

# News & Notes

## M. A. in Community and Teacher Leaders

Spring 2024

### Welcome to 2024 MACTL Community!

MACTL continues to thrive because of our brilliant and hardworking community and teacher leaders! 2024 is already an eventful year. MACTL is focused, as always - on creating and strengthening beloved community and shaping teaching and learning opportunities for us to build the world we need, now!

-- Your MACTL Faculty



### Congratulations to MACTL Graduates!

Congratulations to our students who successfully earned their master's degrees and completed their Teacher Leader Endorsement (TLE) studies in Summer and Fall 2023! This is an accomplishment that highlights their dedication and hard work in the MACTL program. Well done!

Elizabeth Ayala: M.A. + TLE  
Mackenzie Grattan: M.A. + TLE  
Michelle Ludwig: M.A. + TLE  
Chiquorie Schaffer: M.A.  
Maryam Sultan: M.A. + TLE  
Mari Garvonado: TLE  
Katie Keesbury: TLE  
Katherine MacLennan-Chung: TLE



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## Critically Engaged Faculty Scholarship

### Dr. Durene I. Wheeler

*"I am constantly asked to participate and volunteer in meetings and committees that require my identities but do not desire my input."*

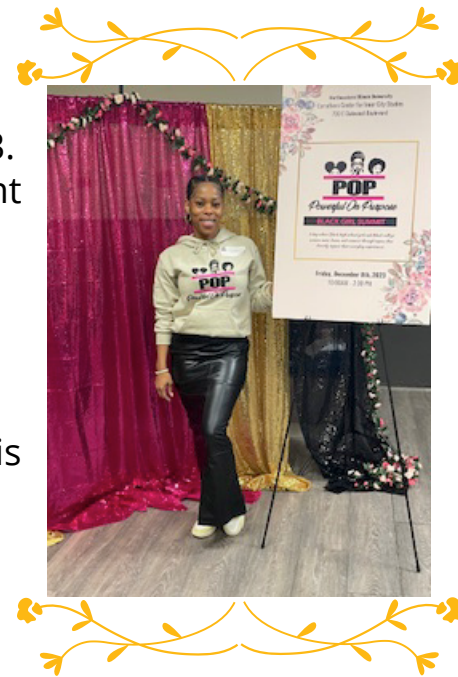
The current climate for Black women in higher education remains fraught with challenges despite Black women's increasing presence and their academic qualifications. Attending the Third Annual Conference for Psychology and Mental Health in Dubai, UAE on November 17, 2023 was transformative. Dr. Wheeler shared analysis from her paper, "Reframing Our Relationship to Work Trauma," published in the *Journal of Mental Health and Social Behaviour* (2022) which centers her experiences as a Black woman in the academy. Being exposed to other Scholars of Color from the US and abroad, such as Kenya, Nigeria, Columbia, and the United Arab Emirates, helped broaden her understanding and scope of the problems and, more importantly, the connectedness and community of care they can build. Hearing their stories convinces Dr. Wheeler that there is much work yet to be completed if they are going to dismantle work trauma, specifically racialized work trauma, in Higher Education and beyond. "Connecting with these scholars offered new ways to combat racialized work trauma, and inspired me to continue to fight the good fight for a better world and for work environments for us all", Dr. Wheeler said. Her essay centered three outcomes: (1) to define and understand racialized work trauma, (2) to identify the difference between individual and organizational accountability therein, and (3) to give some guidance on individual practices that help create critical boundaries and healing in one's work life. The call for transparent reporting mechanisms, robust anti-discrimination policies, and cultural competency training for faculty and staff is growing louder. Black women navigate these challenges with resilience and community support, but systemic change is desperately needed to foster a truly equitable and welcoming higher education landscape for Black women to thrive.



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## MACTL Hosts Black Girl Extravaganza: Powerful on Purpose

The Fall 2023 semester was very eventful for MACTL alumna, Chiquorie Schaffer. In addition to graduating in December, Chiquorie was awarded a Graduate Dean's Research and Creative Activities (RCA) Graduate Assistantship for the Fall 2023. She used that opportunity to create a community outreach event that she called "Powerful on Purpose (POP)." The event, which was held at the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies NEIU campus, was an opportunity for Black, Chicago public high school girls to spend a day with Black women who are college students, educators, and professionals from throughout the Chicagoland area. Chiquorie will present her POP experience this Spring, at the 31st John Sargon Albazi Student Symposium. The symposium showcases performances, creative activities, and research by graduate and undergraduate students. This event will be held on the NEIU Bryn Mawr Campus on Friday, April 26, 2024.



## Alumni Highlights

**Valentina Gamboa-Turner.** Very timely, Valentina just published "Why we need critical race theory: moving toward critical race praxis in P-20 education" in the International Journal of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (co-authored with Asif Wilson, Erica Dávila, Anänka Shony; and David Stovall). This project is a part of her ongoing collaboration with People's Education Chicago.

