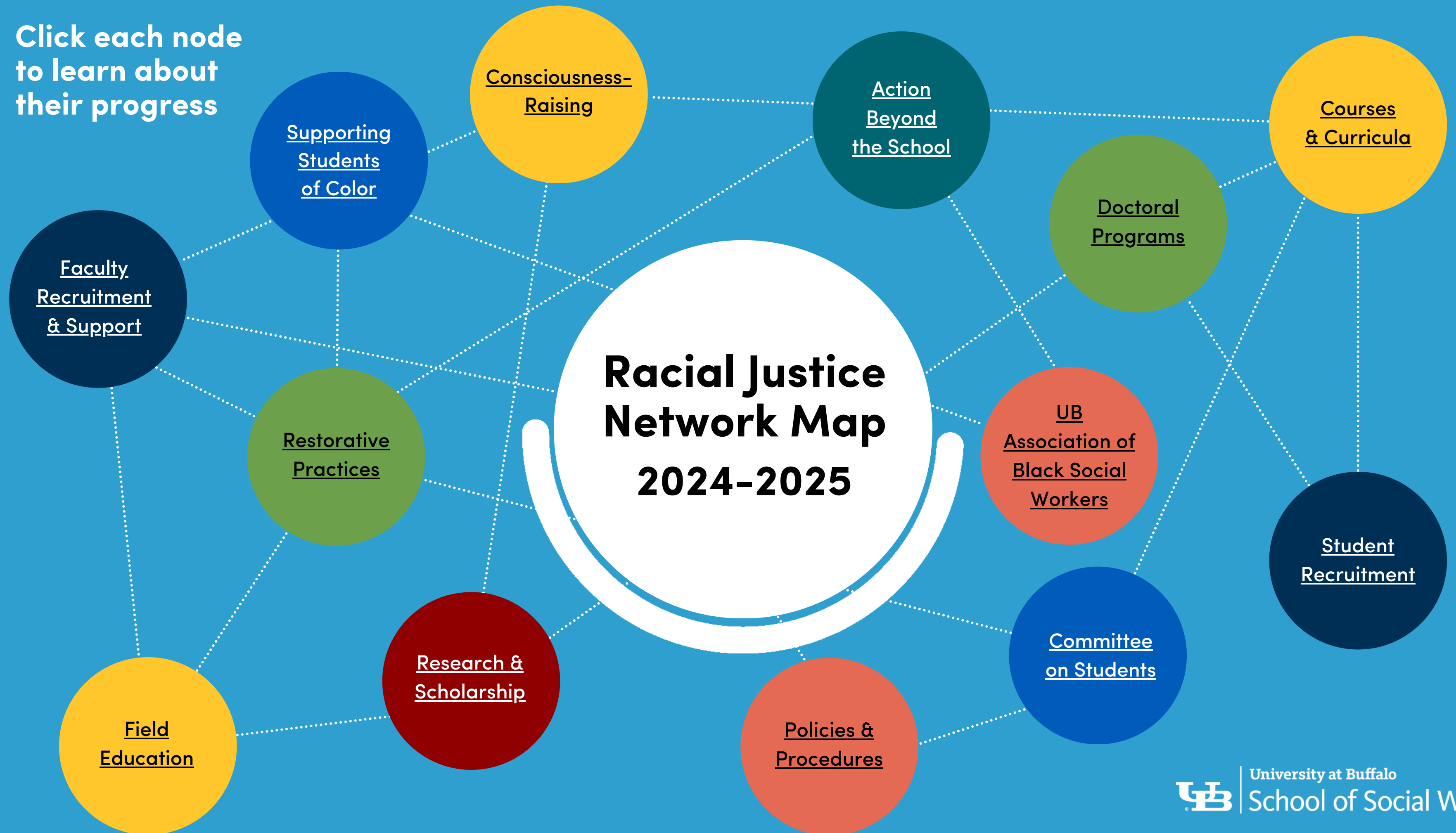


Click each node
to learn about
their progress



Consciousness-Raising

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90th Anniversary Lecture and Celebration

Featured speaker:
Melissa Harris-Perry

Our alumni, students, faculty, staff and community partners celebrated 90 years of advancing the dignity and worth of humankind in the UB School of Social Work. The evening began with a presentation from award-winning professor, writer, speaker and media host Melissa Harris-Perry — titled, “The Complexity of Equity: Advancing Justice through Social Work” — followed by a networking reception.

