

Annual Report 2023





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Our Mission



CAST leads, inspires, and convenes a global community to design equitable, inclusive learning experiences through our Universal Design for Learning framework.

Introduction

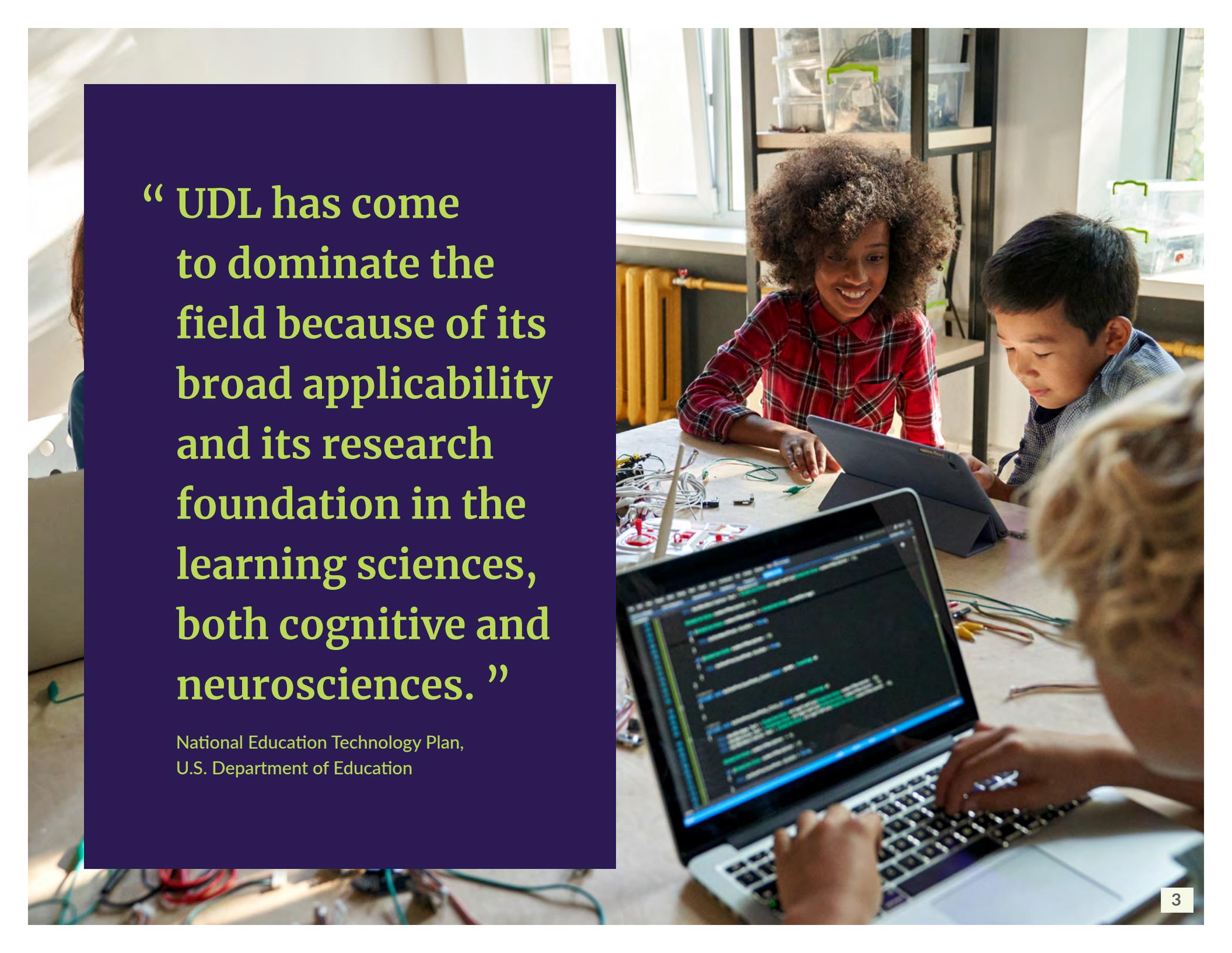
Now in our 40th year, CAST is a not-for-profit organization that leads, inspires, and convenes a global community to design equitable and inclusive learning experiences through our Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework.

