gibson ([22:21](#)):

So, for my first year, this scholarship has helped me because it helped me not have so much of a financial burden. Going into the next semester, I'm actually studying abroad in Italy at Lorenzo de' Medici, and the scholarship has helped me not have to pay so much toward study abroad and help go toward that. So, I have more money saved up to do more opportunities while abroad, to travel or go do different excursions during the weekends or something like that. So, that has helped toward this experience also.

Taylor Pardue ([23:05](#)):

Awesome. When will you leave for that, and what all does that program entail other than just obviously being abroad?

Carla Gibson ([23:11](#)):

So, the program starts August 30, so I leave from Charlotte August 28, and then I'll get back December 17. And so, LODM is an international school, so it's more than just American students. It's also different students from around the world at this one place. And so, I mostly, when I'm over there, I'm focusing more on my minor classes because those are the classes they have over there since it's in Italy. It's in Florence, Italy, and most of the classes are mainly for like fashion and other things. So, they do have some psychology courses. I'm taking a few cooking courses for nutrition, and then my interdisciplinary.

Taylor Pardue ([24:08](#)):

That's great. That sounds like an exciting opportunity. So, talking a little bit more about the Darla Buchanan Scholarship, I actually wrote a story on it and got to interview the anonymous donors and kind of hear more about what they were wanting to accomplish with the scholarship. They actually put up the initial \$20,000 to fund the first student and then invited other guests to join in and really help promote it even more and to make it not just support one student, but actually many more students. What would you say to the donors who have already contributed? I know you're one of several students who are already receiving this scholarship.

Carla Gibson ([24:45](#)):

So, one thing I would say to the donors is, thank you for such an opportunity to receive the scholarship and be able to put it toward my education. It is such a big opportunity, and knowing that it contributes to my education and then how I can use the scholarship and put it toward, especially when I get into the classroom, for student teaching, I can always remember these people gave this money for the specific reason to show equity and social justice in the classroom and make sure that I implement that into my future teaching.

Taylor Pardue ([25:26](#)):

Yeah, I think that's great. It's been so nice to see this scholarship from the start, to see everyone rally around this mission of what the Darla Buchanan Scholarship stands for, especially. I always try to ask guests this, and you as a student are a particularly important viewpoint on this, just what's your favorite thing about NC State? It's great now that we're kind of past the early days of COVID-19 and you're able to be on campus again and enjoy it.

Carla Gibson ([25:56](#)):

I think my favorite thing about NC State is the people I have met so far, because the small group of people I have become friends with, we're very close, and I really like that, and we always turn to each other when we need help. And I do think that's important, especially living on a college campus, that you don't have your family right there to help you when you need them. So, I do think the people but also the staff, the faculty, because they're very helpful when you need something or you're confused about a question or anything like that, they're very helpful and very resourceful people to come to.

Taylor Pardue ([26:42](#)):

All right. Thank you so much for your time, Carla, and just all the best in your study-abroad program this fall and just the rest of your time with the Pack.

Carla Gibson ([26:49](#)):

Thank you. Thank you for having me today.

Taylor Pardue ([26:57](#)):

To learn more about the Darla Buchanan Scholarship and how you can help further her extraordinary legacy, please visit go.ncsu.edu/darla. If you'd like to hear even more stories of Wolfpack success, please subscribe to the NC State Philanthropy Podcast today in the Apple or Google podcast stores, on Spotify or through Stitcher. Be sure to leave a comment and rating as well to let us know how we're doing. Thanks for listening, and as always, go Pack.

