

Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study

Teachers College, Columbia University

YEAR END REPORT 2024-2025



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OUR MISSION

The Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study is committed to critically examining and reshaping the lives and education of socially precarious and racialized populations. Drawing from critical theories, the Institute is an undercommons that does work that is voraciously interdisciplinary, intellectually curious, methodologically creative, and agenda setting fugitive planning and study.

Our mission is to understand, challenge, and dismantle the effects of power, structural oppression, colonialism and settler colonialism, global racial capital, and the seemingly most socially intractable issues in education, culture, and society; and, to actively work towards a more equitable, anti-colonial, and transformative educational system.







A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Gordon Institute Community,

This year, we have witnessed how civil society is rapidly being dismantled in unprecedented ways. From constitutional rights such as freedom of speech to the values of academic freedom, and from public institutions like the Department of Education to institutions of higher education, the major pillars of civil society are under attack. Students and faculty have been disciplined or detained for practicing their constitutional right to peaceful protest. Long established civil rights legislations are being subverted through executive orders threatening the very conditions for a democratic society.

The neoliberal project of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion has become weaponized to not only further solidify and consolidate an ideology in institutional arrangements and policies that privileges, advantages, and normalizes the structural position of particular groups but to cultivate a culture that politically marks the non-white Other as suspicious and subject to potential disappearance. As part of this rhetoric, we have become the target of recently terminated federal grants, amounting to over four million dollars. Not only do I take serious issue with the unconscionable aims of these grant terminations, I also vehemently believe that something even greater is at stake: the foundation of civil society and democratic institutions, including the social good of education.

Education is more than just a means to acquire knowledge or skills; it is a fundamental pillar of democracy and social equity. As we learn from John Dewey, education is an essential institution for a democratic society. A robust public education system fosters critical thinking, civic engagement, and the capacity for individuals to advocate for their rights and communities. The social good of education lies in its ability to empower individuals, challenge systemic injustices, and cultivate informed, engaged citizens and differences. Hannah Arendt cogently argued that a new political order can be shaped, not through force and constraint, nor through persuasion, but through the social process and arrangement of education. Dismantling the social good of education and education research is not just an attack on institutions but on the very fabric of an equitable and just society.

As has been the history for marginalized, subjugated, and dispossessed communities, the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study will continue to create subversive spaces of collective care, study, knowledge-sharing, planning, and dreaming, especially through the ongoing attack on civil society and dismantling of the social good of education.

The Gordon Institute remains committed to its mission of critically examining and reshaping the lives and education of socially precarious and racialized populations. We continue the radical intellectual pursuit of understanding, challenging, and dismantling the effects of power, structural oppression, colonialism and settler colonialism, global racial capital, and the seemingly most socially intractable issues in education, culture, and society. And, we continue to actively work towards a more equitable, anti-colonial, and transformative system of education.

Our work continues to strive for racial equity and social justice in education and society through the initiatives and activities that you will find in this report, which respond to urgent needs such as:

- ▶ Conducting essential and groundbreaking research that is critical for the advancement of a just and equitable society.
- ▶ Creating support mechanisms for our Faculty Affiliates to navigate these unprecedented times and to enhance our collective capacity to seek and secure external funding.



- ▶ Fostering spaces for academic engagement and intellectual dialogue, such as the 11th Annual Distinguished Gordon Lecture featuring the renowned radical Black feminist Dr. Hortense Spillers, as well as a Speaker Series showcasing prominent scholars from across the country, and the new brown bag series known as *Munch and Learn*.
- ▶ Providing professional learning for racially just education through racial literacy initiatives and the Reimagining Education Summer Institute (RESI).
- ▶ Improving students' educational outcomes in high-need PreK-12 schools in Harlem through the Reimagining Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem (REACH).
- ▶ Designing and implementing diverse curricula for New York City schools as a way to address systemic bias in education and to enable all students to thrive in a diverse, multicultural society through culturally responsive education.
- ▶ Generating new knowledge about teaching and learning in the past and exploring its implications for the present through the Center for History and Education and initiatives like the oral history project focused on the life and legacy of Professor Edmund W. Gordon.
- ▶ Bringing together scholarship, community, and culture to create scalable models, like the HipHopEd Conference, Science Genius, and the Barbados Partnership, as ways to reshape scholarship, engage youth, innovate in teaching and learning methods, develop productive networks, and foster meaningful partnerships.
- ▶ Advancing critical scholarship on AI, including the much-needed research on the affects of AI on Black youth's everyday life.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff, whose passion, talent, and unwavering commitment have been the driving force behind the accomplishments we have achieved this year. Their commitment has not only been the backbone to advancing our mission but has also made a tangible impact on our efforts to defend and preserve the social good of education. I also want to sincerely thank our partners and collaborators, including our Advisory Board, whose guidance and support has been critical to navigating the challenges we've faced and invaluable for pursuing meaningful opportunities; the Senior Associate Directors, whose shared vision and contributions have enriched and edified our work through their leadership in each of the institute's pillars; and, our Faculty and Research Affiliates, whose sharp and critically important research have expanded our reach and amplified our impact.

As we continue our efforts, we recognize that the fight for academic freedom and educational justice is more urgent than ever. We invite you to join us in reaffirming our commitment to critical research, educational equity, and the advancement of knowledge in service of the social good of education, especially for the marginalized, the subjugated, and the dispossessed.

In solidarity,

Ezekiel Dixon-Román

Director, and Professor of Critical Race, Media, and Educational Studies



A YEAR IN REVIEW

1,174

Event Attendees

1,275

Students Served

577

Families Served

\$6,812,016

Awarded Grants

14

Grant Proposals Submitted

5

Grant Proposals Awarded

12

Guest Speakers

5

Visiting Scholars

1

Artist Scholar in Residence

43

**AERA Presentations/
Facilitators:**

Reinforcing our role as a center of excellence

1st

Developing first PreK-12 curriculum on Latinidad in NYC through the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative

1st

Implementing first PreK-12 curriculum on Black studies in NYC





OUR PILLARS

RESEARCH

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP
AND POLICY

TEACHERS
COLLEGE



RESEARCH

Senior Associate Director for Research:

Felicia Mensah

The Gordon Institute for Advanced Study is dedicated to the transformative power of education and community engagement. Our Institute works to transform society and the world for educational equity through four key areas of research:

- ▶ Revolutionizing pedagogy via hip-hop education, racial literacies, and Black studies;
- ▶ Redesigning assessment to serve teaching and learning;
- ▶ Supporting children and youth through violence prevention and informal learning in arts and STEM;
- ▶ Rewriting educational histories. This work is grounded in innovative research methods spanning action research to data science, alongside critical AI analysis that prioritizes equity in educational technology and data use.

Over the past year, we have been diligently working to ensure that our mission and goals align with our intentions of service and community in our research, collaborations, partnerships, and affiliations. Our ambitious research agenda reflects our shared interest in dismantling inequitable educational systems and building transformative alternatives that center justice, amplify the voices of marginalized communities, and foster meaningful change in how we teach, learn, and understand the role of research and education in society.



NURTURING A GORDON INSTITUTE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of individuals who share a common interest, profession, or goal and engage in collective learning through regular interaction. Members of a CoP collaborate to share experiences, develop expertise, solve problems, and innovate within their shared domain of interest. The Gordon Institute for Advanced Study has focused some of its research activities this year on creating a CoP among faculty, students, and staff.

Professor Felicia Moore Mensah, the Senior Associate Director of Research, collaborated with the Institute Faculty Affiliates and staff to provide programming to nurture our CoP. Fostering collaboration and shared learning among faculty affiliates is crucial to improving and meeting the goals of the Gordon Institute. We are building an infrastructure to support the work of faculty affiliates, students, and staff.