Rooted in the learning sciences and best practices, UDL guides the design of learning environments and experiences that are flexible enough to respond to the variability of learners. That variability may be physical, cultural, social, experiential, economic, and more. With the UDL principles – to provide multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement – we can design flexible goals, methods, materials, assessments, and environments that offer robust support to all learners while lowering barriers to learning. First articulated by CAST’s founders, Anne Meyer and David H. Rose, UDL is now at the heart of a global movement to improve educational access, engagement, and effectiveness.

CAST’s staff of 60+ professionals engage in applied research; accessibility consulting and inclusive technology development; professional learning for educators at all levels; workforce and career education; and publishing. These activities impact learning wherever it happens – in the preK-12 classroom, in colleges and universities, in informal learning settings, and in the workplace. In the United States, every major piece of federal education policy endorses UDL, and UDL is a centerpiece of the National Education Technology Plan. At the same time, UDL is being adopted throughout the world in local and national settings on six continents.

In 2023, CAST continued to focus on growing the field of UDL through advancement opportunities and outreach. CAST envisions a world where all learning experiences in school, the workplace, and life are intentionally designed to elevate strengths and eliminate barriers so everyone has the opportunity to grow and thrive.





“ UDL has come to dominate the field because of its broad applicability and its research foundation in the learning sciences, both cognitive and neurosciences. ”

National Education Technology Plan,
U.S. Department of Education

Research, Design, & Development

Through applied research and technical assistance, CAST develops innovative solutions to make education more inclusive and effective.

The AEM Center

The National Center on Accessible Educational Materials ([AEM Center](#)) at CAST works with individual educators, school districts, and states across the nation to help them provide educational materials that are accessible to all learners, from early childhood through adulthood (entering the workforce).

In 2023, the AEM Center at CAST partnered with a for-profit government service provider called, coincidentally, the AEM Corporation, along with state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) in five states to identify the best kinds of data about when, where, and how accessible materials are provided. The goal? To give SEAs and LEAs the relevant data they need to better serve students and families who require accessible materials.



Circle Up

[Circle Up](#) provides schools with a comprehensive model of academic, social, and emotional learning. The project combines CAST's UDL framework with an evidence-based model for problem-solving, [Collaborative and Proactive Solutions](#), and a dropout-prevention intervention called [Check & Connect](#). Circle Up leverages the power of the three models to reduce barriers to engagement and learning for all students. We are codesigning the Circle Up approach with educators in the Aldine Independent School District in Houston, Texas. In 2024, we will enter the national conversation on how to integrate social and emotional learning into academic lessons when we share our model at a leading conference sponsored by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

Project COOL (COaching On Learning)

CAST continues its collaboration with the University of Kansas to develop materials and supports for elementary-school instructional coaches to use as they help teachers improve a variety of outcomes for all learners, especially those with disabilities. By combining UDL with evidence-based and high-leverage practices, Project COOL's coaching model supports better classroom instruction and resource procurement, as well as the development of professional learning communities of coaches. In 2023, the Project COOL team implemented the model in five elementary schools and completed the last of 12 COOL Coaching Modules for use in schools.



Professional Learning

CAST offers many opportunities for educators at all levels—and their organizations—to build their understanding and practice of UDL. These range from introductory or short-term engagements to multi-year projects related to professional learning and its impacts on teaching and learning.

In 2023, highlights included:

District-wide UDL Implementation

The team worked with districts across the United States to implement UDL at a large scale. CAST's Implementation Specialists worked with teachers, coaches, principals, and district leaders to build their internal capacity to lead and scale UDL systemically throughout their districts.

Statewide Projects

States have put UDL at the forefront of their improvement efforts. In 2023, CAST worked with the state departments of education in California, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire to advance student outcomes through improved special education pathways, inclusion efforts, and support for students who have been marginalized by traditional education systems. In all three states, CAST helped develop expertise among education officials themselves, ultimately enabling them to lead the work on their own.

