

THE UB GSE MAGAZINE FALL 2023

Learn

Redefining
& unleashing
doctoral
excellence
GSE's new PhD
scholars, curriculum
and community



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Editorial & Creative Director
Amber M. Winters

Director of Content & Lead Writer
Danielle LeGare

Graphic Design
Ellen Stay

Contributing Writers
Sara Dembski
Julie Gorlewski
Nicole Mehlman-Davidow
Delaney Reh
Vicky Santos
Ann Witcher Gentzke

Contributing Photographers
Charbel Boujaodie, Onion Studios, Inc.
Stephen Gabris, Onion Studio, Inc.
Douglas Levere, UB

Copy Editors & Proofreaders
Danielle LeGare
Ann Witcher Gentzke

Web Design & Production
William J. Belz III
Nicole Mehlman-Davidow
Amber M. Winters

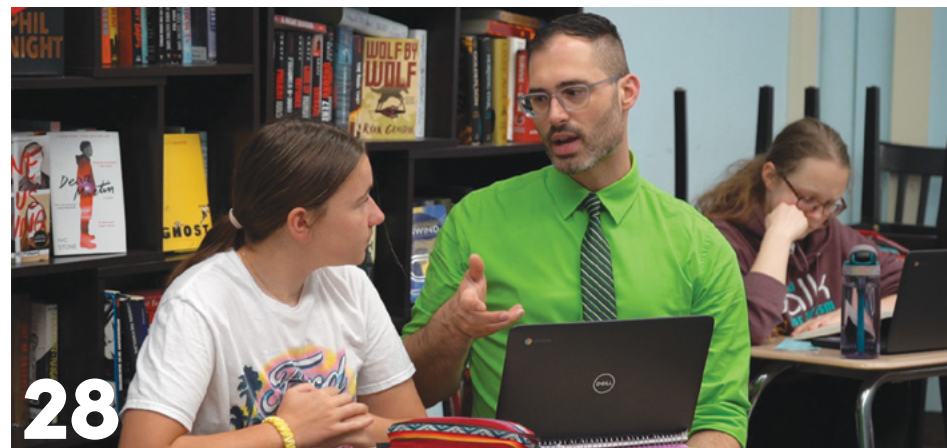
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The overhead projector aims to help students shine brightly

BY NICOLE MEHLMAN-DAVIDOW

While the world went digital, the overhead projector somehow remained relevant in classrooms and business settings.

Widely used since the 1930s, the overhead projector was especially popular in classrooms because of its ability to enlarge images and create interactive presentations. This reliability led to its longevity. Its capabilities, meanwhile, inspired companies to adapt the overhead as a "must have" for movie nerds in their home theaters.

According to **EdTech**, most classroom overhead projectors consist of a large, boxlike base with an arm, mirror and bright light. The box houses a cooling fan and the light, while the arm extends above it. At the end of the arm is a mirror that catches and redirects the light toward the screen. This type of projector can be used to enlarge images on the screen or wall for students to view.

EasyTechJunkie delves into the history of the projector. It was created in France in 1850, but it took several decades to arrive in the U.S. During World War II, overhead projectors were used as a tool to train troops. In the 1950s and 1960s, they made their way to American classrooms.

Gen Xers and millennials will remember the transparent sheets with text imprinted. Our teachers would hand us a dry-erase marker to write math problems or edit a story. While some of us may have had stage fright giving this type of presentation, others will recall the excitement of showing off our math or grammar skills for all to see.

While our definition of portable has changed over time, the overhead projector used to be praised for how easily it could be moved. It was packed away in a box/suitcase-like shape.

Use of the overhead peaked in the 1990s and then gradually fell out of favor for smart boards and other digitally based products. However, teachers still sometimes prefer it for its reliability and simplicity.





Dear Alumni and Friends of GSE,

The 2023-24 academic year has gotten off to a strong start. We kicked off the year by welcoming our new students—GSE enrollment continues to grow. Currently, our enrollment stands at 1,550 students. This is a 23% growth in the last six years! As part of our continued effort to broaden our individual and collective understandings around racial equity and education, we held our second biannual Teach-In for Racial Justice. This year, we welcomed three outstanding and thought-provoking scholars: Dr. Sherri Ann Charleston, Dr. Crystal Fleming and Dr. Anneliese Singh to campus for daylong lectures and conversations around race and educational equity.

Our featured story in this edition focuses on the growth, enhancement and changes made to our PhD programs. As part of a university-wide emphasis on PhD excellence, GSE faculty were asked to examine their programs to ensure that the curricula, co-curricular experiences and mentorship were student-centered and organized in such a manner as to ensure excellence. At the same time, recognizing the need to ensure that financial support was adequate to better meet our PhD students' needs, we worked to increase the stipends associated with our assistantships. As you will see in the pages that follow, this exercise, while challenging, has paid off many times over with the recruitment of 23 outstanding PhD students.

This issue also introduces you to some of our outstanding faculty. You will have the opportunity to read about Dr. John Strong's impactful literacy research and understand why he is considered an emerging scholar in the field. In addition, Dr. Africa Hands will share her insights into navigating the job market as a BIPOC person. Dr. Sarah A. Robert's impact as an international gender expert will be featured in this edition as well. She was recently one of 15 gender experts worldwide invited by the United Nations to review and provide feedback on "Gender Equality in a Changing Climate," a flagship report for UN Women. You will also have an opportunity to learn a little bit about our eight new faculty. They are truly outstanding and fantastic additions to GSE.

GSE's Teacher Residency Program continues to expand and extend its work. With two new federal grants awarded, UBTR has continued its relationship with the Buffalo Public Schools and extended its work into other districts in Western New York.

As you read through this issue, I hope you are as impressed as I am with the many ways GSE faculty and students approach meaningful problems broadly related to educational equity. As a mission-driven academic unit, we strive to make sure that our teaching and research, outreach and engagement live up to our collective vision.

Take good care,

Suzanne Rosenblith

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

A pledge to peaceably share and care for North America's five Great Lakes

We would like to acknowledge the land on which the University at Buffalo operates, which is the territory of the Seneca Nation, a member of the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations Confederacy. This territory is covered by The Dish with One Spoon Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a pledge to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. It is also covered by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, between the United States Government and the Six Nations Confederacy, which further affirmed Haudenosaunee land rights and sovereignty in the State of New York. Today, this region is still the home to the Haudenosaunee people, and we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work and share ideas in this territory.



"Great Lakes, No Clouds" Image of North America's five Great Lakes courtesy of US NASA Earth Observatory.

GSE in the News

Headlines from stories that featured our faculty and students

LIBRARY JOURNAL quoted Africa Hands, assistant professor of information science, in a story titled "Do LIS Programs Prepare Future Librarians for Real-World Challenges?"

TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION quoted Nathan Daun-Barnett, associate professor of educational leadership and policy, in a story: "US debt pact throws campuses back into crisis."

Heidi Julien, professor of information science, was interviewed on **TRENDING NOW TV NEWS** about vaccine misinformation spread by Elon Musk and Joe Rogan.

WKBW-TV quoted Amanda Nickerson, professor and director of the Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention, in a report that local psychiatrists have recently seen an increase in adolescents with mental health concerns.

NEWSWEEK quoted Nathan Daun-Barnett, associate professor of educational leadership and policy, in an article titled "Can Student Loan Borrowers Use Bankruptcy to Get Rid of Debt?"

EDUCATION WEEK features the work of LaGarrett King, associate professor and director of the Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education, in a story titled "This After-School Program Is Improving Students' Reading, One Black History Book at a Time."

THE WASHINGTON POST, EDUCATION WEEK, THE SEATTLE TIMES AND THE NEW YORK TIMES all quoted LaGarrett King, associate professor and director of the Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education, in stories discussing Florida's Gov. Ron DeSantis' new standards for teaching students about Black history.

WIRED quotes Noemi Waight, associate professor of learning and instruction, in an article titled "Kids Are Going Back to School. So Is ChatGPT."

Stephen Santa-Ramirez, assistant professor of higher education, was a guest speaker on **KCBS RADIO: ON-DEMAND** discussing what it means for recipients of DACA after a federal judge ruled the "Dreamers" program illegal.



BOOK STACKS

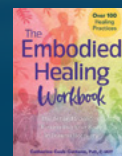
Books and chapters published by members of the UB GSE community



“Reimagining Literacies in the Digital Age: Multimodal Strategies to Teach with Technology” was written by Pauline S. Schmidt, EdM '99, PhD '09, along with her research partner, Matthew J. Kruger-Ross. This book was published by the National Council of Teachers of English in 2022.



“Encyclopedia of English Language Arts Education: A Critical Perspective” was edited by Julie Gorlewski, senior associate dean of academic affairs and teacher education; and David Gorlewski, a consultant at UB. Other editors include Chernice Miller, PhD '22, and Lisa Barker, the executive director of PLACE: Professional Learning and Community Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Education. This book was published by Brill in 2023.



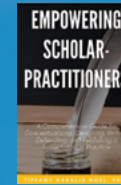
“The Embodied Healing Workbook: The Art and Science of Befriending Your Body in Trauma Recovery” was written by Catherine Cook-Cottone, professor of counseling, school and educational psychology. It was published by PESI Publishing, Inc. in 2023.



“My Father's Daughter: An Untold Story” was written by Linda B. Akanbi, EdD '77. It was published in 2019 by ARS Educational Services, LLC.



“Exploring Science and Art: Discovering Connections” was written by Mary Kirsch Boehm, EdM '60. It was published in 2022 by The New Idea Press, an imprint of The City of Light Publishing.



“Empowering Scholar-Practitioners: A Comprehensive Guide for Conceptualizing, Designing, Writing, Defending, and Publishing a Dissertation in Practice” was written by Tiffany Karalis Noel, director of doctoral studies and clinical assistant professor of learning and instruction. This book was independently published in 2023.

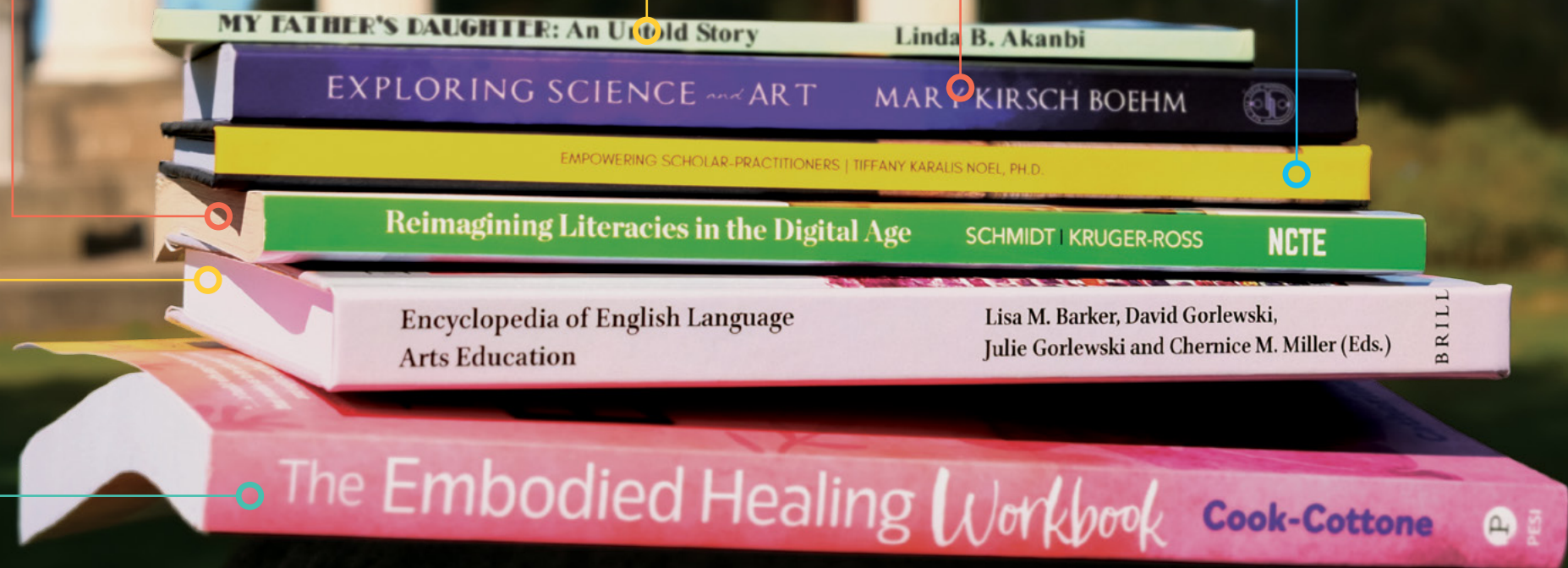


Photo of Strong in 2019 with Sharon Walpole, his doctoral adviser and professor of education at the University of Delaware, on the occasion of receiving his PhD. "During my master's program, I met Sharon, who became my PhD adviser. She taught me everything I knew at that time about how to teach beginning readers [and] children with reading difficulties."

"These **third- through fifth-grade books** were part of our summer school program to build fluency and comprehension. Believe it or not, kids don't read a lot of trade books in school—they read a lot of textbooks. Fourth- and fifth-graders saying it's their first chapter book has been a highlight of my career."

Cover of **book by Dutch researcher Suzanne Bogaerds-Hazenberg**. Strong was honored that his work was acknowledged by the author, who has also studied the impact of text structure on children's reading skills. "My work was influential for her on her own dissertation."

"**'Garfield'** bookmark features Mike McKenna, who was Thomas G. Jewell Professor of Reading in the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Virginia until his death in 2016. "Mike worked with ['Garfield' creator] Jim Davis to create a survey for students about their reading motivation."

Shining the light on young readers and writers

John Z. Strong develops innovative classroom intervention to help students and teachers

BY ANN WHITCHER GENTZKE

Newly embarked on his teaching career, John Strong witnessed what it's like for students to try to catch up with reading, when the underpinnings of literacy are missing.

While teaching English in a Delaware high school, Strong was startled to find 17-year-olds in his classroom who had never passed ninth-grade English and so were stuck in the ninth-grade. "That was my first job teaching high school," said Strong, assistant professor of literacy education in GSE. "I had been hired only the day before, so I wasn't prepared to teach children with that level of reading difficulties in high school. I thought, 'How can I learn how to serve these students?'"

In response, Strong returned to the University of Delaware, where he earned a master's degree in reading. "This is where I really learned about reading science, evidence-based instruction, and experimental methods for developing interventions." Faculty there, too, emphasized the close relationship between reading and writing, the integration of which is insufficiently studied, compared to investigations of reading and writing viewed separately.

Much of this training overlapped with Strong's doctoral studies, also at the University of Delaware, where he researched and devised tools and interventions that teachers and students can use in the classroom. His study of a text structure intervention for reading and writing in grades 4 and 5 won the 2020 Timothy and Cynthia Shanahan Outstanding Dissertation Award from the International Literacy Association.

Further research led to an evolution of these instructional routines. Strong is now principal investigator on a grant from the Advanced Education Research and Development Fund to study his intervention called Read STOP Write. (STOP stands for "Summarize, Text structure, Organize, Plan.") Students use informational texts aligned with science and social studies topics they're learning about during other parts of the school day. They first read to determine the meaning of new words and identify the main idea and key details. "We teach them strategies for breaking apart multisyllabic words and then for learning vocabulary—focusing on prefixes and suffixes and using context clues to infer the meaning of the word," Strong explained. After reading, they summarize the main idea and key details, identify the text structure, organize information using a text structure map, and plan their writing using a graphic organizer. They then write an informative paragraph of what they've just read.

