

TC Today

THE MAGAZINE OF
TEACHERS COLLEGE,
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

FALL/WINTER 2019

INSIDE

GLASS HALF FULL

An app for the world's water crisis

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

New TC Provost
Stephanie J. Rowley

AN "A" FOR PRE-K

Countries where
kids hit the
ground running



Weighing Our Words

Derald Wing Sue and his team are challenging America to think about "microaggressions"

Contents



A LEGACY GROWS IN BROOKLYN

Shirley Chisholm State Park honors America's first black Congresswoman and black female presidential candidate, Chisholm (M.A. '52), who died in 2005, proclaimed herself "unbought and unbossed" (see page 4).

Features

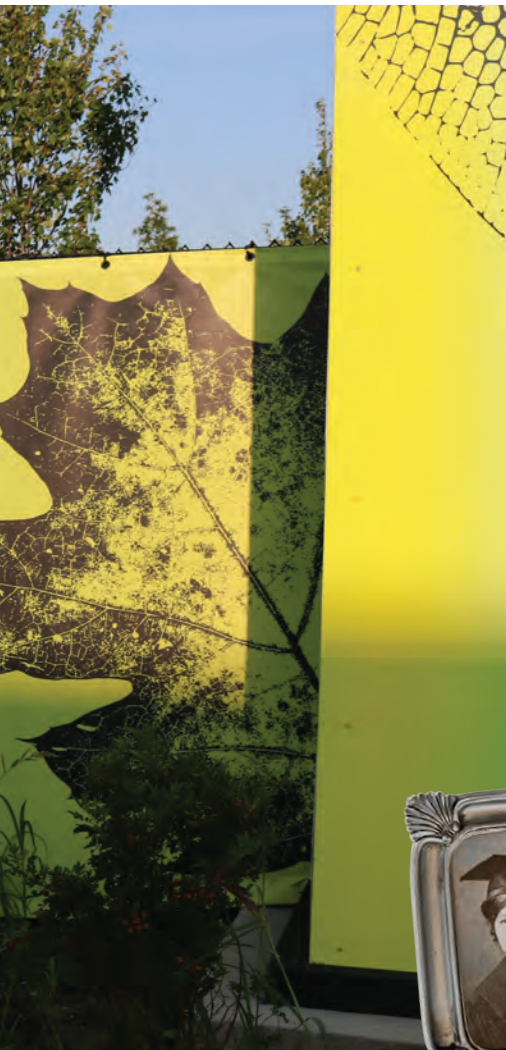
10 **Weighing Our Words**
Derald Wing Sue is challenging America to think about microaggressions

24 **TC Heroes: Glass Half Full**
Annie Feighery (Ed.D. '12, M.Ed. '08) is fighting the world's looming water crisis with a digital app, bold market theory and hope



32 **Putting Success in Context**
From reimagining research infrastructure to reframing racial narratives, TC Provost Stephanie J. Rowley inspires people to excel

46 **Future Leaders: Running the Walk**
Attorney Lesley Kroupa has sprinted through a marathon of accomplishments at TC. Ultimately, she's still all about advocacy



Departments

- 2 PRESIDENT'S LETTER**
Recommitting to TC's core values
- 4 SHORT TAKES: NEWS @ TC**
It's Shirley Chisholm's year; picturing Edmund Gordon; Cate Crowley saves a smile and a life; AI and education
- 41 UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM**
A global study could add "zing" to U.S. early childhood education; underscoring the "ed" in EdTech; a black science teacher finds her voice; rethinking adult literacy; action and language; preschoolers in print
- 48 EARLY RISERS**
Young alumni making their mark: Jenny Abamu (M.A. '16), Elizabeth Hernandez (Ph.D. '18), Vikash Reddy (Ph.D. '16), C.J. Reilly III (M.A. '18)
- 64 THE LAST WORD**
Associate Professor Sonali Rajan (Ed.D. '10) argues that reducing gun violence entails listening



Alumni News

- 55 NEWS, PROFILES & NOTES**
News Posthumous honors for the nation's first black woman to earn an education doctorate
Lost & Found A Russell returns
Profiles Eleanor Armour-Thomas (Ed.D. '84), Jonathan Gyurko (Ph.D. '12), Harrison (Qing) Xia (Ed.D. '10)
- 57 THE FINE PRINT: TC AUTHORS**
- 58 CLASS NOTES**
- 63 IN MEMORIAM**
Remembering June Dobbs Butts (Ed.D. '69), Maureen Horgan, Thelma Shafran (M.A. '54), Jonas Soltis

Development

- 50 Development Report**
Celebrating our generous TC family; a major influx of federal funding; a fond farewell from Suzanne M. Murphy
- 53 On Board**
Welcoming new Trustees David O'Connor and Don Callahan



The magazine of Teachers College is produced by the Office of Development & External Affairs at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Suzanne M. Murphy
VICE PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(M.ED. '99, M.A. '96)

James L. Gardner
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Sara Clough
SENIOR DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

TC TODAY STAFF

Joe Levine
EDITOR

Heather Donohue
MANAGING EDITOR

CONTRIBUTORS

Kirsten Burch, Linda Colquhoun, Rosella Garcia, Steve Giegerich, Morgan Gilbard, Emily Kobel, Harriet Jackson, Patricia Lamiell, Boris Litvin, Nikki Marenbach, Steven Mau, Laura Nichols, Kalena Rosario, Scott Rubin, Susan Scherman, Lori Strauss, Matthew Vincent, Hua-Chu Yen, Dasheng Zhang

Nina Ovryn Design
CREATIVE DIRECTION

Ali Silva
COPY EDITOR

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Dan Flint; Rose Creative Group

TC Today Fall/Winter 2019

Volume 44, Number 1. Copyright 2019 by Teachers College, Columbia University. Articles may be reprinted with the permission of the Office of External Affairs. Please send alumni class notes, letters to the editor, address changes and other correspondence to:

TC Today
525 W. 120th St., Box 306
New York, NY 10027
212-678-3412
tctoday@tc.edu
www.tc.edu/tctoday

ON THE COVER



PHOTOGRAPH: BILL CARDONI

Empowering TC to Do Its Very Best

Reaffirming our core principles for the challenges of a new era

Teachers College has always upheld the core principles of equity and inclusion, global citizenship, and the deployment of teaching and research to advance human development and well-being. ■ Equally important, we have reaffirmed those principles in applying them to the challenges that each new era brings. In this issue of *TC Today*, you'll find powerful stories of how,

during these challenging times, our faculty, administration and alumni are doing just that.

Why, for example, do human beings instinctively “other” other people? How can we prevent othering in our society and our own thinking? How can we learn to embrace difference rather than fear it? These are long-standing questions, but they resonate especially powerfully right now in the midst of the Black Lives Matter movement, the global refugee crisis and the backlash against immigrants. Few have offered more profound

answers than TC psychologist Derald Wing Sue, the focus of this issue's cover story, who recently received the American Psychological Association's Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to Psychology for his work on racial microaggressions. In shedding light on how these everyday slights and indignities reflect and reinforce our society's power inequities, Dr. Sue has sought to understand the lived realities of all human beings — a quest that should be part of everyone's work at Teachers College.

Our era has also given

a new and perhaps unprecedented urgency to the phrase “global citizenship.” TC has always focused on the wider world and how nations can best live with and learn from one another. Yet as we confront a growing climate emergency, “global citizenship” demands the kind of higher-order innovative thinking and proactive cooperation modeled by alumna Annie Feighery, this issue's “TC Hero.” With her husband, John, Annie

created mWater, a nonprofit that has brought cheap and effective water-monitoring technology to 167 countries around the world. By using a new business model that favors “investors” over “donors,” mWater more effectively serves the communities and families whose lives depend on access to clean water. With her adroit social entrepreneurship and expertise in networking with all relevant stakeholders, Annie Feighery shows us all

THOUGHT PARTNERSHIP *Bailey is working with Provost Stephanie J. Rowley to promote greater collaboration among faculty and increase TC's research funding.*





ALL ABOUT CONNECTION

Bailey has spent significant time listening to the concerns of faculty, students and staff.

colleagues to join her in developing and fulfilling a shared vision for building a stronger institution. Dr. Rowley’s arrival has given me great hope that, together, we can empower TC to do its very best.

And so, too, do the six new faculty members who arrived at the College this fall, adding to the scores of leading-edge scholars who have joined us during the past decade-plus. With expertise ranging from dance education to the preparation of mathematics teachers to the assessment of learning disabilities, our newest additions immeasurably broaden and enrich our teaching and research enterprise.

Our great institution is always a work in progress. I am excited about all the progress that we are making here at Teachers College and look forward to telling you more about it soon.

THOMAS BAILEY

“How do we bring the best minds together across disciplines? And how do we partner with others on the frontlines? I am excited about all the progress that we are making here at Teachers College.”

ways to translate great ideas into maximum impact.

Of course, every college of education — and every learning institution worth its salt — embraces a mission of building a better world. The devil, however, is in the details. How do we mentor faculty and students to obtain funding and acquire essential skills — and how do we tailor support to disciplines with vastly different funding infrastructures? How do we bring the best minds together across disciplines? And how do we

partner with administrators, teachers, health practitioners and others on the front lines? TC’s new Provost, Stephanie Rowley, profiled in this issue, has devoted her career to these concerns. Dr. Rowley possesses a formidable combination of intelligence, knowledge of different disciplines and understanding of the research funding landscape, and she is also genuinely and passionately concerned for the well-being of others. As one of her own mentors at- tests, that quality inspires

Short Takes

... on big news at the College



It's Shirley Chisholm's Year

She was “unbought and unbossed”— and, also, unforgettable

TC ALUMNA SHIRLEY CHISHOLM (M.A. '52) was the first African American female elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and the first to seek a major party's presidential nomination. She helped expand the nation's Food Stamp

FIELDS OF DREAMS

Chisholm's image graces her Brooklyn park.

program and create the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. In 2014, years after her death, she was honored with a Black

Heritage Forever Stamp. ■ But as a recent *New York Times* headline proclaimed, “2019 Belongs to Shirley Chisholm.” ■ In July, Brooklyn — Chisholm's birthplace and home to her Congressional district — opened the 407-acre Shirley Chisholm State Park. A 40-foot steel silhouette of Chisholm is part of a public art initiative to recognize the contributions of women to the city's aesthetic. ■ California Senator Kamala Harris is co-sponsoring a bill to add Chisholm's likeness in Congress to that of African Americans Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. ■ Meanwhile, *The Fighting Shirley Chisholm*, a forthcoming biopic, will star Academy Award winner Viola Davis, and in *Mrs. America*, an upcoming FX miniseries about the Equal Rights Amendment, Uzo Aduba will also portray Chisholm. ■ And at TC, the Shirley Chisholm Dissertation Award recognizes work about the contributions of people of color to democracy. 2018 recipient Kathryn Bassett Hill (Ph.D. '18, M.A. '10) says that her parents' educational vigilance exemplified Chisholm's famous adage: “If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”

Q&A

LATE NIGHT TC: On *The Daily Show*, Michael Rebell discussed the lawsuit he's filed to ensure Rhode Island prepares youth for citizenship.

Visit tc.edu/rebell

“So why did you decide to sue Rhode Island instead of a state that everyone hates, like New Jersey?”

Comedian
Jaboukie Young-White

“We looked at states with the worst education systems when it comes to civics, and at where the community would be supportive. If we get the Supreme Court to declare a national right to education, state legislatures and school systems will act.”

— TC Law & Educational Practice Professor Michael Rebell



For Schools, a Virtual Town Meeting

Robert Kennedy called democracy “messy and hard.” Now *DecisionMaker*, a free online tool from TC’s Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education (CBCSE) improves the process.

■ *DecisionMaker*’s cost-utility analysis framework helps schools, districts and states choose curricula, professional development and other resources. Building on methodologies of the late psychologist Ward Edwards and TC education economist Henry Levin, *DecisionMaker* juxtaposes data on costs and student outcomes with stakeholder opinions and preferences. ■ “Education agencies tell us that they need to worry about buy-in from teachers, parents and their boards,” says Fiona Hollands, CBCSE Associate Director.

[Visit decisionmakertool.org to learn more or register as a user.]



Professor Emeritus — In Perpetuity

Professor Emeritus Edmund W. Gordon’s work has guided TC for decades. July’s unveiling of Gordon’s portrait (by photographer Bruce Gilbert) ensures the 98-year-old psychologist will be a campus presence in perpetuity. ■ “Consider that this is a man who was mentored by the sociologist and pan-Africanist W.E.B. DuBois — himself born in 1868,” said President Thomas Bailey, as Gordon looked on. “Where others’ lives and careers have followed a predictable arc, a graph of Edmund Gordon’s contributions would consist of a single, astonishing, continuously rising line.” ■ Gordon’s portrait, Bailey said, affirms that “his beliefs, ideas, methods and monumental accomplishments are fundamental” to TC’s “highest ideals of what it aspires to be.”

HONORS & DISTINCTIONS



Education economist **Henry M. Levin** received AERA Division L’s 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award in Educational Policy and Politics.



Felicia Mensah, Professor of Science & Education, has been named Co-Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*.



Anthropologist **Nicholas Limerick** won the 2018 Bereday Award for his *Comparative Education Review* article, “Kichwa or Quichua? Competing Alphabets, Political Histories, and Complicated Reading in Indigenous Languages.”



Jane Dickinson, Director of TC’s Master of Science Program in Diabetes Education & Management, was elected to the Board of the American Association of Diabetes Educators.



Grants to Guide Pathways

The Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College has received nearly \$3 million from the National Science Foundation’s Improving Undergraduate STEM Education program to study how guided pathways reforms in community colleges can help students succeed in STEM programs. A second grant of \$1.4 million, from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences, will allow CCRC to expand its research on English language learners.

Something to Really Smile About

Last year at a conference in Kenya, Gate Crowley, Professor of Practice and Director of TC’s Communication Sciences & Disorders Program and Bilingual Extension Institute, learned about Isaac, a child born with a cleft lip. After traveling to Isaac’s village and finding that he also had a cleft palate and was severely malnourished, Crowley connected the boy’s family with the charity Smile Train. Later, writing on Smile Train’s website, Crowley wrote that cleft palate is more than a cosmetic or even social issue and highlighted the urgency of the organization’s work. She was right: Her actions saved Isaac’s life.



[RESIDENT EXPERTS]

132

That’s the number of graduates of TR@TC, the College’s innovative teaching residency. In October, TC won federal funding for another iteration: TR@TC³, a dual-certification program.

IN BRIEF

THE BUS STARTED HERE

Yellow school buses have transported American children since 1939, when TC's **Frank W. Cyr** (Ph.D. '33), Professor of Rural Education, convened officials from across the U.S. to standardize school transportation and improve safety. ■ This fall, *Smithsonian Magazine* recounted how Cyr, who died in 1995, led "seven days of deliberation" on everything from standard measurements for vehicles to the now-iconic yellow color itself. The magazine cites that color as one reason why school buses — the largest mass transit system — account for "less than one percent of traffic fatalities" annually.