Courageous Conversation with Justice for Migrant Families

Presented by
Jennifer Connor,
Executive Director of JFMF

From Food Apartheid to Food Equity in Buffalo

Presented by
Dennice Barr of Buffalo Food
Equity Network and
Allison DeHonney of Buffalo Go
Green, Urban Fruits and
Veggies, and the Erie County
Food Policy Council

Black History Month 2025

**Art: Healing,
Empathy and Resistance**
Presented by
Alexa and Edreys Wajed,
Founders, Eat Off Art

Social Work Month 2024

Advancing DEIA in Challenging Times

Presented by:
Seval Yildirim, Vice Provost for
Inclusive Excellence, UB
Jacqueline Hall, MSW '05, DSW '24,
Buffalo and Erie County Workforce
Investment Board
Elizabeth Ramirez, MBA/MSW '24

Idging Borders and Honoring Culture: Transnational Collaboration to Advance the Rights of New Immigrant Families

Presented by
Marco Castillo,
Co-Executive Director,
Global Exchange, New York City

Action Beyond the School of Social Work

Alumni Engagement

Filomena Critelli, associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion, presented to alumni: "The Human Rights Framework and Rights-Based Social Work Practice to Advance Social, Racial and Economic Justice."

Juneteenth

We participated in Buffalo's 49th Juneteenth Festival on June 15-16. We met hundreds of community members, providing self-care information, along with instructions and resources so participants could make their own self-care kits and scented bath salts.

Social Welfare Action Alliance

Alumni members of the SWAA are getting back to our radical roots, with racial justice on the agenda.

socialwelfareactionalliance.org

90th Anniversary Days of Service

In 2024, the School of Social Work marked our 90th anniversary through service.

In April, we hosted a day of service with the City of Buffalo's Operation Clean Sweep initiative that brought together students, faculty, staff, alumni and field education partners. In addition to recognizing our anniversary, volunteers dedicated their efforts to the lives lost during the racially fueled massacre in May 2022 at Tops, which was along our clean-up route that day.

During the year, we also partnered with Jewish Family Services of WNY to support the Refugee Partnership — and planted trees in Buffalo's McCarthy Park with the Tool Library.



Courses and Curricula

We recently launched a new undergraduate course with a racial justice focus, which will be part of the interdisciplinary Prison Studies Certificate Program in the UB College of Arts and Sciences.

Mass Incarceration and Direct Practice

Instructor: D. Michael Applegarth

This course focuses on prevention and intervention strategies that address the high incarceration and reincarceration of people with mental health challenges, the overrepresentation of people of color in carceral and community supervision settings, and supportive services that facilitate community reintegration following incarceration.

SW 130: Black Lives Matter

Instructor: Tonya Myles-Day

SW 199: Valuing Diversity

Instructor: Tonya Myles-Day

SW 199: When We Fight We Win

Instructor: Laura Lewis

Revision of SW 500 addresses whitewashing of social work history

Our History and Policy course has been revised and divided into two courses with the goal of presenting an inclusive and equitable history of social work that honors the contributions of BIPOC social work activists, founders and reformers.

Doctoral Programs

PhD students Ogechi Kalu, Vanity Jones, Jennifer Elliott and Joyce Adeola Jekayinoluwa created the Building Black Relationships by Initiating Development, Growth and Empowerment (BBRIDGE) podcast series on intimate partner violence in the Black Community.

Doctoral Programs Committee (DPC) Process

DPC has added on ongoing agenda item to each meeting related to racial justice.

PhD Student Spotlights

PhD candidate Samantha Williams is conducting a study on school of social work-community partnerships to address health disparities in Black neighborhoods in Buffalo.



Admissions and Recruitment

DPC partnered with the school's Admissions team to strengthen the recruitment and admissions process. The School of Social Work also removed the GRE requirement for admissions to the PhD and DSW programs.

