

OCTOBER 2023

Dear National College of Education community,

I hope this letter finds you well-rested and feeling positive about the academic year. Seeing our community return this fall with a renewed passion for education brings me great joy, and I am consistently inspired by your dedication to making a difference in the field.

As we all know, the past few years have presented unprecedented challenges to the world of education. Among these challenges, teacher shortages and burnout have become growing concerns. This year, we're placing a special emphasis on teacher wellness and support. Our goal is to ensure that our educational community has access to the necessary tools and resources to prioritize their well-being. To that end, we've organized a [2-part webinar series on teacher wellness and self-care](#), offering invaluable insights and strategies to help teachers maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Furthermore, I am thrilled to announce the successful launch of our [Teacher Induction Program](#), which plays a pivotal role in supporting newly graduated teachers during their crucial first year in the classroom. We aim to help our new educators hit the ground running and

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thrive by providing mentorship, guidance, and a strong support network.

As we embark on this new academic journey, let us remember that the National College of Education is a community that cares for its members. Together, we will navigate any challenges that come our way and celebrate our successes. I am excited to witness your growth and see the collective impact that you will continue to have on the field of education.

If you have suggestions or questions on our initiatives or in general, please email me and let me know how NCE can help you or a colleague in your educational journey. You may also view our NCE Resource Guide, a comprehensive overview of the College and its offerings. Take a look [here](#).

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



Carolyn Theard-Griggs, Ed.D.

Dean, National College of Education

WHAT'S NEW

NLU Rankings

National Louis University's Early Childhood Education program has been ranked in the top 10 Best 2023 Early Childhood Education Degrees Online by [Forbes Advisor](#).

New Grants

Jaclyn Rivard, assistant professor and chair of the Higher Education Leadership and Post-secondary Teaching and Learning programs, received a \$140,000 award from the National Science Foundation. The grant work will focus on improving undergraduate STEM education and increasing successful STEM participation by underserved groups.

Kathy Pluymert, assistant professor and chair of the School Psychology program, received a 5-year/\$50,000 per year grant from the U.S. Department of Education to increase the number and diversity of high-quality, trained mental health professionals in high-needs schools and districts.

Faculty Recognition

Nominated by the NLU community, two NCE faculty members received faculty awards at the 2023 National Louis University Connections. Congratulations to **Sherell Wilson**, assistant professor in Educational Leadership, who was honored with the Excellence in Research, Scholarship, and Inquiry Award. **Gloria McDaniel-Hall**, associate professor in Educational Leadership, was honored with the Excellence in Service and Engagement Award.

Program News

NCE added a new major in [Linguistic Diversity and Equity](#). The major will provide an additional option for students in the Teaching and Learning Ed.S. and Ed.D. programs.

NCE revised its [Coaching and Mentoring Certificate](#) curriculum into a 3-course package, allowing for more candidates to add this professional qualification to their skillset.

Summer Reading Program

The Center for Literacy's Summer Reading Program included 30 Reading Teacher and Reading Specialist candidates at two campus locations: Wheeling and Virtual. During the program, candidates worked with 57 K-12 students in literacy interventions.

Alumni Portal

Discover new ways to stay connected with cohorts, classmates, and friends with NLU's new [Alumni Portal](#)! From alumni volunteer opportunities, networking events and class reunions, and career services to an exclusive alumni directory, this is your "one-stop shop" to engage with your alma mater. You can also use the portal to update your contact information, submit class notes for the alumni magazine, find out what's new at NLU, and more. If you still need to sign up, click [here](#).

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

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

Publications:

Xiaoning Chen, associate professor, published *Connecting & Sharing: The Book of Selected Readings 2023* from the International Visual Literacy Association. Dr. Chen is the assistant editor for this publication.

Kristin Lems, professor, published "In 'town full of writers,' Jane Addams biographer Louise Knight stands out" in the *Evanston RoundTable*.

Renee Gugel, assistant professor, published an article in *Education Week* titled "What This Former Administrator Wishes She Had Known About Teacher PD."