TALKING IN CLASS

Freedom of speech has never really been constitutionally protected in classrooms, but why is it under fire now? Speaking at TC on Constitution Day, University of Pennsylvania political scientist **Sigal Ben-Porath** cited the growing diversity of society and group norms; the emergence of "landslide districts," with little ideological diversity; and movement by the major parties' cores toward the outer extremes. "We have to operate within the law's boundaries, but our institutional norms are actually more limited than the law," said Ben-Porath, author of *Free Speech on Campus*. "We need to expand that understanding."



Loud Reports: Headline-Makers from TC

Rethinking school integration; the semantics of youth exposure to gun violence; promoting high-opportunity relocation



■ In "Whose School Integration?" an essay in *Voices in Urban Education*, **Sonya Douglass Horsford**, Associate Professor of Education Leadership, ponders American school desegregation, wrestling with "what constitutes the best type of learning environment for young people [of color] in a society that does not value their intellect, culture, or humanity." With youth of color now comprising

more than half of the U.S. school population, we are "long overdue for a more radical imagination of what education can and must be for America's new majority."



■ American youth under 18 exposed to gun violence are not typically considered to have undergone an "adverse childhood experience" (ACE) according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The numerous implications of this omission include "limiting access to ACE interventions," write **Sonali Rajan**, Associate Professor of Health Education, and co-authors in the August special issue of

the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*. The authors tap 81 other journal articles to argue that youth gun violence exposure should be classified as an ACE.



■ In a Seattle-area study, an intervention co-designed by TC economist **Peter Bergman** produced unprecedented gains in moving low-income families to "higher-opportunity" neighborhoods by reducing barriers to using federal housing choice vouchers. Previous research by Bergman's co-authors found that every year spent in a higher-opportunity neighborhood during childhood increases

the likelihood of college attendance and total lifetime earnings by \$200,000.

[NEW FACULTY]

And Now Joining the TC Conversation . . .

Teachers College added six new faculty members this fall:

Barbara Bashaw,
ARNHOLD PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE, DANCE EDUCATION; EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DANCE EDUCATION ED.D. PROGRAM/ARNHOLD INSTITUTE FOR DANCE EDUCATION RESEARCH, POLICY & LEADERSHIP, explores how artistic and cognitive development intersect.

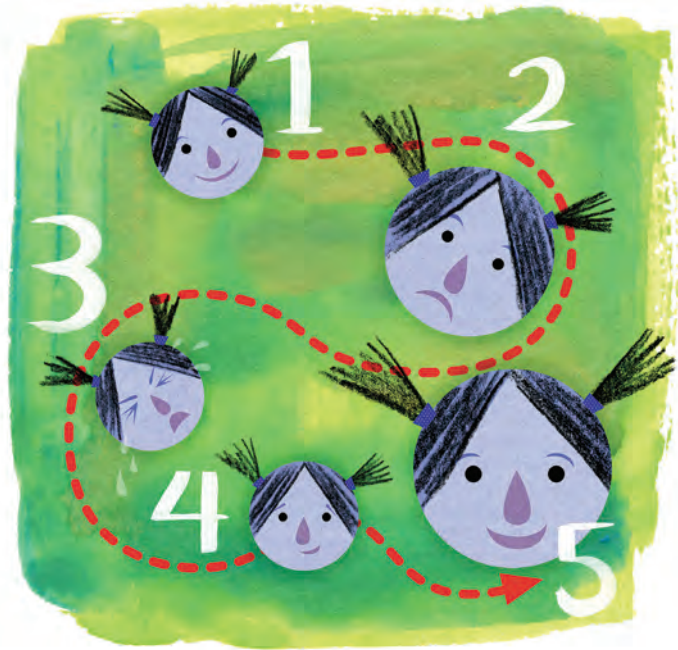
Gwendolyn S. Baxley,
MINORITY POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW, explores educational spaces in which black youth and families navigate.

Matthew Henley,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF DANCE EDUCATION, describes cognitive and social-emotional skills associated with dance education.

Ben Lovett,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY & EDUCATION, explores diagnostic assessment of learning disabilities and ADHD.

Irina Lyublinskaya,
PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS & EDUCATION, examines educators' development/transfer of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

Tyler Watts,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, studies educational policies to promote underserved children's development.



Failing, to Learn

Because schools don't teach that failure is "a normal part of life," students care more about grades than learning. ■ So argued Xiaodong Lin-Siegler, Professor of Cognitive Studies and founding Director of TC's Education for Persistence and Innovation Center (EPIC), in addressing The Population Council's GIRL Center for Innovation, Research and Learning at the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. ■ Lin-Siegler has shown that high schoolers who studied early failures of famous scientists earned higher grades than peers who only learned about the scientists' successes.

[WAKE-UP CALL]



The Public Matters, a TC-based public survey project, found that more than two-thirds of Americans believe elementary and secondary schools should teach students about climate change and global warming.

[SPECIAL REPORT]

AI and Education: Hope or Hype?

A TC conference pushes buttons

IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) the “killer app” education needs, or an overhyped “next big thing”? Will it close the achievement gap or deepen inequities? And what if, as Columbia University roboticist Hod Lipson predicts, AI develops free will and emotions? A September conference at TC offered a range of answers.

“Any discussion of EdTech must address the mythology that Silicon Valley has created about technology being intrinsically benign, and that their CEOs are just good people who want to help,” said Paulo Blikstein, Associate Professor of Communications, Media & Learning Technologies Design.

Stavros Yiannouka, CEO of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE), a global think tank of the Qatar Foundation that funded the gathering, pushed back: “You don’t have to have a sinister plan for world domination to get things horribly wrong.”

Lipson, the James & Sally Scapa Professor of Innovation, said that most AI is “rule-



based” — a drawback, because “it requires experts to tell you the rules, and experts are expensive, slow and wrong.” But with machine learning now becoming mainstream, “you don’t tell the computer, you show it” — technology that enables self-driving cars or guides supermarket foot traffic.

“Machine learning is great, but I want to think more about human learning,” said TC’s Sandra Okita, Associate Professor of Technology & Education. “Tools are just objects, unless used

“I want to think more about human learning. Tools are just objects, unless used purposefully — the key is what relationship you develop with them.”

— Sandra Okita, Associate Professor of Technology & Education

purposefully — the key is what relationship you develop with them.” — **JOE LEVINE**



YIANNOUKA



OKITA



LIPSON



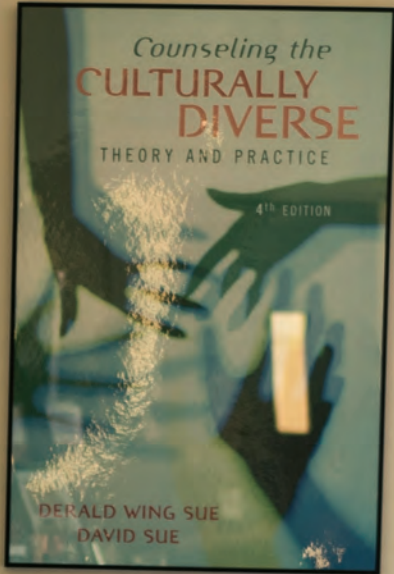
BLIKSTEIN

W e i g h i n g O u r W o r d s

DERALD WING SUE IS CHALLENGING AMERICA

TO THINK ABOUT MICROAGGRESSIONS

BY JOE LEVINE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL CARDONI



In October 1997, in televised testimony before President Clinton’s Advisory Board on Race, the multicultural psychologist **Derald Wing Sue** urged Americans to conduct “an honest examination of racial prejudices, racial stereotyping and racial discrimination” and accept “responsibility for changing ourselves, our institutions and our society.”

Midway through, he dropped the *we* and *our*. “One of the great difficulties with white Americans . . . is that they perceive and experience themselves as moral, decent and fair people — and indeed, they are,” said Sue, whose father emigrated from China to the United States. “Thus, they fail to realize that their beliefs and actions may be discriminatory.” For society to change, he declared, white people must undergo “a personal awakening” and work to “root out these biases and unwarranted assumptions related to race, culture and ethnicity.”

Sue took pains in his remarks not to blame whites. People are not born racist, he said, but become so “through a painful process of social conditioning.” Yet he was deluged with angry mail, ranging from accusations that he was a “racist of a different color” to threats that his “tenure on this earth” would be “limited.”

“I was stunned,” he recalls. “What I said seemed so mild and was all vetted by the Clinton staff. But my wife, Paulina, said, ‘You’ve been liv-

ing in a bubble, speaking to other academics. You need to get out there and talk to the public.’”

It was a turning point for Sue, the beginning of his metamorphosis from change agent in his field to a man on a mission to reveal — not to the haters, but to the more reasonable people who vehemently denied the reality he described — how people of color experience racism on a daily basis.

For some time, he had been pondering the concept of “microaggressions,” a term coined in 1970 by Chester Pierce, a black psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School (and the first African American full professor at Massachusetts General Hospital) to describe the daily insults and dismissals endured by black Americans at the hands of whites. The idea of microaggressions hadn’t gained traction, but for Sue, who, as a youngster, had been shamed by one teacher for speaking Chinese and encouraged by another to study math because “you people are good at that,” it resonated. “I thought, could all these things that I’ve been experiencing be microaggressions? And I began to dissect the meaning of the term. It comes from a person who thinks they mean well, but there is a meta-communication, an invalidation, that’s especially disturbing to the recipient because it’s outside the perpetrator’s awareness. And when I

MOMENT OF TRUTH

Sue’s 1997 testimony about racial prejudice in America prompted a flood of angry mail and his decision to begin speaking directly to the public. His subsequent work on microaggressions has received tens of thousands of citations.





“At some point, I changed — I realized, it’s white ethnocentrism, or white supremacy, that’s the enemy, not white people — and that has lowered resistance to me.”

talked to people of color, they understood exactly what I was saying. I didn’t have to explain it.”

In the mid-2000s, Sue and his Teachers College students began reading personal narratives and combing the literature on racism to catalogue microaggressions, which they redefined as the “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.”

Microaggressions differ from ordinary expressions of incivility, Sue has since argued, in that they are “continual in the lives of people of color . . . cumulative in nature . . . constant reminders of the recipient’s second-class status in society . . . and symbolic of past injustices directed toward people of color.” And because microaggressions reflect and reinforce society’s existing power structure, only white people, who are dominant, can commit them.

Here is a sampling from a “taxonomy” of microaggressions, quoting directly from the paper that Sue and his students published in 2007 in the journal *American Psychologist*:

THEME: Alien in their own land (when Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born).

MICROAGGRESSIONS: “Where are you from?” “Where were you born?” “You speak good English.”

MESSAGE: You are not American.

THEME: Myth of meritocracy (statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes).

MICROAGGRESSIONS: “I believe the most qualified person should get the job.” “Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”

MESSAGE: People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.

The impact of this work, and of Sue’s subsequent book, *Microaggressions In Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*, has been seismic. The 2007 paper has received some 3,700 citations on Google Scholar, and Sue’s work overall has been cited 41,000 times. There have been over 25,000 publications on microaggressions, most since 2007, spanning psychology, business, law, sociology, education and political science. The Merriam-Webster dictionary added the word “microaggression” in 2017.

Meanwhile, Sue, Professor of Psychology & Education, has soared to rock-star status. He has logged

JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY Sue (with his mother, bottom right) overcame shame to embrace his Chinese heritage. At Berkeley (top right) he joined a strike that helped establish the ethnic studies field. His books are central in multicultural counseling.





countless miles to address conventions and meetings, to conduct trainings for corporations, universities and other organizations, and to speak on television and radio. His books have been widely translated. He advises a UNESCO effort to foster racial, ethnic and multicultural tolerance among children.

In 2011, in a 40-page tribute in the journal *The Counseling Psychologist*, Thomas Parham, an authority on racial identity development, wrote that Sue has “literally changed the face of the psychology and counseling professions” through “a Martin Luther King-like call to serve people of color.”

This past summer, the American Psychological Association presented Sue with its Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to Psychology, the highest honor it bestows. Past recipients include B.F. Skinner, Kenneth Clark, Judith Rodin, Albert Bandura, Beverly Daniel Tatum and Martin Seligman. At the APA annual meeting, APA President Rosie Phillips Davis told Sue that he has “made the invisible, visible.”

And at 77, Sue isn’t slowing down. This year, he and his students published a much-discussed paper on “microinterventions” — the powerful real-life responses of

BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD

As a boy (top left), Sue identified with black children. Later, his heroes included Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Today his ideas are applied to issues of gender, sexual orientation and immigration status.

“I thought, could all these things I’ve been experiencing be microaggressions? And people of color understood exactly what I was saying. I didn’t have to explain it.”





Outside Their Comfort Zone

WHY WHITE PEOPLE DON'T
WANT TO HEAR IT

Laura Smith sees it in her research. ■ “Many white people sincerely oppose racism in the abstract but reject the suggestion that they have perpetrated a microaggression — or have racist attitudes,” says Smith, a TC psychologist who studies whiteness. ■ Whites can be “so insistent in their defenses and explanations,” Smith says — *No, I didn’t mean it like that; I just didn’t see you standing there* — that people of color often suppress what they feel rather than navigate the barrage of disclaimers. ■ White reactions can stem from “the shame of discovering racist assumptions we consciously disown, the wish to ‘disappear’ them by explaining them away, and the conflation of intention and impact.” ■ “Living in the context of whiteness means I am used to centering my own experience, so my denial of intention takes precedence over your experience of impact,” Smith says. ■ “People resist changing when things are comfortable, when they feel shame, fear or resentment at the implication that they need to change, and when they feel they have something to lose. Those things take them beyond their comfort zone.”

COURTESY OF LAURA SMITH



LAURA SMITH

ordinary people to microaggressions — that provides “a strategic framework” for moving “beyond coping and survival to concrete action steps and dialogues.” The TC team was given a two-hour slot to discuss their work at this summer’s APA meeting, and the journal *The Counseling Psychologist* has approved their proposal to produce a 130-page manuscript on microinterventions.

WHERE HE’S COMING FROM

One of Sue’s favorite responses, when people have complimented *him* for speaking English well, is, “Thanks, I should — I was born here.”

Still, he’s traveled a long way.

He grew up in poverty in Portland, Oregon, where his family lived on welfare briefly and picked beans and berries to supplement their income. Sue and his siblings were high achievers (all four brothers became psychologists), with Derald winning a statewide essay contest and becoming the first in his family to earn a Ph.D.

Yet while his parents were proud of their Chinese heritage, he felt shame. After his elementary school

teacher admonished him, “You’re in the United States — speak English!” he told his mother he would never speak Chinese again “because that’s why people don’t like us.”

