



Professional Bio: Joel Medley

Joel Medley is a native North Carolinian and was taught the importance of education as a child. His father dropped out of high school and ensured that his children would not repeat that mistake. He became the first person in his family to graduate from a four-year college and the first to pursue post-graduate work.

He holds a BS in Social Studies Education, MA in history, MSA in school administration, MBA, and PhD in leadership. He credits his wife for these advanced degrees as she encouraged him to keep learning and then served as sounding board on thought formulation while reading every paper. She told him this better be his last degree!

Joel taught social studies at the middle school, high school, and community college levels. A highlight of his career was being named the 2001 NC Character Educator of the Year for high school teachers. After teaching, he pursued the principalship and served as a school administrator in both charter and traditional schools. He led the Charter and Magnet School program in South Carolina before returning to his home to lead the NC Office of Charter Schools – overseeing the expansion from 100 to more than 170 schools when he left.

His journey as Stride began by opening and serving as the founding Head of School at the NC Virtual Academy. He transitioned to a corporate role focusing on leadership development and teacher training. Now, he is part of a new unit called the Stride Professional Development Center where he focuses on product development.