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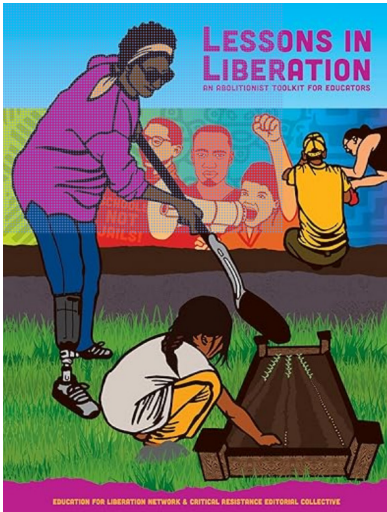
**Jose S. Rodriguez.** Jose was fortunate to be a Chicago 2023 Surge Fellow and it was a life-changing experience. Since then, he has been on a healing journey, decolonizing his mind and evolving to be the authentic leader he feels he was destined to be, leading with love. The experience has transformed his approach as the Dean of Restorative Practice at Roosevelt High School, working to disrupt the status quo of the education system. Jose has been blessed to build genuine relationships and collaborate with amazing leaders in education, opening opportunities for him to become a member of the Umuwi Ethnic Studies Program Advisory Board and the first inaugural SCRR (School Crisis Recovery and Renewal) Leadership Cohort.

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**Nurys Uceta-Ramos.** After earning her Master's in Community and Teacher Leaders in 2018, Nurys has continued to excel in roles centered on community collaboration. Initially serving as a FACE Manager at Chicago Public Schools, she built and nurtured partnerships across schools and communities. This experience paved the way for her current position as Director of Engagement at Forest Park School District 91, where she has been integrating family and community engagement as a foundational element of the district's mission, culminating in the creation of a dedicated department!



## Faculty Snapshots



**Dr. Erica R. Meiners:** Fall 2023 Dr. Meiners was honored to attend/keynote the Sisters Inside Conference and spent a busy week meeting with community based networks in Melbourne and Brisbane. She is working hard to ensure the third cohort of NEIU's University Without Walls undergraduate students at Stateville Prison will graduate in 2024, and she has new publications including several related to her anti-prison organizing in *Social Justice: A Journal of Crime, Conflict & World Order*, *Journal of Higher Education in Prison*, *Inquest*, and *Truthout*.

Please reach out to Dr. Meiners if you are interested in a free copy of *Lessons in Liberation* (and a matching T shirt!) This project is being used with study into action teacher's groups across North America!

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Last summer, **Dr. Isaura Pulido and Dr. Nicole E. Holland** co-chaired the search committee for Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)'s Interim President.

Typical university presidential searches use an external executive consulting firm, recruit candidates nationwide, and take at least 4-6 months to complete. However, Dr. Pulido and Dr. Holland were charged with the daunting and unprecedented task of conducting a search consisting of only internal applicants and they were given a 3-week timeline. To execute this task, they worked with a 26 member committee consisting of students, staff, faculty, and administrators from across all three NEIU campuses, representing different perspectives, interests, and experiences. Conducting this search, and co-chairing this committee, required them to face some of their biggest challenges and some unexpected learning experiences. It is noteworthy to mention that much of what serves as the foundation of the MACTL curriculum was relevant throughout the process of co-chairing this committee. Upon successfully completing the process, in late June of 2023, Dr. Katrina Bell-Jordan, previously the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was named Interim President of NEIU.

Dr. Pulido and Dr. Holland leaned into three very important principles throughout this process. First, if you are tasked with leading any high-stakes project, and you are given the option, co-lead with people with whom you hold similar values & commitments (super important!), and people you know well and deeply respect. Second, know each other's strengths and defer to them. Third, and most importantly, no matter what happens along the way, stay united, trust one another, and stay the course.

# Upcoming Events



## March 2 **MACTL Community Get Together**

Join MACTL alumni, students and faculty for light bites, reminiscing, and catching up.

**Location:** El Centro Campus

**Time:** 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM



## March 5 **Let's Talk About Teaching: Creating Community in the Classroom**

Dr. Durene I Wheeler: Audrey Reynolds Distinguished Teacher Award Presentation

**Location:** Golden Eagles Room at NEIU North Campus

**Time:** 3:00 - 4:30 PM



## March 21

Join with friends of MACTL, Dr. David Stovall and Dr. Bettina Love (author of the 2023 *Punished for Dreaming: How School Reform Harms Black Children and How We Heal*) for a conversation about educational reparations, including how to move education toward healing and transformation. Book signing & refreshments served following the dialogue

**Location:** Carruthers Center for Inner-City Studies at NEIU. Doors open: 5:30 PM

**Event time:** 6:00-7:30 PM

This event is organized by Umuwi Ethnic Studies, a new organization dedicated to protecting and sustaining ethnic studies and other honest and accurate educational methods in Chicago (<https://www.umuwiethnicstudies.org/>) and is supported by the Chicago Community Trust, UIC Department of Black Studies, and the NEIU Goodwin College of Education

**Scan to register in advance - with free code NEIUSTUDENT**



## April 3 **2024 Kenneth Addison Lecture for Social Justice**

### **Chicago Area Arab American Youth in Action: Challenges and Radical Futures**

Join MACTL alum and Illinois educator Maryam Sultan, in conversation with Rania Salem (United States Palestinian Community Network USPCN), Nicole Nguyen (University of Illinois Chicago), Jinan Chehade (movement attorney), and learn about Arab American youth organizing in the Chicago area! On ZOOM and open to the public! Please register in advance.

**Time:** 4:30 to 6:00 PM

**Location:** Zoom

**Scan to register and get Zoom link now! Spaces are limited!**





# 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!



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

Contact the program ([mactl@neiu.edu](mailto:mactl@neiu.edu)) after you have donated to confirm that your funds have been placed in the correct account.



## 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 the program ([mactl@neiu.edu](mailto:mactl@neiu.edu)).

### Follow us on social media