Sue’s political awakening owed much to his sense of kinship with black people. In grade school, he sided with black children when they were teased “because I had been teased, too,” and eventually he, too, identified as non-white. In college, his heroes were Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Huey Newton and H. Rap Brown — “because of their ability to speak out so forcefully about prejudice and oppression.”

He channeled his own activism into changing academia and psychology. As a young faculty member at the University of California at Berkeley, Sue participated in the Third World Liberation movement, a strike by minority students that helped establish the field of ethnic studies. In 1972, he and his brother Stanley co-founded the Asian American Psychological Association, and in 1981, he and his brother David published *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice*, now standard in most multicultural counseling programs.

And in 1999, in the field’s equivalent to Martin



FAMILY BUSINESS Sue’s three brothers are also psychologists. He and his brother Stanley (far left) are co-authors. He co-publishes with his students, too (top right). From left: Narolyn Mendez, Cassandra Calle, Elizabeth Glaeser and Sarah Alsaiddi.



“People say, ‘Well, that’s your opinion.’ But social psychologists will tell you that the most disempowered groups have the most accurate understanding of what’s going on.”

Luther nailing his 95 theses to a church door, Sue and others co-founded the National Multicultural Conference and Summit, an independent group sponsored by four divisions of the American Psychological Association. The conference’s stated purpose is “to remind us that psychologists must always be mindful of the impact of discriminatory environments and that we ourselves are not exempt from discriminatory views.”

Sue says he was, and still is, influenced by the “marvelous militancy” of the ‘60s and ‘70s. But he’s also come to understand just how threatened whites can feel in conversations about racism.

“In workshops I conducted decades ago, white people felt that I was against them and blaming them, and they may not have been incorrect,” he says. “When they challenged me, I’d feel angry — I’d want to hurt them.

But at some point, I changed — I realized, it’s white ethnocentrism, or white supremacy that’s the enemy, not white people — and that has lowered resistance to me.”

ONGOING STRUGGLE

And yet, one has only to pick up a newspaper to find ongoing hostility to Sue’s ideas.

Since the end of Barack Obama’s presidency, the nation has been rocked by police shootings of young black men, the resurgence of the white supremacy movement and anti-Semitism, and the federal push to scale back immigration and deport the “undocumented.” Many observers speculate that Donald Trump’s appeal stems partly from his unrepentant deriding and baiting of minorities and women. In findings that National Public Ra-

VOICES FOR OUR ERA Sue published much of his breakthrough microaggressions work with “Sue’s Crew” — then-students (from left) Christina Capodilupo Schwefel, Gina Torino, David Rivera, Aisha Holder and (not pictured) Kevin Nadal. He continues to work with them.

dio termed a “warning to Democrats,” a recent NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll reported that 52 percent of Americans, including a majority of independents, are against the country becoming more politically correct and feel there are too many things people can’t say anymore.

The latter critique has been echoed by psychologists, free speech advocates and legal scholars.

Writing in *The Atlantic* in 2015, Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist at NYU, and Greg Lukianoff, President of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Educa-

“It’s common sense — if you really want to understand racism, who are you going to ask, white people or people of color?”



tion, warned of “a movement to scrub campuses clean of words, ideas, and subjects that might cause discomfort or give offense.” Its focus, they said, is on crying “microaggression” and demanding “trigger warnings” for potentially upsetting course content — including such staples as Chinua Achebe’s novel *Things Fall Apart* (it describes racial violence) and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* (it portrays misogyny, physical abuse and microaggressions).

Haidt and Lukianoff warned of a “vindictive protectiveness that violates the Socratic method of teaching students how to think rather than what to think,” and of handicapping young people in a world that “often demands intellectual engagement with people and ideas one might find uncongenial or wrong.”

Sue has other critics. The sociologists Bradley Campbell and Jason Manning have argued that microaggressions research has created “a culture of victimhood” in which people are so intolerant of even unintentional insults that they turn to courts and the media. Campbell and Manning see a regression from past “honor cultures,” in which slights were redressed through fighting, and “dignity cultures” where “insults might provoke offense” but no longer called into question the recipient’s reputation for bravery.

And the Emory College clinical psychologist Scott Lilienfeld argues that “there is scant real-world evidence that microaggression is a legitimate psychological concept.” In 2017, Lilienfeld called for a moratorium on microaggression lists and training programs: “No one has shown that [microaggressions] are interpreted negatively by all or even most minority groups. No one has demonstrated that they reflect implicit prejudice or aggression. And no one has shown that microaggressions exert an adverse impact on mental health.”

Microaggressions, Lilienfeld concluded, “necessarily lie in the eye of the beholder,” and “it is doubtful whether an action that is largely or exclusively subjec-



tive can legitimately be deemed ‘aggressive.’”

Sue has tacked his published responses to these critics to his office door. To some extent, they follow the standard “is not, is too” pattern of much academic debate, citing research showing that microaggressions do indeed increase recipients’ depression and affect emotional well-being; that in fact, because recipients endure them day in and day out, they inflict a kind of death by a thousand cuts, creating “a chronic state of racial battle fatigue” that siphons energy from studies or work.

But in refuting Lilienfeld’s “insufficient evidence” charge, Sue indicts western science itself.

Lilienfeld “fails to realize that there is more than one way to ask and answer questions about the human condition, that what constitutes evidence is often bathed in the values of the dominant society, and that scientific methods we employ often shortchange real-world contexts,” Sue says.

Citing the African proverb that “the true tale of the lion hunt will never be told as long as the hunter tells the story,” Sue asserts that microaggressions are indeed “about experiential reality,” and more pointedly, about “listening to the voices of those most oppressed, ignored and silenced.”

Such work “does not lend itself easily to objectivity and control of variables without separating people from the group, science from spirituality, thoughts from feelings, observer and observed, and man/woman from the universe.” Yet psychology has tried to style itself in the mode of the physical sciences, Sue says. To illustrate what such western empiricism misses, he recounts a parable told to him long ago by a Nigerian scholar:

A white teacher asks her class: “Suppose there are four blackbirds sitting on a tree branch. You take a slingshot and shoot one of them. How many are left?”

A Nigerian immigrant boy answers “zero,” prompting the teacher to suggest he study harder. But, Sue writes, “if the teacher had pursued the reasons behind the Nigerian student’s answer, she might have heard the following: ‘If you shoot one bird, the others



will fly away’ — an answer based upon lived experience, a known relationship among birds, and an understanding of how the real (not hypothetical) world operates.”

That understanding, Sue argues, is the crux of the issue. Microaggressions may not meet some scientists’ criteria for being “real,” yet nonwhite faculty and students in Mississippi, Utah, Los Angeles and elsewhere report experiencing them regularly. In a two-week study of Asian Americans, nearly 80 percent reported experiencing a racial microaggression, and in an APA study, 75 percent of African Americans reported being subjected to daily discrimination.

“I like to ask: When you talk about racism, whose reality is the real reality? Social psychologists will tell you that the most disempowered groups have the most accurate understanding of what’s going on. The oppressed have to understand white institutions in order to survive, but white workers don’t have to understand what it’s like to be African American. So it’s common sense — if you really want to understand racism, who are you going to ask, white people or people of color?”

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

But *do* most white people want to understand racism?

No, says Sue, at least, not to the point of under-

taking real self-scrutiny and behavioral change.

In a 2017 paper, “The Challenges of Becoming a White Ally,” Sue concurs with Beverly Daniel Tatum’s assertion that “active racists” are walking fast on a metaphorical conveyor belt in accordance with an ideology of white supremacy, and passive racists, though standing still, are on that same moving walkway.

Becoming a true “white ally,” Sue believes, requires developing authentic relations with people of color and an awareness of white privilege; taking action when microaggressions and other injustices occur; and, ultimately, fighting for change on a societal level.

White people who undertake such work are, literally, comfortable in their own skins. They acknowledge their inherent biases and limitations. And they are so rare that Sue, in a half-serious aside, wonders if they are born and not made. But in the next breath, he underscores the necessity of cultivating more of them.

“We fail to prepare our White brothers and sisters for the alternative roles they will need to play to be effective,” he writes. “We do not provide them with the strategies and skills needed for antiracist interventions; and we do not prepare them to face a hostile and invalidating society that pushes back hard.”

Will enough whites ever reach “ally-ship” to make a difference? Sue acknowledges that each conversion amounts to “a monumental task and lifelong journey.”

HIGHEST HONORS *Top, right: Sue testifies with psychologist John Dovidio and sociologist James Jones. Bottom right: Rosie Phillips Davis, American Psychological Association President, presents Sue with the organization's Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to Psychology.*

Still, he keeps at it, despite family and friends who ask why he doesn't simply pass the torch and retire.

"I actually have minimal racial battle fatigue," he says. "Early in my career, it was a struggle, and I'd get tired. But now I feel invigorated. The work I'm doing provides me with so much satisfaction and meaning and such a sense of liberation."

Sue has come to accept that he can't change everyone. "A third of people in workshops are receptive to the message, another third can be reached with a lot of work,

and the rest are so difficult to reach that if you focus on them, you hinder everyone else. So I target the middle."

Meanwhile, it's clear that people of color appreciate his efforts. In October, not long after the APA honored him, he received another lifetime award — this one emblazoned with the logos of psychological associations representing the country's major ethnic and cultural groups.

"I think," he said, his voice catching, "that this one is the most meaningful of all." **TC**

A Little Help from His Friends

Professors often view their students as important research partners. ■ Derald Wing Sue calls his "the inspiration, energy and engine" behind his work. ■ In the mid-2000s, "Sue's Crew," a group of his students, began co-authoring publications with Sue. Since then, core members of that group — Kevin Nadal, now a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Aisha Holder, now a psychologist at the Columbia University Counseling Center and also in private practice; Gina Torino, now an associate professor at SUNY Empire College; David Rivera, now an associate professor at CUNY Queens College; and Christina Capodilupo Schwefel, who teaches at TC while also operating a leading fitness company — have continued working with their mentor. In 2018, the team produced the book *Microaggression Theory: Influence and Implications*. ■ Now Sue's current TC students Sarah Alsaïdi, Elizabeth Glaeser, Cassandra Calle, Narolyn Mendez and Michael Awad (completing an internship at Yale) are helping him flesh out the concept of microinterventions. ■ Both groups have drawn on their diverse racial and cultural knowledge to research people's lived experiences of microaggressions and extend Sue's work to issues of gender, sexual orientation and immigration status. ■ "I've so appreciated Derald's ability

to encourage students to share their perspectives and voices," says Nadal, author of *Microaggressions and Traumatic Stress: Theory, Research, and Clinical Treatment* and *That's So Gay!: Microaggressions and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community*. "He could easily have written the first microaggressions article on his own. But he wanted his students to be part of it — to bring our whole selves to the table, and collectively hash out the concept." ■ Capodilupo credits Sue with "exposing to the field that it's very dangerous to have one person's perspective applied universally to all people." From "Day One," she says, "the idea has been to form and develop theories by studying people's lived experiences." ■ In the early 2000s, recruiting participants for an eating disorders study, Capodilupo was struck by how many were excluded by the "narrow criteria" for bulimia and anorexia of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. ■ "I subsequently studied how black women relate to their bodies and don't necessarily prize thinness when talking about body shape — something required for an eating disorder diagnosis at the time in the *DSM*. Imagine you're a young therapist with only one way of understanding eating disorders. If someone talks about the problem differently, you might miss it."



**CHRISTINA
CAPODILUPO**



KEVIN NADAL



TC HEROES
ALUMNI ON THE FRONT LINES OF CHANGE

GLASS HALF FULL

ANNIE
FEIGHERY

(ED.D. '12, M.ED. '08) IS FIGHTING
THE WORLD'S LOOMING WATER
CRISIS WITH A DIGITAL APP, BOLD
MARKET THEORY AND HOPE

BY WILL BUNCH ♦ PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSTEN MORAN

The inland port of Mwanza, Tanzania, sits on the banks of Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa. There is water everywhere, but for many residents of the impoverished “informal settlements” on the city’s outskirts, not a drop to be safely drunk.

Seven years ago, when Annie Feighery (rhymes with “theory”) and her husband, John, first visited the region to pitch their new web-based water monitoring technology, aid groups were helping families to hand-dig their own wells. But with families emptying their latrines directly on the rocky, boulder-strewn slopes, the water was contaminated with *E. coli* bacteria that were causing cholera outbreaks and other diarrheal diseases.

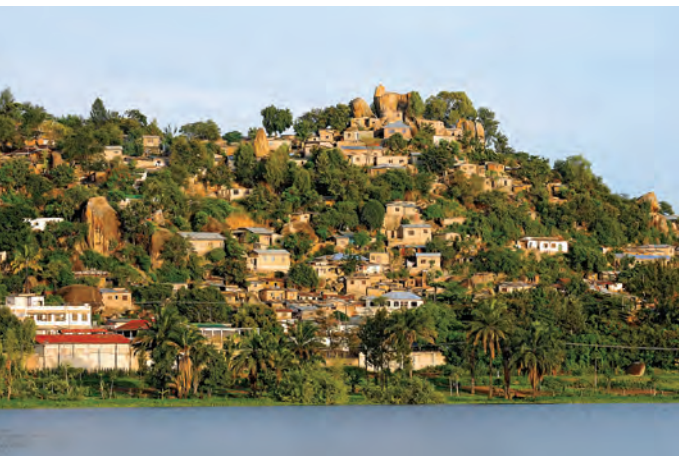
Under the old regime of yearly surveys, expensive testing by high-tech labs and lengthy written reports, it would likely have taken decades to document the unfolding crisis and get information to the right people.

By 2012, however, the Web 2.0 revolution was in full swing. The thirty-something Feigherys — Annie, a Teachers College- and Columbia University-trained public health scientist, and John, a former NASA engineer — were in its vanguard, decidedly more Silicon Valley than Peace Corps. Through their nonprofit start-up, mWater, they were offering data, digitally collected and immediately actionable. Their new app, Surveyor, combined a cheap but reliable water-testing kit with a smartphone app that allowed users to share information in real time. When the couple demoed Surveyor for local officials and families, they could immediately show them contaminated water, which

GROUNDS FOR CHANGE

Clockwise from top: mWater can immediately demonstrate to local officials and residents that water is unsafe; Mwanza’s rocky hillsides; drought in India.





changed color in response to the test. Even more powerfully, they could upload that information — with maps showing impact on surrounding areas and various populations — to a free database, viewable by all.

Flash forward to today. Mwanza still has massive water problems, but there have been significant advances, and the Feigherys' hand is evident. The region's non-governmental organizations are drilling deep bore holes instead of digging shallow wells. Since 2017, the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Programme — backed by UN-Habitat, a major mWater client — has brought clean water to several settlement communities.

“There is hope,” reported a recent UN-Habitat publication. “Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Programme in Mwanza has been able to provide access to sanitation through the simplified sewerage system as well as access to clean water supply. Residents of the informal settlements have a reason to smile.”