This past spring, Read STOP Write was implemented locally in seven fourth-grade classrooms and five fifth-grade classrooms. "Currently, we have schools within four districts implementing it in New York, and two districts in Michigan are implementing it as well," Strong said.

"I wanted to develop programs that are easy and intuitive and feasible for teachers and students to use in real classroom settings," Strong added. "It's different than the way that text structure, and reading and writing, are typically taught in schools. I think it's really an attractive option for teachers."

RESEARCH AREAS

- Access and Equity
- Achievement
- Assessment
- Elementary Education
- English Education
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Equity and Poverty
- Design Experiments
- Literacy
- Reading Instruction
- Writing Instruction
- Quantitative Research Methods
- Research Design
- Research Methods

REDEFINING & UNLEASHING DOCTORAL EXCELLENCE

GSE's new PhD scholars, curriculum and community

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

A Facebook post changed Richard Williams' life.

After spending over a decade as a special education teacher and district leader, Williams felt burnt out. He had led the special education division of Providence Public Schools through the COVID-19 pandemic and knew he needed to take a break from working in the field of education. While recovering and healing, he rediscovered the power of mindfulness and compassion, which perfectly aligned with his approach as a caring and empathetic educator.

Soon after, he stumbled upon a post on Facebook by [LaGarrett King](#), associate professor of learning and instruction and director of [UB's Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education](#). King wrote in his post that he had funding available for new PhD students who had previously taught in K-12 education and would be interested in studying Black history education and racial literacy.

Williams wasn't sure his research interests were an ideal match for the opportunity, but he felt compelled to reach out anyway. Following a series of conversations with King and other members of the GSE community, he found himself at UB's doorstep as an enrolled student in the [curriculum, instruction and the science of learning PhD program](#)—partly because he realized that this next step wasn't just about advancing his education and career. It was about joining a community that valued him.

"What I got from Dr. King when we first talked was this sense of, 'We see you as a scholar, but we also see you as a person,'" said Williams.

Najat Sghyar, now a student in the [language education and multilingualism PhD program](#), shares a similar story. Sghyar, who's originally from Casablanca, Morocco, has pursued her studies and career as a writer and educator around the globe, with stops throughout France, and in the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and the U.S.

Although she had achieved success as a highly sought-after French teacher, most recently at the French American School of Princeton in Princeton, New Jersey, she knew she wanted more. Sghyar wanted to change the world through education; she realized she had to advance her own education to do so. With a specific interest in multilingualism, a Google search brought her to GSE's PhD program webpage. Her interests were piqued, but it wasn't until she connected with [Janina Brutt-Griffler](#), professor of learning and instruction, that she knew GSE was the right next step.

"When I read about my advisor's background and talked to her, knowing that she's also from Europe, I felt that she could totally understand me if I start speaking about French ... She also is familiar with Arabic language policies. And so it was just perfect ... a perfect fit," she said.

Sghyar's interactions during GSE's PhD recruitment weekend in March 2023 only reaffirmed her feelings—with one moment, in particular, standing out in her memory: When GSE Dean and Professor [Suzanne Rosenblith](#) took the stage to address the prospective PhD recruits, she asked if any of the students already felt confident that they wanted to attend UB.

Without a second thought, Sghyar raised her hand. "I was looking at my hand, and I was like, 'Am I really raising it?' It just felt so natural," she remembered. "I listened to [the dean], and I saw her vision. I knew automatically that it was the right thing."

Raising hands, committing to excellence

While working alongside GSE's leadership team to plan the recruitment weekend, Rosenblith understood the importance of bringing students to campus to help them determine the next steps in their journeys. But her desire to attract exceptional students began long before that blustery recruitment weekend in March.

Since becoming dean in 2017, Rosenblith has led faculty and staff through the process of rearticulating the school's mission and vision, and reviewing and refreshing GSE's academic programs and curriculum.

A significant part of that vision and process? Ensuring that the student experience—both academic and co-curricular—is rigorous, supportive and engaging.



Najat
Sghyar

"I listened to [the dean], and I saw her vision. I knew automatically that it was the right thing."

— Najat Sghyar



Sara Kieffer

“[The funding] meant that I could really do this ... It meant that we don’t have to worry.”

— Sara Kieffer

Rosenblith knew she could not achieve this vision without buy-in and innovation from GSE’s faculty. “I said from the very beginning that excellence was something that each program needed to define for itself,” she said.

She then asked the faculty: “What is an excellent outcome for your PhD program?”

“And then it was really about backward planning,” she said. “That meant looking at the curriculum, both in terms of the content and the amount ... It meant looking at what the research sequence requirement was. It also meant, perhaps, in some ways, most importantly, looking at the co-curricular experiences—what are the sorts of activities that you would expect a student to engage in, in addition to their academic coursework and dissertation?”

But this process wasn’t just about working with GSE’s already robust faculty. Rosenblith also established cluster hiring initiatives to recruit outstanding scholars interested in engaging in community-based research to provide students with the field-based activities and research opportunities they needed to excel in their fields. In 2022, **13 new faculty scholars** with wide-ranging and forward-thinking research interests joined the school. In addition, eight new outstanding scholars joined GSE’s faculty this year, with more arrivals likely on the horizon.

Nathan J. Daun-Barnett, associate professor and chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP), has witnessed firsthand the impact of GSE’s redefined mission, vision and goals: “Over the past six years, we have made significant changes to nearly every program we offer. We have dropped a few programs that no longer met the changing needs of educators, and we have developed new programs to appeal to the interests of undergraduate students interested in the intersection of sociology and education,” he said. “Excellence is a subjective target, but it should reflect a deep and sustaining commitment to identifying and addressing the most important problems facing educators today.

“Where our changes have aligned most with the mission of GSE is regarding the intentionality with which we infuse equity, diversity, justice and inclusion (EDJI) throughout the curriculum. Incidentally, this is also where educators at all levels face the greatest challenges,” Daun-Barnett added. “We have found that EDJI has been a consistent thread throughout the work of the faculty in ELP, but we had not formalized that emphasis in the curriculum as well as we could. For the past several years, we have found ways to bring equity into stronger focus through the courses we offer, the readings we require and the faculty who teach in our programs.”

Myles Faith, professor of counseling, school and educational psychology, has also seen these changes in his department. “We have redesigned our doctoral program to both prepare future faculty and policymakers and to unapologetically center race and equity in our curriculum,” he said.

A game-changing funding shift

Deeply reflecting upon GSE’s curriculum and program offerings was only one part of redefining and achieving excellence as a graduate school. Extending more competitive and comprehensive funding packages to exceptional students also became a priority.

Driven by a commitment to remove barriers for exceptional students, in 2022, GSE began offering opportunities for funding of up to \$38,000 for full-time, on-campus PhD students. Twenty-three graduate assistantships, several with fellowship support, were awarded to newly admitted students for the 2023–24 academic year.

According to LaGarrett King, doctoral students often come to

GSE with wide-ranging backgrounds and extensive career experience. “It is a huge step for these professionals to stop their careers and begin a PhD, which is scary because the process is different from K-12 education,” he said. “To provide funding that will allow them to study full time is the best way to attract and retain quality scholars and people.

“I tell you this,” King continued. “Richard [Williams] is a top-notch educator and scholar, and we probably would not have attracted him without this package.”

Similarly, Daun-Barnett believes that the improved funding for PhD students has been a game-changer, “particularly for first-generation college students, racially minoritized students and those from families with more modest means,” he said. “Our changes in GSE correspond with a number of changes across the university, focusing on doctoral excellence and raising the minimum stipend.

“The inspiration [behind these changes] is essentially one of equity,” Daun-Barnett added. “We saw what our students needed to be successful, and we found ways to make that possible for the PhD students we serve.”

Sara Kieffer is one of those students. Originally from California, Kieffer—now a **UB Presidential Fellow** and **higher education PhD program** student—knew she wanted to pursue a doctoral degree but refused to do it at the expense of her family. “I was like, ‘OK, so if I get in, but I don’t get funding, we’re not going. I’m not going to do that to my husband and myself,’” she shared. “[The funding] meant that I could really do this ... It meant that we don’t have to worry.”

Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy **Margaret Sallee**, who serves as Kieffer’s doctoral advisor, acknowledges the significance of financial support. “Our peer institutions offer competitive financial packages ... If we want to recruit and retain students like Sara, we need to match what they offer,” she said.

Ashfique Rizwan also began his doctoral education at GSE this fall. With academic and professional experience in pharmacy, public health and behavioral medicine, his career brought him around the world—and ultimately led him to apply and enroll in the **counseling psychology and school psychology PhD program**, due, in part, to the life-changing funding offer he received.

“Because of the scholarship, I’ll be able to pursue my dream. Without that, it would be really hard because I come from an international background, and there are a lot of challenges that international students have to go through,” Rizwan said. “The scholarship

will help me to focus more on my studies and focus on my research work, and the graduate assistantship. It means everything and is helping me to actually work in the field that I love.”

A new generation of GSE student excellence

With a new academic year underway, faculty from across GSE report feeling energized by the opportunity to work with the new PhD students, each of whom brings a wealth of experiences to share from living around the world. “Broadly speaking, our new PhD students are coming to GSE from across the country and globe at far higher rates,” said Ryan Taughrin, GSE assistant dean for enrollment management.

Whether the new students are from the U.S. or abroad, they are committed to making positive changes in the communities they serve and are ready to explore crucial questions. “I have met with some of our incoming doctoral students and am so impressed by their extensive research experience, well-developed research interests and ideas, their integration of EDJI issues in everything they discuss, and their overall compassion and care,” said **Amy Reynolds**, professor and chair of the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology.

In summary, this year’s incoming class of PhD students possess unparalleled global perspectives, a strong desire to positively affect educational spaces and communities, and a remarkable depth of interdisciplinary research interests and insights.

Meet four new PhD scholars joining GSE this year.

Scholar-activism fueled by global experiences

Najat Sghyar’s personal and educational journey is a testament to the transformative power of a global perspective. Her early years were shaped by the French education she received in Morocco. After high school, she ventured to France to pursue law studies but soon changed course. The Arab Spring—a wave of pro-democracy uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa beginning in 2010—brought a glimmer of hope and change to Morocco. It also ignited a spark within Sghyar to follow her passion—writing. With an unwavering love for the written word, she returned to Morocco in 2012 to begin her career as a journalist.

Navigating the challenging landscape of Moroccan journalism, where investigative reporting was fraught with danger, Sghyar honed her skills in covering business news and international events. However, the constraints of the profession led her to seek a new path: She left Morocco in 2014, initially drawn to Istanbul, Turkey, because of the city’s rich culture. There, she found an unexpected calling to teach French, a language associated with prestige and privilege in Turkey.

Sghyar’s natural affinity for teaching became evident as she started with one family and soon had a full schedule of private French classes. She realized that she enjoyed teaching and had a gift for it. Language instruction became her purpose, and with the determination to excel in her newfound career, Sghyar pursued an education in French instruction at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris.

“We have redesigned our doctoral program to both prepare future faculty and policymakers and to unapologetically center race and equity in our curriculum.” — Myles Faith

Her experiences in education evolved at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle at the Sorbonne’s campus in Abu Dhabi, where she served as a lecturer and her passion for teaching grew amid the COVID-19 pandemic. “I fell in love with the country. The UAE is such an advanced, beautiful, safe country,” she said. “Because of the pandemic, all I could do was study and work. For three years, I worked three jobs, filled my résumé, finished my master’s and wrote my thesis on French teaching in the UAE.”

Most recently, Sghyar’s journey led her to the U.S. as a teacher at the French American School of Princeton. Yet, the desire to create lasting change in education, particularly in Morocco, remained at the forefront of her mind, ultimately influencing her choice to continue her education.

“I want to change education back home. We have in Morocco major linguistic issues because we are a multicultural society ...

Basically, up until high school, everything is taught in Arabic. So, kids learn history, math, science and art—everything—in Arabic. Once they graduate and go to college, everything is in French,” she explained. “It’s a real concern ... Today, if you don’t put your kids in private schools, they don’t have any chance to go to college.”

Now, she aspires to use her experience, vision and education to address these ongoing issues in Moroccan public schools. And she feels confident in her decision to do so at GSE—especially after her first conversation with **Erin Kearney**, associate professor and chair of the Department of Learning and Instruction. “She told me that I could be a scholar-activist. She gave me the confidence that I was lacking—just by using the words ‘scholar-activist.’ I realized I can be an activist today with my experience and my knowledge, because academic research is the only way for me to be able to write freely and to have an impact,” Sghyar shared.

Her doctoral advisor, Janina Brutt-Griffler, is thrilled to have her join GSE’s scholar-activist community: “She has experienced the workings of multilingualism across multiple cultures and societies and has put it into practice in and outside of the classroom.

“I am truly excited about her joining our very talented group of doctoral students in GSE and [the language education and multilingualism program],” Brutt-Griffler continued. “Najat brings a unique perspective from a region and cultures to our school and will undoubtedly enrich our mission on research in multicultural and language learning.”

Infusing educational communities with compassion and inclusivity

Richard Williams’ journey through education has been diverse and deeply rooted in his commitment to compassionate teaching and community building. Hailing from Georgia, Williams embarked on his educational journey by pursuing a bachelor’s degree in philosophy at Georgia State University. However, it was during his time at Clark Atlanta University, where he earned a master’s degree in special education, that he found his calling: working with students facing emotional and behavioral challenges and diagnoses such as emotional behavior disorders, autism and other health impairments.

With his passion ignited, he spent a decade in special education classrooms throughout Virginia, the District of Columbia and Rhode

Island, working tirelessly with students—who often faced severe challenges—and guiding them on a path of healing and academic growth.

School administrators in the districts where Williams worked took notice, and his path to school leadership began. He started leading interdisciplinary projects that aimed to create more inclusive and compassionate learning environments. Eventually, he moved into district leadership roles, serving as a compliance and quality officer for the District of Columbia Public Schools and then managing the entire special education

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“We saw what our students needed to be successful, and we found ways to make that possible for the PhD students we serve.”
.....

— Nathan J. Daun-Barnett

division for Providence Public Schools.

With a devotion to education extending beyond K-12 settings, he also became an adjunct professor at American University and engaged with professional organizations, like the Council for Exceptional Children, to advocate for marginalized students and drive change in education. Through these experiences, Williams recognized that compassion plays a pivotal role in education but often goes unnoticed.

Through it all, he has remained committed to creating environments where people feel like they belong and their perspectives are valued, and where compassion is a guiding principle.

“For most of my academic and professional career, maybe because I am a person with divergent abilities (disability), I didn’t really feel belonging ... and so part of my commitment to being a leader, a servant leader, is to keep aware of those kinds of experiences and know that there are a lot of people in the academy who feel like they don’t belong when they damn sure do,” Williams said.

One step he’s taken to achieve this goal is serving as editor on the soon-to-be-published book, “Healing While Studying: Reflections and Strategies for Healing, Coping, and Liberation of Graduate Students

of Minoritized Identities.”

Now, his research interests at GSE are anchored in three significant areas: identifying and promoting compassion in education, with a focus on creating emotionally supportive learning environments; transforming education through a rehabilitative approach, advocating for the dismantling of traditional structures and addressing inequality; and supporting compassion within marginalized communities, aiming to combat systemic issues like white supremacy and rebuild a sense of community in academic and professional settings.

“My goal is to come and learn and create a pedagogy of compassion that we can take into spaces and work into academics, where everything is permeated with compassion,” said Williams. “I realized that UB GSE and being a mentee of Dr. King would be the perfect setting with the perfect people.”