UB Association of Black Social Workers

ubuffaloabsw@nabsw.org

LEARN MORE ABOUT UBABSW



Gloria James, MSW '22, UBABSW founder



2024-25 Executive Board

- Vanity Withrow, President
- Vanity Jones, Vice President
- Jamie Pope, Treasurer
- Ogechi Kalu, Secretary

ALUMNI COLLABORATION INITIATIVE

UBABSW is continuing work on an initiative to connect members with alumni working in the field.

EVENTS



UBABSW hosted “Recovering our Roots” in partnership with the UB Macro Social Work Student Network and Grassroots Gardens, going beyond gardening to celebrate the shared ancestry of African Americans and reclaim our rightful knowledge and food sovereignty.



UBABSW hosted an interactive discussion using popular songs and video clips to examine how relationship dynamics are portrayed in the media.

Student Recruitment

The School of Social Work strives to build and retain a diverse student body that reflects the communities we serve.

Application Policies and Procedures

- Maintain a consistent, replicable and equitable application process
- Provide coaching and offer opportunities for guidance with applications
- Assist applicants with steps to application completion and deadlines
- Host live and virtual information sessions

Admissions Review Process

- Maintain a consistent, fair and equitable review process
- Support and assist faculty reviewers to review applications according to our policies and procedures
- Require multiple reviews for each application
- Promote a holistic review approach, while maintaining fair and equitable discussion of applicants' materials
- Continue quality improvement regarding application eligibility, requirements and review process

Committee on Students

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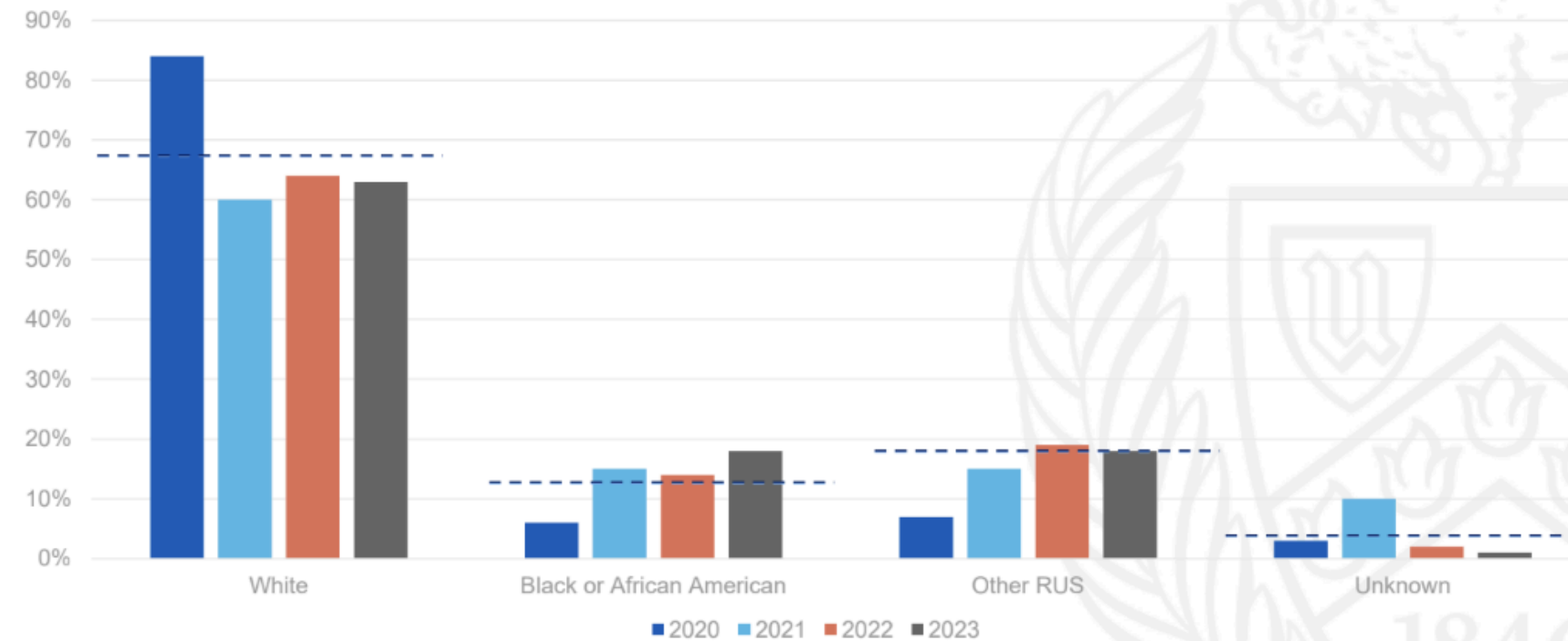