GOING AGAINST THE FLOW

If the '60s were the Age of Aquarius, the global warming era is its dark opposite — a time when water is rapidly becoming the world's scarcest resource. Consider that:

- Global water use has quadrupled over the past century, and water demand is projected to grow by 55 percent by 2050.

- By 2030, humanity's “annual global water requirements” will exceed “current sustainable water supplies” by 40 percent.

“ANNIE'S GENIUS IS IN FINDING PEOPLE WHO COULD HELP HER NOT JUST IN HER COURSES BUT ON HOW TO DO THE MOST GOOD.”

— ROBERT FULLILOVE

• By 2025, an estimated 1.8 billion people will live in areas plagued by water scarcity. Two-thirds of all people will live in water-stressed regions.

• Water demand in India will reach 1.5 trillion cubic meters in 2030 while India's current water supply is only 740 billion cubic meters.

But while water scarcity looms, it's the fecal contamination in available water — the Feigherys put it less delicately in their talks to the health community — that constitute the more immediate problem. A child dies of a water-related disease every 15 seconds, and diarrheal disease, which kills 1.5 million children annually, is largely caused by drinking contaminated water.

“What we really want people to understand,” says Annie Feighery, who serves as mWater's CEO (John is Chief Operating Officer), “is that unsafe water is most dangerous for children under age five, and children who do survive the water source are very likely to be physically and/or mentally stunted.”

What's most needed, Feighery firmly believes, is not the sweat of Peace Corps volunteers toiling at the village level, but instead information, data sharing, coordination and cooperation.

“Relational databases, cloud-based data management, multiple digital channels that span from mobile operating system native to mainstream app-integrative, and API interoperability are all standard practice in the aid industry,” she writes in her Medium.com blog. “If you are not digital, you are a dinosaur.”

Since launching mWater (the “m” is for “mobile”) in 2012, the Feigherys have rapidly won converts to that view. Through partnerships with UN-Habitat, USAID, the World Bank Innovation Fund, and leading NGOs such as Water.org and WaterAid, mWater's platform is now in 167 countries and has surveyed and tracked some 3 million water sources. Haiti has adopted the mWater platform wholesale.

The mWater app is “a game changer for the rural areas and small towns that get forgotten in data management” for water safety, says Ellen Greggio, a monitoring and mapping adviser to WaterAid. “It's really

about accelerating government service providers” to make better and faster health decisions.

On one level, mWater's operating philosophy of “what gets measured gets done” reflects changes in the larger global aid world. The old UN Millennium goal, which was to reduce by half the number of people who lacked access to “nearby improved water sources,” has been replaced by the Sustainable Development Goal of achieving global access to “safe and sustainably managed water systems.” Now aid organizations and governments more freely share data.

But mWater has also introduced new paradigms. Eschewing traditional grants from philanthropic organizations, Feighery seeks “investors” — large aid groups who see the utility of a ubiquitous platform and



accessible maps and data, and who support making that data free to all users.

“mWater's business strategy is borrowed from the tech industry to take advantage of Web 2.0 and the efficiency revolution,” Feighery writes. “In technology, the value of a platform increases with more eyeballs seeing it. Just as end users do not pay for Google or Facebook . . . we structured mWater in such a way as to charge the beneficiaries of a widely used, broadly applicable platform and left it free to the end user.”



TAKING IT TO THE BANKS

Feighery has taught kids to test water quality in New York's Central Park. Right: an mWater test kit. Opposite: the daily trek for clean water, a global commonplace.



“UNSAFE WATER IS MOST DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE, AND CHILDREN WHO SURVIVE THE WATER SOURCE ARE LIKELY TO BE PHYSICALLY AND/OR MENTALLY STUNTED.”

— ANNIE FEIGHERY

mWater's focus on investors rather than donors has also helped accelerate meaningful change. Data collection used to happen at the behest of funders, a system that, Feighery argues, had two major flaws. First, “outputs” were “collected, analyzed, and reported at the end of a ‘project,’” which meant that “errors in planning and adjustments for unforeseen events [were] not possible mid-stream.” And second, a project's success or failure was “solely measured by the donor's decision to re-fund . . . a perverse economic model, in which the recipient of the product has nothing to do with the judgement of the success of the product.”

The bottom line: Under the mWater business model, the real customer calling the shots isn't the donor or even the aid organization — it's the family living in the informal settlement that doesn't have fresh water.

ROADSIDE PHILOSOPHER



Feighery says her work at Teachers College and in her other Columbia programs helped her hone mWater's contrarian ideas on how global aid does and doesn't work.

“PEOPLE PRIORITIZE SHORT-TERM GOOD SOMETIMES, OR RELATIONSHIPS THAT WILL HARM THEM, BECAUSE OF STRESSES OF POVERTY. IF YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, YOU CAN BEGIN HELPING PEOPLE.”

— ANNIE FEIGHERY

“I call it the aid industry,” she explains. “Some people are surprised — they say, ‘Hey, call it the humanitarian sector.’ But it *is* an industry in the flows of money and power. We are all motivated to make the world a better place — but if you can understand it as an industry, you can do a more impactful job working in it.”

Still, that hard-edged worldview may also reflect Feighery’s youth in the dusty New Mexico truck stop town of Tucumcari (mentioned in so many pop and country songs that she has compiled a list for Spotify).

Well known to cross-country travelers as a stop on historic Route 66 to fill up with gas and maybe snag a cheap motel room, Tucumcari looks different to the 3,000 or so people who live there. Feighery’s parents were both in the business of helping people — her dad as an agent for the railway workers’ union, her mom working at the local high school and later opening an experimental school for teens about to become parents.

Feighery wanted to help people, too, but far beyond the big sky of eastern New Mexico. “I immediately felt like I had this affinity for other countries and wanted a career that was international,” she recalls. She read incessantly — even a French dictionary, just to pick up the language — and visited Europe as an exchange student shortly before studying anthropology at the University of Texas at El Paso.

During freshman year, she went on a date with another questing soul, John Feighery, whose dream

was to become an astronaut. They married two weeks after graduation and relocated to Houston, where John became NASA’s lead engineer for air and water monitoring, focused on the space station program. During those years, Annie gave birth to their three children and became a pioneer in the so-called “mommy blogger” world, learning the art of social connection and the value of decentralized information.

In 2003, the space shuttle Columbia disintegrated on reentering the earth’s atmosphere, and flights were grounded for the foreseeable future. “John was heartbroken,” Feighery recalled, “but we’d always planned to take turns. He said, ‘OK, it’s time to focus on the next step in the flow chart — your career.’”

The next stop was New York City and Columbia. Annie earned a master’s degree from the School of International and Public Affairs before embarking on her doctorate in health education at TC, working with Professor John Allegrante. Her doctoral thesis, on technology-assisted disaster response in Haiti, offered her a fresh perspective on social networking in the developing world.

“Annie’s genius is in finding people who could help her not just in her courses but on where to find other people, or how to do the most good,” says Robert Fullilove, Associate Dean for Community and Minority

THE ART OF NAVIGATION *Top center: mWater’s Surveyor app. Top right: Disseminating the findings. Below right: Feighery 2.0. Below left: For Feighery, it all began in Tucumcari.*





Affairs at Mailman and a TC adjunct professor who taught Feighery in his course on the AIDS epidemic. He remembers no other student “who learned to work the system so successfully.”

Feighery credits Columbia and TC with introducing her to the concept of “social capital” and theories about the ways that people bond together, form communities and make choices.

“I thought, this is exactly what explains how people make rational decisions and what can harm their health,” she says. “They need to prioritize short-term good sometimes, or certain relationships that will harm them, because of the stresses of poverty. And if you understand that, you can begin helping people break out of cycles that come from poverty.”

John Feighery, meanwhile, was completing a Ph.D. in Earth and Environmental Engineering. And somewhere along the way, he and Annie realized that the technology he’d been working on to monitor water quality on the space station could easily be applied to other cramped, low-resource settings — like, for example, cities in the developing world. Together with a Montreal-based software developer, Clayton Grassick, the Feigherys launched their start-up even before they received their final diplomas. They chose the name “mWater”

five minutes before their first grant application was due because it was the only one they could agree on.

Today, in the Silicon Valley mode, mWater operates “lean and agile,” with just nine employees who work remotely around the globe. Feighery herself rarely interacts with the villagers who might benefit from the mWater app, but recently she trained students at Tanzania’s Mzumbe University on how to test a local water source in front of residents.

“Mostly I work with data and numbers,” she says.

But she’s no less mindful that the numbers are a means to a humanitarian end. This year, she announced the launch of Solstice, a new venture which uses the mWater technology to build new open-access databases for an array of public health issues.

“I’m an optimist,” she said in late September, reached by Skype in Mwanza. Despite the “water wars” already being waged in the Middle East and Africa, she sees more neighbors — Tanzania and Kenya, for example — cooperating on tackling climate change.

It’s helped, she said, to find a like-minded soul in John. “We’re both passionate — we’re in this righteous work because we were made that way.” As she spoke, night was falling on Mwanza, half a world away from Tucumcari. “We threw ourselves into a cause.” **TC**

“Sometimes people haven’t had great successes because, for example, no one taught them to write a grant. We want to build capacity for those who haven’t had opportunities.”



PUTTING SUCCESS IN CONTEXT

FROM REIMAGINING RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE
TO REFRAMING RACIAL NARRATIVES, TC PROVOST
STEPHANIE J. ROWLEY INSPIRES PEOPLE TO EXCEL

BY JOE LEVINE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEBORAH FEINGOLD

KATIE SCHMITT OFFERS TWO EARLY MEMORIES FROM working with Stephanie Rowley at the University of Michigan: first, that Rowley encouraged her to think about her own professional development; and second, that whenever someone mentioned *your staff*, Rowley invariably responded by referring to *my partners*. ■ These were not mere gestures. As Rowley rose through U-M's administrative ranks, Schmitt stayed with her, morphing into a trusted leader with input into shaping the Psychology & Education Department's intellectual vision. ■ "Stephanie is a person who I share many values with," says Schmitt. "She helped me recognize how much a leader shapes the culture of the workplace. In every position I've supported her in, we've landed someplace great." ■ In July, Rowley left U-M (her alma mater) to become Teachers College's Provost, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs. In September, Schmitt followed as Director of Special Projects. "Stephanie contributed largely to my passion for academia," she says. "She is a leader I believe in, and I'm proud to be standing next to her as she begins her tenure as Provost of Teachers College."

BROADENING THE CONVERSATION

n Rowley's career — as a teacher and mentor; as a social scientist exploring the formation of racial identity; as an administrator promoting interdisciplinary collaboration — creating conditions for others to succeed has been the leitmotif.

“Good leaders get you to buy into a vision, but great ones get you to co-create it,” says Robert Sellers, U-M's Charles D. Moody Collegiate Professor of Psychology & Education, Vice Provost for Equity & Inclusion, and Chief Diversity Officer. “Besides being a special person who really cares about relationships, Stephanie is rare

in being strategic and visionary, yet creating a collaborative, respectful and fun work environment.”

As with Schmitt, Rowley's approach is to listen to people's interests and needs, recognize their potential and, ultimately, change their sense of what's possible. In one of her first administrative roles — as associate chair of U-M's 100-member psychology department — she was tasked with increasing diversity and rejiggering office and lab space.

“Space is a sacred cow in academia, but she made the case for thinking about what the work really required,” Sellers says. “She listened to people's fears and goals and earned their trust. That made her more effective in dealing with diversity.”

The experience served Rowley well when, in 2016, she became U-M's Associate Vice President for Research. Her brief was to increase the traffic of social scientists and humanities faculty to an office which had mainly served engineers.

“We started out by saying, hey, we see you're doing very different kinds of research and have different needs,” she recalled this past summer in her new office at TC. “Engineers are supported by a whole grant-writing infrastructure, but artists, say, usually work alone. So we collected examples of humanistic grants and developed workshops on how to get them.”

Those efforts paid off when a U-M project she helped facilitate called Mcity — a collaboration with automobile manufacturers to help develop autonomous vehicle technology — came up for renewal.

“The car makers had come to us because they wanted to avoid creating something people would be afraid to use or that would have terrible consequences after they'd sunk money into it,” Rowley says. “U-M not only had great engineers, but also psychologists, public health researchers, artists and others who could think through the impacts. But after five years, mostly engineering faculty were participating in the project.”

When Rowley asked other faculty why they weren't participating, the answer was, essentially, “Oh, I didn't think this was intended for me,” or “I didn't see where



MENTOR TO MANY Rowley's tchotchkes include a mug bearing the names of her many doctoral advisees.



I fit in.” She handpicked scholars from different fields to brainstorm about how to contribute.

“They raised fascinating questions. Would self-driving cars increase the transportation gulf between low-income and affluent people? What if wealthier people owned four different self-driving cars and sent them to do their shopping, or left them circling the block while they were in meetings?”

Nor did the input only raise red flags.

“One guy who was a transportation historian said that when people were switching from horses to automobiles, they had similar fears — ‘You want me to get in this thing where you can’t pull the reins?’ His point was that technology transitions are always difficult, but you can’t stop forward progress.”

REFRAMING THE NARRATIVE

Rowley’s focus on nurturing people’s potential seems to stem in part from being raised by two first-generation college students who emphasized the importance of interacting with all types of people.

“Our dinner table was always filled with guests from all walks of life,” she recalls.

“My parents also taught us about how access to resources underlies variation in material success.”

In college at U-M, the summer after

“Just putting resources in front of kids doesn’t do it. TC is on the front lines in training educators and thinking about principles of engagement in urban communities.”

her freshman year, Rowley landed two work-study jobs at centers run, respectively, by the world-renowned developmental psychologists Vonnie McLoyd and Jacquelynne Eccles.

“My parents had said I could only stay in Ann Arbor for the summer if I supported myself,” she says. “I took those jobs because they paid the most, but I ended up staying in them through graduation.”

She was particularly influenced by McLoyd, whose work focuses on how poverty and economic hardship influence family life and parenting.

“There’s a whole narrative that low-income parents of color don’t have aspirations for their kids, but the big takeaway from Vonnie was that people try to manage the contexts they’re in,” Rowley says. “If you live in a dangerous neighborhood, if you’re afraid your kids might be shot by the police, if you’re simply trying to get enough food, your parenting may not always focus on algebra homework.”

Rowley’s unique contribution as a scholar has been to explore how black youth form a sense of racial identity; how that self-concept is shaped by narratives about them that teachers, parents and they themselves have created; and how racial identity affects their pursuit of education and a career.

In 1998, she was part of a group led by Robert Sellers that published the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). Previously, white theorists had assumed that group identity looked the same across races or, for African Americans in a racist society, had negative consequences. In contrast, MMRI posits that African American racial identity reflects four key variables: salience, or the degree to which one consciously responds to a given situation as an African American; centrality, or how consistently one defines oneself as black regardless of context; regard, or how positively or negatively one feels about being black; and ideology, or one’s beliefs about the stance African Americans should take toward a white-dominated society.