As his advisor, King emphasizes that Williams’ work extends beyond traditional educational boundaries to address broader societal issues: “His experience is unmatched. I think the world of Richard—Richard is what I call a transdisciplinary scholar, as his work is not only about teaching or about social studies. Sometimes, his work is not about traditional education per se. He deals with the intersections of race, social justice and healing, among other things. To me, being a transdisciplinary scholar, as Richard is, holds no boundaries, and that is an excellent way to think and write about the world.

“I am working with Richard because of his intellect, curiosity and insightfulness, and because he is a great human,” King added. “Being a great human is something I think we scholars do not value enough. Our humanity is what sets us up for work that not only provides new knowledge but contributes to the world in a positive way.”

Sara Kieffer’s work is deeply personal. At the age of 30, she was diagnosed with ADHD—a discovery that shed light on her past academic challenges. With a better understanding of herself and her diagnosis, she decided to enroll at Long Beach City College, earning her associate degree in sociology and social science. Soon after, she was accepted at UCLA, where she majored in gender studies and education. “I attended community college first and that is how I got to UCLA. My community college background is really important to me,” she said.

Kieffer’s research interests center on gender studies, disability studies and education. In particular, she is interested in studying community colleges and the

experiences of adult women learners, with a specific focus on how neurodiversity intersects with education.

“[My research] is meaningful because it’s the story of me,” she said. “I base a lot of this on my own experiences, then back it up with research. All the research that I’ve done has carried that element of me in it.”

In addition to being a lifelong learner and researcher, Kieffer is a dedicated educator. In her free time, she volunteers to teach an introduction to college course for system-impacted students. Her involvement in this program reflects her commitment to creating opportunities for those who are often overlooked by traditional education systems.

“Teaching women was amazing. They were so interested; they were so engaged. One of them was getting ready to apply for transfer ... She was in a transitional kind of prison where she was on her way out. She was like, ‘As soon as I’m released, I’m going to apply and go to university. I want to do this,’” Kieffer recalled. “I was like, ‘Wow, that’s amazing. Here are the resources you need to do that.’”

Through these experiences, Kieffer realized that higher education wasn’t necessarily designed to cater to adult learners. This revelation fueled her desire to explore the challenges of individuals who pursue education later in life, particularly those with neurodivergent identities.

When she began exploring PhD programs, she was searching for the right academic home—a place that aligned with her unique research interests and personal needs. She ultimately decided to search for an advisor, rather than a specific school, whose expertise complemented her own while providing the freedom to explore adjacent areas of interest. Ultimately, she found her match in Margaret Sallee.

Now, through her doctoral research, Kieffer seeks to challenge stereotypes, promote inclusivity and support adult learners to create a more equitable and accessible higher education system. She also strives to challenge misconceptions about neurodivergent individuals and their potential for success in higher education.

Sallee is delighted to work with Kieffer—both on her advisee’s research and her own projects focused on student-mothers in college. “As a Californian myself, I’m always excited to see applicants from the West Coast. But I’m even more excited to welcome Sara because of her interest in adult women college students and commitment to gender studies,” said Sallee.

“She returned to higher ed as an adult student herself and has done incredible work both as an undergraduate and a graduate student. It was this combination of factors that made her especially exciting.”

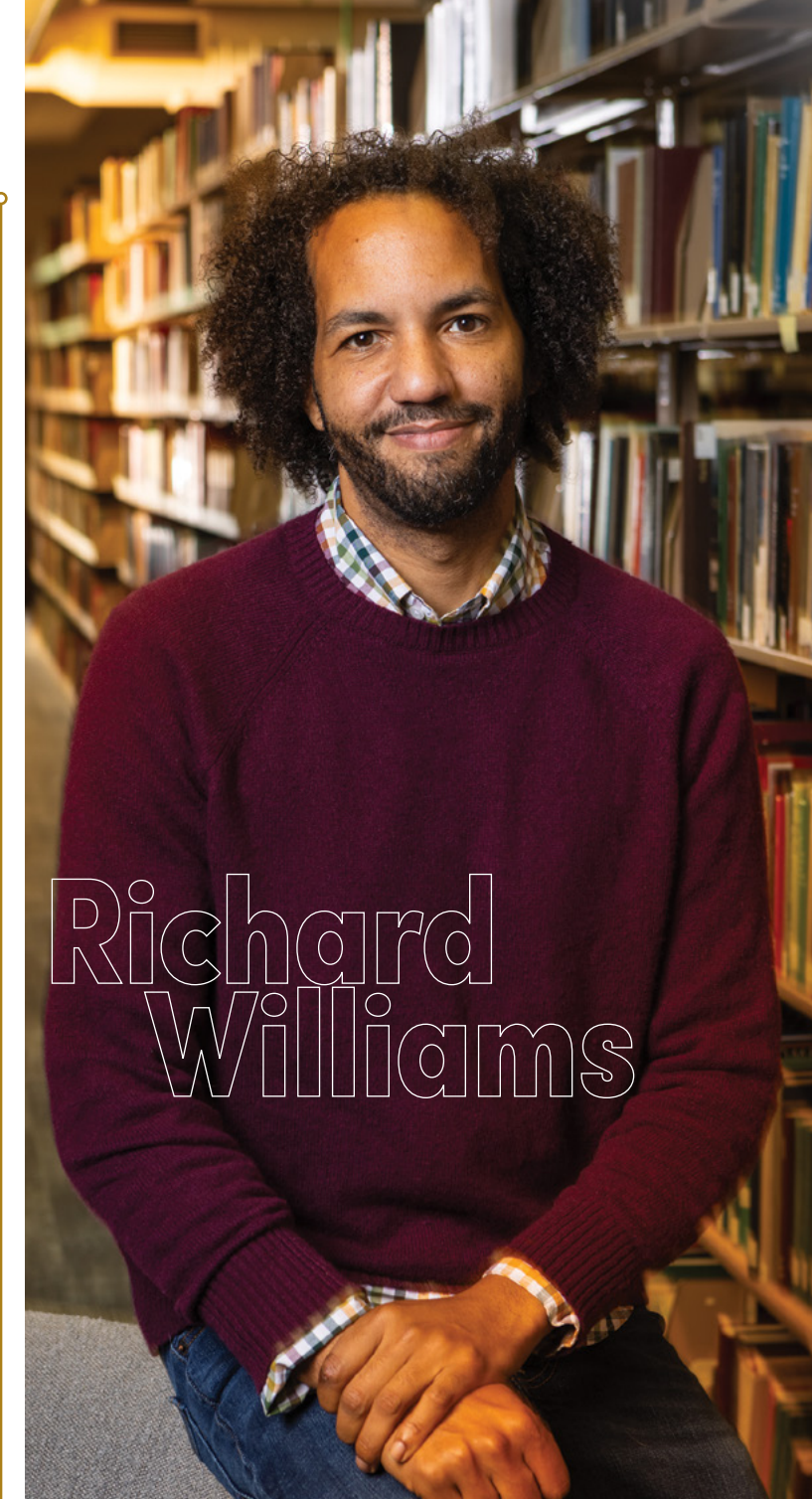
Multidisciplinary interests, new research frontiers

Ashfique Rizwan, GSE counseling psychology and school psychology PhD student from Dhaka, Bangladesh, brings diverse and interdisciplinary interests to the school and his research.

His academic journey began with a foray into the world of theater while he pursued his undergraduate studies. These interests led him to a university theater group, where he engaged in acting, directing and organizing drama festivals. This initial love for theater eventually intertwined with psychology, particularly psychodrama, igniting a profound curiosity within him.

However, practicality led him to complete his undergraduate and master’s degrees in pharmacy and work in international marketing for a pharmaceutical company. Unfortunately, he soon realized that the position did not align with his passion for research, and he knew he wanted to pursue a more meaningful profession.

He contacted the research director at the BRAC James P Grant



Richard Williams

“What I got from Dr. King when we first talked was this sense of, ‘We see you as a scholar, but we also see you as a person.’”

— Richard Williams



Ashfique Rizwan

“The scholarship will help me to focus more on my studies and focus on my research work, and the graduate assistantship. It means everything and is helping me to actually work in the field that I love.”

— Ashfique Rizwan

o School of Public Health at BRAC University in Dhaka. “They were thinking of submitting a proposal to the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research, WOTRO Science for Global Development (NWO) about applying psychodrama to the young men living in the slums to look at their risky sexual behavior and how psychodrama can change that,” he explained. “So I said, ‘OK, I can help you with the literature of psychodrama, and I can help you write the proposal. So, I voluntarily helped them, and after six months, they got the funding. And then it was, I think, a time to decide what I should do. I left my pharmaceutical marketing job, then joined the university, and simultaneously, I was doing a master’s in public health.”

During that time, Rizwan pursued another passion: He acted in a full-length feature film, “Bengali Beauty,” released internationally in 2018 and currently streaming on Amazon Prime.

His journey continued with work at a nonprofit human development organization based in North Carolina with a chapter in Dhaka, focusing on improving nutrition and entrepreneurship among women in rural communities in Bangladesh.

Next, his experience and passion for psychodrama led him to another professional opportunity at Therapeutic Spiral International—an organization that provides experiential trauma therapy training worldwide. At the same time, he established a mental health startup focused on helping vulnerable populations, such as garment workers in Dhaka. While focused on the growth of his business, his wife received an offer of admission to UB’s master’s program in pharmacology and toxicology. Rizwan decided to come to Buffalo to support his wife in August 2021.

In April 2022, he joined UB’s Division of Behavioral Medicine within the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, coordinating and developing research study ideas and making new connections, including a connection with Myles Faith. “I was impressed with Ashfique’s passion for research, experience conducting research and his desire to use research to improve the well-being of others,” Faith said.

Faith encouraged him to apply to the counseling psychology and school psychology PhD program—and soon thereafter, Rizwan was accepted, and Faith became his advisor. While Rizwan hopes to bridge the gap between Eastern philosophy and Western psychological practices and strive for a more eclectic and holistic approach to mental health intervention, he is also open to new areas of interest and opportunity.

“The fun part is developing and refining specific ideas, and doing this with students like Ashfique is exciting,” Faith said.

GSE’s commitment coming back into focus

The beginning of the fall semester has brought a renewed commitment from faculty and staff to support GSE’s new scholars. Reynolds hopes the new PhD students are challenged and enriched, personally and professionally. “I sincerely hope that their goals, hopes and dreams become a reality and that they are able to make the difference in the world to which they are so clearly committed,” she said. “My wish for them is that they are able to develop the competence they need and desire.”

Interacting with the new class of GSE’s PhD students also serves as a reminder of the greater power in continually redefining and recommitting to excellence as a school of education. “Taking the time to reflect on our PhD programs—from recruitment, to funding, to equity and diversity, to the curricular and co-curricular experiences, and to mentorship and advisement—has enabled GSE to ensure that our PhD programs are student-centered, rigorous, vibrant and aligned to our mission and core priorities of preparing the next generation of engaged scholars,” said Rosenblith.

“Taking the time to reflect on our PhD programs—from recruitment, to funding, to equity and diversity, to the curricular and co-curricular experiences, and to mentorship and advisement—has enabled GSE to ensure that our PhD programs are student-centered, rigorous, vibrant and aligned to our mission and core priorities of preparing the next generation of engaged scholars.”

Q&A

Go beyond finding your 'mini-me' How colleges and universities can recruit diverse talent; how job seekers can showcase excellence

BY NICOLE MEHLMAN-DAVIDOW



As institutions vie for faculty candidates, applicants can feel pressure as they attempt to display their talents, endure lengthy interviews and stress over negotiations for benefits and pay. This process can feel daunting, especially for individuals from historically marginalized backgrounds.

According to Africa Hands, assistant professor in the Department of Information Science, both institutions and applicants need to do their research thoroughly if they want to succeed.

Q You recently participated in a virtual session focused on helping Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals navigate the academic job market. What recommendations do you have for job-seeking PhD students?

A You want to be organized. You will apply to multiple institutions, and you want to keep track of where you apply, when you applied, what documents you submitted, as well as what response you received from each school.

When you reach the negotiation phase after an offer is made, you can utilize social media as well as your own network to see what others received in their hiring packages. Think beyond benefits and pay and consider equipment and assistance to get your research up and running.

I want to also emphasize that moving to a new job is expensive. You really want to plan financially for moving and possible gaps in pay.

Q How can institutions see excellence in prospective employees that go beyond what is on their résumé?

A Search committee members need to go beyond themselves and stop trying to find someone who is their "mini-me." Members also need to have an upfront conversation about the biases they have. You want to look for excellence but dive deeper. What privileges may have contributed to that excellence? Someone may look excellent because they had certain advantages. Another candidate may be just as talented but did not have the same privilege.

Q How can institutions improve the job application/hiring process for BIPOC scholars?

A Transparency. Institutions owe it to candidates to inform them of where the committee is in the search process. A quick note updating candidates on the timeline is helpful to ease candidate anxieties around the process. As I mentioned, an honest conversation about biases among search committee members is necessary. Search committee members should also be aware of the current climate for job seekers. They can gain insights from personal stories shared on social media. There's no shortage of cautionary tales that will help institutions do a better job with their own hiring processes. From these personal stories institutions can learn how their peers landed a candidate, or why they lost one.

Q You received a grant to fund a project that will investigate career services in graduate library and information science programs. How can career services help these students?

A The grant was won through a competition via the Association for Library and Information Science Education. I will be researching how library and information science graduate programs are preparing students for the job market. I will survey students to see what they need in terms of career services and preparation as well as what currently is being offered through these graduate programs.

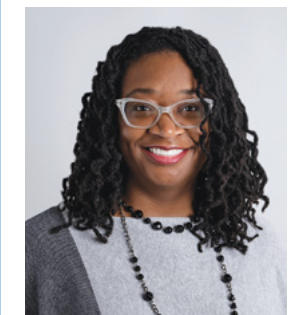
Research shows that even at the graduate level, students may possess limited knowledge of the profession they plan to enter. For those without professional role models, career development and preparation services are particularly vital.

Q How can institutions prepare their students for the academic job market?

A Institutions can offer unique ways to increase visibility for their PhD students. For example, UB has the Visiting Future Faculty Program, which brings together doctoral students from all over the country to present their research.

These events and practices need funding, and students need financial help as well. PhD students, particularly students from underrepresented backgrounds, may not have the capital to pay for travel and other expenses. If you want your program to have students placed at the best institutions, then your program needs to provide opportunities and resources for students to be seen.

Africa S. Hands is an assistant professor in the Department of Information Science and principal investigator for Project CliA, an IMLS-funded project examining public libraries as an information resource to college-bound patrons.



New Faculty



Simone Fried is an assistant professor of education administration and comes to the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy after earning her PhD at the Harvard School of Education. Her research is focused on U.S. public schools in crisis, and how a complex constellation of stakeholders navigates relational dynamics and external pressures to heal wounds inflicted on communities. Her work in K-12 education spans over a decade. She's looking forward to using her skills to ensure a diverse pool of excellent and equity-driven education leaders positively impact Western New York and beyond.



Rebecca Jacob is a clinical assistant professor of rehabilitation counseling in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology. She is from the Buffalo area and is a UB alumna. Jacob is a licensed mental health counselor, a certified rehabilitation counselor and a certified New York State school counselor, who earned her doctorate in counselor education and master's degree in rehabilitation counseling at UB. She brings over 30 years of field experience to GSE.