To increase grant activity and support faculty in securing external funding, the Gordon Institute offered a two-part workshop. The workshop was led by Dr. Ed Dieterle, a researcher and former program officer with extensive experience on both sides of fundraising, and co-sponsored by Caroline Ebanks and the Office of the Vice Dean for Research.

The two interactive workshops covered essential strategies, including understanding funders' perspectives, applying the Needs-Approach-Based-Assessments (NABA) framework to refine research ideas, and mastering effective communication using the Know-Believe-Do model. In small groups, participants learned how to navigate the proposal drafting process, analyze successful case studies, and reframe rejection as an opportunity for growth.

Building from these experiences, two Reading and Writing Saturday Retreats were held in the Smith Learning Theatre on the Teachers College campus. These two retreats provided additional opportunities for faculty, research teams, and students to come together to work on grants and other writing projects.

As we continue to build a research infrastructure, we want to support grant writing and publishing, and other research projects to reflect the effort and impact faculty and research affiliates are doing. Over the year, we experienced increased grant seeking and publications across diverse venues.

The Gordon Institute is committed to deepening knowledge and enhancing practice through our CoP and providing regular spaces for our community to grow, learn, and support one another, while also informing the broader audiences to advance the mission and goals of the Gordon Institute.





MUNCH AND LEARN

This spring, we launched *Munch and Learn*, a series of lunch conversations with faculty and visiting scholars, facilitated by Dr. Mark Anthony Gooden. The goal of this series is to create a space for informal intellectual dialogue, while building community, and finding synergies and opportunities to collaborate on research topics of interest to our Faculty Affiliates, Research Affiliates, and Doctoral students.

Attendees in the inaugural gathering on March 12, 2025 had the chance to learn from Dr. Patricia Faison Hewlin, Professor of Social-Organizational Psychology at Teachers College, who shared insights about her research and better recognize how it applies to supporting faculty of color in the current, tense-filled context.

On April 30, 2025, we hosted our Visiting Scholar, Dr. Charles H. F. Davis III, who is a faculty member in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education and Director of the Campus Abolition Research Lab at the University of Michigan.

Dr. Davis shared his experiences as a third-generation educator, organizer, and artist whose work centers on the racialized consequences of higher education on society, including the role of colleges and universities in limiting the life-making possibilities of Black and other racially minoritized communities.



MUNCH & LEARN SERIES

An Informal Gathering for Research & Community

**Edmund W. Gordon
Institute for
Advanced Study**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2025
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
Suite 112 Zankel**

**Join us for the inaugural session of the
Gordon Institute Munch and Learn Series,
featuring:**

PATRICIA FAISON HEWLIN, PHD

**Professor of Social-Organizational Psychology
Teachers College, Columbia University**



REGISTER NOW!

LUNCH IS INCLUDED!

To request disability-related accommodations, please contact OASID at
oasid@tc.edu or 212-678-3689



ELEVENTH ANNUAL EDMUND W. GORDON DISTINGUISHED LECTURE



As part of the Edmund W. Gordon Distinguished Lecture Series, on April 15, 2025, Teachers College welcomed the renowned literary and cultural theorist and radical Black feminist, Dr. Hortense J. Spillers, for an evening of reflection, critique, and engagement on the intersection of race and public discourse.

The lecture titled *Telling Tales out of School: Race and Public Relations*, drew a full house at Milbank Chapel, underscoring the continued relevance and urgency of Dr. Spillers' voice in today's social and academic landscape.



The evening began with a warm welcome from Provost Kerry Ann O'Meara, who emphasized the role of the Gordon Distinguished Lecture Series in honoring legacies of intellectual excellence and social impact. Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román, Director of the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study, introduced Dr. Spillers with an overview of her groundbreaking scholarship in Black studies, Black feminist theory, and literary and cultural theory.

Dr. Spillers, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor Emerita at Vanderbilt University, delivered a thought-provoking lecture on the limited frame of media in public relations, the mythical and the work of sociogeny, and the affective violence produced from the *'tales told about people'*. Her message challenged the audience to think deeper, act bolder, and dream bigger.

Following the lecture, Dr. C. Riley Snorton, Visiting Professor at Columbia University, moderated a lively Q&A session.

The conversation further delved into themes of institutional memory, media literacy, and the responsibilities of scholars and educators in shaping public consciousness.

Dr. Davinia Gregory-Kameka, Assistant Professor in the Arts Administration Program at Teachers College, offered closing remarks, highlighting the significance of Dr. Spillers' work in advancing nuanced and justice-oriented conversations across disciplines. The event concluded with a reception in Everett Lounge, where attendees continued the dialogue inspired by the lecture.

Dr. Spillers' visit added a powerful chapter to the legacy of the Edmund W. Gordon Distinguished Lecture, which honors the enduring contributions of Professor Edmund W. Gordon, founder of the Gordon Institute and its Director Emeritus. As an educator, editor, and public intellectual, Dr. Spillers exemplifies the spirit of inquiry and transformation that the Lecture Series seeks to foster.





SPEAKER SERIES

The 2025 Speaker Series featured an array of remarkable individuals whose work is making a profound impact on the world. These events were a unique chance to hear from leading experts, engage with groundbreaking ideas, and gain fresh perspectives on critical race, decolonial, and Black studies scholarship in education that can inform and transform our own work.



DAVID STOVALL

Professor in the departments of Black Studies and Criminology,
Law & Justice
University of Illinois at Chicago

Black Figure Futures Embracing the Possibilities of Abolition in the Here and Now

September 25, 2024



EMERY PETCHAUER

Visiting Full Professor in the English Education Program
Teachers College, Columbia University

Us Whole: A listening Session-w-liner notes

October 23, 2024



DAVID JOHNS

Executive Director
National Black Justice Coalition

Teach ALL the babies addressing anti-black & anti LGBTQ+ Stigma to Ensure All Students Thrive

November 13, 2024



BISA BUTLER

Artist
Bisa Butler Art

The Artist as an Educator

January 29, 2025

**NOLAN CABRERA**

Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Practice
Center for the Study of Higher Education
Arizona State University

Why Don't We Notice the White Kids Sitting Together in the Student Union?

February 5, 2025

**CHEZARE WARREN**

Associate Professor of Education Policy
Vanderbilt University

Playing In the Dark? Blackness, Humanity and Studies of Black Life in Education 2012-2022

March 12, 2025





VISITING SCHOLARS

Through the Visiting Scholars Program, the Gordon Institute engages scholars who bring visionary, justice-oriented perspectives that challenge traditional paradigms and push the boundaries of educational research and practice. Their work has significant impact on our community as it fosters critical dialogue, advances innovative approaches to equity-focused research, and deepens interdisciplinary collaborations. By integrating transformative scholarship into its core, we affirm our commitment to decolonial knowledge, culturally responsive pedagogy, and cutting-edge inquiry that shapes the future of education and society at large.



CHARLES H. F. DAVIS III

Dr. Charles H. F. Davis III is a third-generation educator, organizer, and artist committed to the lives, love, and liberation of everyday Black people. Dr. Davis is a faculty member in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education and director of the Campus Abolition Research Lab at the University of Michigan.



MIKE JOHANEKE

With the generous gift of time and community this year via the Center on History and Education in the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study, I have been able to reframe and develop further my historical research into how urban communities can exercise agency on the public institutions that are failing them. This book project mines archival and interview data from Mexican-American communities in Chicago to reframe school reform as a lens on developing adult civic engagement. The collaboration of wonderful TC colleagues this year has been tremendously valuable and deeply appreciated.