Rowley has since mapped out how these dimen-

“Tom emphasized issues around diversity, equity and inclusion, and student experience. It was wonderfully un-presidential, in being concerned about individuals on the ground.”

sions operate in real life. Her approach, rooted in black people’s descriptions of their lived experiences, has simultaneously revealed, on the one hand, just how intensely African Americans feel the societal forces arrayed against them and, on the other, how those forces can make them complicit in perpetuating hurtful stereotypes.

In a 2014 chapter titled “Framing Black Boys: Parent, Teacher, and Student Narratives of the Academic Lives of Black Boys,” Rowley, her longtime collaborator, Beth Kurtz-Costes, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and others cite a litany of all-too-familiar statistics: Black boys are least likely among ethnic and gender groupings to earn a high school diploma in four years. They have the lowest standardized test scores and the highest rates of expulsion. They are most likely to be in special education classes or labeled as emotionally disturbed.

“Framing Black Boys” applies a “contextual analysis” paradigm to those numbers.

“If I think, ‘Poor kids don’t do well because they



BILL CARDONI

MUCH APPRECIATED Rowley wins plaudits for her consultative style. Above, with (from left) Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Associate Professor of English Education; Lily Ngaruiya, Academic Affairs Coordinator; Lalitha Vasudevan, Professor of Technology & Education; and student Mike Yarbrough.

don't value education,' that doesn't leave me many options for how to see myself if I'm poor," Rowley says. "Whereas if I take up a more structural analysis of economic disparities, I might say, 'Poor kids do less well in school because the system disenfranchises them.'"

Rowley, Kurtz-Costes et al. suggest reasons why black boys internalize society's view. One is a cultural disconnect with white, female teachers, who often single them out early for discipline. The authors link this "adultification" of youthful behavior to the drop in black boys' academic performance in fourth grade and argue it suggests a view of black boys as less innocent than other youngsters.

Black parents may also, unwittingly, feed the black boy narrative of low achievement. Concerned about discrimination and their sons' grade-point averages and self-esteem, they may set lower expectations for boys than girls. Warning boys to expect unfair treatment may predispose them to distance themselves from school. In another paper, Rowley and her co-authors suggest that when black mothers act as watchdogs against discrimination, they may antag-

onize teachers, reinforcing a cycle of animosity that penalizes their children.

Yet Rowley and Kurtz-Costes also spotlight brighter narratives. A subset of New York City public schools graduates 80 percent of their low-income black and Latino boys. Black boys in five states are more likely to finish high school on time than their white counterparts. Nationwide, far more black boys qualify for advanced placement classes than take them — not a happy statistic, but confirmation that ability is not the issue.

“These data clearly demonstrate that, given the right conditions, Black boys can thrive academically,” Rowley and Kurtz-Costes write. Teachers must examine “their own histories, perspectives [and] beliefs [and] check their narratives about Black boys at the classroom door.” Black parents could focus more on academic goals and partnering with teachers and researchers on what is going right with black boys.

IN A DIFFERENT SPACE

When Katie Schmitt first read the description of the provost’s job at Teachers College, she told Rowley, “This was written for you.”

Certainly, Rowley was drawn by TC’s longstanding commitment to social justice and diversity. She’s eager to build on the College’s deep connections in Harlem and New York City in general.

“Racial and economic achievement gaps are largest in college towns, so just putting resources in front of kids doesn’t do it,” she says. “TC is on the front lines in training all kinds of educators and in thinking about the principles of engagement in urban communities.”

But equally important for Rowley, from the beginning, has been TC’s President, Thomas Bailey, and his mantra of creating “pathways to success” for all TC community members.

“Tom and the search committee really empha-



BRUCE GILBERT

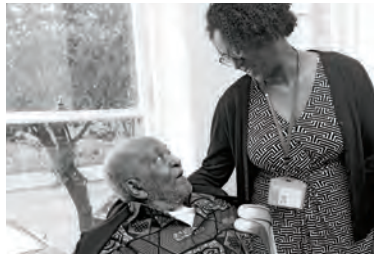


LILY NGARUIYA





“The number of people and initiatives in this one city block is so impressive and important. How can we connect them more? What are additional cross-cutting topics for collaboration?”



VALUING DIFFERENCE *Rowley is partnering with President Tom Bailey (top left) on creating “pathways to success” for all — an approach she honed at the University of Michigan (center), where she was honored (above) for mentoring colleagues like Katie Schmitt (bottom left), now at TC. Rowley “grew up, intellectually speaking,” on the ideas of TC psychologist Edmund Gordon (far right) — particularly that “cultural difference isn’t deficiency.”*

sized issues around diversity, equity and inclusion, and also student experience,” Rowley says. “It was wonderfully un-presidential, in the sense of being concerned about individuals on the ground. I thought, hey, we can accomplish things together.”

One of her priorities is to ensure that everyone gets the resources and mentoring they need.

“Sometimes people haven’t had great successes because, for example, no one taught them to write a grant. We want to build capacity for those who haven’t had opportunities,” she says.

She’s also determined to create more points of contact among TC’s faculty.

“The number of people and initiatives housed in this one city block is so impressive and important. How can we connect them more, and what are additional cross-cutting topics for collaboration?”


In July, Bailey introduced her at TC’s Edmund W. Gordon Lecture, delivered this year by urban education scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings.

Gordon, the 98-year-old psychologist and professor emeritus, would be honored afterward with an unveiling of his portrait.

“One of the very best things I have to announce today is that Stephanie Rowley has joined us at Teachers College,” Bailey said. “With her arrival, I have found a partner to lead TC — and especially in enabling everyone to succeed as we work toward creating comprehensive, evidence-based solutions to challenges in human development and well-being.”

Then Rowley stepped to the podium. “I couldn’t be more pleased that this is my first official activity at TC,” she said. She called Ladson-Billings “a giant in the field” and thanked Gordon for “mentoring a generation to think about black culture and its use for youth and schooling.

“I grew up, intellectually speaking, on his work. I learned that cultural difference isn’t deficiency. So, thank you, Dr. Gordon.”

She paused and smiled around at the crowd in Cowin Auditorium. “I am so happy to be here.” 



Telling Better Stories

Christie Noelle Krase (M.A. '19, M.A. '03)

Career

Former early childhood teacher; Childcare Council of Westchester board member. "I want to help kids while their stories can change. I taught pre-K until I became a mom. Then [former TC President] Susan Fuhrman suggested I think about education policy."

What I learned at TC

"There's meaning in people's experiences that can shape policy from the bottom up. Similarly, Professor Amy Stuart Wells advised picking research projects in which we could find our own stories."

Philosophy

"Changing a child's life is the biggest difference you can make. Teachers are so important, but as teaching is de-professionalized, everyone suffers."

Proudest accomplishment

"I'm proud of my four children, but also of myself for returning to school at age 48. My computer was so old that it didn't have a click and drag option!"

Her gift

The Christie Krase Endowed Scholarship for Rural Students

Why I give

"I grew up in a rural, blue-collar town where the mail came every three days. My parents were immigrants but understood the value of education. I attended the University of Pennsylvania on scholarship, but my TC experiences defined me. I'm grateful to be able to pay that forward."

S U P P O R T o u r S T U D E N T S

Photo: Bruce Gilbert

*You, too, can support TC's students.
Contact Linda Colquhoun
at 212 678-3679
or visit tc.edu/supportstudents*

Early Childhood Lessons

A global study could add “zing” to American early childhood education



Sharon Lynn Kagan has long argued that achieving high-quality programs for young children requires attending to and funding the system that supports them: financing, regulations, monitoring, governance, program standards, professional

development and effective use of data.

This past spring, Kagan — Virginia & Leonard Marx Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy, and Co-Director of TC’s National Center for Children & Families — published an analysis of

early childhood education and care (ECEC) systems in six trend-setting nations: South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Finland, England and Australia. Her visionary goal: to discern the core systemic elements that make for high-quality ECEC, thereby enabling

the United States and other nations to upgrade the quality, equity, sustainability and efficiency of their services and systems.

Fully funded by the National Center on Education and the Economy, the effort yielded two books. One is a compendium of country case studies; the other, *The Early Advantage: Building Systems That Work for Young Children — International Insights from Innovative Early Childhood Systems*, argues that while the study countries all have more services for young children than does the U.S., they also understand that “context contours policy” — that is, what works in one country may not in another. Regardless, a carefully planned, comprehensive approach that promotes “policy synergy” is requisite.

The six countries also look across the development spectrum, Kagan says, beginning prenatally and with abundant parenting supports. All make provision for infants



Other countries offer “far more services than we do. It does really come down to making our nation more respectful of the importance of the early years.”

— Sharon Lynn Kagan,
Virginia & Leonard Marx
Professor of Early Childhood
and Family Policy

and toddlers and “provide rich services for three- and four-year-old children.” All focus on helping families transition from preschool to kindergarten, and “comprehensive health benefits are rather routine.”

America ranks 11th globally in investment in pre-primary education as a percentage of government expenditures on education; 22nd in presence of well-defined quality guidelines to cover basic early childhood education and care needs; and 31st in availability of preschool for families.

Ultimately, Kagan

says, her report is a wake-up call to American policymakers. “It does really come down to making our nation more respectful of the importance of the early years and more committed to what makes services for youngsters really zing!”

UNDERSCORING THE “ED” IN EDTECH

Paulo Blikstein works “at the intersection of education and technology,” but his allegiance is clear.

“People say technology makes things cheaper and more efficient, so automate education,” says Blikstein, Associate Professor of Communications, Media & Learning Technologies Design. “But we don’t need more automation in education; we need less. The best use of technology is to creatively augment what teachers can do, not replace them.”

Blikstein creates tools to help children learn STEM subjects by doing,

making and building. He created the first open-source educational robotics platform and the first program to bring maker education to schools — the FabLearn project, now in 22 countries on four continents.

He studies these tools *in vivo* to validate broader learning theories. In 2015, with his then-students Richard Davis and Bertrand Schneider, he placed high school students with no formal engineering and design training in a maker space. They soon acquired behaviors and problem-solving skills “resembling those of experts.”

Blikstein attended a progressive Brazilian elementary school led by the daughter of Paulo Freire, author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. After studying engineering in college, he earned a master’s in Media Arts & Sciences from MIT and a Ph.D. in Learning Sciences from Northwestern University.



“We don’t need more automation in education; we need less. The best use of technology is to creatively augment what teachers can do, not replace them.”

— Paulo Blikstein, Associate Professor of Communications, Media & Learning Technologies Design



Teaching at Stanford University in Silicon Valley, Blikstein became wary of technology’s potential uses in education. “Any discussion of EdTech must address the Silicon Valley mythology of ‘give us your data, because we’re the good guys, we wear hoodies,’” he told a recent TC conference (See page 9). “Filmmakers use technology to tell otherwise impossible stories; doctors, to heal in un-

thinkable ways. Similarly, teachers should use technology to teach kids to build AI, not to deliver 19th century Orwellian-style education. We want more humanity in the classroom, not less.”

THE COLOR OF TEACHING

After Michele (not her real name), a black student from the rural South, attended the first



“The educational landscape post-*Brown v. Board of Education* has not yet rebounded” from a “mass exodus” of black educators, including many who were fired.

— Felicia Mensah,
Professor of
Science & Education

session of Felicia Mensah’s science methods course at Teachers College, she called home.

“I was like, ‘Dad, guess what? I’m taking a class with an African American professor!’” Michele later told Mensah. “She’s a woman.”

Mensah, Professor of Science & Education, considered Michele a rarity, too. “The significant decrease in the number of Black teachers has been

so drastic that scholars have referred to them as an ‘endangered species,’” she writes in her paper, “Finding Voice and Passion: Critical Race Theory Methodology in Science Teacher Education,” published in February by the *American Educational Research Journal*.

“The educational landscape post-*Brown v. Board of Education*, the 1954 Supreme Court decision striking down school segregation] has not yet rebounded” from a “mass exodus” of black educators, including many who were fired.

Mensah chronicles Michele’s journey from childhood through her first full-time appointment as a New York City elementary school teacher. She describes how Michele, “a darker complexion African American woman,” learns that beauty is associated with lighter skin tone; how she repeatedly experiences being “the only one” in all- or mostly white classrooms; and how white teachers classify her as learning disabled, telling her she hasn’t learned to apply herself “because of my skin.”

Michele is considering



“Higher-skilled people with dyslexia may appear to be functioning well, but often reading and writing tasks are extremely effortful for them — they may have to work eight times as hard.”

— Dolores Perin,
Professor of Psychology
& Education



quitting teaching until Mensah introduces her to Critical Race Theory, which holds that race and racism are defining characteristics of American society and also in teacher education. Michele responds powerfully to what Mensah terms “the centrality of naming her own experience.” “I found my voice,” she later tells Mensah. “This is what caused me to stay in teaching.”

ON THE SAME PAGE

Helping the 750 million adults worldwide who lack literacy skills requires reading between the lines.

That, in essence, is a central premise of *The Wiley Handbook of Adult Literacy*, edited by Dolores Perin, Professor of Psychology & Education and Director of TC’s Applied Education Psychology: Reading Specialist Program.


The book addresses

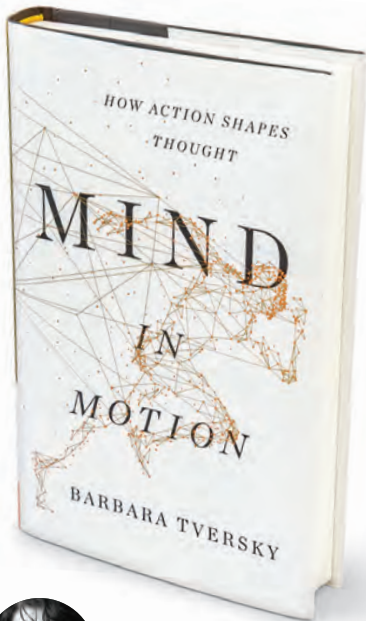
topics ranging from word structure to the teaching of literacy skills in prisons, to literacy and social change in South Asia. It also links three seemingly disparate groups: adults with low reading skills (typically those who haven’t finished secondary education and may not be native English speakers); students who enter community colleges with low literacy skills; and higher-skilled adults (including

in graduate school) who have dyslexia.

“A large proportion of people in each of these populations have a problem with awareness of phonemes, the smallest unit of sound that we can appreciate,” Perin explains. “That issue is a real drag on their ability to make reading automatic.”

People in each group also have low literacy skills in relation to specific tasks that confront them: “Higher-skilled people with dyslexia may appear to be functioning well, but often they are subject to severe difficulty and stress because reading and writing tasks that are easy for others are extremely effortful for them — they may have to work eight times as hard.”

