

January 2024

Dear National College of Education community,

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you well. As we embark into the winter term at the National College of Education, I want to update you on some important initiatives and developments that will shape the trajectory of our College.

At the core of our NCE's commitment to excellence in education is our collaborative approach to listening and responding to the needs of the K-12 world and how we adapt our programs and curriculum in response. In the past month, I have conducted a series of student focus groups to ensure we are attuned to our candidates' voices and making informed decisions regarding their student experience. As always, we continuously seek community input in our quarterly advisory group meetings and through the counsel of my NCE Brain Trust alumni group.

As part of our ongoing efforts to broaden the reach of our educator preparation programs, we are excited to announce the expansion of our geographic footprint. We understand that the field of education extends beyond state borders, and we are actively working to clarify out-of-state licensure requirements to enable graduates to apply for licensure in states outside of Illinois. We have developed pathways for licensure in Indiana and Wisconsin, with plans to explore additional states in the future.

In addition to the initiatives above, I am pleased to share that I have joined the Deans for Impact, Impact Academy, a year-long fellowship program where I am mentoring two College of Education deans. The Impact Academy brings together deans from several institutions to collaborate, build a shared understanding of leadership and organizational change, and focus on big questions involving equity and instructional improvement. Secondly, several NCE faculty and I are taking an Auburn University-partnered online course on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on higher education. As Artificial Intelligence continues to shape various industries, including education, engagement with this course will empower our faculty to stay abreast of developments in AI and its potential impact on their courses.

As we navigate through the winter term, we remain steadfast in our pursuit of academic excellence and community collaboration. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the National College of Education. Your contributions and insights are vital to our collective success. Together, we will continue to shape the future of education and empower our students to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Best wishes for the winter term! I look forward to hearing about your work and progress,

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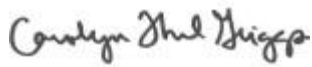
In This Edition

[What's New](#)

[Thought Leadership](#)

[Celebrations](#)

[Welcome New Faculty
Members and Staff](#)



Carolyn Theard-Griggs, Ed.D.

Dean, National College of Education

WHAT'S NEW

Jamillah Gilbert Named as Next Director of Teacher Preparation Programs



The NCE Leadership Team is pleased to announce that Dr. Jamillah Gilbert has accepted the position of School Director for Teacher Preparation. Dr. Gilbert will assume the role on April 1, 2024. Dr. Gilbert earned her Bachelor's in Special Education, her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction, and her Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Illinois State University (ISU). She served as a teacher and leader in PK-12 education for over 14 years in Bloomington/Normal and has been involved in higher education for over 19 years. Dr. Gilbert spent the last nine years at Illinois State University as a Clinical and Instructional Assistant Professor and recently as the Assistant Director of Curriculum Services. While at ISU, Dr. Gilbert was awarded the Outstanding University Teacher Award for clinical professors. Currently, Dr. Gilbert is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at NLU.

Math For All Grant

The National College of Education has been awarded a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education in conjunction with the Education Development Center (EDC). The EDC is a global nonprofit that designs and implements innovative programs to improve education, promote health, and expand economic opportunities. The grant titled **Math for All: Expanding Professional Learning to Improve Mathematics Outcomes for Students in High-Needs Schools** will be facilitated by **Dr. Sherri Bressman**, the co-investigator. **Drs. Xue Han, Bobby Dillard, and Xiuwen Wu** will primarily support this project. They will oversee the pilot test of Math for All resources in pre-service teacher preparation courses and contribute to facilitating grade 3–5 and grade 6–8 Math for All professional learning with 25 Chicago area schools. The grant aims to help improve math outcomes for elementary and middle-level students across the greater Chicagoland area.

NLU One of the Select Partners in CPS P-STEP

The National College of Education is partnering with Chicago Public Schools P-Step (Pre-Service Teaching Equity Project), a revamped student teaching program designed to fill vital gaps in student teaching experiences across the city while diversifying their teaching corps. Learn more about the partnership [here](#).

NLU Part of New EPP Collaborative

NLU is among 32 participating programs in the National Registered Apprenticeship in Teaching Educator-Preparation Program Collaborative (EPP Collaborative). Deans for Impact and the National Center for Grow Your Own will co-lead the EPP Collaborative, sharing best practices to ensure that all apprenticeship programs are accessible, high-quality, and responsive to the needs of their communities. To learn more, please visit deansforimpact.org/epp-collaborative-announcement.

FY Year End Review Booklet

We have compiled a FY 22-23 Year End Review booklet. The booklet offers a concise overview of the dedication and effort within our community. Please take a look [here](#).