Data comes from
"Race/Ethnicity" as self-
reported* by students
in HUB.

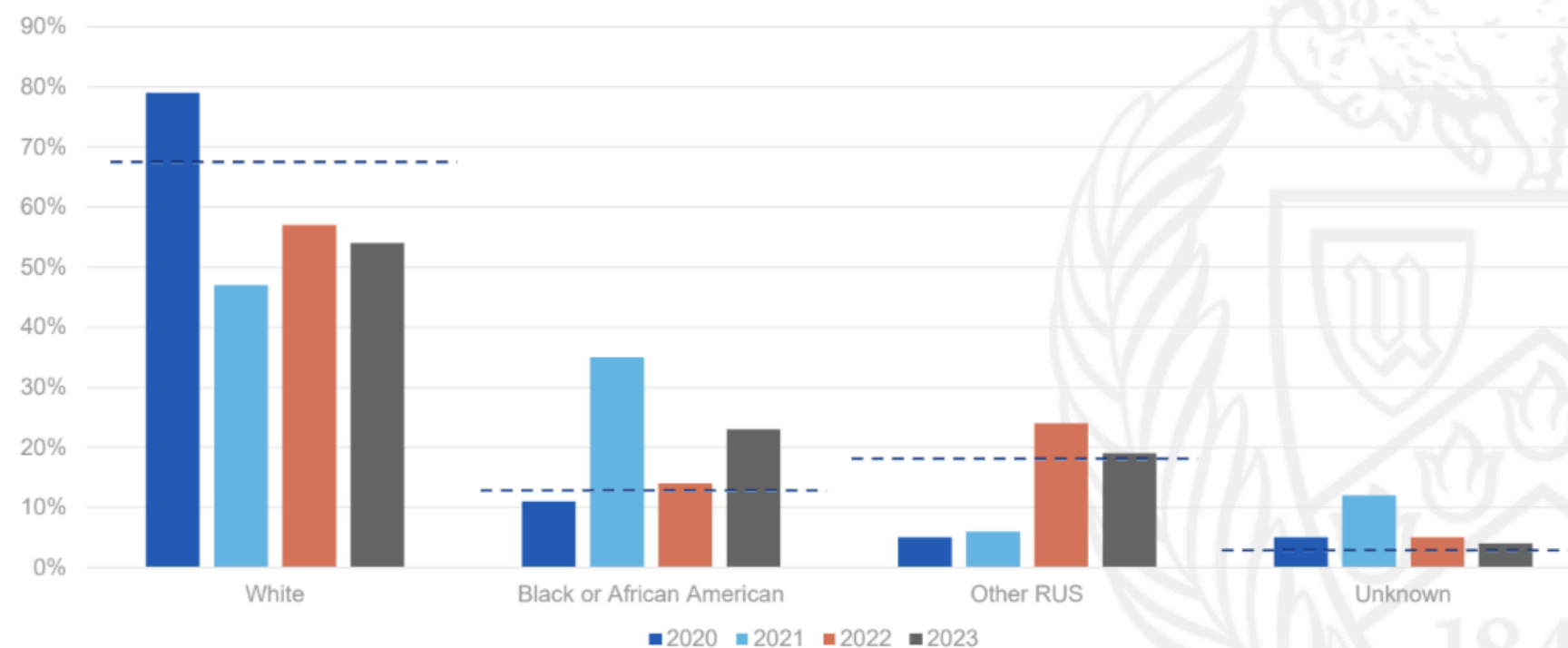
For the purposes of this review,
data is presented in the following
groups:
White, Black or African American,
Other Racially Underrepresented
Students (RUS) (including Asian
students), and Unknown.