Brittany Jones joins the Department of Learning and Instruction as an assistant professor of social studies education. A marathon runner from Richmond, Virginia, Jones will also serve as the assistant director of the Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education. Her research, which is informed by her experiences teaching secondary social studies, explores the teaching and learning of critical Black histories, with a specific focus on Black emotions and affect. Jones's work also interrogates the intersections of race, power, emotions and, discourse within social studies curricular materials and state standards.



Ian Mette joins the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy as an associate professor of education administration. An outdoorsman, Mette is originally from Maine. Mette's research focuses on culturally responsive instructional supervision and developing equity-oriented educational leaders in predominantly white rural spaces. Part of his work looks at examining internal physiological stimulation when providing difficult feedback about instructional practices, specifically by measuring biometric data using high-quality wearable watch technology.



Carla Pattin is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Learning and Instruction. Pattin earned her PhD from the University of Toledo in educational leadership and social foundations of education. Her research centers on Black women's voices, challenging racial and gender stereotypes through a social justice lens, and ways to implement Black feminist pedagogies in classrooms. Pattin is a gardening educator also known as the "Harvest Doctor" and wrote a gardening book titled "Grow Through It." Her Instagram @theharvestdoctor features gardening recommendations, especially for those living in urban communities.



Tangela Roberts is an assistant professor in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology. Roberts received her PhD in counseling and psychology from the University of Massachusetts Boston, and her research focuses on experiences of stigma and marginalization encountered by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, as well as the negative health outcomes of prejudice. Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, Roberts feels she brings a critical mass of research related to Black, LGBTQ+ mental health to GSE.



Saguna Shankar is an assistant professor in the Department of Information Science. Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Shankar was drawn to GSE because of its scholarly communities. Her research focuses on information practice, specifically how groups negotiate their activities with information and technologies, as part of a theoretical approach that emphasizes the agentic, cultural and social aspects of these activities.



Paris Wicker joins the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy as an assistant professor of higher education. A classically trained vocalist and chorus singer, Wicker is originally from Chicago and is a proud product of Chicago Public Schools. Prior to her doctoral journey, she worked for ten years as a higher education practitioner within college admissions and student affairs. Her field of research applies sociological and equity-based perspectives on the study of health, well-being and success in higher education.

Six GSE faculty recently awarded prestigious NSF grants

In a significant stride toward advancing education and research, six of GSE's esteemed faculty members have been awarded prestigious grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF), and are currently serving as principal investigators on projects poised to make substantial contributions to their respective fields. These groundbreaking projects span a diverse range of educational and scientific domains, showcasing GSE's commitment to innovation and excellence.

"These projects, bridging foundational and applied research, bolster STEM education for youth and educators. With a steadfast focus on equity, they promote robust community engagement and address pressing real-world challenges," said X. Christine Wang, professor, director of the Fisher-Price Endowed Early Childhood Research Center and associate dean for interdisciplinary research. "These endeavors underscore GSE's commitment to pioneering solutions that advance educational equity."



PI: Virginia Flood
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"Dialogic Gesture in Collaborative Sense Making in Physics"
3 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$497,798



PI: Mary McVee
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"Elementary Teacher Professional Learning of Equitable Engineering Pedagogies for Multilingual Students"
3 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$374,969



PI: Christopher Proctor
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"Designing a Residency-Based CS Teacher Preparation Program with a High School Community"
2 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$277,284



PI: Noemi Waight
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"STEMcyclists: Black and Brown Youth Transforming STEM via Bikes"
3 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$1,982,790
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"RAPID: Co-Developing a Community-Based Science Education Curriculum Framework for Disaster Justice and Resilience: A Response to the 2022 Buffalo Blizzard"
1 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$100,000



PI: X. Christine Wang
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"RAPID: Exploring an AI Literacies Framework for Young Children: A Delphi Study"
1 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$199,920



PI: Amanda Winkelsas
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
"Citizen Science Teachers: Noyce Residency Scholars Program for Western New York"
5 YEAR GRANT | PROJECT TOTAL:
\$1,199,545

"These projects, bridging foundational and applied research, bolster STEM education for youth and educators. With a steadfast focus on equity, they promote robust community engagement and address pressing real-world challenges."

-X. Christine Wang

Robert tapped by UN Women to review report on gender equality, climate justice

BY VICKY SANTOS

A UB faculty member was one of 15 gender experts worldwide invited by the United Nations to review and provide feedback on "Gender Equality in a Changing Climate," a flagship report for UN Women.

Sarah A. Robert, GSE associate professor, is an international education policy expert who researches how policy and politics shape and are shaped by the intersectional qualities of gender in global, South American and U.S. urban contexts.

"The report lays out a gender-focused approach to climate justice, making the case that public action should be based on a framework of feminist climate justice," Robert explained.

Robert's research brings together aspects of social policies, education policies, and health and pension policies for teachers and school employees. Her unique blend of expertise and her award-winning book, "School Food Politics" co-edited with Marcus B. Weaver-Hightower (Peter Lang, 2011), caught the attention of UN Women, the U.N. organization delivering programs, policies and standards that uphold women's human rights.

"I had no idea that my scholarship, and the school food politics book in particular, actually had such an impact on different people, including government decision-makers and grassroots activists and students," Robert said.

She has completed an update to that book with contributors from around the world, which is how she ended up on UN Women's radar.

The new book, co-edited with Jennifer E. Gaddis (University of Wisconsin-Madison), is called "Transforming School Food Politics Around the World" (MIT Press,

2024) and caught the attention of UN Women. As part of the discussion leading up to the two-day review of the UN Women report, Robert learned that what's been laid out for her new book is similar to the conceptual framework being proposed to U.N. member states to confront climate justice and, "to do so from the perspectives of women and those who are most vulnerable to climate change, and who also have a deep fountain of knowledge about schools and food systems."



Sarah A. Robert

Climate change is having a significant impact on food systems. And climate justice is an important concept that is gaining momentum around the world. Robert's forthcoming book looks at the food systems in schools from urban Philadelphia to rural Brazil and beyond.

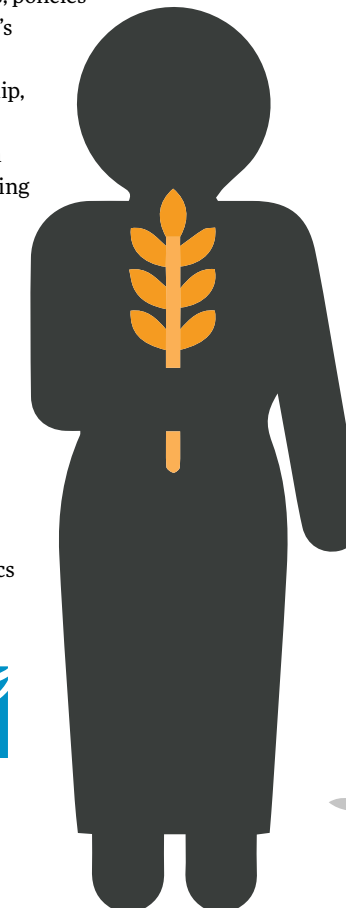
"There are people who care for communities in ways that governments need to start paying attention to and finding ways to support both in terms of just honoring and recognizing the work that they're doing in their communities," she said.

Robert has been entrenched in feminist policy and educational food system studies for three decades. And while she's been involved with crafting policy and language all over the world, this is her first time working with UN Women.

"This was really incredible because of the diversity of experts who were asked to participate," she said. "People from different sectors of the world who have knowledge and engage in work that's concerned about women and about climate justice and about food systems. It was refreshing because I was being asked to be an expert and to share my knowledge, but I also was engaging in learning. I think that that's the beauty of that type of meeting."

Robert says it speaks volumes that UN Women brought together experts who have knowledge that addresses women's experiences around the world. And of the report, Robert says she thought it was brilliant, moving and important.

"I was so humbled by the fact that our research matters on a global level. And that there are people at this global policy-making level who are actually paying attention," she said. "They want to know what it is that someone at the University at Buffalo is doing. And it's really transformative as a public scholar to work with governments to make that change happen in different places. So that was really moving and really reassuring."



The gift of librarianship: New fellowship honors UB alumna's legacy and love story

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

Tim Laraway established a fellowship in his wife Nell's name for a simple reason: He loved her, and they loved UB.

He first noticed Nell Tyler in the fall of 1968 while walking from his apartment in the University Heights neighborhood to UB's South Campus. She lived in the house across the street, and according to Laraway, she had the most beautiful smile he'd ever seen.

Within a few months, the glances from across the street turned into lengthy conversations, and they began dating. While Laraway was initially drawn in by her beauty, it was Tyler's thoughtful, intelligent and hardworking nature that he found most captivating. Together, they studied and shared adventures—like attending Woodstock and joining anti-war protests on campus. And, when Laraway proposed in 1969, Tyler said yes.

After graduating from UB and getting married in 1970, the Laraways moved to Charleston, West Virginia, to pursue their careers. A graduate of the civil engineering bachelor's program, Tim was eager to immerse himself in the field. On the other hand, Nell had studied history and education and felt uncertain about the shape she wanted her career to take. It wasn't until she spoke to her aunt Cornelia, a librarian at Cornell University, that she realized she wanted to pursue graduate studies and a career in librarianship.

The Laraways moved to Denver, Colorado, where Tim began a new position at the Department of the Interior. Nell enrolled in the University of Denver's master's program in librarianship. She had found her niche and—after completing the program—carried her passion for librarianship as their careers took them to Pennsylvania, Georgia and Ohio. "I kind of dragged her all over the country, but she always adapted," Tim recalled with a smile.

Their time in Columbus, Ohio, marked a turning point: They became parents to their daughter, Erin, in 1984. Around the same time, Nell joined the Squire, Sanders & Dempsey Law Firm as the head of the law library. "She was a law librarian for the rest of her career—the next almost 20 years. She loved that job," said Tim.

Nell's enthusiasm for law librarianship continued at the Murphy, Young & Smith Law Firm, where she worked as the head law librarian until her retirement in 2015.

Her dedication and desire to help others join the information science field inspired Tim to set up a fellowship in his wife's honor after she passed away in October 2021. "Her graduate degree meant the world to her. She knew it would open the doors for her to have a career where she could do the things she wanted to do, because she was smart, thoughtful and always wanted to be challenged," he said.

"That's why I decided to approach UB about a fellowship in her name. She loved UB when she was there."

Continued on next page



The generous gift moved **Dan Albertson**, professor and chair of GSE's Department of Information Science. "UB meant so much to this family. Our profession meant so much," Albertson said. "Those factors went into deciding to connect with us and to give us a gift in honor of Nell. It is a very special thing to be part of someone's major life discussion and decision.

"People recognize our profession as being one of service and helping people, and so it's special when people give back," he continued. "It's just indicative of our wider profession."

"Her graduate degree meant the world to her. She knew it would open the doors for her to have a career where she could do the things she wanted to do, because she was smart, thoughtful and always wanted to be challenged."

The fellowship seeks to recruit and retain information science students, focusing on those who express financial need, and have the potential for academic and professional success. Albertson reports that a "very worthy" candidate was awarded the fellowship for the first time in 2023.

"Scholarships have a tremendous impact on what we do and, on our students," Albertson said. "It's a lifelong gift."

Now that the fellowship has taken effect, Tim finds comfort in knowing that his wife's legacy lives on. "When she died, I lost my best friend. ... She was a really important person to me. And she always wanted to help. That's what this fellowship is about," he said.

"I know she's smiling about this right now."

At left: Photos of Nell throughout the years, from her time as a UB student (bottom) to her participation in gatherings with colleagues from the West Virginia State Library Commission (top), where Nell managed the Library Commission's Program for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Former West Virginia Governor Jay Rockefeller attended one of the Commission's events (middle).

GSE launches new combined degree programs in English, information science

BY DELANEY REH

GSE's Department of Information Science recently launched two new combined degree programs. Through these **new programs**, students can simultaneously earn a Bachelor of Arts in English with either a Master of Science in information and library science, or a Master of Science in school librarianship.

A collaboration between GSE and UB's College of Arts and Sciences, the new programs were designed to create a clear career path for undergraduate students majoring in English who are interested in the information and library sciences profession. The coursework will give students the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed for successful careers after graduation.

The programs can be completed in five years rather than the traditional six, allowing students to save on tuition, while cultivating an educational background that will make graduates competitive in the job market.

"Anyone with an undergraduate degree in English should look at these programs because it would give them a clear career path to look toward after their undergraduate degree. The programs allow students to couple their undergraduate interest in English with professional coursework, whether it be in school librarianship or information and library science," said **Dan Albertson**, professor and chair of the Department of Information Science.

The BA English/MS information and library science program requires 135 credits for completion. Students enrolled in this program can pursue careers as academic librarians, public librarians, archivists, digital humanities specialists,



digital communications specialists, information managers, webmasters and within private industries and businesses.

Meanwhile, the BA English/MS in school librarianship program requires 138 credits. Students enrolled in this program will receive the preparation and certification needed to secure New York State K-12 teacher librarian credentials for work in a school library setting.

"Anyone with an undergraduate degree in English should look at these programs because it would give them a clear career path to look toward after their undergraduate degree."

Both MS programs are accredited by the American Library Association.

Students in these programs will complete undergraduate coursework on campus and graduate coursework online.

Albertson believes that offering students a pathway to careers in information science and school librarianship is vital in today's landscape of misinformation. "We see a lot of topics about information literacy and management that are becoming really important right now as people and organizations are bombarded with lots of information every day, and it's difficult to assess what's accurate and useful. But information professionals are on the front line of those services," he said.



At left: The Laraways attending a family gathering in Batavia, New York, in 2005.



Censorship hinders critical thinking and infringes on readers' rights

BY JULIE GORLEWSKI

Banned Books Week, held during the first week of October, seemed an ideal time to investigate the meanings of key terms and the implications of their execution. In today's political landscape, the words "censorship" and "book banning" are whispered and declared in a range of settings, without always ensuring that shared understandings underpin discussion. Let's start there.

According to Oxford Languages, censorship means "the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news, etc. that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security." While the definition is a useful starting point, it omits the actor. This is critical because it is a person who determines whether texts are obscene, politically unacceptable or dangerous; and people's interpretation of texts in relation to these criteria differ. Some people find nudity and sex to be obscene, others find depictions of violence and war offensive. Some people object to references to demons, angels and deities, and others prefer texts that include them. In a diverse, pluralistic society, considerations about what content should be censored and why reflect an enduring tension that seems inherent to democracy.

Criteria matter in censorship decisions, but even more relevant is power. In other words, whose viewpoints are enacted, and whose perspectives are ignored? Who decides what is obscene, politically unacceptable or a threat to security? And who is affected by these decisions? In some cases, lines of authority are clear. More often they are not. Having spent many years as an English teacher and department chair in a public school, I have direct experience navigating these ideas in consequential contexts.

For example, each year, my colleagues and I collaborated on the development of curriculum, which included summer reading lists for each grade level. Our intention was to create lists with a range of topics and reading levels, since the books would be read independently without instruction. Summer reading assignments were designed to heighten student interest and increase reading fluency and thus build in student choice from a list of district-provided selections. One June when I was department chair, the district assistant superintendent received a call from a parent who expressed

concern about the list. When I returned the call, the parent said that none of the books on the 10th grade reading list were acceptable. Her objections to the books included references to religion and the occult (angels, wizards or witches), excerpts related to physical desire or of a sexual nature, and descriptions of violence (settings with a backdrop of war or other kinds of fighting). She acknowledged that she had not read the books, and listened as I explained our rationale for text selection and presented the merits of the books listed.