TEMPLE LOVELACE

As a Gordon Institute Visiting Scholar, I collaborated on a systematic literature review with a research team that also included Professor Edmund W. Gordon on the primary scholarship contributions of Cronbach and Snow (1977) around the role of aptitude in instruction. In *Advancing Customized Learning: Integrating Functional Pedagogies and Human Variance in Modern Education*, we explored the role of technologically-free and enabled capabilities to support a functional approach to learning. In addition, I continued two lines of research, the first on exploring new approaches to learning progressions and the second focused on translating human variance through visualizations that support asset-based approaches to understanding learner development, which resulted in an accepted presentation at NCME/AERA in 2025.



NICOLE SANSONE RUIZ

My time as a Visiting Scholar with the Gordon Institute has coincided with radical shifts in the landscape of higher education and research, resulting in major interruptions to planned research and international collaborations. Despite this, early in 2025 Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román and I were awarded a Spencer Foundation grant for a groundbreaking study on Black youth and their engagements with AI. The study is the first of its kind and we've been extremely rigorous and thoughtful about the design of our instruments and the questions we are asking our participants. I am immensely proud of our work and look forward to sharing our findings!



CHEZARE WARREN

First, I was happy to present work from a recently published paper for the first time during the Gordon Institute Speaker Series. Most significantly, my book *Empathy in Black: Race and the Spectacle of Human Suffering* was put under contract with a leading trade press. I continue to make substantive progress on the book, having completed a full elaborate outline of the book's seven chapters. I also wrote and revised a complete final first draft of the book's introduction for submission to my editor for feedback. Finally, the visiting appointment allowed me time to collect and comb through new research sources, as well as re-analyze my own empirical data essential to the development of the book's other chapters in preparation for workshopping with colleagues.



HISPANIC EDUCATION SUMMIT

OPENING PLENARY SESSION “Entre Familia” Chat: New York City Latinidad

MODERATOR

Damaris Díaz

News Anchor and Reporter Univision

Tom Liam Lynch, Ed.D.
*Vice President Education
United Way of New York City*

Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román
*Director of the Edmund W. Gordon
Institute for Advanced Study
Teachers College, Columbia University*

Jes



NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS

LATINIDAD CURRICULUM INITIATIVE (LCI)

The Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study is spearheading an ambitious new initiative to transform the way Latinidad histories and cultures are taught in New York City public schools.

The Latinidad Curriculum Initiative (LCI), led by Professors Limarys Caraballo, Regina Cortina, and Ezekiel Dixon-Román, is being developed in partnership with United Way of New York City and the Hispanic Federation, with funding from the New York City Council. LCI aims to bring a culturally responsive curriculum to K–12 classrooms that honors the experiences of Latin American and Caribbean communities.

At the heart of the initiative is the goal to provide both educators and students

the opportunity to explore, celebrate, and expand their study of Latinidad through interdisciplinary frameworks. Latinidad encompasses the shared cultural and historical commonalities of people from Latin American and Caribbean descent—often grouped under terms like Hispanic, Latino/a, Latinx, or Latine, despite the rich diversity these labels can obscure.

New York City operates the largest public school system in the country, serving over 900,000 students in the 2023–2024 academic year. Of these, 42% identify as having Latin American and/or Caribbean heritage, yet their histories and contributions remain underrepresented in most classroom materials.





The LCI aims to address this inequity by offering resources that allow teachers to connect more meaningfully with students' identities and strengths, while also giving learners of all backgrounds a more complete understanding of the city's social fabric.

Among the highlights of the accomplishments in Year 1 of this project are:

- ▶ Developing a strategic report entitled *The Need to Advance the Study of Latinidad in New York City Public Schools*, which is comprised of four sections:
 - ▶ Section 1 introduces the background and demographics that underpin the need for a curriculum enhancing the education of Latinidad in New York City.
 - ▶ Section 2 delves into the details of our conceptual framework that will guide content development and instructional design.
 - ▶ Section 3 includes a lesson planning guide and four sample lesson plans associated with each grade level band.
 - ▶ Section 4 looks towards the future and details our plan for the next steps as we continue to develop this innovative curriculum project.
- ▶ Creating a blueprint entitled *Latinidad Curriculum Initiative: A Blueprint for NYC Schools*, which includes an infographic picturing a visual summary of the conceptual framework that informs all aspects of the initiative and outlines its scope in practice. The conceptual framework for the LCI includes four foundational pillars: Belonging, Critical Skills Across Contexts, Multiple Ways of Knowing, and Dynamic and Inquiry-Based Learning. To illustrate how the new curriculum aligns with these pillars, the four sample lessons published in the report, “*Sounds of Latinidad*,” “*Latinidad in My Community*,” “*Exploring Latinidad through Photography*,” and “*Mobilizing for Equity in Education: The Save Hostos Movement*,” are mapped by grade level band K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 onto the framework, which will provide a robust foundation for students to explore the beauty and multiple experiences of Latinidad.



- ▶ Leading two interactive panels at the 2025 Hispanic Education Summit, showcasing the curriculum's goals and classroom applications. In the session *Studying Latinidad in NYC Schools: Sample Lesson Plans*, participants were introduced to the interdisciplinary vision of the curriculum and had the opportunity to experience a sample lesson that explores diverse Latinidad narratives rooted in New York City communities. In the session titled *Learning Together: A Community-Centered Vision of Latinidad for NYC Schools*, educators, youth collaborators, and attendees explored the curriculum's intersectional definition of Latinidad, its participatory design process, and the data and research that shaped the framework and curriculum mapping. Together, these presentations highlight LCI's commitment to creating a dynamic and inclusive curriculum that centers student identity, lived experience, and the rich cultural contributions of Latino communities in New York City.

Plans for Year 2 include developing lesson plans across grades and subjects, along with a professional learning plan for educators. Year 3 will see the pilot implementation of the curriculum with school partners and the rollout of professional development programming. By Year 4, the full curriculum will launch, with comprehensive support for adoption by school districts.

Through the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative, the Gordon Institute and its partners are not only enriching public education—they are fostering a more just and inclusive future for all NYC students.

To learn more about Latinidad in Schools, visit our website:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/latinidadnycschools/>





AI AND BLACK YOUTH LIFE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF AI AFFECTS ON BLACK YOUTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLING

Drs. Ezekiel Dixon-Román and Nicole Sansone were awarded a rapid response grant from the Spencer Foundation for their year-long pilot study, “*AI and Black Youth Life: An Exploratory Study of AI Affects on Black Youth Within and Outside of Schooling*.” The study is being conducted in partnership with NYC’s District Five and NYC Digital Learning and Innovation Team and will conclude in February of 2026.

This study works with Black youth in grades 9–12 to try to understand how they are engaging with and understanding AI platforms in their everyday lives, both within and outside of school settings. Through both survey and interviews, researchers will explore open-ended questions, embedded experiments with GenAI prompts and output, and case study scenarios with participants to create a rich and nuanced picture of how AI is showing up for Black youth today.

The study will address AI usage from a range of perspectives, such as whether Black youth think about AI as their “collaborative partners,” as a tool, or as a “cheat” when creating content, and whether or not Black youth trust AI and expect it to be “fair” and “unbiased.” Additionally, the study will do a close analysis of the reported most used AI software by Black youth, with a focus on the extent to which the software’s design is in continuity with Black youth’s understanding of it.

The rush to include AI-powered tools in educational settings is overwhelming, making it more important than ever for research on the efficacy and safety of these tools to keep pace. Research focusing on the affects of AI on Black youth education and everyday life is a particular gap in the landscape that this study seeks to address.

Scholarship has already shown how embedded AI-driven technologies have the potential to exacerbate harm and discrimination for historically marginalized groups, raising new

issues around equity and data justice. This study explores those challenges and extends the scope of inquiry by placing Black youth at the center of the study. Instead of only asking how AI is shaping the experiences of Black youth, we also ask, “How are Black youth influencing the uses and applications of AI tools?”