Arlene Borthwick, professor emerita, served as co-editor of an issue of *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education* as well as co-author of the issue's introductory and concluding editorials. The special issue summarizes the literature describing the four pillars of a technology-infused teacher preparation program: curriculum, instructor modeling, practice, and self-efficacy. The articles in this special issue were developed through the teamwork of nineteen experts in the field, including **Angela Elkordy**, associate professor, **Nicole Zumpano**, adjunct alum, and **Lucy Gray**, alum.

Ruth Quiroa, associate professor, co-authored the article entitled "Preservice Teachers' Written Responses to Refugee Experiences in a Graphic Novel" published in *The Social Studies* on August 23, 2023. The findings in this qualitative study point to the importance of increased levels of instructor scaffolding with explicit attention to developing students' identities and critical reflection so that they can learn from their own response patterns to stories with themes of world/national injustices, immigration causes/effects, and diversity in general.

Gloria McDaniel-Hall, associate professor, and **Jennifer Engelland-Schultz**, assistant professor, co-authored "Collective Wellness and Growth for Educators: A Rippling Effect in Society" in *Voices for Educational Equity*.

Presentations:

Harrington Gibson, associate professor, and **Cheryl Watkins**, adjunct faculty, were featured in the *Education Week* article "How to Support Male School Leaders of Color. 6 Tips From a District-University Partnership." The article results from NCE partnership work with Chicago Public Schools supported by the Fry Grant and CPS Grants. The proposal/paper was selected for presentation this year at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting. After attending the AERA session presented by Dr. Gibson and Dr. Watkins, the co-editor for *EdWeek* requested a follow-up to inquire about the NLU Educational Leadership Coaching Program and to feature the program's objectives and approach while highlighting the NLU candidates, alumni, and faculty who participated in it.

Blanca Gamez-Djokic, assistant professor, presented "Of Boundaries and Borders: A Micro-Interactional Examination of Research-Practice Partnership Actors' Talk, Learning and Knowledge Construction Across Difference" at The Paris Conference on Education (PCE) organized by The International Academic Forum (IAFOR). PCE2023 was held June 16-19 in Paris, France. Dr. Gamez-Djokic also acted as Session Chair

for this Onsite Presentation Session, titled "Educational Research, Development & Publishing." In addition, Dr. Gamez-Djokic served as PCE2023 Reviewer.

The 2023 International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) ISTE Live 23 Conference included the following NCE faculty presentations:

- How Do Educators Apply Computational Thinking to Instructional Planning? **Jack Denny**, associate professor, **Angela Elkordy**, associate professor, **Ayn Keneman**, professor, and **Donna Wakefield**, associate professor
- Modeling Technology Use for Candidates: Design Principles for Technology-Infused Preparation Programs **Angela Elkordy**, associate professor
- Thinking by Design: Framing Thought With Cognitive Strategies and Digital Tools **Angela Elkordy**, associate professor

Karen Tardrew, associate professor, presented "Find Professional Understanding Through Visual Self Study Practices: Meaningful Teacher Growth" at the eighteenth International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences in Oxford, UK.

Todd Price, associate professor, was moderator for several sessions of the 2023 Conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (AAACS). At the conference, NCE faculty presentations included:

- Empowering Teachers to Unpack and Confront the Hidden Curriculum, Gaps, and Biases in Their Curriculum **Hyeju Han**, assistant professor, and **Suzanne Martinez**, assistant professor
- Public Spaces, Politics, and Policy: Historical Entanglements with Irrational Momentism **Todd Price**, associate professor

Gloria McDaniel-Hall, associate professor, and **Vishodana Thamotharan**, assistant professor, prepared a presentation entitled "The Power of Co-Creating: EmPOWERing Learning," offered as an interactive workshop at the Center for Success 2023 Annual Conference. Guided by the Illinois State Board of Education's Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, this session explored the impact of co-created higher education courses on student learning. Shared with the participants were how Dr. McDaniel-Hall and Dr. Thamotharan co-created the learning process, the challenges they faced, student work samples, and student reflections on co-creating.