It is important to note that our conversation was collegial, as we both sought to understand the other's position and to reach a solution. The parent initially requested that, based on her objections, we replace the list with a new set of books. I explained that no set of books would be immune from complaints, as objections and the assumptions that underlie them represent enduring tensions that require ongoing negotiation in a democratic society. I expressed agreement with her assertion that she has the right to determine what her child reads, but disagreed with her request to determine what all incoming 10th graders could read. This gave her pause, as she considered how her rights intersected with the rights of other parents who might have different values and different criteria regarding the appropriateness of texts for their children. This parent could and did decide to provide an alternative summer reading book, but she did not have the right to decide what texts the rest of the 10th graders could be exposed to.

Decisions about censorship uphold the rights and values of some and deny the rights and values of others. As public educators, we are charged to respond to the communities we serve. Schools and teachers should

respect the values of families, and should also engage them in curricular activities that are challenging, reflect diverse perspectives and promote critical thought. All of these endeavors require dialogue—speaking and listening with the goal of expanding understanding. We expect this of learners, and should expect no less from the adults around them. Censorship is contextual; therefore it should not be standardized.

Extensive, standardized censorship leads to book banning. To make a film analogy, instead of blurring objectionable content (which would be akin to censorship), the whole film is prohibited. Such an approach is inherently undemocratic. It obstructs dialogue and inhibits informed discussion. Learners who never encounter challenging content are unprepared for authentic participation in our society; having never considered alternative perspectives, they may not be prepared to explicate their own beliefs. Ironically, these conditions run counter to the aims of many proponents of censorship and book banning.

Ultimately, censorship and book banning reveal relations of power. Who decides whether a text should be available to read, and for whom are such decisions made? A thriving democracy requires an educated populace—people who are exposed to diverse ideas and can debate effectively. Censorship and banned books undermine the foundations of our

society. Schools and libraries exist to promote dialogue and critical thought for learners of all ages. Censorship is simply the powerful silencing of the less powerful. What is it that those in power fear will be learned? And how can we ensure we will be able to read it? Educators must advocate to liberate readers.



Julie Gorlewski is the senior associate dean for academic affairs and teacher education and a professor of learning and instruction. Her research focuses on curriculum and instruction; access and equity; English education; educator preparation; school and community partnerships; and qualitative research methods.



Learning and leading with love: Nicholas Emmanuele brings care and connection to classrooms

Nicholas Emmanuele works with a student in his classroom in the Millcreek Township School District in Erie, Pennsylvania.

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

GSE PhD student Nicholas Emmanuele tells the students in his classroom he loves them at least once a week. While he used to say those three words only after a national tragedy, like a school shooting, he decided to make it a regular practice—because he means it.

And it's not just students. Emmanuele loves people, especially when connecting with them about learning—something he does often through his work in Erie, Pennsylvania, as an English teacher and department chair in the Millcreek Township School District, and as an adjunct instructor at Gannon University.

His zeal for learning, teaching and connection permeates everything he does outside the classroom, including his participation in professional organizations. He serves as the president of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English Language Arts and of the Literacy Association of Greater Erie, and as the associate chair of the Conference on English Leadership.

Emmanuele's devotion to education also impacts his approach to social media. "I really like meeting people and learning things. And so, Twitter [now X] has been one of those amazing spaces where I've connected with people from all over ... I think it has made me more aware of the profession," he said.

"It's talking with people, it's building friendships—or at least professional friendships—if that's a category of friendships, finding mentors, mentoring others," he

shared. "It's expanding my network of connections and understanding of our field so I can do a better job in my day-to-day work with students."

The drive to continue learning and growing influenced his decision to pursue GSE's curriculum, instruction and the science of learning PhD program in 2018. "I had done a couple of graduate certificates and two master's degrees," he explained. "And so, after a two-year wait, I was looking at the UB program, and I just knew I wanted to keep going. I like taking classes. I like learning. I like figuring things out."

An online, part-time student, Emmanuele is now focused on his dissertation. Inspired by his professional and academic background in special education, he centers his research on how students with learning disabilities in reading accept, reject or navigate that label—a label placed on them by adults, a label some students do not initially know they have.

He cites faculty like **Tiffany Karalis Noel**, clinical assistant professor of learning and instruction and director of doctoral programs, and **John Strong**, assistant professor of learning and instruction, as mentors. "All of the professors have been great, whether through email, an asynchronous course or a synchronous course," he said.

His advisor, **Ryan Rish**, associate professor of learning and instruction, has offered

particularly helpful and constructive guidance throughout the dissertation process: "He's been a wonderful support," Emmanuele said. "He is very easygoing, really supportive, a great sounding board—and he always touches base when we need to."

"Nick is, first and foremost, a thoughtful learner. He seeks to understand what is supporting and what is getting in the way of students and teachers flourishing," said Rish. "In his research, Nick seeks to understand how students process and experience disability labels that are ascribed to them in the context of reading instruction. In his district and national leadership roles, he seeks to understand how institutional shifts can be made to support teaching and learning. Nick wants to understand in order to guide effective and lasting change."

Looking to the future, Emmanuele hopes to finish his dissertation in 2024 and then continue his research independently after graduation. But, more than anything else, he still wants to help and work with students.

"I like working with students who are figuring out how to communicate differently, or better, and are developing as communicators, readers and writers," he said. "I want people to feel comfortable and welcomed in school, where they feel like they can be successful and find ways that increase their sense of success."

GSE student earns mental health counseling scholarship

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

Luiza Perez Ortiz, a first-year student in GSE's mental health counseling master's program, is the recipient of a scholarship created to support underrepresented students who are entering or enrolled in mental health degree programs at SUNY or CUNY campuses.

Perez Ortiz and three other UB students receiving the scholarships are among 21 students statewide who will share \$2 million to support tuition assistance, paid internships and direct stipends for minority and multilingual students through a partnership with the New York State Office of Mental Health, SUNY and CUNY.

The scholarships aim to expand and diversify the state's mental health workforce. They will also provide expanded mentorship and guidance for the recipients.

"The funding, support and guidance are amazing," said Perez Ortiz, who first realized that she was interested in pursuing a career as a mental health counselor while growing up in East Hampton, New York. When facing struggles with her own mental health, she recalls being unable to locate the help she needed.

"There were really no community resources, especially resources in Spanish. I speak English, but my parents speak mostly Spanish," she said. "My mom had no idea how to connect me to therapists when I needed it."

Soon thereafter, she left East Hampton to study psychology at SUNY Geneseo with the goal of helping immigrant and refugee communities who may face similar challenges accessing mental health counseling. Upon graduation, she chose to continue her education at UB because of the cohort model and tight-knit community in the mental health counseling program. "It's really nice to be with people with the same interests ... Creating those connections with my peers has been wonderful," she said.

Her experiences learning alongside GSE's faculty have also left a meaningful

impression. Perez Ortiz describes her experiences in classes with Aaron Reslink, adjunct instructor of counseling, school and educational psychology, as "amazing" and "really helpful"—particularly because Reslink helped connect Perez Ortiz with the New York Mental Health Counseling Association (NYMHCA). "He's very involved with NYMHCA, and now I'm involved with a friend from the program—we're student ambassadors. We recently participated in the Out of the Darkness Buffalo Walk for suicide prevention," she said.

She also cites Wendy M. Guyker, clinical associate professor of counseling, school and educational psychology, as a source of support: "I am interested in her clinic and research focus on mindfulness-based interventions. In her Principles to Ethics class, I had to have my first client—a student client—which helped me build my confidence to start my internship in the fall."

Guyker shares equally positive feelings about Perez Ortiz. "Luiza is warm, empathic, thoughtful and sensitive, but she is also passionate, hard-working and committed. Together, these qualities make her such a strong and well-deserving recipient of this important scholarship, and I couldn't be more proud or excited for her."

The impact of the scholarship will last long beyond Perez Ortiz's time at UB. She plans to pursue a PhD program in counseling, allowing her to meet her goal of serving refugee and immigrant communities, while also specializing in eating disorders. She hopes to employ mindfulness-based interventions to treat eating disorders and intergenerational trauma in the Latinx community.

She also plans to take a creative approach to her future practice. "I appreciate the healing properties of nature and enjoy spending time outdoors, usually hiking, camping and paddle boarding. I want to incorporate nature, art and physical activity such as hiking and yoga—a holistic approach—into my counseling," she said.



"Luiza is warm, empathic, thoughtful and sensitive, but she is also passionate, hard-working and committed. Together, these qualities make her such a strong and well-deserving recipient of this important scholarship, and I couldn't be more proud or excited for her."

2023-24 Fellowships and Scholarships



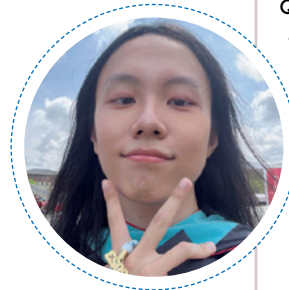
UB Graduate School Fellow Najat Sghyar travels to the Black Sea Region in Turkey.

UB Graduate School Fellows

The UB Graduate School Fellowship helps fund outstanding graduate students at UB.

Weiyi Ding

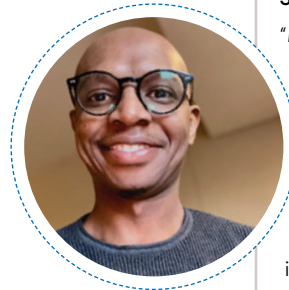
HOMETOWN: Wuxi, China
PROGRAM: Educational Psychology and Quantitative Methods PhD



"I would like to enhance school engagement for international students by identifying and addressing current problems of parental support among parents from different countries. This scholarship helps me to better prepare for my doctoral degree and allows me to step further in the research field."

Blessed Mhungu

HOMETOWN: Harare, Zimbabwe
PROGRAM: Curriculum, Instruction and the Science of Learning PhD



"My ambition is to be a college professor, a beacon of inspiration for others, regardless of their background. With the GSE fellowship, I aspire to make quality education accessible to students from marginalized communities, just as I came from, and I pledge to introduce the concept of 'UBUNTU' to the USA. UBUNTU is a term steeped in South African culture, emphasizing the interconnectedness of humanity in all our endeavors."

Najat Sghyar

HOMETOWN: Casablanca, Morocco
PROGRAM: Language Education and Multilingualism PhD



"I want to show the world how amazing Moroccan students are at learning multiple languages. The fellowship allows me to do impactful research on Moroccan public education. As we say back home: set your intentions. Dir niya!"

Presidential Fellows

The Presidential Fellowship Program, inaugurated in the fall of 1984, is awarded to new PhD applicants who have a record of excellence. Students must be appointed as a full teaching, graduate or research assistant.

Sara Kieffer

HOMETOWN: Long Beach, California
PROGRAM: Higher Education PhD



"My goal is to have a career that benefits students from 'non-traditional' backgrounds, either through research, policy-building or in a student-facing role. I believe I will be able to do this with the support of my fellowship, which has and will continue to provide the opportunity and resources for me to develop as an academic and a professional."

Ziqi (Kathleen) Li

HOMETOWN: Kunming, Yunnan, China
PROGRAM: Language Education and Multilingualism PhD



"My academic interests mainly center on community, identity and language learning. With the presidential fellowship, I intend to work closely with schools and institutions to increase educational opportunities for international students and promote equity in language education."

Yeshi Paljor

HOMETOWN: Tibet/Dharamshala, India
PROGRAM: Curriculum, Instruction and the Science of Learning PhD



"At seven, I was displaced from my family in Tibet, finding refuge in the Tibetan exile community in India. This fellowship is a pivotal opportunity, offering personal growth, academic development and community impact. Being part of the dynamic UB GSE community is an honor. I'm proud and grateful for this chance to enhance my knowledge and skills, enabling me to contribute more to my goals and community."

Reza Nahid Sahlan

HOMETOWN: Tabriz, Iran
PROGRAM: Counseling Psychology and School Psychology PhD



"Overall, I am potentially interested in studying eating disorders among adolescents, college students and pregnant women. I am eager to continue my research work. Furthermore, I am interested in being involved in therapy using evidence-based treatments for those who report eating disorders. I have a plan to apply to United States universities to become an assistant professor and start supervising students. Being a fellow provides me with additional support for my professional growth, allowing me to maximize the benefits of my graduate school experience."

Silvia Zumaglini

HOMETOWN: Biella, Italy
PROGRAM: Counseling Psychology and School Psychology PhD



"My professional aspirations are becoming a school psychologist and staying involved in meaningful research projects. I am passionate about learning how to best support young people and helping them succeed in and out of school. Being a fellow and student in the combined school and counseling psychology program allows me to pursue all of these goals."

Arthur Schomburg Fellows

UB's Arthur A. Schomburg Fellowship Program provides financial support for master's and doctoral students who contribute to the diversity of the student body and have overcome a disadvantage or other barrier to success in higher education.

Daphanie Bibbs

HOMETOWN: Chicago, Illinois
PROGRAM: Curriculum, Instruction and the Science of Learning PhD

"My academic and professional goals include launching a research study that lends perspective on how Black history is taught by non-Black teachers, constructing a platform for school administrators and teachers to embed Black history education throughout the academic year, and pursuing professorship to instruct, motivate and advise pre-service teachers. Being an Arthur A. Schomburg fellow will greatly impact the lives of my daughter Amiyah, and Black girls and Black women whom I intend to advocate for throughout this journey."



Kiana Jean-Baptiste

HOMETOWN: Fairburn, Georgia
PROGRAM: Counseling Psychology and School Psychology PhD

"I aspire to pursue a tenured faculty position and conduct research related to queer people of color (QPOC). Further, I intend to engage in social action aimed at deconstructing oppressive systems and promoting equity for the population. This fellowship provides me with the means to pursue academic endeavors that will prepare me to enter spaces where I can enact such change."



Robyn Lelito

HOMETOWN: Buffalo, New York
PROGRAM: Counseling Psychology and School Psychology PhD

"My research goals center on Indigenous and LGBTQ2S+ competent psychological treatment, intersectionality, trauma, resilience, protective factors and access to care. I hope to use this research to provide quality care to these populations. Being a fellow means having the privilege to access resources that support my research and training to provide quality services to marginalized and underrepresented populations."



Lino Loja

HOMETOWN: Sleepy Hollow, New York
PROGRAM: Educational Psychology and Quantitative Methods PhD

"There are several challenges that minority children face throughout their lives that I feel get overlooked. Although being a Schomburg fellow helps me tremendously in various ways, I believe it has a strong impact on the future of minority families and their children's education. I say this because that's my goal at the end of this: to help as many minority children as I can in my life."



Aminah Raysor

HOMETOWN: Gaithersburg, Maryland
PROGRAM: Language Education and Multilingualism PhD

"I aspire to help improve pre-service K-12 World Language (WL) teacher development through autoethnographic research methods, examining interest convergence theory and linguistic capital in WL education. This fellowship has created the ideal experiential learning environment for my academic and professional goals."



Richard Williams

HOMETOWN: Locust Grove, Georgia
PROGRAM: Curriculum, Instruction and the Science of Learning PhD

"My scholastic goal is to collaboratively discover and create a pedagogy of compassion while practicing healing and community. I am an individual who lives their divergent abilities out loud and in audacious invitation for those around me to practice community and healing together. The fellowship has an immediate impact on my work by affirming the practice and process, while simultaneously enabling me to connect and practice compassion, curiosity and learning with the UB and broader Buffalo community."



SCENE ON SOCIAL

To infinity and beyond!