Lucy Zhang, a Doctoral Research Fellow and Ed.D. student at Teachers College, and Alicia Chatterjee M.S. Ed., M.S.W., Ph.D., a Postdoctoral Fellow, will be overseeing the data collection process and supporting analysis. “*AI & Black Youth*” will culminate with three main outputs: a published report on the study’s findings that will direct a national research agenda for AI in educational settings; a national webinar that also addresses considerations for educator professional development on AI; and at least two scholarly publications addressing case studies that advance ethical considerations for AI, edtech, and racialized learners.

The “*AI & Black Youth*” study represents the first of its kind in explicitly addressing the mutually co-constituting relationship between AI and Black youth.



THE CULTIVATION OF INTELLECTIVE CHARACTER AND COMPETENCE: AN ORAL HISTORY PILOT PROJECT WITH DR. EDMUND W. GORDON



The Cultivation of Intellectual Character and Competence: an Oral History Pilot Project with Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, is a pilot initiative funded by the Spencer Foundation and dedicated to documenting the life and work of Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, a pioneering educator, psychologist, and scholar, who turned 104 this year. With support from a group of researchers led by Drs. Ansley Erickson, Maitrayee Bhattacharyya, Kenji Hakuta, and Michael Hines, this oral history explores the formative influences of people, institutions, and cultural movements that shaped Dr. Gordon's life and work as a Black intellectual across a century of U.S. history.

In this first phase of the project, a series of in-depth interviews are being conducted to capture Dr. Gordon's reflections on his development, including the role of influential women in his life, his formative experiences at institutions like Howard University and Teachers College, and his connections to Black intellectual traditions and leading cultural figures. The project seeks to illuminate his evolving philosophy and ongoing commitment to equity in education.

The artifacts produced as part of this project will contribute to the Edmund W. Gordon collection at the University of Texas at Austin, as well as at the Schomburg Center, and Teachers College, Columbia University. They will also lay the foundation for future scholarship exploring the intellectual development of Black leaders, with the potential to inform pedagogy, equity efforts, and multigenerational dialogue in education.

In keeping with Professor Gordon's commitment to mentoring and intergenerational learning, the project includes two doctoral student research assistants, Dayna-Joy Chin at Teachers College and Beth Bass (TC M.A., 2024) at Stanford University.



ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Senior Associate Director:
Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz

The reinstatement of Donald J. Trump to the White House has accelerated efforts to silence and erase the histories of marginalized communities, particularly those who are racially, religiously, or gender diverse. These attacks, often cloaked in anti-DEI language, target educators, authors, and librarians. They attempt to ban books and punish those who speak truth. In this environment, racial literacy is not just important, it is essential.



THE IMPERATIVE OF RACIAL LITERACY AND THE POWER OF BOOK TALKS IN THE ERA OF BOOK BANNING & KNOWLEDGE ERASURE

At Teachers College, Columbia University, the Academic Programming Pillar of the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study responded to this crisis through an expanded Racial Literacy Book Talk Series (2024–2025).

These events centered voices being censored or challenged, including authors like Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul, Dr. Oiyen Poon, Jamilah Pitts, and Toni Blackman. The series offered educators, students, and community members a space to reflect, heal, and resist.

These Book Talks weren't just about books—they were about creating a platform for identity, love, justice, and community.

Facilitated by TC doctoral student Victoria Dumas, the series affirmed that justice work must be rooted in daily practice, and always done in community.

As we prepare for the 2025–2026 series, we remain committed to amplifying truth and preserving inclusive education. Below is a snapshot of recent and upcoming featured authors:

2024–2025 Highlights

Toni Blackman: *Wisdom of the Cypher*, November 2024

Dr. Oiyen Poon: *Asian American is Not a Color*, March 2025

Jamilah Pitts: *Toward Liberation*, March 2025

Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul: *Antiracist Reading Revolution*, April 2025

Drs. Francois & Cahill: *Identity-Affirming Literacies in Schools*, May 2025

Planned 2025–2026 Authors include

Barry Goldenberg, Antero Garcia, Breanya Hougue, Omo Moses, Nolan Cabrera, Nadia Lopez, Dawn DaCosta, Mark Gooden, Fabienne Doucet, and more, including a new Book Talk by Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz on *The Archaeology of Self™*.







REIMAGINING EDUCATION: TEACHING, LEARNING AND LEADING FOR A RACIALLY JUST SOCIETY

Reimagining Education: Teaching, Learning and Leading for a Racially Just Society (ReEd) is a program that provides educators with support and vital skills to make their schools and classrooms more culturally relevant and antiracist throughout the school year. Our commitment is to reimagine education in four ways:

- ▶ A summer institute: *Reimagining Education Summer Institute (RESI)* is a professional development conference that takes place every year in the month of July. During the three-day Institute, teachers and researchers come together as a learning community to explore, make sense of, and provide tangible support to reimagine education for a more racially just society. The future of our diverse democracy and the intercultural understanding needed to sustain it depend on our schools' ability to do the required work to educate. *RESI 2025* took place virtually, between July 15–17, 2025, with the participation of 150 educators from across the country and around the world. Seat hours and credits are offered if teachers and administrators choose.
- ▶ A year-long online Advanced Certificate Program, fully online and offered to individuals, schools, and districts, the *Reimagining Education Advanced Certificate* is designed for those who aspire to become educational leaders on issues of equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion at the classroom, school, or district level. This program prepares educators to become change agents in reducing disparities within schools. Individuals or groups complete capstone projects that are presented at the end of their program.
- ▶ A standalone course available for pre- and in-service teachers, counselors, and administrators who can take the course in the summer, allowing them to get graduate credit while completing a small research project based on a conference speaker or theme and the reflection of their own RESI experience.
- ▶ An opportunity for ongoing professional development. *RESI 365* extends our commitment towards reimagining education beyond the three-day professional development summer institute, offering year-round professional development support for schools and districts, online or on-site. Prior topics include: culturally relevant pedagogy, racial and cultural literacy, culturally responsive leadership, parent and community engagement, and addressing policies related to student assignment and tracking.

To learn more visit our website:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/conferences/reimagining-education/>





SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Senior Associate Director:
Chris Emdin

This year marked a transformative chapter for the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study—one that fundamentally challenges traditional academic boundaries. Our work has demonstrated that scholarship, community, and culture are not separate domains but rather a unified, powerful pathway forward. By centering culture in its varied forms, (re)establishing global partnerships, and deliberately expanding our definition of who qualifies as a scholar and what constitutes scholarship, we have created a model that others can follow to bridge institutional knowledge with lived experience.





REDEFINING SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP: JOEY BADA\$\$ SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE



In June 2024, we revolutionized traditional academic residency models by welcoming multi-hyphenate artist Joey Bada\$\$ as Scholar-in-Residence, while launching the Impact Summit in partnership with the Gordon Institute. This collaboration vividly illustrates our core principle: **community engagement is scholarship of the highest order.**

Joey's recurring mentorship series for young men of color provides more than just guidance—it creates an intentional space where self-discovery, leadership cultivation, and educational excellence flourish through cultural connection.

His residency represents our ongoing commitment to challenging narrow conceptions of intellectualism while establishing a new paradigm: cultural figures deeply rooted in community work are legitimate scholars, mentors, and architects of meaningful change.

As Joey shared in a *Billboard* interview regarding his work with the Gordon Institute, “I’m just excited to expand...to create a new norm for people like me.”

This partnership serves as a replicable model for institutions seeking to authentically engage with cultural figures who hold community wisdom that enriches academic discourse.

