Racial Justice Network Map

2023-2024

Click on each node to learn about their effort & progress

- Supporting UBSSW Students of Color
- Consciousness-raising
- Action Beyond the UBSSW
- Courses & Curricula
- Doctoral Programs
- UB Association of Black Social Workers
- Combatting Antisemitism Special Interest Group
- Faculty Recruitment & Support
- Policies & Procedures
- Restorative Practices
- Field Education
- Research & Scholarship
- UBSSW Data for Equity
- Committee on Students
- Student Recruitment

University at Buffalo
School of Social Work
Identity & Belonging: Karen Refugees in Southeast Asian Diaspora

UBSSW’s Immigrant & Refugee Research Institute partnered with UB’s Asia Research Institute to host a roundtable discussion on the resettlement experiences of people from Southeast Asia. The event featured several participants, including the SSW’s Dr. Isok Kim, and Faustina Palmatier, UBSSW alumna & current executive director of the Karen Society of Buffalo.

For more information about this event, click here
To learn more about Faustina Palmatier’s story as a member of Buffalo’s refugee community, click here

Consciousness-Raising

“How Racial Trauma Fits into the UBSSW’s TI-HR Framework”

Presentation given at Fall Teaching Summit for UBSSW Faculty by Dr. Filomena Critelli (Associate Professor, Interim Associate Dean for DEI, UGS Director) and Dr. Lisa Butler (Associate Professor)

“The Trauma Informed-Human Rights Framework and DEIA”

Presentation given to UBSSW Faculty and Staff at Final Strategic Planning Meeting by Dr. Filomena Critelli, Interim Associate Dean for DEI

Reimagining Social Work’s Social Justice Strategy

The UBSSW partnered with Social Workers for Justice for a workshop on collective action, sources of power, and the campaign to change NYS social work licensure requirements in the wake of evidence that found racial biases in the outcomes of the licensure exam. More information on the event can be found by clicking here

Global to Local Racial Justice Series

From Environmental Racism to Environmental Reparation: The Story of One American City

Featuring: Dr. Jennifer Roberts
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Global Health<br>

To watch Dr. Roberts’ full presentation, click here
Action Beyond the UBSSW

Faculty Affairs
Nancy J. Smyth, PhD, LCSW, Associate Dean for Faculty Development, has been working with the Office of Faculty Affairs to review the promotion and tenure recommendations from the President’s Advisory Commission on Race (PACOR).

Media
UBSSW in the News
Dr. Wooksoo Kim was quoted in a Buffalo News article about employment amongst the refugee and immigrant populations in WNY:
Click here to read the full article

Buffalo Emergency Preparedness
In 2023, UBSSW alumna Samantha Williams worked with the UB Center for Urban Studies on a project that analyzed the Emergency Management Plans of cities around the USA to identify gaps in these plans that have resulted in racially marginalized groups being disproportionately affected by adverse weather, as was seen in Buffalo during the December Blizzard of 2022.

As of Fall 2023, Ms. Williams has also been working on creating and distributing emergency preparedness kits for the residents of Buffalo’s East Side

For more information or to make a contribution to these kits, email Samantha Williams at sw94@buffalo.edu

Buffalo Chapter
UBSSW members of SWAA and our alum are getting back to our radical roots, with racial justice on the agenda
socialwelfareactionalliance.org
New undergraduate courses with Racial Justice Focus are currently in development & will be part of the interdisciplinary Prison Studies certificate program.

Some of these courses are planned to begin in Spring 2024–Fall 2025, including the courses below:

**SW 350: Restorative Justice**
Developed by Dr. Filomena Critelli

**Mass Incarceration & Direct Practice**
Developed and will be taught by Dr. Michael Applegarth

**Courses & Curricula**

**Revision of SW500 to Address the Whitewashing of Social Work History**
The UBSSW History and Policy course has been revised and divided into 2 courses with the goal of presenting an inclusive and equitable history of social work that honors the contributions of BIPOC social activists and social work founders and reformers. These changes were developed by Dr. Annahita Ball, Chair of Curriculum Committee, and Dr. Filomena Critelli, Chair of Diversity and Policy Sequence, and were voted into implementation by UBSSW faculty.