In Case You Missed It

- NLU is now partnering with three high-impact literacy tutoring services to offer volunteer and paid opportunities for our candidates. Learn more about the tutoring partnerships [here](#).
- Meet this year's Cassin-Graft Scholars [here](#).
- [Check out](#) Associate Professor **Gloria McDaniel-Hall's** recent *Urban Legends* podcast, featuring an interview with **Anquineice Brown**, '17 M.A.T. Elementary Education alumni and 2023 Golden Apple Award winner.
- The first cohort of students recruited under the [Early Childhood Faculty Preparation \(ECFP\) grant](#) awarded to NLU for \$1.4 million by ISBE began their first full term of coursework this fall. The grant's mission is to diversify the pipeline of early childhood faculty in Illinois. The students' anticipated graduation is Summer 2024.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

NCE faculty and alumni continue to serve as thought leaders through their service to the field, publications, and presentations.

Publications:

Kristin Lems, professor, co-authored [Building Literacy with Multilingual Learners: Insights from Linguistics, 3rd edition](#). The book, released by Guilford Press in November 2023, explores the processes involved in second-language acquisition and translates the research into practical instructional strategies for PreK–12.

Sophie Degener, associate professor, co-authored the article entitled "[When 'Nice' Isn't: Confronting Niceness and Whiteness to Center Equity in Teacher Education](#)," published in *Action in Teacher Education*, volume 45, issue 2. The eight white female co-authors formed a self-study community of practice to interrogate and dismantle how niceness and whiteness function in their teaching and teacher institutions and create barriers to centering equity and justice.

The Fall 2023 issue of *i.e.: inquiry in education* has been published. Volume 15, Issue 2, is available at the [NLU Digital Commons](#). This issue features an editorial, "We Need Each Other: The Importance of Relationships," by **Elizabeth Minor**, Director of Educational Leadership Studies, and the article, "Engaging Higher Education Students in Creating Curricular Content to Increase Equity" by **Gloria McDaniel-Hall**, associate professor, **Elizabeth Teahan**, assistant professor, **Sadia Warsi**, associate professor, **Terry Jo Smith**, professor, and **Shaunti Knauth**, NLU Director of Engaged Research.

Renee Gugel, assistant professor, authored the article "[How Teachers Can Lead From the Classroom](#)" in the December 2023 issue of Learning Forward's *The Learning Professional* magazine.

Kristin Lems, professor, published "[MLK musical event celebrates Black excellence](#)" in the *Evanston RoundTable*. Dr. Lems captures the details of the 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Concert, organized by the Music Institute of Chicago. The event featured selections either written or performed by Black composers and musicians. **Marcus Campbell** '16, Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, the superintendent of Evanston Township High School, shared remarks at this all-music program. Dr. Campbell spoke of his own South Side Chicago childhood filled with music study and performance and credited the discipline of music for leading him to who he is today.

Presentations:

Xiuwen Wu, associate professor, delivered a virtual poster presentation titled "Pilot GO Instruction and Specialist Training Program in Elementary Math Classrooms" at the 1st International Conference on Go Studies held at Myongji University, South Korea.

NCE faculty presented at the 55th Annual Conference of the International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Presentations included:

- *More Than "Cute": A Disruptive Reading of Magical Realism Used in the Visual Narrative of the Distinguished Picturebook Alma and How She Got Her Name*; **Ruth Quiroa**, associate professor
- *Visual Literacy Skill Development: Young Children's Interaction with Picturebooks*; **Geri Chesner**, associate professor
- *Visual Literacy Initiative in Teacher Education*; **Karen Tardrew**, associate professor; **Geri Chesner**, associate professor; **Mark Newman**, professor; **Xiaoning Chen**, associate professor; **Hyeju Han**, assistant professor
- Visual Art Exhibition Panel; **Karen Tardrew**, associate professor; **Geri Chesner**, associate professor
- *Enhancing Teachers' Knowledge and Ability to Transfer Critical Visual Literacy Strategies to Plan Culturally Responsive Classroom Learning*; **Mark Newman**, professor; **Xiaoning Chen**, associate professor; **Hyeju Han**, assistant professor

Gloria McDaniel-Hall, assistant professor, presented the keynote address, "Is BELONGING all that really MATTERS?" at the Illinois Council for Exceptional Children (ICEC) 74th Annual Fall Convention in Naperville, IL.

Antonina Lukenchuk, professor, presented the paper "Philosophies of Teaching and Learning: My Epistemological Journey with Doctoral Students" at the Society for the Philosophical Study of Education (SPSE) Conference.