Todd Price, associate professor, presented at the European Conference on Educational Research 2023-Glasgow Conference. The title of his presentation was "Diversity in Educational Philosophy and Educational Policy." This work is derivative of a soon-to-be-published paper in a Special Issue of *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, "Transformations of Choice and Diversity in Education: *Bildung* from Wilhelm von Humboldt through John Stuart Mill to Milton Friedman," authors Todd Alan Price and Ruprecht Mattig. At the conference, Dr. Price also participated in workshops on Curriculum Innovation and philosophical speculation on the venerable Adam Smith and education.

Service to the Field:

Dean **Carolyn Theard-Griggs** spoke on the panel "Making Pathways into Teaching Accessible, Practice-Based, and Focused on Equitable Instruction" at the Leadership Collaborative hosted by Deans for Impact (DFI). The panel had former fellows from a diverse range of institutions describe efforts to foster pathways into teaching that are accessible, practice-based, and focused on equitable instruction and the leadership decisions that they have made in doing so.

Dean **Carolyn Theard-Griggs** was appointed to the IMSA Illinois Math and Science Academy School Board by Ginger Ostro at IBHE- Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Angela Elkordy, associate professor, participated in a series of Mock Review Panels organized by the AI CIRCLS initiative at Digital Promise, funded by the NSF. The panel series was designed to provide professional development and networking for interdisciplinary faculty interested in pursuing NSF funding for innovative projects proposing emerging technologies solutions to problems of practice in education contexts.

Angela Elkordy, associate professor, recently attended an international conference organized by Educational Leaders Without Borders (ELWB) in partnership with the University of West Attica (UWA) and the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) held in Athens, Greece. Dr. Elkordy's presentation was entitled "Pitfalls and Possibilities: Artificial Intelligence and K-20 Education. What do Educational Leaders Need to Know?"

Ayn Keneman, professor, and Brisa Garcia, NLU's Undergrad College (UGC) Director of Jumpstart, facilitated the third In-Service Jumpstart Literacy Workshop at the Chicago Campus. The cohort finished their work at El Valor, a non-profit, community-based organization, and worked in two-year-old through 1st-grade classrooms, implementing Interactive read-alouds with all their young learners at El Valor Carlos Cantu Children & Family Center. The NLU Jumpstart program had 100% retention for the national Jumpstart program this year at UGC.

CELEBRATIONS

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

Congratulations to **Lourdes Marrero**, '23 Ed.S. in Educational Leadership, who was appointed Assistant Principal of Woodland Middle School.

DeKalb County School District appointed **Markisha Mitchell**, '18 Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, as their new

Scott Fraenheim, '11 M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision, is one of four new trustees for the Naperville Education Foundation. He is also the chief executive officer of Distinctive Schools.

Congratulations to **Michael Robey**, '96 M.Ed. Technology in Education, who is John Bosco Catholic School's new principal.

Congratulations to **Gina Majewski**, '23 Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, who is the new assistant principal at Bernotas Middle School.

Congratulations to **Catherine Eason**, '06 M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education Leadership and Advocacy, who has been

Associate Superintendent of
Continuous Improvement

Congrats to alumnus **Malcolm Hill**, '97 M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction, who was featured in a Yahoo! News article, *Six questions with new Belleville West High School principal Malcolm Hill*.

appointed Day Nursery's new executive director.

WELCOME NEW FACULTY MEMBERS AND STAFF



Jamillah Gilbert, assistant professor, is a special education teacher with 30 years of experience teaching students in diverse levels, programs, and settings. She has a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Foundations, with a focus on leadership, Equity, and Inquiry. Her M.S. is in Curriculum and Instruction, and her B.S. is in Special Education from Illinois State University.

Before joining our NLU faculty, Dr. Gilbert served as the assistant director of curriculum services at Illinois State University (ISU), where she oversaw the curriculum, instruction, and student support programming for all first-year experience, transfer student, and developmental math courses. She also has previous higher education teaching experience at ISU, Illinois Wesleyan University, Greenville College, and Heartland Community College.