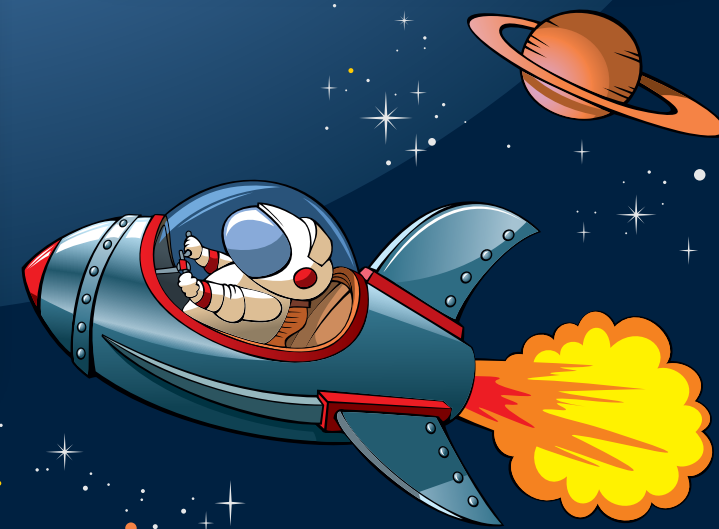
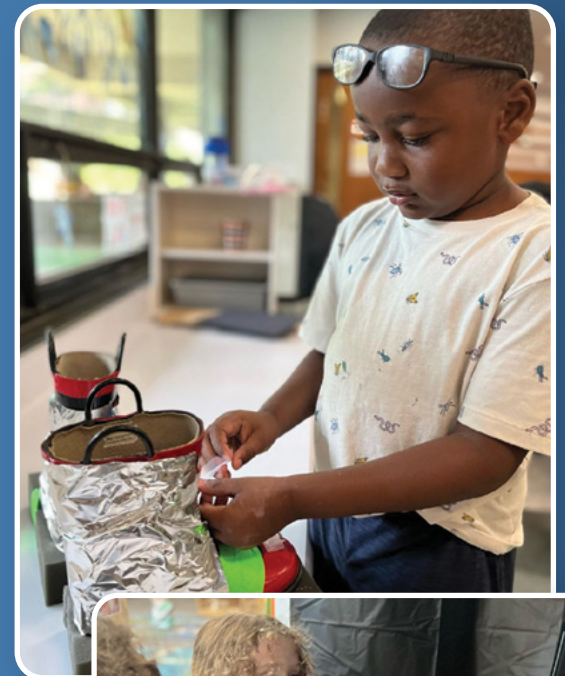
The ECRC learns about space through hands-on activities

BY SARA DEMBSKI

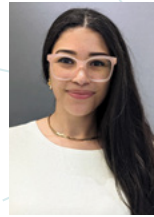
At the end of July, the UB Early Childhood Research Center's Instagram account showcased their trip to outer space. From looking at satellite images to getting lost in the stars, there was always something to do. The children learned various facts about our moon, such as what its rocks look like and the fact that the moon has one-sixth of the earth's surface gravity. This would explain why astronauts walk so funny when exploring the moon; nothing is holding them down!

All age groups got in on the fun, even the toddlers. They wore space masks to breathe in the galaxy's thin air and wrote in "blue moon dust" to communicate with other life forms. With all the excitement, they almost forgot to keep the classroom's space station running correctly.

UB's Early Childhood Research Center did a fantastic job this summer combining learning and play to teach the children about space! The GSE community enjoys seeing what the children are up to, and Instagram is the perfect way to tag along on their adventures.



Welcoming this year's residents



Myra Ahmed

Worked as a substitute teacher in the Buffalo Public Schools. She holds a bachelor's degree in individualized studies with the programmatic theme of community revitalization. Ahmed was born and raised in Buffalo, and loves to work with arts and crafts. "One specific teacher inspired and motivated me to pursue UBTR. This program would allow me to be able to continue modeling and expressing the respect, peace of mind and quality education that every student deserves."



Grace Bashizi

Is originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and came to the U.S. in 2008. Bashizi graduated from Buffalo State University with a bachelor's degree in political science. She is fluent in Swahili, Mashi, Luganda, French and English. "I was motivated to become a teacher in Buffalo because I worked as an academic coach in the Buffalo Public Schools. I saw a need for multilingual teachers in the Buffalo Public Schools."



Esther Blakely

Received an associate degree in general studies from Erie County Community College and a bachelor's degree in business management and economics from Empire State University. Blakely has worked for more than 10 years as a program coordinator for Playworks, which is supported by the Buffalo Board of Education. "I was interested in the UBTR program because it seemed like the timing was finally right to pursue a career as an educator. I want to become a teacher because I want to be an active participant in the change that I want to see within the communities of the global majority."



Tanya Blakeley-Clark

Earned a bachelor's and master's degree in history from Eastern Washington University. During her time there, her thesis, "The Martyrdom of Anne Askew: A Case Study in the Suppression of Feminine Spirituality in Early Modern England," was awarded the 2016 Raymond G. Shultz prize for best departmental thesis. In addition to pursuing her advanced certificate, her dissertation is underway with the UB history department. "As someone who comes from a low-income, first-generation family, I have personally seen the ways that a good education can change lives. I believe that teaching in an urban school is a great way to pay it forward and put my education and skills to use."



Mary Kay Caulfield

Attended Buffalo State University and earned her bachelor's degree in humanities. As a longtime champion Irish dancer, Caulfield became a certified Irish dance teacher and instructed children ages 3 and up. After subbing in the Buffalo Public Schools, Caulfield decided to apply to the UBTR program. "I think that every child deserves a chance and just needs to be given an opportunity to shine! I will be a powerful advocate for my students."



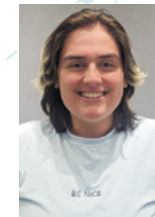
Kara Cottrell

Obtained a bachelor's degree in business administration, and a master's in international business from Daemen University. After a long career in human resources, Cottrell decided it was time for a change. "I have always been interested in teaching, so I was thrilled to be accepted into the UBTR program. I want to become a teacher to inspire young children, and I am motivated to teach in Buffalo to have an impact on my community."



Angel Davis

Received an associate degree in biblical studies and a bachelor's degree in business management from D'Youville University, and a master's degree in organizational leadership from Medaille University. Davis originally worked as an insurance claims adjuster for 15 years, and decided to change careers and enter the field of education. "I am very passionate about justice, right and wrong, and feel the need to advocate for those who are underserved."



Alexa Dean

Earned her bachelor's degree in geology from UB. As an undergraduate, Dean worked as a barista at Starbucks—and she now plans to transfer the skills she obtained in creating lesson plans and individual learning plans while training new baristas to educating youth in the classroom. "I was interested in the UBTR Program because of the opportunity to work in the Buffalo Public Schools. I am drawn to Buffalo Public Schools because of the diversity in their schools and the ability to immerse myself in many different cultures. I want to become a teacher because I want to make a difference in students' lives and be a positive role model."



Jada Fisher

Studied at the UB where she obtained a degree in psychology in 2020. While obtaining that degree, she started working at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo's Early Childhood Center, where she discovered her passion for working with children. "Going into the Buffalo Public School district, where diversity enrollment is so high, I am able to educate, love and foster a safe environment for students of all cultural backgrounds."



Lauren Fogle

Graduated from Niagara University with a bachelor's degree in biology. She found a love of teaching while working as a substitute teacher for the Hamburg Central School District. "When choosing to go back to school, I spoke to many of my friends who are teachers and a couple work for the Buffalo Public Schools and love it. When I investigated different programs and spoke to UB, it seemed like the perfect fit."



Ashtyn Gregoire

Is a UB graduate after beginning his educational journey at Niagara County Community College. He earned his bachelor's degree in business with a minor in education. "I was interested in UBTR because I loved my time in undergrad at UB and wanted to stay here for grad school. I decided on teaching after seeing the impact my great-grandma was able to have on her students just as an aide, and always wanted to be able to have that same impact."



Abby Griffith

Is an Alfred University graduate with a bachelor's degree in English. She also attended the University of Tennessee, where she received a master's degree in English. Her most recent positions include serving as the executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Wyoming County, and as lead executive director for the CCE Western Shared Business Network. "I can think of no better program to hone my skills as an educator than one that provides participants with such rigorous, hands-on learning opportunities. I could not be more excited to join the community of passionate individuals who make up the residency program."



Jaime Herbeck

Received an undergraduate degree in organizational communication, learning and design with a minor in art history and still photography from Ithaca College. Herbeck has had the pleasure of teaching English as a new language to a group of incredible adults through the Ken-Ton Adult and Community Education program since moving to Buffalo. "What I hope for in education is meaningful, community-embedded project-based learning that gives students the spark, curiosity and courage to think for themselves, ignite tangible, positive change in the places they call home and continually question the world around them."



Cierra Hernandez

Attended UB and majored in health and human services. Hernandez has been working as a social-emotional coordinator with BestSelf to support the Buffalo Public Schools. "Being a community partner in Buffalo for the past four years allowed me to see how I can support students and coach teachers to be trauma-informed, teach with a social-emotional lens and include more restorative justice practices in their school day. Being able to support the diversity and diverse learners that Buffalo Public Schools has to offer is something that I want to do."



Meg Devine Maxwell

Is a graduate of College of the Holy Cross and earned a bachelor's degree in English. Maxwell then went on to work in publishing, arts marketing and higher education communications for 20-plus years. "I am equally excited by UBTR's commitment to increasing educational opportunities for all students and the opportunity to learn experientially in a classroom from/with an experienced mentor teacher."



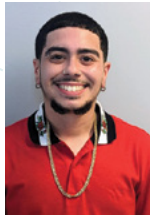
Jesse Meeder

Earned his BA in English language and literature from Gordon College. An avid vegetable farmer, Meeder has held positions with various nonprofits that focus on educating youth about healthy foods. "I believe in the importance of the public educational system, and wanted to receive training, experience and eventually professional work opportunities in an urban school system such as Buffalo's."



Loran Peterson

Is a graduate of SUNY Fredonia, where he earned a BA and MA in English. Peterson is a world traveler and lived in the Middle East for 14 years, where he worked as an editor for Open-Source Enterprises and Now Lebanon. "UBTR offered a golden opportunity for me to channel my experiences abroad into Buffalo Public Schools classrooms. I'm a big fan of self-advocacy among the underserved and came back to Western New York to see if I could find a way to engage that in powerful, meaningful ways."



Victor Enrique Morales

Earned a bachelor's degree from SUNY Fredonia with a dual major in English and political science. Morales has previously worked as a domestic violence advocate and was a supported housing specialist before deciding to enter education. "I believe building community is vital and look forward to being a part of a school community. When I contemplated if I wanted to teach, I always knew I would be teaching in Buffalo if I did."



Tierra Purdue

Received a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics, with a concentration in statistical modeling, from Buffalo State University. Purdue was born and raised in Buffalo and is a proud product of the Buffalo Public Schools and a Say Yes Scholar alumna. "I think it is so important to see teachers who look like you, especially in a STEM subject, and teachers who have had a similar experience. By knowing I can make a change for the better, it motivates me."



Areej Mullick

Studied biological science for her undergraduate degree at UB. Mullick is a cat lover and would like to become a foster cat mom in the future. "I became interested in teaching due to my organic chemistry professor. I am a Buffalo Public Schools student myself, and that, paired with the effect my professor had on me, led to this program."



Melissa Ray-Schaefer

Is a UB alum with a BA in communication and an MS in applied public affairs. Ray-Schaefer was the director of the community center for a youth and family counseling agency in Illinois for ten years before taking a break to raise four children. She has been working as a teacher's aide in Buffalo and found her calling as a teacher. "A family friend highly recommended the UBTR program. His son is a graduate and happily teaching in the Buffalo Public Schools."



Tasha Vega

Completed her associate degree in liberal arts and science at Trocaire College. She also completed her bachelor's degree in educational

studies at Empire State University. Vega has more than 20 years of experience working in education. "Since I was in high school, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. When I received an email regarding the UBTR, I immediately began the steps required to apply."



Lauren White

Graduated in 2022 with a bachelor's degree in communication and marketing from SUNY Brockport. While at Brockport, White was

the vice president of The Organization for Students of African Descent, where she organized community events and community service projects for the student body. "I was interested in UBTR because I love how the program works toward the improvement of Buffalo Public Schools. My passion for working with students in my community and being their representative motivates me to teach in a diverse school district like Buffalo Public Schools."

GSE secures over \$4.75 million in grant funding for teacher residency program

GSE faculty recently secured two substantial grants aimed at revolutionizing teacher education and diversifying the teaching profession. These grants, totaling more than \$4.75 million, will support initiatives aimed at addressing teacher shortages, improving teacher quality and promoting diversity in the education sector.

The first project, entitled "UB Teacher Residency MBK TOC II," has been funded with \$564,220 by the New York State Education Department's My Brother's Keeper Teacher Opportunity Corps II initiative. Under the leadership of Principal Investigator **Amanda Winkelsas**, GSE clinical assistant professor and director of the UB Teacher Residency Program, alongside Co-PIs **Julie Gorlewski**, GSE professor and senior associate dean of academic affairs and teacher education; and **Elisabeth Etopio**, GSE clinical associate professor and assistant dean for teacher education, this project aims to enhance teacher recruitment and preparation. The project seeks to positively impact student learning by developing teacher residents who cultivate an inclusive, equitable classroom climate where students' social-emotional and academic needs are met. Over five years, it will provide partial tuition scholarships,

certification exam support and textbook assistance to 20 My Brother's Keeper Teacher Opportunity Corps II Scholars annually, focusing on underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students pursuing certification through the UBTR Program.

The second project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership Program with \$4,190,612, will further expand the UBTR Program. Led by Winkelsas as PI and a team of Co-PIs, including **Rosenblith, Gorlewski and Etopio**, as well as **Erin Kearney**, GSE associate professor and chair of the Department of Learning and Instruction; **Corrie Stone-Johnson**, GSE professor of educational leadership and policy; and Kamontá Heidelberg, assistant professor of school psychology at The Ohio State University's College of Education and Human Ecology, this initiative will broaden UB's successful 16-month teacher residency program to schools and districts beyond Buffalo. It will also introduce a leadership staff to prepare building leaders who understand the unique needs of novice teachers, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds.

The two grants are in addition to two existing grants supporting the UBTR program: a U.S. Department of Education Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant awarded in 2022 (\$3.5 million), and a National Science Foundation Noyce Program grant (\$1.1 million) awarded in 2021.



On the Move | HONORS, AWARDS AND PROMOTIONS

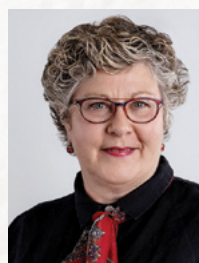
FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORS



Jasmine Alvarado, assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy, was awarded the AERA Latina/o/x Outstanding Dissertation Award.



Janina Brutt-Griffler, professor in the Department of Learning and Instruction, was awarded the 2023 Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education at the University at Buffalo.



Heidi Julien, professor in the Department of Information Science, was awarded the Canadian Association for Information Science Career Achievement Award. She was also recognized as a UB Exceptional Scholar for Sustained Achievement.



Jaekyung Lee, professor in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology, was named a Fulbright Scholar and traveled to Kazakhstan this past summer.



Amanda Nickerson, professor in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology, was inducted into the Society for the Study of School Psychology.



Courtney Ward-Sutton, assistant professor in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology, was awarded the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation President's Award.

STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS



Russel Bassarath, a UB Teach student studying history and social studies education, has received a Fulbright Scholar Award and will spend the academic year in Cyprus.