SCIENCE GENIUS INITIATIVE: COMMUNITY-BASED STEM IDENTITY FORMATION

This year marked the revitalization of the Science Genius Initiative, bringing science education directly into community spaces through the cultural framework of hip-hop. By conducting workshops across Brooklyn, Queens, and Harlem, we witnessed students transform scientific concepts into powerful rhymes grounded in physics, biology, and chemistry.

Now in its second decade and firmly established at the Gordon Institute, the Science Genius Initiative continues to demonstrate remarkable outcomes: increased science engagement, improved academic performance, and validated youth identity.

This initiative proves that STEM education, when taught through the lens of lived experience and community cultural wealth, becomes a liberating force rather than an alienating one.

Science Genius offers a sustainable, community-centered model for STEM education that other institutions can adapt to their specific contexts—showing how cultural responsiveness leads to deeper learning and community transformation.







GLOBAL COMMUNITY BUILDING: THE BARBADOS-TC PARTNERSHIP

Our international community-building efforts crystallized through the deepening partnership between the Gordon Institute at Teachers College and Erdiston Teachers' College in Barbados. This collaboration transcends traditional institutional exchanges by fostering genuine reciprocity and mutual learning between global educators.

Throughout the year, Dr. Emdin facilitated stakeholder convenings, supported innovative course design, and created spaces for educators from both countries to share expertise.

This partnership brought U.S.-based faculty to Barbados while introducing frameworks focused on creativity, leadership, and equity that honor local knowledge.

This international collaboration demonstrates how global educational partnerships can move beyond one-directional knowledge transfer to create sustainable communities of practice that respect cultural context and local wisdom—providing a template for authentic cross-cultural academic engagement.





CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY IN ACTION: TEACH LIKE AN MC

Supporting the launch of Dr. Edmund Adjapong's book, *Teach Like an MC*, aligned perfectly with the Institute's mission to advance culturally responsive pedagogy.

The celebratory event and accompanying workshop trained educators to adopt the precision, presence, and power of an emcee in the classroom—transforming teaching into a community-centered art form.

This launch amplified the voices of students and teachers who position culture not as a supplementary element but as the foundation of curriculum development.

The methodology provides teachers with practical strategies to connect academic content with students' lived experiences, creating classrooms where community knowledge is valued alongside traditional academic discourse.

Dr. Adjapong's work offers a replicable framework for teacher education programs nationwide, demonstrating how culturally responsive teaching practices can be systematically implemented to transform educational experiences.





COMMUNITY CONVENING: HIPHOPED CONFERENCE

Our commitment to community-centered education culminated in the inaugural two-day HipHopEd Conference at Teachers College on June 6–7, 2025.

Themed “Hip-Hop as Transformation: Empowering Education, Industries, and Communities,” this partnership with the nonprofit HipHopEd brings together educators, scholars, artists, and community leaders to explore hip-hop’s transformative potential across educational landscapes.

Through workshops, keynotes, and student performances, the conference examines hip-hop’s influence across sectors including technology, business, art, and activism. This gathering creates space for diverse knowledge-holders to collaborate and reimagine education from a community-first perspective.

The conference structure itself models how academic institutions can create forums where community wisdom is centered and valued, establishing a template for community-engaged scholarship that other institutions can adapt.





EXPANDING COMMUNITY NETWORKS: UNLOCK HER POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

Our new partnership with Unlock Her Potential, a mentorship program founded by Sophia Chang, demonstrates our commitment to building educational models that address structural inequities.

This initiative accelerates the professional growth of women of color through mentorship, career development, and community building.

By connecting our students and community members with mentors across media, arts, and education, we're creating pathways that

challenge traditional gatekeeping mechanisms in various industries.

This partnership exemplifies how academic institutions can leverage their resources and networks to create more equitable professional landscapes.

The structure of this partnership offers a blueprint for how educational institutions can collaborate with community organizations to create sustainable support systems for underrepresented groups.









REIMAGINING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT COALITION OF HARLEM (REACH)

Launched in 2011 as a broader Teachers College initiative, now under the auspices of the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study, the Reimagining Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem (REACH) aims to improve students' educational outcomes in a group of high need PreK-12 schools in Harlem.

This program seeks to demonstrate how universities can effectively and strategically partner with public schools in sustainable and cost-effective ways to help address the needs of children and families in their communities.

REACH utilizes the University Assisted Community Schools Model, which involves the

collaboration of schools, essential community resources, and higher education.

Our partner schools have the opportunity to leverage services offered by Teacher College's graduate fellowships, student volunteers and organized groups, as well as aligning faculty expertise and research that combines community-based participatory research practices to provide services and support to schools and communities.

Through the implementation of this model, this year REACH served more than 577 families and 775 students in the Harlem community.





LOOKING AHEAD: A COMMUNITY-CENTERED MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The momentum we've built demonstrates the power of community-centered approaches to education. From redefining scholarship through hip-hop to transforming classrooms through international partnerships, we are establishing a model for education that is simultaneously radical, rigorous, and deeply rooted in community wisdom.

With new initiatives on the horizon—expanding the Impact Summit, scaling Science Genius globally, and launching a “Young Journalism Scholar Studio” at the Institute with news reporter Lisa Every—our work continues to demonstrate how institutions can authentically bridge community knowledge with academic discourse.

Our approach offers a replicable framework for educational institutions seeking to:

- ▶ Expand definitions of scholarship to include cultural and community expertise
- ▶ Center youth voices and experiences in knowledge creation
- ▶ Build global partnerships based on genuine reciprocity
- ▶ Transform pedagogical practices through cultural responsiveness
- ▶ Create sustainable networks that address structural inequities

By continuing to develop these community-centered initiatives, the Gordon Institute is not only advancing its immediate mission but crafting a transferable model that reimagines the relationship between academic institutions and the communities they serve.



EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AND POLICY

Senior Associate Director:
Sonya Douglass

The Education Leadership and Policy Pillar of the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study advanced its mission during the 2024–2025 academic year through its focus on outreach and engagement with faculty affiliates, research-practice partnerships with state, local, and district-level leaders, and advancing critical research, policy analysis, and scholarship of consequence for the public good.

The Pillar remains dedicated to translating faculty research for nonscientific audiences to ensure the public is informed about what educational research says concerning the costs, benefits, opportunities, and limitations associated with existing and proposed education policies and leadership practices.





FACULTY AFFILIATE OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The Gordon Institute launched a survey for faculty affiliates to assess what policy issues, topics, and concerns they would identify as priorities for the Institute's policy agenda.

Thirteen (13) affiliates out of roughly 29 responded. They reported their primary interest or experienced impact in education policy is at the local/district (33%) and federal level (27%), primarily within the K-12 education area (47%).

Key policy areas of interest or concern include teacher and leader preparation programs (47%), academic, social, and emotional learning (33%), and federal research funding for colleges and universities (33%).

Faculty affiliates reported most concern for students of color (33%), students with disabilities (20%), and immigrant students (20%) in relation to education policy.

Their current involvement in policy-related projects is wide-ranging, including ethnic studies curriculum development and implementation (e.g., Black studies,

Latinidad, Lenape), AI education, school governance, racial literacy, teacher training and development, and special education.

On February 27, 2025, the Gordon Institute also hosted a presentation by Education First, a national mission-driven strategy and policy organization with deep expertise in education improvement, to examine the impact of the federal executive orders on K-12 and higher education, and to get a perspective on the funding landscape given the shifts in the federal priorities.

The Gordon Institute also hosted a panel discussion, *Equity-Driven Research in a Shifting Political Landscape*, on April 10, 2025, featuring Adam Gamoran, President of the William T. Grant Foundation, and Caroline Ebanks, TC Vice Dean of Research.

The panel provided interesting insights about the challenges of pursuing grant funding for equity-driven research and strategies for how best to approach this rapidly shifting funding landscape.