NCE faculty presented at the Illinois Council for the Social Studies (ICSS Fall 2023 Conference at Harper College in Palatine, IL. **Mark Newman**, professor, **Xiaoning Chen**, associate professor, and **Hyeju Han**, assistant professor, presented "Using Critical Visual Literacy to Meet Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Standards."

Todd Price, associate professor, co-presented "Federal Legislative Landscape and AACTE National Updates" at the Illinois Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (IACTE) Fall 2023 Conference at the Illinois State University Alumni Center in Normal, IL.

NCE faculty presented at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference in Nashville, TN. Presentations included:

- *The What and How of Emergent Writing: Materials, Curriculum, and Developmentally Appropriate Practice Instruction for Children; Ages 0 to 5*; **Emily Hoffman**, assistant professor
- *Building a Professional Framework for Early Childhood Program Leaders: Five Consensus Recommendations from Key Stakeholders*; **Xiaoli Wen**, professor, and **Teri Talan**, Senior Policy Advisor, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership
- *The Impact of Race, Culture, and Language on the Leadership Journeys of Early Childhood Education and Care Leaders of Color*; **Xiaoli Wen**, professor, and **Teri Talan**, Senior Policy Advisor, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Ayn Keneman, professor, served as a presenter for a "Content Test Preparation Panel" at the Chicago Area Directors of Student Teaching (CADST) meeting. Panelists included Illinois State University professors examining the best support for students to pass the test. Topics included *Defining Content Test Support*, *Pro-Active Strategies to Support Licensure Testing Support*, *Supporting Students After Graduation*, *Creating Structures for Undergraduate Students to Increase Passage Rates*, and *Focusing on Test-Taking Skills*.

Bilge Cerezci, assistant professor, presented "Challenging the Status Quo: Making Early Mathematics Meaningful and Playful" at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics 2023 Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

NCE faculty and NCE doctoral students presented at the Critical Questions in Education (CQiE) Symposium held in Chicago, IL. Hosted by the Academy for Educational Studies, the 2023 Conversation Theme for this national gathering was "Teaching Then, and Teaching Now: How Has the Narrative of Teaching Changed?" Presentations included:

- *Supporting Veterans in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities*; **Stephen Curda**, associate professor

- *Tracing and Imagining Relations Between Educators, Research and Activism*; **Terry Jo Smith**, professor
- *Co-Ownning Inquiry, Learning Outcomes, and Student Choice in the Higher Education Classroom*; **Todd Alan Price**, associate professor; **Molly Buren**, assistant professor; **C. Martin Caver**, Undergraduate College instructor
- *Cultivating Disability Equity and Inclusion in Education: Learning from the History of Disability Activists*; **Terry Jo Smith**, professor; **Joyce Madzinga**, NCE doctoral student in Disability and Equity in Education; **Tiffany Sommerio**, NCE doctoral student in Disability and Equity in Education; **Ashley Palladini**, NCE doctoral student in Disability and Equity in Education

NCE faculty delivered presentations for the "Carousel of Panels," attended by **Carolyn Theard-Griggs**, dean of NCE, at the IASB/IASA/IASBO Joint Annual Conference held in Chicago, IL. At this conference, school leaders gathered to celebrate 90 years of leadership and learning. **Renee Gugel**, assistant professor, and **Geri Chesner**, associate professor, presented "What Teacher Leaders Want to Know About PD," and **Gloria-McDaniel Hall**, associate professor; **Jennifer Engelland-Schultz**, assistant professor, and **Elizabeth Minor**, Director of Educational Leadership Studies, presented "Teacher Wellness and Resiliency."

NCE faculty participated in the 73rd Annual Conference of the Literacy Research Association (LRA) in Atlanta, GA. **Mary Hoch**, associate professor, served as the 2023 Area Co-Chair for Area 3 Literacy Assessment, Learning, and Teaching. The following papers and studies by NCE faculty were presented at the conference:

- *Unpacking the Social Identities of Chinese American Children via Multimodal Discourse Analysis*; **Xiaoning Chen**, associate professor
- *Examining Hierarchies and Harvesting Change in Literacy Clinics*; **Mary Hoch**, associate professor
- *I Just Need to Turn My Work in and Go About My Business: Learning from BIPOC Students Enrolled in a Reading Specialist Program*; **Sophie Degener**, associate professor; **Tina Curry**, adjunct instructor; **Mary Hoch**, associate professor; **Gloria McDaniel-Hall**, associate professor; **Ruth Quiroa**, associate professor; **Courtney Brookins**, adjunct instructor

