



## 2010 FEA National Conference FEA Moment

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My Future Educators Association experience has influenced me greatly to become a teacher. I have found a group of people like myself that have a desire to teach—to light lanterns and send them into the world. Our Future Educators Association advisor, Sharla Forcellini, has been instrumental to my choice to be an educator. She has been with us every step of the way, encouraging us to persevere even when things got really tough.

This year, we are out in the district doing observations, and that is a challenge in and of itself. Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday we go out to classrooms and observe, assist the teacher, and even teach a lesson occasionally. This is all for students who are in lower grades than ourselves. I have gleaned a lot of insight from these observations and hope to continue to do so once I get to college and do my student teaching.

My Future Educators Association experience has also encouraged me to tutor at-risk students in a district near us. I tutor a fifth-grade student named Solomon; this is my second year doing it. We met last year. Solomon had lived in a foster home before his grandmother adopted him. Prior to this change halfway through the year, he lived with his dad, his uncle, four cousins, two brothers, and a sister he had just found out he had. Without the support of a family, he could barely read. He could read, but it was on a second-grade level and he was in fourth grade. We started at the beginning of the year reading small children's books and then worked our way up. By the end of the year, Solomon was at a third-grade reading level and passed all his proficiency tests with flying colors.

On our last day of tutoring Solomon gave me the toothiest grin I had ever seen. He gave me a huge bear hug and said to me, "Miss Lauren, please don't leave me. I want you to come back next year." This year, I returned to be Solomon's tutor again. It makes me feel so good about myself. I love knowing that I am making a difference. Since I joined Future Educators Association and Teacher Academy, I have come out of my shell. It is so nice to be surrounded by a group of people like myself who are all united by the common dream of becoming a teacher.