ALUMNI AWARDS



Moza Coote, PhD '23, was a finalist in UB's Three Minute Thesis Competition.



Tiffany M. Nyachae, PhD '18, received the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship Award.



Roberta A. Stevens, MLS '74, BA '70, was recognized with the UB Alumni Association's Samuel P. Capen Award.



Francisco M. Vasquez, PhD '03, was recognized with the UB Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award for GSE.

STAFF AWARDS



Louise Lalli was recognized as Advisor of the Year by the University Advising Council.



GSE's Marketing and Communications team, **Amber Winters, Danielle LeGare and William J. Belz III**, were awarded "Best of Category" in the SUNY CUAD Awards of Excellence for the fall 2022 issue of Learn magazine.

FACULTY PROMOTIONS



Stephanie Fredrick in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology has been promoted to associate professor with tenure.



Xiufeng Liu in the Department of Learning and Instruction was named SUNY Distinguished Professor.



Margaret Sallee in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy has been promoted to full professor.



Corrie Stone-Johnson in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy has been promoted to full professor.

WELCOME TO GSE

Patrick Braunscheidel joined the Office of Educator Preparation as a clinical coach.

Alice Cady joined the Early Childhood Research Center as an early childhood lead.

Jason Lyons joined the Office of Educator Preparation as a clinical coach.

Halley Maza joined the Teacher Residency Program as a postdoctoral student.

Arethetta Ming joined the Office of Educator Preparation as a clinical coach.

Tikana Truitt joined the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology as a clinical coordinator.

Beth Weiss joined the Office of Educator Preparation as a clinical coach.

Cassandra Wright joined the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy as the LIFTS Program coordinator.

STAFF ROLE CHANGES

William J. Belz III has been promoted to assistant director of web and accessibility for Marketing and Communications.

Jennifer Dexheimer has been promoted to mental health counseling program and clinical director in the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology.

Dawn Haak has been promoted to administrative operations coordinator.

Kristine Mariglia has been promoted to director of personnel and finance within the Office of the Dean.

A lifelong Buffalonian, **Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr.** earned his BA, EdM and EdD degrees from UB. Prior to joining the GSE faculty in 1965, he served as a teacher and curriculum coordinator in area schools. During his tenure at UB, he supervised nearly 100 doctoral and master's students. Several of his mentees came together to establish the **Dr. Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr. Mentorship Award**, which will honor exceptional mentorship in the GSE community. The inaugural award will be presented this spring, with a nomination process in the new year.



Continued Accreditation

The American Library Association (ALA) has recently granted continued accreditation status to the Master of Science in information and library science program in GSE's Department of Information Science. This accreditation status is a significant milestone for the program, reaffirming its commitment to excellence in education and preparing information professionals for the challenges of the digital age.

The accreditation decision, made by ALA's Committee on Accreditation, ensures that the program meets the rigorous standards set by ALA. Accreditation is vital, as it signifies that the program has met or exceeded the established benchmarks for quality education and professional development.

Visiting Faculty



Anne Perrault is a visiting lecturer in the Department of Information Science. Perrault brings a wealth of practitioner and district level leadership experience from the educational field. Perrault earned her MLIS from the University at Buffalo and her PhD in teaching and curriculum from the University of Rochester. She previously was a faculty member in the Information Science department and continued to serve as an adjunct after returning to the PK-12 public school system.

Her research is in information behaviors of educators to improve pedagogical practices, and the health information behaviors of young people with varying abilities. She has published in refereed and practitioner journals. Publications include "Reaching All Learners: Understanding and Leveraging Points of Intersection for School Librarians and Special Education Teachers" and "Schools as Information Ecologies: A Proposed Framework of Study."

Visiting Faculty



Kathleen Reeb is a visiting instructor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy. Reeb earned both her EdM in learning and instruction, and her PhD in educational culture, policy and society from the University at Buffalo's Graduate School of Education. Reeb will be instructing both undergraduate and doctoral level courses and will also be designing and offering a special course on the schooling realities of special education and the systems of dis/ability that underpin the K-12 landscape.

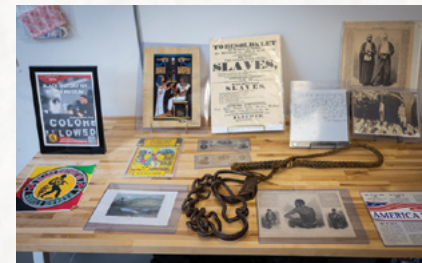
When not teaching, Reeb is a member of the Buffalo Public School's Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Executive Board, where she helps support families navigate the special education system and advocate for systemic change on their behalf. Reeb was selected as a 2020 NAEEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellow for her work on the structural and systemic mechanisms that undergird inequities for students with dis/abilities or those needing special education.

Events

TEACHING BLACK HISTORY CONFERENCE

Sounds of Blackness, Hip Hop Turns 50

July 21-23



Hundreds of educators, parents, librarians and others who share a love of Black history convene every year to learn the best curricular and instructional practices in Black history education at the Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education's annual Teaching Black History Conference. This year's conference theme was "The Sounds of Blackness: Hip Hop Turns 50," and offered interactive sessions led by educators and a range of thought-provoking keynote speakers, as well as a Black History 101 Traveling Museum, karaoke, laughter and fun.

Events

THE ROOTS OF RAP

Featuring author Carole Boston Weatherford

July 24

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

Aug. 26



UB ALUMNI WEBINAR

Addressing Teaching Shortages and Diversifying Teachers in the Classroom

Aug. 30

WELCOME BACK ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Aug. 30



WEBINAR

Beyond the Hashtag: Ten Things to Know about the Science of Reading

Sept. 7



At a time marked by growing public concern about the number of school-aged children who have difficulties learning to read, GSE hosted the event, "Beyond the Hashtag: Ten Things to Know about the Science of Reading," to explore and answer these questions. With over 200 K-12 educators, parents, administrators, and UB students and alums registered, the virtual event shed light on the different perspectives and implications related to the "science of reading"—or, in other words, how children learn to read.

COYOTE'S GENIUS: VALUES THAT ARE TRANSCENDING TIME—INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Featuring Caj Matheson

Sept. 13

VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCES AMONG TRANSGENDER AND GENDER EXPANSIVE ADOLESCENTS: AN EXAMINATION OF PREVALENCE, IMPACT AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Part of the Alberti Center Colloquium Series featuring Rachel C. Garthe, PhD

Sept. 14

ECPS LECTURE

The Making of a Teenage Service Class: Going from Unruly Fieldnotes to Coherent Theory featuring Ranita Ray, PhD

Sept. 20



ECPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

Tips and Tricks for Writing a Qualitative Spencer Fellowship Proposal featuring Ranita Ray, PhD

Sept. 20



INFORMATION SCIENCE RESEARCH SEMINAR

User Studies in the Context of Bibliographic Information featuring Tanja Merčun, PhD

Sept. 21

MAKING CHANGE THAT MATTERS: TEACH-IN FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Sept. 22

BLACK HISTORY NERDS SATURDAY SCHOOL

Lessons from Life Row featuring Rachel McMillian, PhD

Sept. 23

BLACK WOMEN LEAD

Black Radical Educational Leadership & The Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School

Oct. 2

ALBERTI CENTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Strengthening Support for the Whole School Community featuring Byron McClure, EdD; Stacy A. S. Williams, PhD, LP; and Rebecca Vujnovic, PhD, NCSP

Oct. 5



INFORMATION SCIENCE RESEARCH SEMINAR

Information Under the Skin: Information Experience of Tattooed People featuring Jennifer Campbell-Meier, PhD

Oct. 11

BLACK HISTORY NERDS SATURDAY SCHOOL

Everyday AfroIndigenous Spiritual Practice as History Pedagogy featuring Eliana Castro, PhD, and Krista Cortes, PhD

Oct. 14

ECPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

How What I Learned in my PhD Program at UB Leveraged My Not-For-Profit Work at The Literacy Lab and Other Venues featuring Heather Jenkins, PhD

Oct. 17

GSE SERIES: BEYOND CHATGPT AI + Education

Oct. 20

BLACK HISTORY NERDS SATURDAY SCHOOL

#TeachBlackHistory Any Day, Every Day and All Year Long featuring Dawnvyn James

Nov. 11

Dean's Lecture Series: A Just Society: Equity, Belonging and Community

Examining the Margins of the Margins: An Imperative for a Just Society featuring TJ Stewart, PhD
Oct. 20

Nurturing Knowledge: Ending Epistemicide, Transforming Education, Strengthening Communities featuring Beth Patin, PhD, MIS, MLIS
Nov. 17

Speaker to be announced
March 15

making **CHANGE** that **MATTERS**

TEACH-IN for Racial Equity | Friday, September 22, 2023

GSE cancels classes to host teach-in for racial equity

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

GSE canceled all coursework and office work for students, faculty and staff on Sept. 22 to host a “Teach-In”—an event that builds on GSE’s efforts to discuss and learn about the relationship between racial injustice and education. In 2020, GSE hosted the school’s inaugural Teach-In, “[Make Good Trouble Now: Teach-In for Racial Equity](#).”

The event, “[Making Change that Matters: Teach-In for Racial Equity](#),” explored systemic racism in education, society and digital infrastructures, offering an opportunity for the GSE community to learn and outline actions for working toward desired change within GSE and the greater community.

Held in person on UB’s North Campus and virtually for online students, GSE’s Teach-In was inspired by the teach-ins during the anti-war movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which were held to educate and elevate collective knowledge needed to improve social conditions.

“In the Graduate School of Education, we believe that education, knowledge and understanding are powerful tools to fight the forces of structural racism,” said [Suzanne](#)

“This Teach-In, like our first, is an opportunity for us to take stock, individually and collectively, of our commitments and vision for a more equitable future for ourselves and the communities in which we live and serve.”

[Rosenblith](#), GSE dean and professor. “This Teach-In, like our first, is an opportunity for us to take stock, individually and collectively, of our commitments and vision for a more equitable future for ourselves and the communities in which we live and serve. As an institution of higher education, we come to this moment to learn, teach and stretch our beliefs and understandings.”

The Teach-In featured three keynote speakers:

[Sherri Ann Charleston](#), JD, PhD, chief diversity and inclusion officer at Harvard University, presented “Past as Prologue: The Future of Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion.”

[Crystal Fleming](#), PhD, professor of sociology and Africana studies and associate faculty in the Department of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies at SUNY Stony Brook, presented “The Light of Truth: Inspiring Change with Critical Race Theory.”

[Anneliese Singh](#), PhD, LPC, professor and chief diversity officer/associate provost for diversity and faculty development at Tulane University, presented “Racial Healing: Practical Activities to Help You Explore Racial Privilege, Confront Systemic Racism, and Engage in Collective Healing.”



Rosenblith and [Raechele Pope](#), professor, chief diversity officer and associate dean of faculty and student affairs, also hosted a town hall session, discussing themes and questions that arose throughout the event. As they reflected on the day, they also looked back on the three years since the last GSE Teach-In.

“We did a Teach-In in 2020 ... One of the things that the dean and I promised was that we weren’t just doing a Teach-In. The Teach-In was not the intervention to try and create something different. The Teach-In was a tool,” said Pope during the town hall.

Pope states that the Teach-In and other GSE events and initiatives have led to increased racial dialogue, a deeper commitment to curricular transformation and inclusion, and increased diversity of people, ideas and engagement at GSE.



The GSE community came together in the Center for the Arts Mainstage Theatre for learning and dialogue.

TRAJECTORY ALUMNI PROFILE



GSE alumna establishes digital archive documenting violence in Jim Crow South

BY DANIELLE LEGARE

The Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, a record collection and database documenting racially motivated violence targeting African Americans in the Jim Crow South, was recently established, thanks in part to GSE alumna Gina Nortonsmith’s expertise, guidance and leadership.

The Northeastern University School of Law’s Civil Rights and Restorative Justice (CRRJ) Project—where Nortonsmith, MS ’19, is the project archivist—launched the database on Sept. 27, 2022.

Named after Professor Margaret Burnham of Northeastern’s School of Law and MIT Chancellor Melissa Nobles, the archive contains thousands of records of people, incidents and documents, allowing users to find more information and better understand the anti-Black killings in the mid-20th-century South.

Alongside the project team of students, staff, scholars and attorneys, Nortonsmith created a digital archival collection out of the investigative records, allowing the archive’s metadata and design teams to develop a web application with open-source architecture to make it available to the public. The project fills gaps in knowledge about this time period by addressing the relationship between racial violence and official silence or misinformation. In addition, it serves as a resource for researchers, journalists, teachers, students and family members of the victims whose stories are told in the archive.

“It is really powerful to have all of the documents—that in some cases were deliberately hidden and in other cases were just forgotten

about—in one place, so people can know the stories of what happened and who was involved,” Nortonsmith said.

With her background in history, political science, higher education, information science and law, Nortonsmith was well-suited to take on this project. She believes her graduate coursework in GSE’s [information and library science master’s program](#) has served her particularly well.

“One of the things that I appreciated about my experience at the University at Buffalo was the realization that becoming a librarian or an archivist isn’t just about organizing information—it is so much more,” she said. “All of those experiences I had before and all of those types of learning I did before were useful in being an archivist and being able to go into a new situation and understand what’s happening, or looking at a new group of records or objects, and trying to make sense of it. All of that previous experience in trying to digest different types of information was really important; having that skill was really important.”

Nortonsmith also notes that the support she received from faculty in the program—like [Heidi Julien](#), professor of information science; [Ying Sun](#), associate professor of information science; and [Amy VanScoy](#), associate professor of information science—has played a critical role in her professional endeavors. “As a student in an online program, what really helped me was the number of professors who wrote recommendations for scholarships to conferences. The networking that I was able to do at conferences, because of the scholarships, actually helped me land this job,” she said.

She recalls that Heidi Julien was one of the faculty members who helped her secure conference funding: “She championed me for various things. It’s always nice to feel like somebody’s giving you a boost or believes in you. I really appreciated that.”

Julien was glad to give her that boost. “I am really delighted to see the success that Gina is achieving. It’s not at all surprising, considering the level of her engagement and hard work in the master’s program,” said Julien. “She served as a student representative on our Advisory Board and sought out every opportunity to learn and to network. Gina’s important work now is an excellent model of what we hope and expect our students to achieve following graduation.”

The knowledge and skill Nortonsmith cultivated during her time at GSE will continue to serve her as the archive grows and evolves.

Nortonsmith reports that the database will soon include more cases, and that the project team will collaborate with similar archives and projects focused on racial violence to learn from one another.

She is proud of the progress they’ve already made on the project and the impact it will continue to have in the future.

“I hope that the events presented in the archive begin to be folded into the understanding of the 20th-century history of the United States because I don’t think you can understand what is currently happening in a place unless you understand the impact of the violence and the trauma that resulted in these events—not just to the people this happened to or their families—but to the whole community who witnessed perpetrators of targeted violence not be subject to the justice system,” she said.

To learn more about the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, visit <https://crrjarchive.org/>.

“It is really powerful to have all of the documents... in one place, so people can know the stories of what happened and who was involved.”

Congratulations, GSE Class of 2023!