**SW974: Social Work in the Black Community**
This course will be taught by Dr. Noelle St. Vil and Dr. Chris St. Vil. Course objectives include "exploration of issues that disproportionately impact the Black community, and how to think about social work in the Black community."

For more information about the course, click here.

**SW 130: Black Lives Matter**
Instructor: Cheney Brockington

**SW 199: Valuing Diversity**
Instructor: Tonya Myles Day

**SW 199: When We Fight We Win**
Instructor: Laura Lewis
Doctoral Programs

DSW & PhD Implicit Curriculum:
DPC will look at ways to strengthen the support for faculty mentors of doctoral students.

Admissions and Recruitment:
DPC partnered with the UBSSW Admissions team to strengthen recruitment and admissions for Fall 2022, using an equity lens. UBSSW also removed the GRE requirement for admissions to the PhD and DSW programs.

Doctoral Programs Committee (DPC) Process:
DPC will host a sharing session in spring to explore this topic more broadly, using a racial equity lens.

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

DPC meetings are public and transparent:
- agenda is shared with faculty, staff, and students;
- all are welcome to attend and/or share ideas.
UB Association of Black Social Workers
ubuffaloabsw@nabsw.org

UBABSW Vice President Tyrone Reese hosted a Virtual Meet & Greet to introduce new E-board and meet with current & prospective members at the beginning of the semester (flyer below); President Vanity Withrow also tabled an orientation for incoming MSW cohort.

UBABSW is continuing to work on their Alumni Collaboration Initiative to connect current ABSW members with ABSW alumni that are currently working in the field.

UBABSW President Vanity Withrow (left) and UBABSW Secretary Jennifer Ray (right) hosted a trivia event entitled “Melanin Mayhem: Black Card Reclaimed” to engage with current members and recruit new members in a fun way.

UBABSW took part in the WNY Alzheimer’s Association Walk, which aims to raise funds and enhance support for those impacted by Alzheimer’s and dementia in the WNY community. Black Americans are disproportionately impacted by these conditions, and often face discrimination in care settings. The event flyer and a photo of UBABSW members at the event have been included on the left.
Recruitment & Marketing

- Inclusive recruiting efforts with organizations and geographic areas that are more likely to elicit diverse applicants (e.g., TRIO, McNair scholars, National Idealist Fair)
- Fostering educational partnerships through direct communication with specific undergraduate institutions (e.g., HBCU)
- Establishing UBSSW admissions awards supporting diversity among the student body
- Advising applicants on eligibility for application fee waivers
- Advocating across UB departments for greater flexibility in recruitment

Application Policies & Procedures

- Computing stats for diversity of applicant pool
- Maintaining a consistent, replicable, and equitable application process
- Provide coaching and offer opportunities for guidance with applications
- Assisting applicants with steps to application completion and deadlines
- Live and virtual information sessions

Admissions Review Process

- Maintaining a consistent, fair, and equitable review process
- Supporting and assisting faculty reviewers to review applications in accordance with our policies and procedures
- Requiring multiple application reviews for each applicant
- Promoting a holistic application review approach, while maintaining fair and equitable discussion of applicants' materials
- Continued quality improvement regarding application eligibility, requirements, and review process
This node supports others by compiling, analyzing and summarizing available UBSSW data to identify relevant trends, gaps, and opportunities.

Qs or ideas? jchine@buffalo.edu

Data for Equity

The Data for Equity node will resume work supporting data projects for other Racial Justice Network Nodes in Spring 2024. More to come soon!
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.

Committee on Students

Nominations by Race/Ethnicity

Winners by Race/Ethnicity
UBSSW Racial Justice
Research Spotlight:

Dr. Noelle M. St. Vil, Assistant Professor, has published an article with colleagues, Perspectives on a Couples-Based, e-Health HIV Prevention Toolkit Intervention: A Qualitative Dyadic Study with Black, Heterosexual Couples in New York State. For more on her research on strengthening Black male-female relationships, see here.