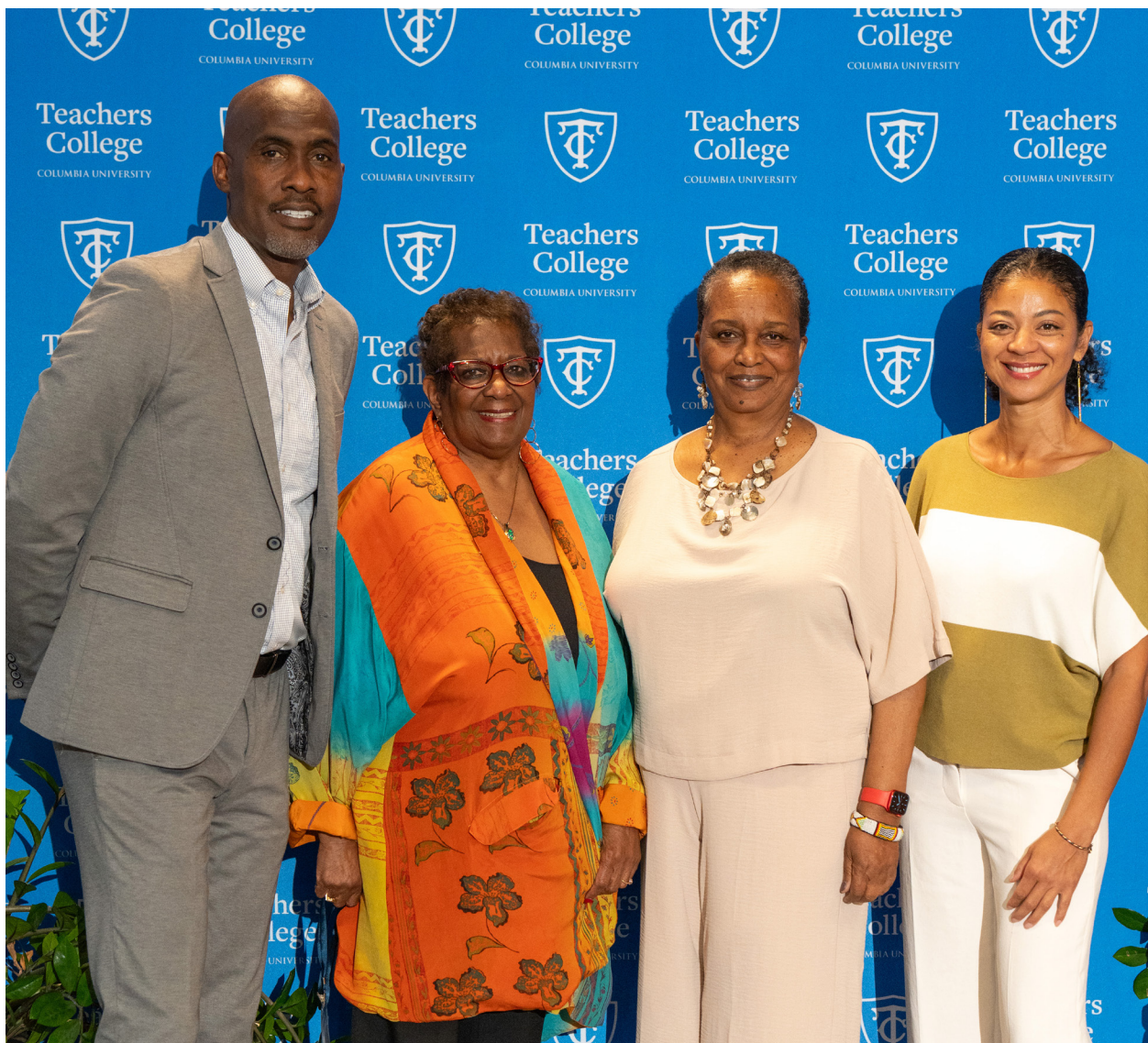
BRIDGING LEADERSHIP, POLICY, & PRACTICE

Dr. Douglass convened a strategy session with leading educational researchers at the 2025 AERA Annual Meeting, providing opportunities to discuss an agenda for Black education policy and refine the Gordon Institute's policy agenda and priorities as a university-based research institute.

As of April 2025, Dr. Douglass serves as Vice President of AERA Division L: Educational Policy and Politics, which provides a national forum for dissemination and discussion

of research that advances understanding of how educational policy is developed and implemented and how policy impacts educational organizations and the students they serve.

This will provide yet another opportunity to leverage policy research with scholars at the Gordon Institute, members of the Division, and existing collaborations with colleagues and organizations in Brazil, South Africa, and Ghana.





Black Education Research Center
Teachers College, Columbia University

2ND ANNUAL

BERC SUMMER CONFERENCE



Black Studies as the Study of the World:
Designing Creative Practices for
Classrooms & Communities

A professional learning day designed to support teachers and school
leaders in the implementation of Black Studies as the Study of the
World: A PK-12 Black Studies Curriculum for NYC Public Schools.

SPEAKERS

DR. SONYA DOUGLASS

Professor & Director, BERC, Teachers College, Columbia University

DR. DAWN WILLIAMS

Professor & Dean, School of Education, Howard University

DR. TYRONE HOWARD

Professor of Education, University of California, Los Angeles

FRIDAY | JUNE 6, 2025 | 8:00 AM-6:00 PM | SMITH LEARNING THEATER

RESEARCH-PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS

The Black Education Research Center (BERC), an affiliate of the Gordon Institute, received a \$750,000 award from the New York City Council to continue its provision of professional learning opportunities and support to New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) educators implementing lessons from the *Black Studies as the Study of the World Curriculum (BSC)*, which was completed on June 30, 2024, as part of the 2021 Education Equity Action Plan (EEAP) Initiative.

This included the monthly *Black Studies Virtual Learning Series* covering a range of topics that culminated in the 2025 BERC Summer Conference, showcasing curricular implementation and research-informed practices for implementing the *BSC*.

BERC has also established a research-practice partnership with NYCPS Community District 3 (D3) that is the basis for a Spencer Vision Grant Proposal entitled: *Black Studies as the Study of the World: Exploring Curriculum Implementation as a Lever for Systems-Level Change in Large Urban Districts*.

BERC also is a member of D3's School Integration Advisory Board, which provides strategic guidance on the district's goal to ensure each of its schools is socioeconomically representative of its student population overall and offers its students a rigorous, culturally affirming education.





IN THE SPOTLIGHT





PUNISHED FOR DREAMING

We kicked off the year with the panel discussion on Educational Reparations, celebrating the one-year anniversary of *Punished for Dreaming: How School Reform Harms Black Children and How We Heal*, a book by best-selling author **Bettina Love**, William F. Russell Professor at the Department of Curriculum and Teaching.

Among other recognitions, this *New York Times* bestseller earned Dr. Love the **Stowe Prize for Literary Activism**, made her a finalist for the *LA Times Book Prize*, and long-listed for the **Brooklyn Public Library Book Prize**.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

PUNISHED FOR DREAMING

HOW SCHOOL REFORM HARMS BLACK CHILDREN AND HOW WE HEAL

BETTINA L. LOVE

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WE WANT TO DO MORE THAN SURVIVE

CELEBRATING THE —ONE YEAR— ANNIVERSARY

PARTY WITH DR. VIEW

SAVE THE DATE

9 1 2 24

THURSDAY

6:00 pm

Smith Learning Theatre

Teachers College, Columbia University

Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study

To request disability-related accommodations, please contact OASID at oasid@tc.edu or 212-678-3689



SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, & FELLOWS



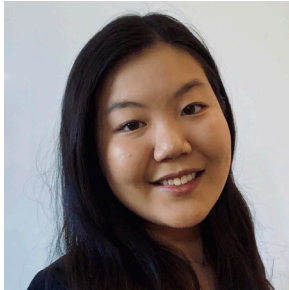
ISABELLA BARTELS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Isabella Bartels is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is a former high school ESL and English teacher in New York City public schools, and currently works as a research assistant and Speaker Series Coordinator at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute. In this role, Isabella has engaged her interests in critical theory and educational justice with a widespread community. Isabella's current dissertation research, working with Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Roman, puts to work theories of desire, discomfort, and memory toward more imaginative possibilities in curriculum and pedagogy. Her research interests make use of affect theory and posthumanism alongside classroom pedagogy, curriculum studies, and teacher-student relationships. Isabella holds an M.A. in Curriculum and Teaching from Teachers College and a B.A. from the College of William and Mary in Secondary Education and English.