In the United States, Perin laments, “there’s this idea that when people have been through 12 years of school but have low literacy skills, it’s their fault, and society shouldn’t have to pay for them twice. So there isn’t much funding for these populations, which is disgraceful.” She hopes her book will “stimulate new research that will benefit all three populations.” 



Moving Prose

Barbara Tversky on why actions speak louder than words

■ What are thoughts made of? Not words, asserts Barbara Tversky, Professor of Psychology & Education, in *Mind in Motion: How Action Shapes Thought* (Basic Books 2019). Rather, spatial cognition enables us to draw meaning from our bodies, surroundings and actions — and actions underlie language’s structure and meaning. ■ *Mind in Motion* “upends everything most of us think we know about thinking,” says “Think Again” podcast host Jason Gots. *Nature* says the book transports us from “the ‘world in the mind’ to the ‘mind in the world.’” And the *Wall Street Journal*’s takeaway is that “the fact that our brains are in bodies shapes how they think.” ■ Education, too, must recognize that visuals, from diagrams to comic books, communicate more directly than symbolic words. “The naming game with babies itself depends on joint attention and gesture,” Tversky argues. “There’s so much more to say, but that would be another book.” — **BY JOE LEVINE**

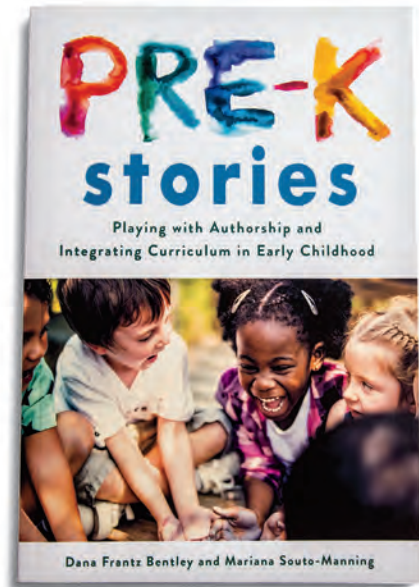


Tversky says spatial cognition enables us to draw meaning from our bodies, surroundings and actions, which underlie language.

“A” is for “Agency”

Seeing preschoolers as authors

■ They weren’t yet reading books fluently, let alone contemplating publishing them. Yet the children of the Pre-K East classroom in Cambridge, Massachusetts, became authors. *Pre-K Stories: Playing with Authorship and Integrating Curriculum in Early Childhood* (Teachers College Press 2019), by their teacher, Dana Frantz Bentley, and her mentor, Mariana Souto-Manning, TC Professor of Early Childhood Education, describes how Bentley helped the children edit recorded narratives based on their daily play and create “really real” (OK, some were typed and stapled) volumes: *The Whole Pre-K East Book* (stories with drawings); *The Book of Paper Airplane Experts* (a how-to, with photos); *A Book of Family Shares* (families’ stories of the children’s homelives); *All of the Seasons Square: A Season World* (poetry accompanying the children’s classroom mural); and *The Pre-K East Life Book*, memories to help others “know how to be in our class.” Deciding on the kids’ curriculum would have been easier but “curriculum needs to be co-constructed with them,” Bentley writes. — **BY PATRICIA LAMIELL**



Souto-Manning mentored a pre-K teacher who guided her students in editing recorded narratives based on their daily play.



BACK TO HER ROOTS

“As the daughter of a Midwestern cherry farmer, I always have been interested in where our food comes from and the policies that govern our food system.”

— Lesley Kroupa

Running the Walk

Attorney Lesley Kroupa has sprinted through a marathon of accomplishments at TC. Ultimately, she's still all about advocacy.

Lesley Kroupa competes in Ironman triathlons, so she appreciates the importance of eating well. Yet she likes to quote Joan Gussow and Pam Koch, two of her nutrition professors at Teachers College: “Nutrition starts long before the first bite — it starts with the soil.” ■ “As the daughter of a Midwestern cherry farmer, I always have been interested in where our food comes from and the policies that govern our food system,” Kroupa says.

At TC, where she enrolled two years ago, leaving her job as associate general counsel for a major real estate development firm, Kroupa has received ample inspiration for how to focus that interest. In Gussow, the 91-year-old doyenne of the sustainable food movement, she's found an embodiment of persistence any Ironman athlete would appreciate: “She was seen as a radical. Now everyone realizes she was right about integrating sustainability into the nutrition guidelines.” John Allegrante, Professor of Health Education, “has been very supportive in pushing

me to use my advocacy skills in the public health context.” And Koch, Executive Director of TC's Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, “is on the ground, always advocating. She really walks the walk.”

So does Kroupa, though it might be more accurate to say that she runs it. During 2018, she spent a week providing pro bono legal services to immigrants at a government detention center in Folkston, Georgia. She did a close reading of new federal legislation governing funding for prevention of gun violence and presented her findings

at the annual conference of the Society for Public Health Education and in an article for the American Psychological Association (her verdict: Counter to media reports, the legislation undermines prevention efforts, advancing the aims of the gun lobby).

But all of that was more or less a warm-up heat. During 2019, Kroupa was awarded the Department of Nutrition's Nutritional Ecology Scholarship. True to form, she has already worked closely with a sustainability nonprofit and briefed Brooklyn Borough President (and vegan) Eric Adams on how plant-based food policies in New York City could help combat climate change.

“The scholarship was really meaningful to me,” she says. “I was nervous about stepping away from my prior career, but the award and my experience at TC has made me confident I'm on the right path.”

Currently, Kroupa is finishing her master's degree in nutrition and public health and completing requirements to become a registered dietitian. Long term, she plans to combine her nutrition and public health studies with her legal background to advocate for a healthful and sustainable food system.

Anyone taking an opposing stand should be forewarned: This is one lawyer who rarely rests her case. — JOE LEVINE

Making Their Mark ...

in diplomacy, counseling, higher education and teaching ■ By Steve Giegerich

SAME ESPRIT,
DIFFERENT CORPS

Jenny Abamu

(M.A. '16)



■ Jenny Abamu (M.A. '16) recently left her job as an education reporter on public radio to join the U.S. State Department.

“As a child of immigrants, I was always drawn to work that challenged me to understand life cross-culturally,” says

Abamu. “Leaving journalism wasn’t easy, but this was an opportunity of a lifetime.”

She finds that both journalism and diplomacy “encourage objectivity and a reliance on law and policy as a moral compass.” And after completing entry-level training, Abamu will become a public diplomacy officer in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where she’ll work with the local media and provide news to the public. She’ll need to brush up on her Arabic, but TC’s International & Comparative Education program taught her “just how complex international work is” and gave her an “amazing

support group” of friends: “We help each other pursue our dreams.”

THERAPIST
WITHOUT BORDERS

Elizabeth Hernandez

(PH.D. '18)



■ Elizabeth Hernandez (Ph.D. '18) is a Staff Psychologist at UCLA Counseling and Psychological Services.

A Los Angeles native, Hernandez trained as an early-career high school counselor and in Marriage and Family Therapy, but her passion was to advocate for undocumented students and their families. Her experiences and training in

ELIZABETH HERNANDEZ

“Activism is in my blood. With each generation, my ancestors challenged unfair laws and advocated for their community.”

TC’s Ph.D. counseling program “set me up as a clinician, consultant, researcher, activist and teacher. My mentors — including Marie Miville, Dinelia Rosa, Elizabeth Fraga, Brenda Mejia, and Diana Puñales — were Latina psychologists who enabled me to envision a career.”

Since returning home, Hernandez has helped the California Psychological Association Immigration Task Force develop clinical recommendations to address the mental health issues of undocumented immigrants: “Activism is in my blood. With each generation, my ancestors

JENNY ABAMU

“As a child of immigrants, I was drawn to [understanding] life cross-culturally.”

challenged unfair laws and advocated for their community. Now I'm following in that tradition."

SMOOTHING THE ROAD TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Vikash Reddy

(PH.D. '16)



■ Vikash Reddy (Ph.D. '16) is Senior Director of Policy Research for the Campaign for College Opportunity, which works to ease student transition from California's community colleges to its four-year public universities.

As a postdoc at TC's Community College Research Center (CCRC), Reddy helped establish that community college remedial courses largely hinder completion of a four-year degree, costing students time and money for no-credit classes that often don't help.

California has eliminated remedial courses and replaced community college placement tests with multiple measures, including high school grade-point averages. Students can enroll in transfer-level courses with credits transferable to the California State and University of California systems.

At TC, Reddy also aided economist Kevin Dougherty in researching performance funding in higher education: "We doctoral students created questionnaires and interview strategies and conducted interviews. I use those skills regularly. And

VIKASH REDDY

"We doctoral students created questionnaires and interview strategies and conducted interviews. I use those skills regularly."

I can say I literally wrote the book on performance-based funding."

A TEACHER WHO KNOWS THE TERRAIN

Charles "C.J." Reilly III

(M.A. '18)



■ Charles "C.J." Reilly III (M.A. '18), an Environmental Education Consultant for Mamaroneck, New York schools, recently served as a Rural Development Specialist with a Peace Corps Response team in the Philippines. A TC Art & Art Education graduate, he helped

the agriculture program at Cagayan State University's Lal-lo campus meet accreditation standards by leading development of maps detailing the land use and agricultural potential. Previously, the program "had only questionable snippets of GPS coordinates, old dusty topographical drawings and local knowledge."

Reilly surveyed nearly 3,500 acres, working during the cooler morning hours. He dodged snakes and finished days covered with mosquito bites. But he also experienced "a magnificent letting go." "I learned new languages and customs and adapted to foreign situations. My colleagues became friends, mentors and guides to the Philippines and Filipino culture. It was a powerfully affirming experience."

CHARLES "C.J." REILLY III

"My colleagues became friends, mentors and guides. . . . It was a powerfully affirming experience."

Celebrating *Our* TC Family

*A Letter From Suzanne M. Murphy
Vice President, Development & External Affairs*



Dear Friends:

The holiday season is a time for family gatherings and family thanksgivings.

The Teachers College community is very much a family. So here, for your holiday pleasure, are stories of three caring and generous members and their gifts to the TC community.

BRIDGING TIME AND DISTANCE

THELMA SHAFRAN (M.A. '54) put her TC credentials to work, spending her career teaching English to students in Spain. After reconnecting with the College in 2008, she began contributing to TC's Annual Fund and attending our annual Grace Dodge Luncheons. She planned to attend this year's Annual Fund thank you event, but sadly passed away in September.

In 2016, Thelma worked closely with Louis Lo Ré, Director of Planned Giving, to create a planned gift which would fund an endowed scholarship to "assist students who did not come from privileged backgrounds, so they could benefit from a TC education to pursue their ambitions and dreams of a better life." Subsequently she added to her

planned gift with three supplemental Charitable Gift Annuities.

After one Grace Dodge Luncheon, Thelma felt a sense of urgency. Wanting to help students in the here and now, she took advantage of the College's matching gift offer and created the Thelma Shafran Endowed Scholarship Fund, making an outright gift so that the first scholar could be named immediately. Expanding her original criteria, Thelma's fund supports students enrolled in our programs in Early Childhood Education, and in Mathematics, Science & Technology. In the words of one recipient, Brittany Chambers (Ed.D. '18), who earned her degree in Adult Learning & Leadership: "At the core of the woman I am and strive to become, personal donations for scholarships from individuals like

Thelma Shafran have enabled me, as well as others with similar experiences, to realize our dreams."

Thelma will continue enabling dreams, because she saved her biggest gift for last: Upon her death, in addition to a large outright gift, she left her Upper West Side apartment to TC. When her estate settles, the Thelma Shafran Endowed Scholarship Fund will likely exceed \$2,000,000.

It's so like Thelma, a quiet and gentle soul, to have given so generously in such an understated way. We thank her from the bottom of our hearts.

And to quote my dear colleague, Louis Lo Ré: "It was a joy to steward Thelma through all these gifts. She was so appreciative and responsive, especially in meeting her student scholars."

“We have talented alumni working on the front lines of their professions and brilliant faculty members on the cutting edge of their fields. Why shouldn’t they work together?”

— SUZANNE M. MURPHY



Thelma Shafran (left, M.A. '54) and Brittany Chambers (Ed.D. '18)

A VOICE THAT KEEPS RESONATING

MICHELE BARAKETT (M.Ed., M.A. '01) took just one course with Robert T. Carter at Teachers College and didn't stay in touch afterward. But Dr. Carter's Racial-Cultural Counseling Laboratory so resonated that in 2018, Michele and her husband, Tim, created the Robert T. Carter Fellowship to support TC doctoral students from an historically disenfranchised or oppressed group.

“It shouldn't be the job of black people to teach white people about racism, but Dr. Carter took on that task,” says Michele, who is white, and now a practicing psychologist who has served as a diversity coordinator in a New York City independent school. “The opportunity to examine my white racial socialization was a gift.”

A few months ago, at a special celebration at TC, Dr. Carter (now retired) and Michele were reunited. For Michele, it was a chance to personally say “thank you.” Dr. Carter, too, was grateful.

“This gift is a very powerful way to say that learning about race and culture is valuable, to the point where it should be made part of the institution,” he said, adding, “I was left speechless. Really? I had that impact?”



Robert Carter (back row, third from left) with former students and colleagues. Back row, second from right: Michele Barakett

BRAINSTORMING TOGETHER

MARY EDLOW (M.A. '67), New York City psychoanalyst, has long pondered how different families and cultures approach the issue of becoming a parent. She wondered if sex education courses could go beyond teaching biology and safe practices to address these subtle psychological factors.

Mary was drawn to TC's Sexuality, Women, & Gender initiative and the work of Aurélie Athan (Ph.D. '11) of our clinical psychology



Mary Edlow (left, M.A. '67) and Aurélie Athan (Ph.D. '11)

Empowered by Public Funding

Teachers College has secured federal funding that, over the next several years, is expected to total roughly \$13 million.

This past summer, TC's Community College Research Center (CCRC) was awarded nearly \$3 million from the Improving Undergraduate STEM

Education program of the National Science Foundation (NSF) to study how guided pathways reforms in community colleges can help students succeed in STEM programs. A second grant of \$1.4 million, from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), will expand CCRC's research into English language learners in community colleges.

In October, TR@TC, our innovative teaching residency program, won its third round of USDOE funding. The program's newest iteration, TR@TC³, exponentially strengthens an

already cutting-edge emphasis on

simultaneously preparing teachers in specific content areas and serving special education students and those who are English language learners. The projected total grant of \$5,985,870 over the next five years will fund 75 new residents.

Also in October, the College received a five-year \$2.5 million USDOE grant to expand support for two local public schools in our REACH (Raising Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem) program.