On May 19, GSE's 92nd commencement ceremony brought together faculty, staff, students and guests to celebrate in UB's Center for the Arts. Dean Suzanne Rosenblith and UB President Satish K. Tripathi conferred degrees on the graduates during this special occasion. This year's commencement celebration was unlike any other. The night before the ceremony, GSE hosted a special reception for graduating PhD students. The reception honored doctoral candidates with awards recognizing their outstanding contributions to our school and communities, including:

Delbert Mullens

"Thinking Outside the Box" Award
Melodie Baker

*Educational Psychology and
Quantitative Methods, PhD '23*

Dr. Edwin D. Duryea, Jr. Higher Education Memorial Award

Danielle Vegas Lewis
Higher Education, PhD '23

PhD Excellence Award

Margaret Manges
*Counseling Psychology/School Psychology,
PhD '23*

Members of GSE's distinguished alumni, faculty and community were also recognized for their exceptional accomplishments and service:

Distinguished Alumni Award

Robert Davies, PhD
President, Central Michigan University

PhD Mentorship Award

Tiffany Karalis Noel, PhD
*GSE Clinical Assistant Professor of
Learning and Instruction*

Dean's Service Award

Samuel L. Radford III
*Program Director, Community Action
Organization of Western New York*

The next day, the ceremony welcomed GSE faculty speaker, Stephen Santa-Ramirez, PhD, assistant professor of educational leadership and policy, and GSE student speaker, Shakuntala (Devi) Gopal, PhD '23, to the stage to share their wisdom and advice with the graduating class.

The ceremony recognized exceptional members of our community with awards, including:

Excellence in Community Outreach and Engagement Award

Michele Agosto
Educational Administration, EdD '23

Excellence in Equity, Diversity, Justice and Inclusion Award

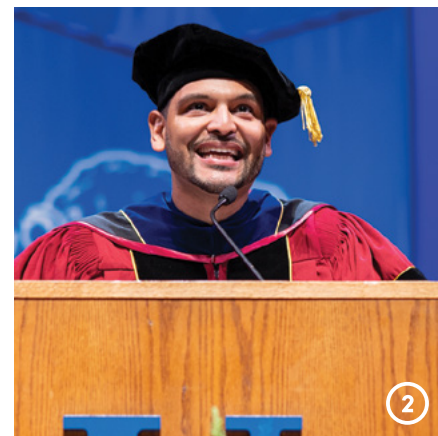
Ebony Bullock
Educational Administration, EdD '23

Excellence in Research Award

Melodie Baker
*Educational Psychology and Quantitative
Methods, PhD '23*

"Thank you all for your advocacy for others, dedication to your craft and the positive impact you have had at GSE and in your personal and professional communities," Dean Rosenblith said during her remarks.

Keep in touch, GSE alumni! Share your accomplishments. Let us always celebrate you.



1. Student Speaker Shakuntala Devi Gopal, PhD '23
2. Faculty Speaker Stephen Santa-Ramirez
3. "Excellence in Research Award" and "Delbert Mullens 'Thinking Outside the Box' Award" Recipient Melodie Baker, PhD '23
4. "Excellence in Equity, Diversity, Justice and Inclusion Award" Recipient Ebony Bullock, EdD '23
5. "Excellence in Community Outreach and Engagement Award" Recipient Michele Agosto, EdD '23

Class Notes

1960s

Norbert Baschnagel, BS '65, EdM '68, wrote his seventh book titled "How to Build a Sport or Life Dynasty" in 2021. He was also inducted into the Clarion University Sports Hall of Fame on April 24, 2022.

1970s

Dorothy Woodson, MS '76, recently retired as African studies curator at Yale Library. She was a fellow at University of Western Cape. Woodson had held the position of social science bibliographer at UB's Lockwood Library from 1977 to 1999. During that time, she was a Fulbright Senior Scholar Research Award recipient and received the United States information Agency fellowship to Swaziland.

1980s

Victor Stolberg, MA '81, MA '83, EdM '84, is the author of seven articles, including "Globalization" and "Tobacco," in the recently published "Wellness Around the World: An International Encyclopedia of Health Indicators, Practices, and Issues" (2023). He has also authored 57 articles, including "Addiction," "Drug Use," "Honor Killings," and "Lifestyle Diseases," in "Women's Health: Understanding Issues and Influences" (2022).

William London, BA '80, EdM '84, PhD '86, is a professor of public health at California State University, Los Angeles, and has been named Fellow of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry.

2000s

Nellie Nosisi Feza, PhD '09, is the deputy vice chancellor of research and innovation at the University of Venda in South Africa. She is currently working on a book titled "Centering Whole-Child Development in Global Education Reform: International Perspectives." In March 2023, she was honored with an Alumni Achiever Award by Nelson Mandela University.

Pauline Schmidt, EdM '99, PhD '09, is a professor at West Chester University in Pennsylvania and was awarded the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award in 2020. She also received Buffalo State University's English Education Alumni Award in 2022. She was promoted to full professor at the start of the 2022 academic year and published her first book, "Reimagining Literacies in the Digital Age: Multimodal Strategies to Teach with Technology," co-authored with Matthew J. Kruger-Ross.

2010s

Meredith Feigel, BA '10, MA '11, Adv. Cert. '12, was named Teacher of the Year for 2023 at an intermediate school in the New York City public school system. In 2022, Feigel was a New York City finalist for the FLAG award and was awarded \$10,000.

Sara Lewis, EdM '12, Adv. Cert. '13, finished her fourth year of employment at Horace Greeley High School in Westchester County, New York, as a school counselor. Prior to being hired, she worked for six years as a school counselor and counseling department chairperson at Fredonia High School in Fredonia, New York.

Louis Altman, MS '13, released an album of original songs called "Songs of Citizen Lou: Hide in Plain Sight" (vol. 1).

Hyonsuk Cho, PhD '16, was promoted to associate professor at the University of North Dakota and received tenure in 2022. She has published research papers in TESOL Quarterly; Journal of Language, Identity & Education; Literacy Research and Instruction; Journal of Early Childhood Research; International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism; and more. She received the AERA Education Research Service Projects grant in 2019, the UND CEHD Danley Faculty Fellow Award in 2022, and the Best Paper Award from the American Educational Research Association.

Zach Basler, MS '18, was promoted to the position of adult and teen services manager/librarian II at the Ben May Main Library in Mobile, Alabama.

2020s

Ashley Cannon-Zelasko, BA '16, EdM '21, serves as the digital marketing specialist in University Advancement at the University at Buffalo. In August 2023, she began a new role as associate director of advancement in the Office of Student Life at UB.

Lindsey Moses, MS '21, is working for a leading artificial intelligence company based in Silicon Valley, California.

Chris Spence, EdM '13, Adv. Cert. '20, PhD '21, EdM '21, Adv. Cert. '21, has been named the next superintendent of schools for the New Hampshire Fall Mountain Regional School District.

Devon Cozad, MS '22, celebrated one year at Daemen University as a research and instruction librarian. She joined the Western New York Library Resources Council's Library Education, Advancement and Partnerships (LEAP) Committee and was inducted into Beta Phi Mu—The International Library and Information Studies Honor Society.

RETIREMENTS

Deborah Dias



I retired on July 20 after working in GSE's Department of Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP) for almost seven years as an office assistant. My career at UB started in the Financial Aid Office, then continued in the Department of Biochemistry and the Western New York Educational Service Council, and ended in ELP with a total of 11 1/2 years of New York State service.

I loved decorating my office for all seasons, caring for my botanical garden setting, and welcoming

everyone with a big smile. I especially enjoyed helping with events and always looked forward to greeting our students and guests.

In my retirement, I look forward to spending time with my husband Dave, my cairn terrier Jake, my Mom (who is in assisted living), our nine grandchildren and other dear family and friends. This fall, I plan to resume my tap-dancing hobby, learn how to crochet, stay in shape with the help of the Muscle Pump class here at UB, pursue my love of gardening and do all the other things I never had time to do. There are so many adventures just waiting for me!

I will cherish all the friendships I made with faculty, staff and students and plan to keep in touch.

Thank you, UB, for all the memories that I will hold close to my heart! I feel so lucky I was, and will always be, a part of this special community.

"I feel so lucky I was, and will always be, a part of this special community."

Judith Roberson



My favorite quote to share with prospective teachers, included in my email signature, states: "Ask yourself one simple question every morning on your way to work. Would you want to be a student in your class?"

I have worked in education all my adult life. For the past 50-plus years, I have been a classroom teacher, school program coordinator and coordinator for parent involvement for the Buffalo Public Schools—where I worked from 1971–2004.

Then, I continued my second educational career journey in GSE under the leadership of Dean Mary Gresham immediately after retiring from the BPS.

As a team player, it has been a privilege to work with some of the most incredible associate deans and directors of educator preparation programs here at UB, such as the late Dr. Julius Adams, Dr. S.G. Grant, Dr. Fenice Boyd, Dr. David Cantaffa and, most recently, Dr. Beth Etopio. I witnessed firsthand how these insightful, positive and progressive leaders have increased effectiveness, nurtured growth, and maintained and enhanced the high standards needed to generate highly effective, quality educators. From the Buffalo Research Institute on Education for Teaching (BRIET) to the Teacher Education Institute (TEI) and now the Office of Educator Preparation, the evolution of teacher preparation at UB has been outstanding.

During my nearly two decades as program coordinator of clinical experiences at GSE, I have interacted with thousands of students, securing student teaching placements, and counseling, coaching and supervising teacher candidates. For three consecutive years, I represented GSE/TEI as a member of the Western New York Teacher Center Board. I also fostered, maintained and enhanced many successful relationships with mentor teachers, administrators and school districts in the Western New York area to create lasting, meaningful partnerships with the UB teacher education programs.

All these experiences have helped me to manifest my purpose in life: helping others. Make a difference, be a difference. The old saying "each one teach one" rings true to me. I plan to continue to follow my purpose by helping others use their talents and abilities to want to teach all children.

"Make a difference, be a difference."

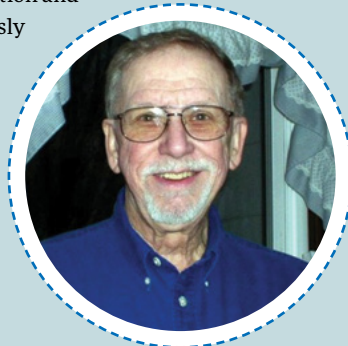
IN MEMORIAM

Remembering members of our cherished GSE community who have recently passed away.

Faculty

A. Neil Yerkey

A. Neil Yerkey, professor emeritus, died on July 30, 2023. He was 85. Yerkey was a distinguished educator and scholar who dedicated his life to the betterment of education. Born in Akron, Ohio, he earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Akron in 1959 and a master's degree in library science from the former Western Reserve University in Cleveland in 1962. He came to UB as an assistant professor in 1977 after earning a doctorate from the School of Communication at Kent State University. Yerkey was a member of the School of Information and Library Studies faculty (previously called the School of Informatics) from 1977 until 2006. He was the recipient of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and became a professor emeritus in 2006.



Known as a pioneer for his work bringing libraries and information science into the digital age, Yerkey helped to develop and implement "the Cleveland idea," an online network that could build banks of information and offer free access to the internet in rural communities. This network, Buffalo Freenet, was one of the first free online networks in the nation. This network evolved into a free website host for more than 600 nonprofit agencies that lasted until 2012.

Yerkey was a member of the American Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, the American Society for Information Science and the Western New York Library Resources Council. In addition to his professional memberships, he was a deacon at his church, a member of the

Western New York Fiddle Club and played Dobro guitar. When he was not teaching, Yerkey could be found with his band, Gospel Express, playing frequent gigs at the famous Earl's Drive-In on Route 16 in Chaffee.

Yerkey was a distinguished educator and scholar who dedicated his life to the betterment of education.

Student

Rachel S. Goodwin

Rachel S. Goodwin, a master's student in the Department of Information Science, passed away on May 17, 2023. She was 50 years old.

Goodwin earned her bachelor's in childhood education from Buffalo State University. After graduation, she relocated to Boston, Massachusetts, where she welcomed a son in 2008. She eventually returned to Buffalo to work as a lead teacher at the University at Buffalo Child Care Center, where she shared her love and kindness with the students she taught.

Goodwin was passionate about education. Her goal was to work with children for the rest of her life. She was prolific in engaging with young people; they were drawn to her energy and her ability to make boring tasks fun.

"Rachel saw the field of library and information science as a path that would provide new challenges," said Dan Albertson, chair of the Department of Information Science. "Her professional interests upon entering the program included children and youth services and lifelong learning. Rachel's passion for books, literature and reading were at the center of her motivation, and she saw the library as a space to advance the mission of childhood literacy. The department will deeply miss Rachel and the dedication and energy she brought to our classes."

She was prolific in engaging with young people; they were drawn to her energy and her ability to make boring tasks fun.



Donor

Myra S. Razik

Lifelong learner and philanthropist Myra S. Razik passed away in July 2023. Myra was an active member of the international committee of UB's Women's Club, which sponsors monthly brunches for international students to interact and exchange ideas with each other and people in the community.

In partnership with her husband Taher, Myra was a committed supporter of GSE and the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP). The Raziks established the Taher and Myra Razik Fellowship, which provides funding for underrepresented minority students pursuing a GSE doctoral degree in educational administration. The Raziks also funded Taher Razik Lounge, located in 463 Baldy Hall on UB's North Campus. This lounge is exclusively for students in ELP and offers a space to study, relax and socialize.

"The Raziks truly made an impact and are fondly remembered by many alumni. From hosting students in their homes for the holidays to having casual weeknight dinners, the years at UB were wonderful times for her and her family. Many of those students were still in touch with her until her passing and called her 'Mom Myra.' Their commitment to ELP and to international students

Many ... students were still in touch with her until her passing and called her 'Mom Myra.'

will not be forgotten, and their generosity will continue to make a doctoral degree more accessible for students," said Katheryn Ross-Winnie, GSE associate director of advancement.

Alumni

1940s

Lorraine R. Bercoon,
BE '47 | 03/13/2022

1950s

Gloria P. Kamm,
EdM '57 | 03/09/2023

Richard Van Valkenburgh,
BE '59 | 04/09/2023

Shirley A. Wilson,
BE '57 | 07/08/2023

1960s

Richard F. Coates,
EdM '62 | 02/20/2023

Stanley Dickson,
PhD '61 | 07/19/2023

William R. McEvoy,
BE '65 | 01/21/2022

Joseph F. Oscsodal,
BE '66, EdM '68 | 11/10/2022

Harold H. Roeder,
PhD '69 | 04/17/2023

Robert E. Zimmerman,
MS '68 | 04/01/2022

1970s

Robert R. Agthe,
PhD '79 | 07/01/2023

Helen C. Basil,
BE '67, EdM '75 | 04/04/2023

Linda R. Cook,
EdM '79 | 06/01/2023

Frederick P. Frank,
PhD '73 | 06/21/2023

Barbara H. Kamp,
BA '70, EdM '71 | 06/04/2023

Sandra L. Pezzino,
MS '74 | 04/13/2023

Dorothy M. Walck,
BS '65, EdM '75 | 11/22/2022

Rita H. Wells,
MLS '70 | 03/13/2023

1980s

David R. Colkitt,
EdM '80 | 03/11/2023

Randolph E. Sarnacki,
PhD '79, JD '88 | 03/22/2023

2000s

Michael A Hoopengartner,
BA '02, MS '04 | 04/20/2018

2010s

Jamie L. Hooper,
EdM '11, MS '18 | 08/25/2023





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Graduate School of Education

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The STEMcyclists Summer Camp—developed by Noemi Waight, GSE associate professor of learning and instruction, in collaboration with GoBike Buffalo and UB's Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)—sparked a transformation in STEM learning this summer by providing 9th and 10th-grade students of color living in Buffalo with the opportunity to explore the intersections of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through bicycles and bicycle riding. The group was photographed on South Campus in July 2023.