Dr. Gilbert's teaching and learning philosophy is: *Growth in skill and knowledge occurs most often when **connections** are made and **bridges** from the familiar to the unfamiliar are crossed.* She knows that there are more avenues available than there are often presented – especially to the ones most marginalized in society. Her commitment is to help build bridges of access and encourage students to make critical connections. The framework from which she leads is Transformative, and the theoretical lenses through which she teaches and researches are Intersectionality and DisCrit.



Dr. **Christopher Lilly** assumed the role of Director of Advanced Professional Programs at the start of the 2023-24 academic year.

Dr. Lilly first joined NLU in the fall of 2021 as the Director of NCE Online Programming. Previously, Dr. Lilly served as a high school English Teacher and Department Chair for 20 years. Dr. Lilly also earned tenure and achieved the rank of full Professor at Concordia University Chicago where he was on the faculty for 10 years. Additionally, Dr. Lilly served as the Department Chair of the Educational Technology Program and later as the Associate Dean of Academic Quality in the College of Business.



Lisa Stukel joins NCE as Academic Project Coordinator for Dean Carolyn Theard-Griggs and Associate Dean Kristi Stricker working on NCE educational projects. She looks forward to a new path in her educational journey, as it has been a lifelong goal to spend the last part of her career in a university. Lisa feels passionately about guiding our future educators and keeping them in the field. She holds a B.A. in Elementary Education and M.A. in Reading and Literacy, both from Lewis University in Romeoville, IL. She also holds an ELL Endorsement from Dominican University in River Forest, IL.

Lisa's previous experience was in the classroom of many demographic areas spanning twenty-four years in six districts. Ten of those years were spent as a public first and second-grade teacher in Illinois. In between, she left the field for five years to raise her twin sons. When reentering the field, she

worked as a reading specialist/coach for K-5 for thirteen years in public schools in Illinois. Switching gears last year, Lisa went back to the classroom and spent one year in Florida teaching Junior Kindergarten in a private school in Miami Beach. In addition to working diligently to assist the NCE, she hopes to pursue a doctorate in the area of Reading and Literacy in the near future.



Deborah Lysicatos is excited to be joining NCE as a Field Experience Specialist. She will be working with a caseload of undergraduate students to secure and monitor their field experiences with partnering districts and cooperating teachers. After graduating from The Ohio State University with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Early Childhood Development, Deborah then went on to earn her MAT at The College of New Jersey.

An experienced educator, Deborah is passionate about helping students discover their strengths and passions. Before joining the Office of Field Experiences at NLU, Deborah had 19 years of experience working with grades K-6 as a classroom teacher and Gifted and Talented program specialist in the state of New Jersey. She also teaches classes for The Center of Talent Development at Northwestern University on the weekends.



Laurel Shapiro is also excited to be joining NLU in her new role as an **Undergraduate Field Experience Specialist**, working with a caseload of undergraduate students to secure and monitor their field experiences.

Laurel has a Bachelor of Arts in Government from Lawrence University, where she was the recipient of the Thomas B. Reid Scholarship in Journalism. She also has a Master's in Broadcast Journalism from Boston University.

An experienced communications expert with a strong interest in youth education, Laurel used her extensive programming experience to plan, create, and manage over 80 youth programs a year for the Vernon Area Public Library, provide advisory services, and develop literature-based programming at the Deerfield Public

Library. Her skills in programming and production developed when she was a Radio Producer for WGN, WMAQ (currently WBBM), and WBEZ Radio, the NPR Affiliate in Chicago. She also was an Adjunct Instructor in Broadcast Communications at Columbia College.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Save the Date! 2024 Comprehensive Literacy and Reading Recovery Conference Discover more about this event here .	January 17-19
Save the Date! McCormick Center's Leadership Connections 2024 Discover more about this event here .	February 7-9

Questions, comments or suggestions? Contact us: NCEDean@nl.edu

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122 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60603

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