Through REACH, overseen by TC's Office of School & Community Partnerships, the College helps neighborhoods with large concentrations of low-income students increase early childhood school readiness, offer expanded learning opportunities, improve students' physical and mental health, bolster family support and engagement, and strengthen school leadership. REACH employs a university-assisted community school model, providing an array of academic and "wrap-around" services essential to the success of children and families. REACH collaborates with TC faculty members and students to design and deliver programming services to partner schools, and partners with other Columbia schools to support this work.

"Beyond extending our important programs, these grants confirm that we are tackling the right issues and making important strides," says President Thomas Bailey. "We believe in what we're doing, and it's great to know that others do, too."



TR@TC, in the field

program, an authority on matrescence (the developmental transition to motherhood). Their collaboration has produced the Teachers College Sex Education Initiative, generously funded by Mary, which prepares health educators in schools to focus on "reproductive identity formation" — the question of if, when and how to become a parent. This effort is pure TC, combining research and practice and extending our historic track record of introducing new paradigms and shaping new fields.

The collaboration between Mary and Dr. Athan also models how TC can improve its course offerings. We have talented alumni working on the front lines of their professions and brilliant faculty members on the cutting edge of their fields. Why shouldn't they work together?

Before I close, I want to let you know that after 12 wonderful years leading Development & External Affairs, I am stepping down as Vice President at the close of 2019. I cannot adequately convey how meaningful it has been for me to work at TC, my alma mater; to play a role in our joyous triumphs and celebrations; and to help strengthen TC for the years ahead. Best of all, TC has been and always will be *my* extended family. I will continue to support the College and stay as closely connected with as many of you as possible. So, this isn't "goodbye" — it's "see you at the next Academic Festival, the next Winter Roundtable, or the latest TC lecture that defines the national conversation on education."

Thank you for the privilege of serving you all, and wishing you a warm and loving holiday,

SUZANNE M. MURPHY
(M.ED. '99, M.A. '96)
VICE PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT
& EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

An Education Veteran

David O'Connor wants to help take TC to the next level

NEXT LEVEL

“Education can close many of the gaps in our society.”



DAVID O'CONNOR

IN 2015, WHEN DAVID O'CONNOR FUNDED CREATION OF THE RESILIENCE CENTER FOR Veterans & Families, he knew it belonged at Teachers College.

For one thing, Columbia University leads the Ivy League in enrolling veterans. TC's Eisenhower Leader Development Program serves officers at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. And TC psychologist George Bonanno, now the Resilience Center's director, was already interested in veterans' transition to civilian life. But O'Connor's bottom line was simple: “Education can close many of the gaps in our society.”

This fall, O'Connor, senior managing partner of High Rise Capital Partners, LLC, affirmed that philosophy, joining TC's Board. His own transition should be smooth: He's served over a decade on the Board's investment committee.

“We've been fortunate to have David O'Connor's counsel and support, and his addition to the Board will only make us more successful in the long run,” said TC President Thomas Bailey.

The Resilience Center's success supports that assessment. It has shifted the field's focus from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to the more prevalent “transition stress” of seeking a job, working with civilian colleagues and getting along with family and friends. Now the Center is pilot-testing a three-session form of therapy that has decreased veterans' symptoms of PTSD, depression and distress.

“They've been doing groundbreaking research,” O'Connor says. “I'd like to see their work get catapulted to another level.”

With O'Connor on board, TC has similar hopes college-wide. — **JUSTIN HARMON**

Changing the Boundaries

Don Callahan believes technology can remove barriers to success in education and life



DON CALLAHAN

REAL TIME

“In today’s world, we must all learn continuously. I’m a big believer in moving more education online, but synchronously, so that not only teaching is real time, but also discussion with fellow students.”

AFTER COLLEGE, DON CALLAHAN READ HISTORY FOR A YEAR AT OXFORD. HE WENT ON TO a stellar international finance career, culminating in a decade as Citibank’s Global Head of Operations and Technology — but Callahan, who recently joined TC’s Board, has drawn on history to shape his visionary approach. “I look backwards to see forward,” he says. “Take Churchill’s embrace of technology. He shaped the modern air force, which changed the role of national borders — much as the internet has today.”

Callahan, too, has eliminated boundaries. At Citibank, working with the Borough of Manhattan Community College and the nonprofit Year Up, he imported student interns from diverse backgrounds, many of whom have built finance careers.

“When I was at IBM, Thomas Watson, Jr., said that education knows no saturation point,” he says. “In today’s world, we must all learn continuously. I’m a big believer in moving more education online, but synchronously, so that not only teaching is real time, but also discussion with fellow students. Because so much learning happens after class, in the debate out on the lawn.”

Ultimately, Callahan believes artificial intelligence (AI) will free teachers and students to focus on higher-order skills — a revolution he sees TC leading: “The scarcity of supply will be in cognition and thought. Aristotle and Socrates were all about considering topics from multiple angles. AI can help with that framing, but for deep thinking, we need humans.” — **JOE LEVINE**

[MAKING HERSTORY]

Hometown Hero Makes Good

Jane Ellen McAllister was the nation's first black woman to earn an education Ph.D. Now Mississippi has celebrated her achievement.



A black professor brings students of color to campus during the summer to prepare them for college. The program wins federal funding and backing from the Ford Foundation. It's a nice story, though not unheard of nowadays.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 56)



HOUSEWARMING Vicksburg, Mississippi, has placed a historical marker outside McAllister's home. Far left: Her cousin, Bettye Gardner, is fourth from left; Vicksburg Mayor George Flaggs is at far right.

Hometown Hero Makes Good

(continued from page 55)

But it happened in the mid-1950s — in Mississippi, at historically black Jackson State University.

Of course, the professor, Jane Ellen McAllister, was always ahead of her time.

In 1929, at Teachers College, McAllister became the nation's first black woman to earn an Education Ph.D. Her advisor, Mabel Carney, subsequently wrote that “the real history of the study of American Negro education on the advanced level” began with McAllister's thesis, “The Training of Negro Teachers in Louisiana.”

This past August, Vicksburg, Mississippi,

the historic Civil War city and McAllister's hometown, unveiled a state historical marker outside her former home. A TC proclamation declared McAllister “a Teachers College hero who embodied the College's values, beliefs and aspirations.”

McAllister improved the teaching and prospects of people of color. She published journal articles on teacher education and mentored generations of students. At her death in 1996, Jackson State had named a dorm and lecture series after her, and the Mississippi Encyclopedia had enshrined her in its pages.

“She was always interested in education for African Americans, because in that period, many Southern black public schools were not the best,” says McAllister's cousin Bettye Gardner, a historian and Professor Emerita at Coppin State University. “And that's why she ultimately chose to go to Teachers College. Its reputation was so strong.” — **JOE LEVINE**

[LOST & FOUND]

A Guy with Some Connections

You never know who might be hanging out in front of the bust of James Earl Russell in TC's Zankel Hall. Russell's great-grandson, Robert, for example, dropped in unannounced one afternoon last May during a trip east with his wife to see their daughter graduate from American University. While Robert Russell does remember his great-grandfather, who served as TC's dean from 1897 to 1927, he was much closer to his grandfather, William Fletcher Russell, who led the College from 1927 to 1954. William Russell frequently hosted him at both his cabin in the Rockies and his apartment at 409 West 117th Street, and once introduced him to the future President Eisenhower when the latter was president of Columbia. Asked whether he, too, had in some way gone into the family business, Robert Russell laughed. "God, no. I'm an options trader and software engineer." He looked around at TC's lobby. "But there are a lot of memories here."



[AROUND THE WORLD IN A TC DAY]



GLOBAL TC DAY 2019

1. The Clark Institute's exhibit on alumna Ida O'Keefe
2. Laura Sanchez (Ph.D. '14) hosts a dinner in the Dominican Republic
3. Paola Ricci (far left, M.A. '19) hosts a dinner in Brazil

The Fine Print

Alumni authors in the spotlight

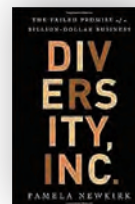
Books by TC graduates; other titles at tc.edu/alumni/news or #TCMade. Suggest a title via tc alumni@tc.edu.



A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF HEAVEN

MATHANGI SUBRAMANIAN (ED.D. '10)

Five young women in Bangalore, India, fight the bulldozing of their homes for a shopping mall (Algonquin).



DIVERSITY INC.: THE FAILED PROMISE OF A BILLION-DOLLAR BUSINESS

PAMELA NEWKIRK (PH.D. '12)

Why American organizations haven't succeeded in representing the country's racial and ethnic makeup (Hachette).



RECLAIMING COMMUNITY: RACE AND THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF YOUTH WORK

BIANCA BALDRIDGE (PH.D. '12)

The invaluable work of one community-based youth program (Stanford University Press).

[FROM YOUR ALUMNI COUNCIL PRESIDENT]

Taking TC With You

Let the College keep boosting your career — and social circle

Greetings Fellow Alumni!

As the proud recipient of three TC degrees and a former TC adjunct professor, I am excited to now serve as the President of the Teachers College Alumni Council. I look forward to working with Alumni Relations over the next two years to create an even more meaningful alumni experience for us all. One of my goals is to increase awareness about the range of alumni benefits TC offers. Here are some I hope you'll take particular advantage of: **TC Gmail**. As an alum you have lifetime access to a UNI@tc.columbia.edu Gmail account. Using



your TC Gmail account is a great way to show your TC pride and develop a professional brand. ■ **Networking and Social Events**. Alumni Relations hosts events on campus, around the globe, and even online. View upcoming events at tc.edu/alumni/events. ■ **TConnect: An Online Alumni Network**. Visit connect.tc.columbia.edu

to build an online profile, share class notes, and grow your personal and professional networks with fellow graduates.

■ **TC Alumni Career Development Webinars**. Enhance your career skills through this free series of career development webinars presented by TC alumni. Visit tc.edu/alumni/webinars to find more information. ■ **Library Access**. Alumni have access to many CU library e-resources. Find a full list at bit.ly/TCAlumniLibrary. You can also visit the Alumni Relations office to obtain an Alumni ID Card for physical access to TC & CU libraries. ■ Find more information at tc.edu/alumni/faq. If you have any questions about these benefits or wish to suggest a new benefit, email tcalumni@tc.edu.

Sincerely,



PHIL GEIGER (ED.D. '81, M.ED. '73, M.A. '72)
PRESIDENT,
TEACHERS COLLEGE
ALUMNI COUNCIL

Arts & Humanities

ART & ART EDUCATION

Ashley Cavadas (M.A. '16) and **Hannah Lokken** (M.A. '16) are making a difference in their community through their startup, Art Strong NYC, which focuses on enhancing children's art education.

DANCE & DANCE EDUCATION

Merián Soto (M.A. '85) was named a 2019 United States Artists Doris Duke Fellow in Dance.

TESOL

Monica Shie (M.A. '98) is the American Center Director and Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Consulate in Kolkata, India.

Counseling & Clinical Psychology

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

David Blustein (Ph.D. '85) wrote *The Importance of Work in an Age of Uncertainty: The Eroding Work Experience in America*.

Curriculum & Teaching

CURRICULUM & TEACHING

Shira Epstein (Ed.D. '03) is the new Dean of the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education in New York.

Ayesha Moore McArthur (Ed.D. '09, M.Ed. '01) is the new principal of Rhame Avenue Elementary School in East Rockaway, New York.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Mary Crist (Ed.D. '91) was appointed the first Indigenous Theological Education Coordinator for The Episcopal Church.

Health & Behavior Studies

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Joanne Hill Powell (Ph.D. '15, M.Ed. '13, M.Phil. '12, M.A. '10) and her brother, Andrew Hill, are "empowering special educators to accelerate learning outcomes for kids who have disabilities" via the LiftEd app.

DISABILITY STUDIES IN EDUCATION (EDUCATION OF THE EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED)

Barbara Schwartz-Bechet (Ed.D. '94) was named Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Education at Misericordia University in Dallas, Pennsylvania.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Marlyn Delva (Ed.D. '13, M.A. '99) is the new Dean of Students at Columbia School of General Studies.

Theresa Guerriere (Ed.D. '19) received the 2019 School Health Professional of the Year Award from the American School Health Association.

Anthony E. Munroe (Ed.D. '07) was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and to the Commission on Student Success with the

American Association of Community Colleges.

NUTRITION & PUBLIC HEALTH

Kathryn MacKenzie (M.S. '02) was appointed the new Director of the Mayor's Office of Food Policy by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Human Development

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

William Latimer (M.A. '88)

is the new Vice President of Mercy College's New Rochelle and Bronx locations.

International & Transcultural Studies

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Daniel Scott Souleles (Ph.D. '15, M.Phil. '14, M.A. '12) wrote *Songs of Profit, Songs of Loss: Private Equity, Wealth, and Inequality*.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 60)

PROVOST ON THE ROAD | Winter & Spring 2020

Meet

STEPHANIE J. ROWLEY

TC's new Provost, Dean & VP for Academic Affairs

Hear her vision for positioning students and the College to achieve great things!



Events Nationwide ► find one near you!
tc.edu/alumni/events

[ALUMNI FOCUS]

Reflections of a Reflective Teacher

Eleanor Armour-Thomas got directions in a TC hallway 41 years ago. She's still following them

In 1978, newly arrived at Teachers College from Trinidad, **Eleanor Armour-Thomas** encountered the famous psychologist **Edmund Gordon**. ■ "I was so anxious and befuddled," Armour-Thomas (Ed.D. '84) recalled at a recent ceremony honoring Gordon. "And then here comes Dr. Gordon in his dashiki and beard, and he says, 'Young lady, may I help you?'" ■ Today Armour-Thomas, Professor of Educational Psychology at Queens College, is an authority on mathematics learning and assessment. Often working with Gordon, now 98, she has addressed an aspect of the United States



Eleanor Armour-Thomas

that still "befuddles" her: the prevailing "deficit perspective" of the two-tiered U.S. education system, which defines "different" as "lesser." ■ "In Trinidad, all children had free education up to college," she says. "We all had equal opportunities to excel." ■ In an ongoing quest to help teachers assess their impact, Armour-

Thomas has characterized what successful learning behavior looks like. ■ In a 2009 study of middle-school students doing group work, she and her colleagues identified "metacognitive" behaviors (conscious analyses of approaches and strategies) essential for successful problem solving. And in the textbook *Becoming a Reflective Mathematics Teacher: A Guide for Observations and Self-Assessment* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates), Armour-Thomas and co-authors advise new math teachers to "continually question your teaching" to prompt "sustainable changes in both your thinking and classroom practice." ■ Yet there is one principle that Armour-Thomas has never questioned: "Those of us with the skills to help others attain a good life have an obligation to do so. And for me, that comes from Dr. Gordon. It's his vision of a principled life." — **JOE LEVINE**

[SECONDARY SCHOOL SCIENCE EDUCATION]

Coach **Marc Skelton** (M.A. '06) of Fannie Lou Hamer High School wrote *Pounding the Rock: Basketball Dreams and Real Life in a Bronx High School*.