*A small percentage of
students do not have a
reported race/ethnicity.

Nominations by Race/Ethnicity



Winners by Race/Ethnicity



Policies and Procedures



Under the leadership of Dean Keith A. Alford, the UB School of Social Work has launched our 2024-28 strategic plan titled, “Strengthening our Impact Through Community, Scholarship and Pedagogy.”

The plan is grounded in our commitment to trauma-informed and human rights perspectives and the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

[View the plan](#)



Research and Scholarship



School of Social Work Racial Justice Research Spotlight

[Noelle M. St. Vil](#), associate professor, has co-authored an article in Archives of Sexual Behavior, titled, [Perspectives on a Couples-Based, e-Health HIV Prevention Toolkit Intervention: A Qualitative Dyadic Study with Black, Heterosexual Couples in New York State](#).

Current Research Focus

St. Vil is studying the intersection of intimate partner violence (IPV) and guns in the Black community, based on interviews with Black women survivors of IPV and firearm violence. She presented her preliminary findings to the MacArthur Foundation in Atlanta.



Field Education

2024-2025

Goals and Progress

Field Educator and Field Liaison Training

The Field Education Office is beginning to assess the need for specific training modules for field educator and faculty liaison orientations that address racial justice in field settings and experiences.

The UB School of Social Work has addressed equity issues by expanding field placements that pay a stipend and provide additional supports, including mileage reimbursement and child care stipends.

Faculty members Michael Lynch, Katie Stalker and Katie McClain-Meeder published an article on equity in employment-based field placements.

[Read the full article](#)

Restorative Practices



D. Michael Applegarth,
assistant professor, presented in
spring 2025 as part of the
Interdisciplinary Work-In-Progress
Speaker Series on prison and
incarceration research from UB's
Baldy Center for Law and Social
Policy.

Topic:
**Reexamining the Sequential
Intercept Model: Incorporating
Theory, Practice Insights and
Social Work Perspectives**



Faculty Recruitment and Support

UBSSW 2024 VITAL Scholars

This fall, the UBSSW had the honor of hosting three scholars to present their work as part of UB’s VITAL Scholars program, which brings promising doctoral students to UB in hopes of increasing the ranks of faculty at UB from traditionally underrepresented populations in North America. [Learn more](#)



Lester Kern
Late Night at MHS: The Role of Humor in a
Psychiatric Emergency Department



Shawn Parra
The Emotional Well-Being and Coping
Strategies of BIPOC LGBTQ+ Youth: A
Grounded Theory Study



JaNiene Peoples
Ecological Momentary Assessment of
Mechanisms Linking Racial Discrimination and
Substance Use in Black College Students

New Faculty

The School of Social Work welcomed two new faculty members last fall.



Clinical Associate Professor Brenda McQuillan, PhD, LCSW, has over 25 years of experience as a social worker across many settings, including a school district, foster care agency, outpatient clinic, juvenile detention center and children’s advocacy center. She holds a PhD in health practice research from the University of Rochester.



Assistant Professor Enoch Azasu, PhD, centers his research on global mental health and suicide prevention, with a focus on understanding suicidality through culturally appropriate interventions. He holds a PhD in social work from Washington University in St. Louis.



Supporting Students of Color

Student Support

The SSW is working with Scholars at Risk to support scholars who are being targeted, harassed or are at risk for their work on racial justice and other social justice issues.

Faculty Liaison for Racially
Underrepresented Students
Clinical Assistant Professor
Tonya Myles-Day

Congratulations to Tonya Myles-Day, who recently earned her Doctorate in Social Work (DSW). In her role, Myles-Day supports racially underrepresented students through monthly group support sessions and individual meetings. She also engages in research regarding disparities among people of color in social work.



For more information about the school's DEI work,
[visit our website.](#)



The wordcloud above reflects the self-descriptions of some of our students of color. If you identify as a person of color and want to be on a contact list about community-building opportunities [complete this form.](#)