70+
contracts
in 2023





International Convenings

In July 2023, the team led its **9th annual Symposium**, bringing together 700 experts from across the globe both virtually and in-person. The theme, *Through the Lens of UDL*, encouraged educators to explore the unique ways UDL can enhance and improve the most cutting-edge practices in education today.

In March 2023, the team led the final **UDL-IRN International Summit**, bringing together 525 educators from across the globe both virtually and in-person. With over 80 sessions and 126 presenters, attendees had access to in-depth resources, planning materials, hands-on sessions, and networking opportunities.

Postsecondary & Workforce

The Postsecondary and Workforce team works with schools, nonprofits, postsecondary institutions, professional associations, corrections facilities, and industry partners to attract, prepare, hire and retain diverse talent to middle- and high-income careers. We focus on industries of the future where there is both a labor shortage and a need to train people in new skills, knowledge and technologies. Many of our partners and funders are in STEM fields. Our team served 40 clients in 2023. A few highlights include:

Collaboration with Manufacturing Innovation Institutes

[Manufacturing Innovation Institutes](#) are national public-private partnerships that promote research, development, and commercialization of advanced manufacturing technologies. CAST worked with one such institute, America Makes: The National Center on Additive Manufacturing in Youngstown, Ohio, to develop “AM Jobs,” an innovative career guidance tool to provide educators and students with a means to understand the career pathways to additive manufacturing (i.e, 3D printing).

With funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), CAST also collaborated with the Advanced Regenerative Manufacturing Institute/BioFab USA, to create [BioFab Explorer](#), career guidance website with case stories and virtual work-based learning. Another tool, [BioBlendFolio](#), (an e-portfolio), enables students to share their work-based learning experiences with employers or educational institutions. This career guidance curriculum is being piloted in several states to broaden participation of underrepresented populations in biomanufacturing.



Take Flight

Take Flight, another NSF-funded project, provides middle school teachers with all the tools and resources they need to integrate drones into their STEM curriculum and help their students develop STEM skills. In 2023, the team worked with four middle school educators to pilot the curriculum and test the first four missions. The teachers taught in a variety of STEM areas including math, science, and technology education. Through the first pilot, approximately 85 students learned to fly drones.



Building Capacity for UDL in Postsecondary and Adult Education

CAST provided faculty, administrators, and industry partners in 23 U.S. states as well as other countries with online training to learn how to apply UDL in their courses and training programs. Upon course completion, participants are eligible to submit a portfolio to receive the Postsecondary UDL Credential from CAST.

The U.S. Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) provided funding for CAST to create seven modules for OCTAE's community of practice. The self-paced, online course module topics included:

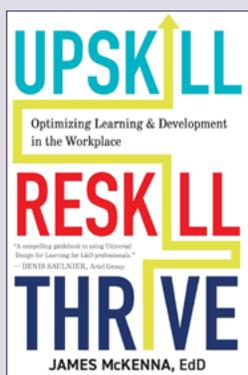
- It all starts with a goal
- Learning that works for all
- Making math matter
- Making reading & writing matter
- Building communities of learning
- Self-advocacy for work & learning
- Improving systems for adult education



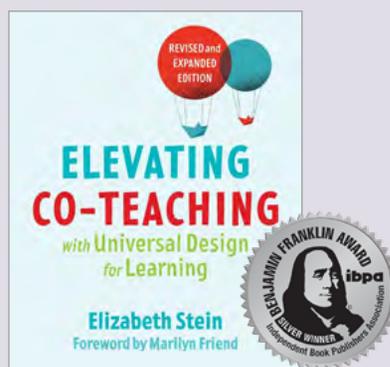
Professional Publishing

CAST Professional Publishing produces and distributes exceptional media that help educators at all levels and in all situations improve their practice—and change students’ lives—through Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Highlights from fiscal year 2023 include:



The first book about UDL for corporate learning and development specialists: [Upskill, Reskill, Thrive](#) by James McKenna. Former Walmart Senior Manager of Learning Design Kendra Grant praised the book as “the means to intentionally create equitable, accessible learning environments” in corporate settings. The Harvard Business Review website featured McKenna and his book.