Interdisciplinary Studies

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN EDUCATION
Kevin Jennings (M.A. '94) is

the new CEO of Lambda Legal, an American civil rights organization that serves lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities as well as people living with HIV/AIDS.

Mathematics, Science & Technology

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY & MEDIA
Pamela Davis (Ed.D. '06, M.Ed.

'02) founded Wellbotics, a nonprofit that brings robotics classes to kids who have sick family members as well as kids who have experienced trauma, poverty or unstable housing.

Reshan Richards (Ed.D. '14) and Stephen J. Valentine co-wrote *Make Yourself Clear: How to Use a Teaching Mindset to Listen, Understand, Explain Everything, and Be Understood*.

MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

Joan Mast (Ed.D. '08, M.A. '88) is the new Superintendent of



CREATE YOUR LEGACY

“Whether you graduated recently or, like me, decades ago, please take a moment to consider TC’s impact on your life and career. Create a personal TC legacy that meaningfully touches those who follow us. OUR foresight and planning matter!”

—*Linda Wright*
M.A., Language, Literature and Social Studies
Grace Dodge Society member since 2015

For more information on gift annuities, bequests or other planned gifts, please contact:

Louis Lo Ré
Director of Planned Giving
lore@tc.edu | 212-678-3037
tc.edu/PlannedGiving



Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District in New Jersey.

SECONDARY SCHOOL SCIENCE EDUCATION

Marc Skelton (M.A. '06), a championship-winning basketball coach at Fannie Lou Hamer High School, wrote *Pounding the Rock: Basketball Dreams and Real Life in a Bronx High School*.

Organization & Leadership

ADULT EDUCATION GUIDED INTENSIVE STUDY

Cindy Pace (Ed.D. '17) is the new Global Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at MetLife.

Cheryl Smith (Ed.D. '00) wrote *On Hallowed Ground: The Dunbar Complex in Harlem*.

Elaine Smith (Ed.D. '12) is the new Dean of Adelphi University's College of Nursing and Public Health in Garden City, New York.

Katie Treadwell (Ed.D. '15) co-authored *Crisis, Compassion, and Resiliency in Student Affairs*.

ADULT LEARNING & LEADERSHIP

Tonia Casarin (M.A. '15) was named a Fall 2019 Latin America and Caribbean Eisenhower Fellow.

Bruce Murphy (M.A. '85) is the new President of Centenary University in Hackettstown, New Jersey.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Michael Gomez (M.A. '03) was appointed President of Saint

Peter's Prep in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Matthew R. Sigrist (M.A. '05) is the new Head of School at Renbrook School in West Hartford, Connecticut.

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Dana Vignale (M.Ed. '08) was appointed Upper School Director at Miami Country Day School in Miami, Florida.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Michelle H. Brown-Nevers (Ed.D., M.Ed. '98) is the Executive Director of Enrollment Management at Montgomery County Community College in Pennsylvania.

HIGHER & POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Tiffani L. Blake (M.Ed. '14) has joined New York Institute of Technology as interim Dean of Students for the institution's two New York campuses.

Mark Kamimura-Jimenez (M.A. '01) is the new Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education recognized **Jeffrey Putman** (Ed.D. '11, M.Ed. '99, M.A. '98), Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at SUNY Downstate, as a 2020 Pillar of the Profession.

INQUIRY IN EDUCATION

Merryl H. Tisch (Ed.D. '05) was

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 62)

[ALUMNI FOCUS]

Higher Ed Gets a Master Class

Jonathan Gyurko is refocusing the sector on teaching

Jonathan Gyurko (Ph.D. '12) likes audacious projects with “the potential for unexpected, transformative change.” He’s brought theater to post-apartheid South African schools, launched charter schools in New York City and improved public education in the United Arab Emirates. Now he’s bringing good teaching to colleges and universities. ■ “Professors are prepared as subject-matter experts and researchers, but rarely as teachers,” he says. Where selectivity and attrition were once “badges of honor,” student success is now higher education’s mantra. But



Jonathan Gyurko

three-year graduation rates are just 28 percent in community colleges and 60 percent over six years in baccalaureate institutions. ■ In 2014, Gyurko launched the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE), which offers online preparation and credentialing in evidence-based teaching practices. Enrolled faculty develop inclusive approaches

that promote engagement, persistence and deeper learning, and earn ACUE’s certificate in effective instruction, endorsed by the American Council on Education. ■ ACUE boasts over 100 partner institutions in 38 states and has credentialed 3,200 faculty. Studies validated by experts, including Michael McPherson, chair of the Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education, show that student outcomes are improving. Gyurko credits TC, where he studied politics and education, for providing “rigorous ways of thinking” about competing interests, finding common ground and building coalitions for educational change: “People say, ‘If only we could get the politics out.’ But education is a public good, and we need better politics, bringing stakeholders together, to support it.” — **JOE LEVINE**

[ALUMNI FOCUS]

Asking Better Questions

Harrison (Qing) Xia (Ed.D. '10) is trying to change China's preschool education

When **Harrison (Qing) Xia** submitted his dissertation proposal, his TC advisor, Professor of Cognitive Studies Xiaodong Lin-Siegler, threw it away. ■ “She said, ‘The research questions are unclear. You have not done much literature review and analysis,’” recalls Xia. “And it was true. I needed to communicate better, read more and write a new proposal.” ■ Lin-Siegler, founder of TC’s Education for Persistence and Innovation Center, was teaching Xia to handle failure and formulate research questions. He draws on both lessons in his current work: transforming prekindergarten education in China. ■ “Chinese students are good at solving problems

posed by others,” Xia says. So “we’re cultivating, in preschool, the habit of asking questions.” ■ Xia launched Nobo Columbia Corporation (NOBO) in 2011. The company tests how different combinations of various cognitive and social cognitive theories (Maria Montessori, Multiple Intelligence, Metacognition and Creativity)

pose children’s development and preschool management. Nobo creates curricula for preschool and kindergarten children ages 2 to 6 and teacher and staff professional development. ■ The Nobo curricula help children develop 10 key habits, including listening, observing, appreciating difference, and self-control: “Our goal is not to have children memorize factual knowledge, but rather learn habits for acquiring and creating knowledge that will benefit their development,” Xia says. “We aim to serve over 1,000 preschools and kindergartens in China. It’s about helping children ask better questions and solve problems. I learned these important skills by doing research with Professor Lin-Siegler.” He smiles. “I failed plenty of times before I mastered them.” — **JOE LEVINE**



Harrison (Qing) Xia

appointed to serve as Chair of the SUNY Board of Trustees by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo.

ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Theresa Canada (M.Ed. '79, M.A. '78) wrote *Desegregation of the New York City Schools: A Story of the Silk Stocking Sisters*.

Tan Suee Chieh (M.A. '03) was named President-Elect of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries. He will be the Institute’s first Asian President.

PRIVATE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Eduardo “Tony” Alleyne (M.A.

'10), a 2019 TC Early Career Award recipient, received the Teach for America-Delaware Markell Leadership Award.

PUBLIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Kenneth Montalbano (M.A. '14) is the new Principal at the Luis Muñoz Marin School for Social Justice in Newark, New Jersey.

Rachel Willis (M.E. '10) founded Elevating Equity in Atlanta, Georgia, a professional development practice focused on how to be anti-racist personally and professionally.

TC Alumni are waiting to connect with you!



Personalize your profile.
Grow your local and professional
TC networks.

Opt in to **TConnect**
An Online Alumni Network

connect.tc.columbia.edu

[CONVERSATION CHANGER]

June Dobbs Butts



June Dobbs Butts (Ed.D. '69), a pioneering black sex therapist and researcher, died in May at age 90. ■ In the 1970s, Butts became the first African American to study and practice with William Masters and Virginia Johnson. She spearheaded more liberated sex education and therapy for African Americans, advocating for more open and honest discussion about sexuality and sex practices, including those long considered taboo. ■ Butts earned her TC doctorate in family life education and taught at New York University, Fordham University, the Howard University College of Medicine and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ■ She also contributed to *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines, and wrote the "Our Sexual Health" column for *Essence*.

[QUIET CRUSADER]

Thelma Shafran



Thelma Shafran (M.A. '54), a passionate supporter of students, passed away in September at age 89. ■ Shafran taught English in Spain for many years and, as a member of TC's Grace Dodge Society, contributed yearly to the College's Annual Fund. Through outright and planned gifts, she gave more than \$2 million to Teachers College — including, upon her death, her

New York City apartment (see the Development Report on page 50).

[UNOFFICIAL MAYOR]

Maureen Horgan



Maureen Horgan, who retired in 2012 from TC as Associate Director of Administrative Services after a 45-year career with the College's

library, passed away in June 2018. ■ At that time, she was TC's longest-term professional staff member. ■ "Maureen was like the mayor of TC — she knew everyone and knew how to get things done," said Christine Jacknick (Ed.D. '09), Associate Professor of Academic Literacy and Linguistics at Borough of Manhattan Community College. ■ A story on TC's website in 2007 compared Horgan to legendary New York Yankees first baseman Lou Gehrig, whose record of consecutive games played endured from 1939 to 1995. ■ Horgan participated in multiple upgrades of the library, declaring after the 2003 creation of the College's Gottesman Libraries, "Each one's better, and this one's been the best."

[CALLED TO THE CRAFT]

Born to Teach

Jonas F. Soltis, 88, helped educational philosophy become an applied discipline that guides classroom practice

As a boy, **Jonas Soltis** constantly "played school," once leading friends in "military exercises" that included jumping off a chicken coop. The resulting injuries convinced him that "teachers don't always succeed." ■ Soltis, who died in August, became TC's William Heard Kilpatrick Professor of Philosophy & Education and internationally recognized for reorienting his sometimes arcane field toward guiding classroom teachers. Where Kilpatrick was the "million-dollar professor" (the public paid to attend his lectures), "Jonas was known as the 'million-book professor,'" says current TC education philosopher David Hansen. "His writings touched tens of thousands of teachers." ■ In the mid-1980s, Teachers College Press published Soltis's five-book *Thinking About Education* series. Soltis (at left,



with his late wife, Nancy) subsequently served the Press in numerous capacities, including in retirement. "We could never afford to lose him because he was so helpful, smart and thoughtful, and he knew the field so well," says the Press's former director, Carole Saltz.

— JOE LEVINE

Visit tc.edu/soltis to contribute to *The Jonas F. Soltis Fellowship*, created by Soltis's will to annually support a TC Philosophy & Education student.

Arming Ourselves with Facts

Reducing gun violence entails listening to truths — and each other ■ By Sonali Rajan



Perspective is a powerful thing.

As a research scientist, I feel obliged to inform politically and ideologically charged conversations with facts. As a human being, I need to listen to others, without making *a priori* assumptions about how our interpretation of facts intertwines with our lived experiences.

No issue better illustrates this dual challenge than gun violence, an

American health epidemic.

Fact: More than 100,000 people are shot annually, and nearly 40,000 die — including thousands of children. Yet at a recent panel discussion, a Fox News commentator I sat next to reiterated the National Rifle Association's argument that, since 1999, gun deaths have decreased as gun ownership has increased.

That's true only if you don't include suicides, a

growing crisis. But our discussion underscored that everyone (myself included) should be specific in presenting facts.

A responsible conversation airs facts that affect people's lives. In his book, *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Resentment is Killing America's Heartland*, Jonathan Metzl notes that America's gun death victims are primarily white men, most killed by self-inflicted wounds. Yet white

men often oppose gun control, Metzl argues, believing guns protect their status in the racial hierarchy.

Similarly, youth exposure to gun violence is not typically classified as an adverse childhood experience. Thus, as my colleagues and I recently reported, children traumatized due to gun violence are often not linked to essential services any parent would want for them.

These facts should inform conversations about gun violence, but our assumptions get in the way. The Fox News commentator likely assumed I've never met a gun owner (wrong: I have close family members who are). And I was guilty of similar assumptions about him. Still, our conversation was more civil than I expected.

As challenging conversations continue — *Should teachers carry guns in schools? Are active shooter drills effective?* — let's arm ourselves with facts, not assumptions.



Sonali Rajan is Associate Professor of Health Education

She gave advice. They give back.

“I’ve seen that purposeful and affirmative mathematical spaces reflect the bridging of people’s out-of-school and in-school networks, relationships and experiences.” — **Erica Walker** (*below, center*), Clifford Brewster Upton Professor of Mathematical Education and supporter of TC’s Center for Educational Equity (CEE) and Bruce Vogeli Endowed Scholarship

At the 2019 celebration for the TC Annual Fund, **Professor Erica Walker** reunited with four of her recent students.

Flanking Walker are, from left:

- **Prattasha Paul** (M.A. '16), Seventh grade mathematics teacher, School in the Square Public Charter School, New York City
- **Eva Hachikian** (M.A. '16), New York City K–12 mathematics teacher
- **Myra Luna-Lucero** (Ed.D. '17), Research Compliance Manager, Institutional Review Board (IRB), Teachers College
- **Jianyu Chen** (M.A. '16), Actuarial Analyst, Verisk-ISO; supporter of TC’s Maxine Greene Society



S U P P O R T o u r S T U D E N T S

What they learned at TC

“To take opportunities, whether teaching at a public high school or college, or working with clients of different cultural and professional backgrounds.”

— Jianyu Chen

How they’re applying their TC education

“I understand the importance of education research, evaluation, and policy issues. I strive to elevate research quality by ensuring each participant’s safety. My working relationships emphasize ethics, service and innovation.”

— Myra Luna-Lucero

“By making math accessible and applicable to my diverse group of students in New York City.”

— Prattasha Paul

What they give, and why

“I would not be where I am without the educational and financial opportunities that TC has provided. I feel compelled to give back to the community.”

— Jianyu Chen

*You, too, can support TC’s students.
Contact Linda Colquhoun
at 212 678-3679
or visit tc.edu/supportstudents*

Take the Path to Enrichment through Continuing Professional Studies at TC

Explore more
tc.edu/cps
cps@tc.edu
212-678-8311

Alumni enjoy
25% off select
online programs

COWIN FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM

FEB 1–MAR 15 | online | *Free for the first 250 registrants!*

This online course will provide educators with classroom-ready instructional resources, strategies, and support to teach financial concepts (savings, investing, budgeting, financial planning, credit, risk, consumption, and diversification) to high school students.

ROCKING THE REGENTS

Analysis and Instruction for the New York State English Regents

FEB 3–APR 27 | online

This online course aims to support teachers who are preparing students for the English Regents. Join us to better understand the design of the exam and use relevant data points to develop targeted instruction for students performing at all levels.

LEADING WITH EVIDENCE IN SCHOOLS

Data and Research Literacy

MAR 2–MAR 29 | online

This interactive online course aims to bring educators together around the data and assessments that matter most to schools. Learn how to build capacity, trust, and collaboration around using evidence in schools for instructional improvement.