NCE faculty participated in the 2023 Multilingual Illinois Statewide Conference in Conjunction with ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) 2023 in Oak Brook, IL. NCE faculty presentations included:

- *Visual Literacy Has Best Practices, Too!*; **Kristin Lems**, professor, and **Xiaoning Chen**, associate professor
- *Expanding Classroom Interactions by Capitalizing on Multilingual Students' Ecosystem*; **Niles Engerman**, adjunct instructor

Gloria McDaniel-Hall, associate professor, presented "Storytelling as Activism: Dreaming Toward Possibilities" at the Evanston School District 65 Equity Summit 2024.

Service to the Field:

Carolyn Theard-Griggs, dean of NCE, recently met with members of the NCE Brain Trust at its fall semi-annual meeting. This group of alumni educational thought-leaders serves as College ambassadors, giving direction for teacher preparation, discussing new ideas in education, and providing support and counsel to Dean Theard-Griggs.

Gloria McDaniel-Hall, associate professor, volunteered for the My Block, My Hood, My City annual ["Be A Part of The Light"](#) event with Jahmal Cole, CEO and Founder. Now in its sixth year, this program was launched to bring holiday cheer to Chicago's historic Martin Luther King Jr. Drive by decorating homes with lights, bows, and garlands. Cole, who started this initiative, was the Keynote Speaker for NLU's 2023 Fall Connections at the Chicago Campus.

Ayn Keneman, professor, has been paying visits to recent M.A.T. Early Childhood Education graduates at the schools where they are employed. In October, Dr. Keneman visited Ifeanyi Ukachukwu, a 2nd-grade teacher at AHS Passages Charter School in Chicago. At the visit, Dr. Keneman shared an interactive read-aloud with the children. In November, Dr. Keneman visited Suneela Khan's preschool classroom at Little One's Preschool in Northbrook, IL. Dr. Keneman observed Suneela's lesson on teaching the children to write a new alphabet letter.

Todd Price, associate professor, who serves on the Executive Committee of the Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA), testified on behalf of [2023 Assembly Bill 640](#) *License to Teach Based on Working as a Paraprofessional in a School District* at the December 5, 2023 Public Hearing held at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, WI.

Ayn Keneman, professor, and **Brisa Garcia**, NLU's Jumpstart site manager, designed an Interactive Literacy workshop for our NLU Teacher Preparation Undergraduates participating in the Jumpstart (Children First) program. The literacy workshop focused on the practice of choosing Tier Two words (high-frequency words for mature language learners) in every interactive read-aloud designed by teachers. All NLU Jumpstart students are working at El Valor Guadalupe Reyes Center -- a collaboration created through Dr. Keneman's role as a board member of El Valor.



CELEBRATIONS

Awards, honors, and career promotions NCE students, alumni, and faculty receive

Jaclyn Rivard, assistant professor, has been chosen as a 2023 Donald H. Wulff Diversity Fellow through the POD Network.

Congratulations to **Amrita Ganguly**, NCE's first candidate to complete the certificate in the Strategic Educational Leadership program.

Thank you to **Veronica Ramos**, '18, M.Ed. in Educational Leadership, who recently returned to NLU for an alumni event to share her

		entrepreneurial journey regarding her ¡WEPA! Libros organization.
Congratulations to Theartris Childress III , '21 Ed.D. Educational Leadership, who has been appointed as the newest member of the Flossmoor School District 161 Board of Education.	Congratulations to Ta'Lor Coleman , NCE's first candidate to complete the Master of Education in Strategic Educational Leadership.	Congratulations to Jeffrey McHugh , '15 Ed.D. Educational Leadership, who was named the new superintendent for Glen Ellyn School District 41.
Congratulations to Precious Allen , '10 B.A. Elementary Education, '14 M.Ed. Reading, '21 Ed.S. Educational Leadership, who was named the 2023 Illinois Network of Charter Schools Elementary Teacher of the Year.	Debby Pope , '95 M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction Bilingual Education, was featured in a Chicago Teacher Union website regarding her 50-year teaching career.	Congratulations to Educational Leadership alumni Ron Murphy , who was named Executive Director of Human Resources at West Aurora School District 129.