Elizabeth Stein’s [Elevating Co-Teaching with Universal Design for Learning \(2nd edition\)](#) won a Silver medal for education in the Independent Book Publishers Association’s annual Benjamin Franklin Awards. A leading voice in co-teaching, Marilyn Friend, calls it “an enlightening roadmap for teaching partners who are working diligently to keep their expectations high while taking into account all the different abilities their students bring to the classroom.”

40,000+
books sold



Produced our first audiobook and first Spanish-language edition—both of Katie Novak’s 100,000-copy bestseller, [UDL Now!](#)

Growing the Field

UDL Credentials

Though the UDL framework has been widely adopted across the globe, assessing whether individuals are truly implementing it can be a challenge. The CAST UDL Credentials can help.

Our credentialing program helps to stimulate, support, and sustain best practices in utilizing UDL. The Credentials support growth in inclusive practices in educational contexts and also provide a baseline criteria for implementation.

After a thoughtful redesign process based on feedback from the pilot credentials, the three updated credentials provide an opportunity for participants to gain feedback on their understanding, analysis, and application of UDL:

- Credential 1: UDL Mindset
- Credential 2: UDL Analysis
- Credential 3: UDL Application

Product Certification

In collaboration with Digital Promise, CAST launched the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Product Certification. The UDL Product Certification is a significant step towards inclusive education. By adhering to the UDL Guidelines, edtech products can cater to a diverse range of learning preferences and abilities, ensuring all students, including those with disabilities, have equal opportunities to learn and succeed. This certification process emphasizes the importance of accessibility in educational technology, aligning with federal regulations to foster an environment where every learner can thrive.

**857 UDL
credentials**

awarded in 2023

Website Visitors

UDL Guidelines: **828K visitors**

CAST.org: **555K visitors**

AEM: **55K+ visitors**

Schoolwide
Implementation
Criteria: **10K+ visitors**

The Year in Numbers

Total Revenue:

\$16,492,584

Total Expenses:

\$16,114,484

Net Assets

Beginning of Period:

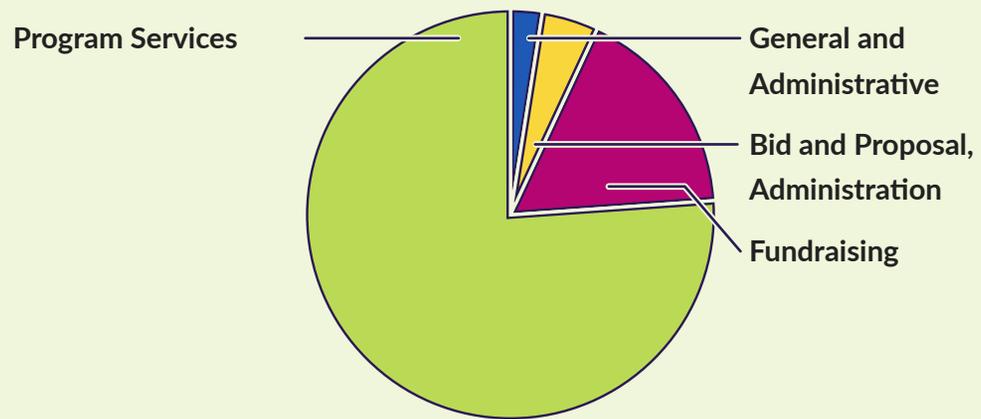
\$5,789,741

Net Assets

End of Period:

\$6,142,650

Breakdown of Expenses:



Program Services:	\$12,290,056	(76.3%)
General and Administrative:	\$2,710,587	(16.8%)
Bid and Proposal, Administration:	\$723,725	(4.5%)
Fundraising:	\$390,116	(2.4%)

CAST Board of Directors



Sheldon H. Berman, Chair

AASA Lead Superintendent for Social-Emotional Learning



Anne Meyer

CAST's Co-Founder and Chief of Education Design (Emeritus)