NATACHA ROBERT, W.E.B. DUBOIS SCHOLAR

Natacha Robert is a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Teaching program at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is currently working as a Zankel Fellow Supervisor with the Youth Historians in Harlem, collaborating with fellows and teachers at Wadleigh High school to bring Black and Latine educational activism history into the classroom. She is also continuing her research and Land curriculum development with the Lenape people of New York and New Jersey. Additionally, she is working alongside Dr. Naraian and Dr. Pizmony-Levy on a research project on *Sustainable Multi-Species Futures*. Her research interests are in African-centered education, culturally relevant education, decolonization, and multimodal methods. Natacha is currently developing research on curriculum collaboration between families and independent African centered institutions. She is also developing research on the intersection of African-centered education, African youth civic identity formation, and indigenous land/ecological education. Being a fellow at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute means engaging in collaborative work with the local Harlem community and schools to address issues of educational equity in urban education and highlighting hidden histories. Natacha holds an M.Ed. and B.A. from Pace University.



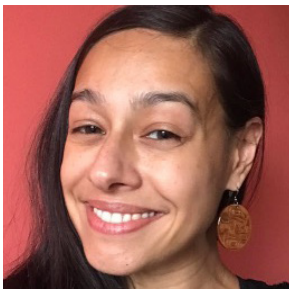
LUCY ZHANG, DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

Lucy Zhang is a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Teaching program at Teachers College, Columbia University, and is currently working as a doctoral research fellow with Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román and Dr. Nicole Sansone Ruiz on their Spencer-funded project, *AI and Black Youth*. Her research interests are in philosophy of technology, AI ethics, and critical data studies. Lucy is currently developing research on the emerging technopolitics of urban AI exemplified in smart cities and smart schools in the U.S., U.K., and China. Her work investigates how large-scale data infrastructures and recursive systems are reshaping educational policy and governance along racial imaginaries. Being a fellow at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute means engaging in collaborative dialogue around important educational issues in urban education, critical theory, and social justice. Lucy holds a M.Phil. from the University of Cambridge and a B.A. from University College London.



ALICIA CHATTERJEE, POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

Alicia Chatterjee is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research critically explores the histories and afterlives of mental health care, drawing together comparative race studies, psychoanalysis, and disability studies. Grounded in decolonial methodology and historical analysis, her current book manuscript traces the emergence of clinical social work in the United States alongside global histories of race, revealing its deep entanglements with racial dispossession. In addition to this work, Alicia investigates how trauma, therapy, and healing are shaped by technology under contemporary racial capitalism. As a Fellow at the Gordon Institute, she is excited to deepen her engagement with the intersections of race, education, and the clinic. She is currently a member of the team working on the *AI and Black Youth* project. Alicia holds a Ph.D. in Social Welfare from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice.



NASRIAH MORRISON, POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

Nasriah Morrison is a postdoctoral fellow working with Drs. Erica Walker and Lalitha Vasudevan on their *Storytelling for Mathematics* project, which explored the use of mathematicians' digital stories in mathematics learning spaces as a means of promoting students' mathematics learning and engagement. She completed her Ph.D. in mathematics education at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she currently teaches courses in multiculturalism and policy in mathematics education. For over a decade prior, she taught middle and high school mathematics in the New York City public school system. Her research interests include the development of positive mathematics identities that are rooted in broad conceptions of mathematics among students belonging to historically excluded racial and ethnic groups, and how integrating racially expansive histories throughout mathematics curricula may contribute to this development. Nasriah also holds an M.A. and M.Phil. from Teachers College and a B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley.



FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORS



EZEKIEL DIXON-ROMÁN

Ezekiel Dixon-Román was appointed **Senior Advisor to the President of the Spencer Foundation** on two initiatives: (1) Tools and Strategies for Transformative Research: Quantitative Focus; and (2) AI and Education.



MARK GOODEN

Mark Gooden was inducted into the **AERA Fellows Program**. This program honors education researchers with substantial research accomplishments, to convey the Association's commitment to excellence in research, and to enable the next generation of emerging scholars to appreciate the value of sustained achievements in research and the breadth of scholarship worthy of recognition.



FELICIA MENSAH

Felicia Mensah was awarded the **NARST Fellowship** as a result of her leadership within the National Association for Research in Science Teaching (NARST), including her role as immediate-past Co-Editor of the *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, and serving on the JRST Advisory Board, reflects her dedication to inclusive, high-impact scholarship. Dr. Mensah's exemplary service, mentorship, and scholarship make her a respected leader and advocate for equitable science education worldwide. Dr. Mensah also received the Urban Education's annual **Kofi Lomotey Outstanding Reviewer Award**. This award recognizes a reviewer, outside of the Urban Education board, for exemplary service to the journal over the academic year.





SONALI RAJAN

Sonali Rajan was named Senior Research Director of Everytown Research, the national research arm of Everytown for Gun Safety, an organization that conducts independent, methodologically rigorous, and interdisciplinary research on gun violence across the nation, working to identify the best policies, interventions, and resources to prevent and meaningfully address gun violence across the U.S., through evidence-based solutions.



YOLANDA SEALEY-RUIZ

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz has been elected as a Member-at-Large on the AERA Council, for which she will serve a three-year term.



RACHEL TALBERT

Rachel Talbert has been awarded the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship, during which she will investigate the implementation of the curriculum developed with Lenape Center.

Four Gordon Institute Faculty Affiliates **Sonya Douglass**, **Chris Emdin**, **Bettina Love**, and **Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz** were included on the **2025 Rick Hess Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings**, a ranking of the 200 university-based scholars in the United States who did the most last year to shape educational practice and policy.

2025 RHSU Edu-Scholar Rankings

Rank	Name	Affiliation	Discipline	Google Scholar	Book Points	Highest Amazon	Education Press	Total
21	Bettina L. Love	Columbia University	Sociology	23	7	17.4	30	112
28 (tie)	Christopher Emdin	Columbia University	Curriculum, Instruction & Admin.	28	12	16.8	2.5	99.4
137	Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz	Columbia University	Curriculum, Instruction & Admin.	24	6.5	0	10	57.3
141	Sonya Douglass	Columbia University	Curriculum, Instruction & Admin.	29	4.5	0	0	53.5





A LIFE OF PURPOSE: A YEAR OF RECOGNITION OF PROFESSOR GORDON'S ENDURING LEGACY

From local roots to national recognition, our Founder and Director Emeritus, **Professor Edmund W. Gordon** has been honored this year for his lifelong contributions to education and society. He received one of the most prestigious awards in the field of education; a Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa; and honors at the local level in Rockland, NY, where he lives, as well as Wayne County, NC, where he was born and raised.

On November 15, 2024, he was honored with the **2024 Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education** in the preK-12 category. The award recognized Dr. Gordon's dedication of "over six decades to transforming pre-K-12 education through his visionary leadership, pathbreaking scholarship, and profound commitment to promoting equity and access to quality education for all students," as well as his "enduring, deep, and wide impact on education, psychology, and social science research."

