

# News & Notes

Master of Arts in Community & Teacher Leaders  
*Fall 2023*



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# Spring 2023 MACTL Graduates



Dulce Enriquez



Catherine Malek



Faviola Fernandez



Julia Sajovec



**Tuesday, May 2, 2023—Faviola, Dulce, and Catherine at NEIU's Spring 2023 Hooding Ceremony.**

The Hooding Ceremony is a special recognition ceremony for Master degree candidates. During the ceremony, a faculty member places the hood over the head of the graduate, signifying their success in completing the graduate program.

The commencement ceremony occurs a few days after the hooding ceremony.

# Spring 2023 Hooding Ceremony Highlight



**A special congratulations to Dulce Enriquez who was nominated and selected to be the student speaker for the Spring 2023 Master's Hooding Ceremony. Dulce's story is an inspiration to other students and their families and friends. Read her powerful remarks.**

Good evening, everyone, it is a pleasure for me to stand before you today to share a little about my experience in the MACTL program. We live in a fast-paced world, and I have to say, if there was anything positive that resulted from the pandemic, it forced me to pause and reflect. I found myself questioning what is next and how will I do that. Looking back today, I couldn't be happier with my decision to enroll in this program.

I have received several opportunities on both a professional and personal level. I work at the Museum of Science and Industry. After receiving the Human Research CITI certification (required for Seminar I), I worked with our Research and Evaluation team on a Cultural Institution Belonging Study. I was later promoted to Outreach Programs and Events Manager, where I collaborate to implement new STEM career exposure programming for youth. One of our upcoming events will feature Katya Echazarreta, the first Mexican - born woman to go to space!

On a personal level, I am a product of Chicago Public Schools and have worked with multiple non-profit organizations whose missions align with providing resources to underserved communities. I was recognized during Urban Alliance's 25th Anniversary celebration with former President Obama due to the impact of my work. The MACTL program also required us to conduct a research study. It was an excellent opportunity to address an important topic in my personal life, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program. Not only because I am DACAmended myself but because the data would elevate the impact it has on DACAmended individuals' lives. It was my opportunity to raise their voices.

Being here today is a result of surpassing many challenges. We've had family and friends motivating us along the way, so I would like to briefly thank my parents, who are present but didn't know I would be speaking. Mami y Papi, gracias a ustedes hoy estoy aqui. Mis logros son fruto de sus esfuerzos. Hoy los celebro a ustedes y espero esten orgullosos de lo que sus sacrificios han obtenido.

I hope that as we all look back at what we have accomplished, we recognize that our passion for our work led us all here. We created safe and welcoming spaces where we talked about the challenging yet REAL issues affecting our classrooms and communities. We learned to listen, reflect, communicate, and collaborate to improve our work. I am sure we will all continue to share our commitment as we strive for social change and educational inclusiveness. I want to end by quoting Jose Antonio Tijerino, CEO of the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, "You are not lucky to be here. The world needs your perspective. They are lucky to have you."

Thank you.

# President's Inclusive Excellence and Diversity

The second annual President's Inclusive Excellence and Diversity Awards ceremony was held April 26, 2023 and honored eight members of the Northeastern community who are significantly advancing the University's goals in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion.

The MACTL program is proud that the Alumni recipient and a faculty recipient are connected to the program! Congratulations!



Faculty recipient, Dr. Nicole Holland, professor of [Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies](#) with a core faculty appointment in [African and African American St](#)



Alumni recipient, Jessie Fuentes (B.A. 2013 Justice Studies; M.A. 2018 Community and Teacher Leaders), director of policy and youth advocacy for the Humboldt Park-based Puerto Rican Cultural Center, co-chair of the Puerto Rican Agenda of Chicago and alderperson-elect for the 26th Ward of Humboldt Park

## Graduate Assistantship Awards

Congratulations to **Chiquorie Schaffer** and **Mueze Bawany** for being awarded a Graduate Dean's Research and Creative Activities (RCA) Graduate Assistantship for the Fall 2023 semester. Chiquorie will work with Dr. Nicole Holland and Mueze will work with Dr. Erica Meiners on their proposed research projects.

The award includes a three credit hour course waiver, a \$1200 stipend, and a research budget.

Chiquorie and Mueze will participate in the Spring 2024 John Sargon Albazi Research and Creative Activities Symposium to disseminate the results of their funded research.

We're proud to have two MACTL students earn this award!

# Recognition

Mayor-elect Brandon Johnson announced that MACTL Alumna Jennifer “Jen” Johnson, the Chicago Teachers Union’s recent chief of staff, will serve as his deputy mayor for education, youth and human services.