Buffalo Center for Social Research (BCSR) Climate:

- The BCSR Grants Team has incorporated racial equity in the grant consultation process.
- The BCSR is committed to supporting racialized faculty and student scholars through training and mentoring programs.
- The BCSR Research Advisory Committee is examining the current Research Awards process to ensure a racial equity lens is used to identify excellence in research.
Field Education 2023–2024
Goals and Progress

Field Educator & Field Liaison Training
The Field Education Office is currently beginning to assess the need for specific training modules for Field Educator and Faculty Liaison Orientations that address matter of racial justice in field settings and experiences.

The Field Education Office is also working to create updates for student Learning Contracts for the Fall 2024–Spring 2025 academic year, in addition to updating and adding to Field Seminar curriculum.

UBSSW’s Michael Lynch, Katie Stalker, and Katie McClain-Meeder published an article on equity in employment-based field placements

Click here to read the full article
Michelle Fortunado-Kewin presented to UB's NEAR Mentors on "Supporting Students using a Restorative Justice Lens" on Wednesday, November 9, 2022.

To learn more about her research, CLICK HERE.

Send Qs to: fortunad@buffalo.edu

Michelle Fortunado-Kewin presented a modified version of her DSW Capstone Presentation, "Using Restorative Practices to Address Students' Experiences of Racism and Oppression" at CSWE APM's Conference on November 11, 2022.
Faculty Recruitment & Support

VITAL Scholar Program

The UBSSW had the honor of hosting four scholars to present their work as part of UB’s VITAL Scholar program, which aims to help UB increase the number of faculty it employs that are members of racially underrepresented populations.

UBSSW 2023 Vital Scholars:

- Julissa Adames-Torres: Predictors of the use of mental health services among Dominican immigrants in the U.S.
- Chesney Ward: Readiness for end-of-life conversations
- Paige Jones: Mindfulness and Black maternal health
- Evelyn Coker: Centering the voices of incarcerated Black girls to create gender-responsive programs

To learn more about UB’s VITAL Scholar program, & to see the full list of 2023 VITAL Scholars, click here.
Policies & Procedures

Enhanced Safety

Nancy J. Smyth, PhD LCSW, Associate Dean for Faculty Development, worked with the Dean’s Office to add peepholes to office doors around the school to provide more safety for faculty and staff. This was initiated by a request from a school faculty/staff member who requested this addition to increase safety.

More to come in 2023-2024...
Student Support

The SSW is working with Scholars at Risk at the university level and within the school to support scholars who are being targeted/harassed/at risk for their work on racial justice and other social justice issues.

The UBSSW thanks Dr. Noelle St. Vil for her commitment to this role over the past two years. Dr. St. Vil was the first faculty member to serve as Faculty Liaison for Racially Underrepresented Students, and served as a significant support for racially underrepresented students during that time.

*To avoid workload inequities commonly experienced by faculty/staff who are women, LGBTQ+, and/or people of color, Dr. St. Vil’s faculty liaison role takes the place of other school service.

Faculty Liaison for Racially Underrepresented Students
Professor Tonya Myles-Day

In this role, Professor Myles-Day will provide support to racially underrepresented students through monthly group support sessions, along with meeting with students individually as needed. Professor Myles-Day will serve as a point of collaboration and connection between students and Student Services, the Field Education Office, and other units relating to student concerns/ideas.

For more information about UB School of Social Work’s #DEI work, visit: http://bit.ly/3sWdod4

The wordcloud above reflects the self-descriptions of some of the UBSSW’s 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
Combatting Antisemitism
Special Interest Group

According to the annual ADL antisemitism report, antisemitic incidents increased by 36% in 2022 and antisemitic activity reported on college campuses increased by 41%. For the third year in a row, the FBI reported that antisemitic attacks are the highest religious-based attacks in the country - and those are the ones that get reported.

We support and stand in solidarity with our Jewish students, faculty, and staff. Our group aims to raise awareness regarding antisemitism on campus and to advocate for inclusivity. Our invited speakers will share their research and discuss ways in which antisemitism affects us all and how we can respond.

The 2nd meeting took place on May 18, 2023. To join in, please contact either of the Co-Chairs.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Co-Chairs:
Dr. Jennifer Underweiser
(jbunderw@buffalo.edu)
Jacob Bernstein
(jab24@buffalo.edu)