NCE IN THE NEWS

NCE programs and community members featured in media outlets

Carlos Azcoitia, emeritus professor, has been interviewed by Univision Chicago about the 2023-24 CPS student enrollment and again for his opinion regarding providing more resources to Chicago neighborhood schools. Watch [here](#) and [here](#). Univision Chicago often seeks Dr. Azcoitia's advice due to his long career with Chicago Public Schools (including being a former CPS teacher, administrator, principal, and Deputy Chief of Education) and his ties to National Louis University, a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

Carla Sparks, associate professor, and **Bradley Fuller**, adjunct instructor, were interviewed on Tampa Bay's Morning Blend to discuss the teacher shortage in Florida. Dr. Sparks highlighted how [National Louis University's Florida state-approved Educator Preparation Institute \(EPI\) program](#) addresses this issue. The 5-month supportive cohort model Florida EPI program is designed so that candidates can continue working while taking weekly synchronous virtual classes. At completion, candidates receive a Master of Arts in Teaching Degree, Florida Professional Educator Certificate, Florida Reading Endorsement, and coursework teaching English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

Xiuwen Wu, associate professor, was featured in two Education Week articles, "[Do Future Teachers Have Math Anxiety? Their University Instructors Think So](#)" & "[Universities Are Teaching Competing Math Philosophies to Future Teachers. Why That Matters](#)," published September 2023.

Kristin Lems, professor, was featured in an FF2 Media article, "[The Historical Connection Between Jane Addams & Kristin Lems](#)." The article recounts Dr. Lems's career in music and activism and speaks of her recent audio musical play, *Saint Jane and the Wicked Wicks*. The musical tells the story of Jane Addams, known as the founder of social work in the US, and Nellie Wicks, Kristin's great-grandmother and one of the residents of Jane Addams' Hull House.

An Education Week reporter recently visited Assistant Professor **Renee Gugel's** LDR 531: **Leading Teacher Development and Student Learning** class to interview students about virtual professional development. Teacher Leader student Stephan Jordan was quoted in the article, "[Hybrid PD May Be the Best of Both Worlds, School Leaders Say](#)," published November 2023.

WELCOME NEW FACULTY MEMBERS AND STAFF



Erin Tatel Stein is excited about her new role as a Field Experience Specialist. Most recently, Erin has been working at NLU as a Field Supervisor and an adjunct, supporting students through presentations, question and answer sessions, and preparing students to apply and interview for teaching jobs.

In education for over 25 years, Erin has been a teacher, dean of students, assistant principal, principal, assistant director, and then director of human resources for a school district in the northern suburbs. Erin graduated with an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from The University of Iowa and earned her Master's in Educational Leadership and Administration from The University of Illinois at Chicago.

Erin looks forward to this next chapter in her professional life. She is excited to work in postsecondary education and effect change for our children's future and our profession at another level.



Maureen Chertow Miller has recently retired from public education after 30 years in the field. Her experience includes fifteen years as a middle/high school science teacher before leaving the classroom to become a school administrator.

Maureen's administrative experience was focused on instructional technology. She developed a passion for technology after earning her Master's degree in Technology in Education from NLU. At her core, she believes it is imperative that we prepare students for their future, not our past.

Maureen is delighted to join NLU as a Field Experience Specialist. Continuing her career with NLU is something she's had her eyes on since leaving the classroom. Maureen is looking forward to meeting new students and staff members. She is a people

person, collaborator, and problem-solver. She believes everyone's voice matters and that sometimes you are only as "smart as the room."



Sophie Schwartz is thrilled to join NLU in her new role as a Field Experience Specialist, where she will manage a caseload of undergraduate education students and assist them in finding field placements where they can complete their field hours, practicum, and student teaching.

A former teacher, Sophie still wants to leave her mark on the world of education but outside of the classroom. Before joining the Office of Field Experiences at NLU, Sophie taught 4th grade in Park Ridge, IL. Sophie graduated from The University of Illinois with a Bachelor's in Elementary Education. She is also currently in the process of earning her Master's in Teacher Leadership from NLU.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date! McCormick Center's Leadership Connections The McCormick Center's 23 rd annual Leadership Connections National Conference is being held on February 7-10 at the Westin Chicago North Shore in Wheeling, IL. This conference provides a framework to support leadership in early care and education programs, with opportunities to attend relevant workshop sessions, network, and become inspired by leading specialists in the field. Learn more information about this event here .	February 7-10
M.A.T. Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education Programs Info. Session February 13, 4:00 pm https://nl.zoom.us/j/93685344254	February 13
M.A.T. Middle Level Education and Secondary Education Programs Info. Session February 13, 5:00 pm https://nl.zoom.us/j/93246072877	February 13
M.A.T. Special Education Program Info. Session February 16, 5:00 pm https://nl.zoom.us/j/92172525169	February 16

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