Jennifer Johnson taught history at Lincoln Park High School for a decade before managing the staff and budget of the nearly 30,000-member teachers union, according to the news release. Johnson was among the CTU’s most visible leaders during the 2019 strike and subsequent work actions regarding COVID-19 safety precautions. [READ MORE>>](#)



## WELCOME NEW STUDENTS! Fall 2023 Cohort

Zoe Bacik • Jake Ballasch • Mueze Bawany • Rich DeThorne • Susan Echeverria • Daniel Ehrlich • Michael Endo • Claire Greene • Melissa Korpalski • Taysia Little • Gabe Lopez • Juan Morales • Tony Negron • Isaac Perlman • Monsserath Ramos • Shelby Redman • Carla Spinelli • Jerome Thomas



Due to the reorganization within the Daniel L. Goodwin College of Education in Spring 2023, we must announce the departure of Vanessa King, from the MACTL program. As the Student Support Specialist, Vanessa has been a great asset to the program. Her professionalism, passion for the work, and exceptional skills have contributed to the program’s growth. We are immensely grateful for the contributions she has made to the program and the dedicated support she has provided to the MACTL faculty, students and alumni. She continues to work in the Goodwin College of Education in the Teacher Education Department with graduate programs. We wholeheartedly wish her every success and fulfillment in the future!

# Master of Arts in Community and Teacher Leaders

Become a reflective, collaborative  
and transformative leader.

*Learn to harness the collective knowledge of  
community members and educators while having a  
positive impact on communities and school success.*



## Program Options

### Community Leader Concentration

This option provides knowledge and skills that foster leadership in ethical and culturally sensitive public engagement; acknowledges and considers the complexities of local and global communities; promotes collaborating with schools to empower communities; and leverages community assets to promote social justice and equity.

### Teacher Leader Concentration

This option provides knowledge and skills related to leadership, peer mentoring and professional development; promotes positive school culture that focuses on achievement; uses data to improve educational outcomes. Focusing on social justice and the strengths of diversity, this concentration leads to the ISBE-recognized Teacher Leader Endorsement in addition to the master's degree.

### Teacher Leader Endorsement (non-degree)

This option offers a professional development opportunity for teachers who already have a M.A. and an Illinois Teaching License to increase their leadership, peer mentoring and job responsibilities by earning the ISBE recognized Teacher Leader Endorsement.

## Program Highlights

The program was designed for developing community and teacher leaders alongside one another. Students will experience a program that is unique as no other program because it is focused on how community impacts education and how the teacher leader serves as resources to help increase community engagement.

The core courses will help students:

- Build a working knowledge of social and racial justice as it relates to curriculum development, schooling, and leadership within schools and/or communities,
- Create connections between communities and schools in an effort to form partnerships that benefit all members of the neighborhood (students, teachers, parents/guardians, and families).
- Connect theory to practice and develop as future community and teacher leaders who are sensitive to how multiple identities, social location, and circumstances impact youth, educators, and neighborhoods.



Visit [neiu.edu/leaders](https://neiu.edu/leaders)  
or scan to learn more.

Apply today at [neiu.edu/apply](https://neiu.edu/apply)

# The Dr. Kenneth N. Addison Lecture for Multicultural Education and Social Justice

The **Dr. Kenneth N. Addison Lecture for Multicultural Education and Social Justice** is an [annual event](#) that the Educational Foundations program spearheads, along with the support of other programs, departments, and units throughout the University to celebrate, and grapple with, the intersections of cultural pluralism, multicultural education, social justice, advocacy and activism.

This event is named after Professor Emeritus Dr. Kenneth Addison, who after 30 years of service to the Northeastern Illinois University community retired from being a core faculty member in the Department of Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies and the African and African American Studies program.

**Let's ensure this wonderful series can continue!**

In your donation, please state if you would like to contribute directly to the **Kenneth N. Addison Annual Lecture Fund**.

Contact **Dr. Hua Bai** ([h-bai@neiu.edu](mailto:h-bai@neiu.edu)) after you have donated to confirm that your funds have been placed in the correct account.

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## Requesting Alumni Guest Speakers

We would like to invite our alums to speak to the current MACTL students. This can be done informally during the cohort orientations or more formally as guest speakers in our classes. We know our MACTL alums are doing great things in their lives, workplace, communities and families that we believe will inspire our current and future MACTL students.

We would like to begin a MACTL presentation series wherein members of the MACTL community present to the NEIU university and beyond. If you are interested in presenting in this type of forum, please let us know. Contact Dr. Hua Bai ([h-bai@neiu.edu](mailto:h-bai@neiu.edu)).

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