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Gordon reflected on the value of teaching as a profession, "I consider pedagogy to be the most noble of the helping professions. There is no higher calling than that of helping in the cultivation of human Intellectual competence," he stated.

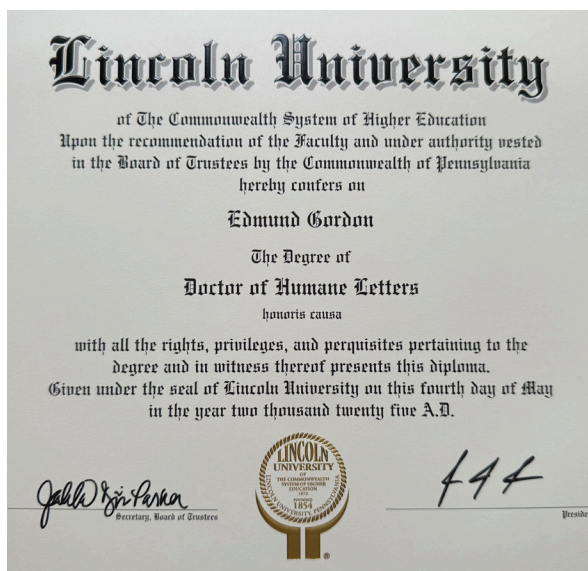
In the winter, the board of trustees of the Rockland Community College (RCC) voted on a resolution to name the Ellipse—a key lecture space in its Technology Center—after him as a way to recognize his contributions in his role as **Senior Scholar in Residence**. The naming ceremony took place on February 24, 2025, at the RCC campus in Suffern, NY.

At its 166th Commencement on May 4, 2025, Lincoln University awarded Professor Gordon an honorary **Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa**, as a recognition of his influence on American psychology, educational theory, and African-American studies.

Dr. Gordon's local accolades also include the induction into the **Wayne County Hall of Fame** as a 1937 Dillard High School graduate. The ceremony took place on May 20, 2025 at the Wayne County Museum in Goldsboro, NC, where he was born and raised.

CONGRATULATIONS, PROFESSOR GORDON!

Your commitment to rigorous scholarship, social justice, and service to the community continues to be a powerful inspiration to all of us.







CYPHERS FOR JUSTICE

Cyphers for Justice (CFJ) is a youth and educator development program housed within the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study and the CUNY College Now Program at Queens College. CFJ apprentices NYC high school youth and educators as critical researchers through the use of hip hop, spoken word, digital literacy, and critical social research methods.

Founded within the traditions of Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and hip hop culture, CFJ youth work alongside TC's students, professors, and community-based teaching artists to conduct research and present their findings on relevant social issues.

CFJ highlights for this year include:

- ▶ **YOUTH-DRIVEN RESEARCH:** CFJ youth defined and explored the characteristics of critical research through literature reviews, community discussions, and reflections on the relationship between research and “mesearch.” Each young person rooted their inquiry in personal and communal passion projects, making their research both rigorous and deeply relevant.
- ▶ **SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT:** Alumni from past CFJ cohorts remained actively involved by co-facilitating weekly sessions and serving on the CFJ Youth Board—demonstrating the intergenerational and enduring nature of our learning community.
- ▶ **MULTIMODAL SCHOLARSHIP:** In partnership with guest scholars, students engaged in research through poetry, music, and podcasting, expanding their understanding of what research can look, sound, and feel like. They also deepened their information literacy by working in the libraries at Teachers College, exploring beyond online sources.
- ▶ **CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION:** CFJ youth contributed original research to YPAR presentations at the 2024 NCTE and AERA conferences—bringing their voices into national education conversations.
- ▶ **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:** As part of the Latinidad curriculum initiative, CFJ students participated in weekly Zoom discussion groups to ensure youth voices remain central to the curriculum's design and implementation. They also participated in the panel session *Learning Together: A Community-Centered Vision of Latinidad for NYC Schools* at the *Hispanic Education Summit in NYC* on June 17, 2025.

To learn more visit: <https://sites.google.com/tc.columbia.edu/cyphers-for-justice/home>







THE IMPACT OF OVER FOUR MILLION IN TERMINATED GRANTS

What happens when your history is being threatened with being erased? You remind people that you were here!

As part of the Trump Administration's actions against Columbia University, due to alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Gordon Institute had over four million in federal grant funding terminated.

What's most important is that the dollar amount of rescinded grant money can in no way approximate the magnitude of the impact that Prerna Arora's, Melissa Collier-Meek's, and Ezekiel Dixon-Román's respective grants, would have had in the Harlem community, in particular, and in society more broadly.

Anyone who watches the news or any type of media should know that mental health issues, post-COVID 19 pandemic, have skyrocketed for our youth. Arora's and Collier-Meek's grant would have created a program that helped meet local, state and national needs by preparing school mental health providers with the evidence based, culturally-informed, and trauma-sensitive mental health services to culturally and linguistically diverse high school students. Additionally, it would have partially funded M.A./ Ed.M. school psychology TC students matriculation through the completion of their degrees.

Under Dixon-Román's grant, the team led by Jamila Mosley, REACH Director, provided university-assisted community school model support designed to meet the academic and social-emotional needs for secondary-school youth in a high poverty area in Harlem. There is no question that our partner school, Frederick Douglass Academy II, is already grappling with the loss of not enabling and supporting the community via REACH's outreach initiatives, school absenteeism prevention, community networking opportunities, family parenting workshops and resources.

The team also sought to leverage the support of TC's faculty and grad students to lead professional development and workshops for families and REACH Team members, with a focus on best practices for family engagement and parental skill development for infants and toddlers.

The yearly evaluation report conducted by Youth Studies Inc. underscores REACH's impact. REACH significantly impacted student development and school climate at FDA II. REACH has made remarkable strides in transforming student outcomes and building stronger, more connected school communities across our partner schools.

In the 2023–24 school year, chronic absenteeism across all REACH partner schools decreased by a remarkable 14.5%, from 41.5% in 2022–23 to 27%. Average attendance at family engagement events increased by 10% in just one year, strengthening the connection between schools and families and fostering a supportive, collaborative environment.

And, 100% of students at REACH partner schools participated in at least one Expanded Learning Opportunity (ELO), ranging from academic support like tutoring and STEM workshops to enrichment programs such as sports, arts, and mindfulness.

Students also reported improvements in core academic skills like reading, math, and computer use, demonstrating the effectiveness of REACH's approach to enrichment. At FDA II, 71% showed strong problem-solving abilities, and 68% demonstrated high academic self-efficacy and self-regulation. REACH's absence and impact on Frederick Douglass Academy II will be felt and the REACH team is already mourning the loss of this partnership.

The impact of the loss of these grants, the projects, and the partnerships is far greater than the terminated over four million dollars.



SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Arora, P.G., Awad, M., Parr, K., Connors, E.H. *Strategic Treatment and Assessment for Youth (STAY): A Theoretically-Driven, Culturally-Tailored MBC Approach*. *Adm Policy Ment Health*. 2025, January; 52(1):261-276. doi: 10.1007/s10488-024-01419-6. E-published 2024, November 14.

Brown, R.N., & **Petchauer, E.** *Routines of re-encounter: Sound Practice in the Art of the Social*. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 0(0), 2025.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/19408447251319423>

Caraballo, L. & Albright, T. *A Constant Negotiating of People, Purpose, and Power*. In Eds. T. Albright and G. Brion-Meisels, *Critical Thinking on Youth Participatory Action Research*, pp. 122-127. 2024

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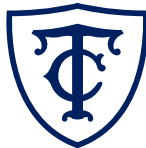
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