David H. Rose

CAST's Co-Founder and Chief Education Officer (Emeritus)



Stephen P. Crosby

Independent Consultant and Co-Founder, The Civic Action Project



Denise C. DeCoste

Occupational Therapist and Special Educator (Retired)



Karla Estrada

Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, Los Angeles Unified School District



DeVone Holt

Vice President of External Affairs, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky



Kristina Ishmael

Thought Leader, Speaker, Consultant, Ishmael Consulting



LaRon A. Scott

Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
Associate Professor, Special Education



Logan Smalley

Director, TED-Ed



Eleazar Vasquez

Director of the Toni Jennings Exceptional Education Institute and Professor, UCF



Deborah P. Waber

Director of the Learning Disabilities Program, Boston Children's Hospital
Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School



Jim Williamson

Technology Consultant to Non-Profit Organizations (Retired)



Michael K. Yudin

Principal, The Raben Group

CAST Leadership Team



Lindsay E. Jones
Chief Executive Officer



Sam Catherine Johnston
Chief Postsecondary and
Workforce Development Officer



Christine Fox
Vice President of Operations



Kisha Barton
Senior Director of
Communications



Jennifer Levine
Chief Academic Officer: PreK-12



Bobby Moore
Chief of Staff



Tara Courchaine
Chief Research and Development
Officer



Skip Stahl
Senior Policy Analyst, Emeritus



David Gordon
Chief Content Officer



Kelly Blackburn
Vice President of Finance

Photo credits: Jessica Latos Photography



learning and learning at this engaging event centered on learner variability and innovation. Register now: <https://ow.ly/FRIH50Rf2LM>



**UDL-Con:
International**

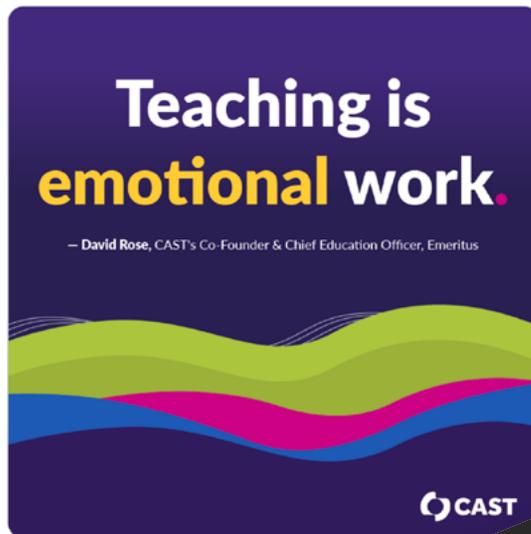
Powered by CAST
Our stories. Our community.

Keynote Speaker
Mirko Chardin
Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer
Novak Educational Consulting

CAST Forty Forward
bit.ly/udlcon2024

CAST @CAST_UDL · May 7

Happy #TeacherAppreciationDay from all of us at CAST! Thank you to all of our educator partners, collaborators, participants, and friends for all you do to make learning more accessible, inclusive, and effective. We can't do what we do without you. ❤️ #ThankATeacher



**Teaching is
emotional work.**

— David Rose, CAST's Co-Founder & Chief Education Officer, Emeritus

CAST

CAST @CAST_UDL · May 3

AWARD WINNER! "Universal Design for Learning received the IBPA 2024 Benjamin Franklin G. Congrats to CAST authors @katienovakudl, Jina Poirier, & Anne Wolff! #cast_udl <https://ow.ly>



Universal Design for Learning in English Language Arts
Improving Literacy Instruction with Inclusive Practices

By Katie Novak, Ryan Hinkle, Brienne Parker, Jina Poirier, and Anne Wolff

Order your copy today!

A UDL Now! book

Universal Design for Learning in English Language Arts



CAST_UDL Posts

cast_udl

Sharing CAST Stories
Celebrating 40 Years of Impact

CAST provided me with multiple and varied opportunities to learn deeply about student variability and the best ways to remove and minimize barriers to learning.

Yvel C. Crevecoeur

CAST Forty Forward

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