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Fall 2024



Academic Affairs Highlights

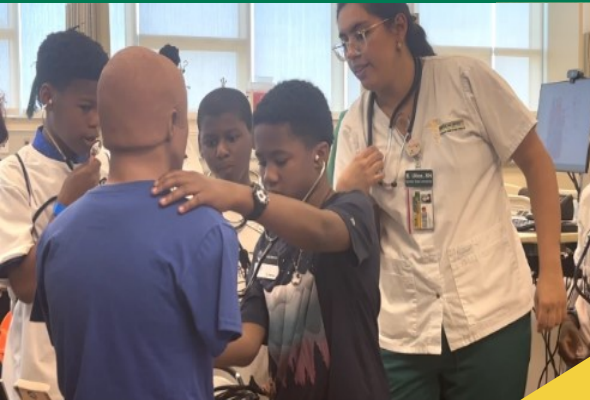
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Page 1



DEVELOPMENT

Page 12



OUTREACH

Page 14



SCHOLARSHIP

Page 3



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Department of Biology

Department Chair and Professor of Biology **Dr. Ashley N. Haines** took 10 NSU students on the first study abroad program under the recently signed MOU with the University of the West Indies, Mona. The students investigated microplastics in queen conch and the potential for microplastics to be vectored to delicate reef communities via sargassum weed. The group conducted their work on site and in collaboration with the Discovery Bay Marine Lab on the north coast of Jamaica in June 2024.



Associate Professor of Biology **Dr. Stephen Via** represented NSU at the coastal resilience and adaptation ecosystem launch and site tour in Gloucester on August 12th. As part of the Go Virginia initiative, Dr. Via and **Dr. Aylin Marz** were awarded funds to work with Knott Alone Hold Fast, a local veteran-focused non-profit, to establish sustainable methods of wild harvesting and cultivating native wetland vegetation. These methods will greatly increase plant availability for statewide restoration efforts, reduce costs to growers, and put more power and money in locals' hands by allowing them to tap into valuable natural resources while maintaining the integrity of our marsh ecosystems. Spearheading this in practice, Knott Alone Hold Fast will be incorporating methods and techniques established by research in the NSU Greenhouse into their nature-based and work training therapy program. Approximately 80 representatives from government, non-profits, universities and businesses toured the model test site showcasing coastal resilience innovations during the launch event, which was highlighted by comments from Congressman Robb Wittman, representative for Virginia's first district.



Computer Science Department

Four Computer Science undergraduates, **Victor "Silas" Morgan, Elijah Everett, Kemon Bynum, and Jordin Jones**, successfully completed an open-source summer internship at the University of California Santa Cruz this past summer. The internship program, Contributor Catalyst, is an eight-week internship in which 4 weeks are residential on UCSC's campus. The internship pays for travel and housing at UCSC and provides the student with a stipend. Use



the following link to read an article about the Contributor Catalyst program, featuring the NSU students who participated in this program: <https://news.ucsc.edu/2024/09/contributor-catalyst-grant.html>.

CSET Students as L.D. Britt Pre Medical Scholars at EVMS

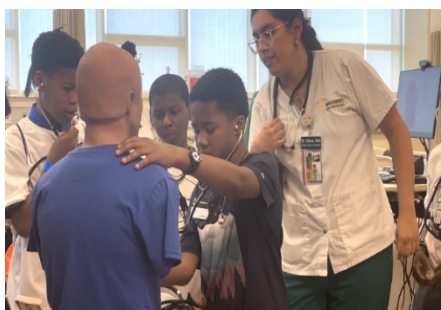


Thanks to an EVMS Diversity and Inclusion initiative that aims to increase the number of talented Black students entering the health professions, students have a defined path with the L.D. Britt Pre-Medical Scholars program. Named in honor of L.D. Britt, MD, MPH, a pioneering surgeon, researcher, educator and Chair of EVMS Surgery, the initiative brings in students from Historically Black Universities in Hampton Roads with whom EVMS has an established BS/MD program. Watch the video clip here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-h8XGStlWc>.

Junior Nursing Student **Ms. Ella Silver** applied for and was awarded a Sanford Health Foundation Scholarship. She was one of 48 students chosen out of a pool of 4,800 applicants to receive this award for \$1000.



Jamela Martin, PhD, RN, Christopher Stancil, Rosalyn Gardiner, PhD, RN, Felisa Smith, PhD, RN, co-hosted Sentara's Black Men in White Coats event on June 1, 2024, in the Nursing and General Education Building. The event is a part of Sentara's new pipeline development programs to support students pursuing healthcare careers and help remove financial barriers. Over 200 local area middle and high schoolers attended this event. Nursing students were present to conduct teaching on listening to breath and heart sounds and performing CPR. Both WTKR and WAVY covered the story. An interview with Dr. Martin and video of the event can be found at this link: <https://www.wtkr.com/news/in-the-community/norfolk/nsus-black-men-in-white-coats-summit-inspires-youth-to-be-doctors-nurses>



On November 18, the **NSU SECUREs grant team** hosted their 6th Annual Fall Research Symposium highlighting course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs). Seventy-five posters were presented by over 200 student researchers from Biology, Chemistry, Music, and Political Science. This event marks the culmination of their semester-long research projects and is a great opportunity to practice presenting their research at a formal poster session.

If you are interested in incorporating course-based research into your undergraduate courses, please feel free to reach out to the SECUREs grant Program Director, Dr. Ashley Haines (anhaines@nsu.edu). Stipends are available for new faculty participants who meet the required deliverables, including having their students participate in the symposium.



SCHOLARSHIP

College of Liberal Arts

Visual and Performing Arts

Assistant Director of Choirs **Terry Butler** composed an original score for a motion picture titled *Death Ph.D.* Mr. Butler is also co-owner and co-founder of Dance Dimensions Academy of Dance and Music, which celebrated its 20-year anniversary of serving the greater community with all levels and genres of music and dance.

Associate Professor of Fashion Design **Christy Frederick** taught a special section of Fashion History, highlighting Italian fashion from the Renaissance to the present day, in Florence, Italy, this past June and July. Ms. Frederick also created a bra for WTKR Coast Live show to unveil as a submission for the annual Bra-ha-ha fundraising event.

Associate Professor of Photography and Graphic Design **Sam Hughes** was elected chair of the Southeast Region Chapter of the Society of Photographic Education. The chapter includes Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Drawing and Painting Instructor **Ralph Irby** served as a chaperon and assisted Professor Fredericks with FDM 373 Fashion History that was taught in Florence, Italy, this summer. Mr. Irby taught a module on fashion illustration (watercolor painting).

Associate Professor and Music Program Coordinator **Dr. Anne Neikirk**'s movement "Venus" for orchestra was premiered in March 2024 with the ADJective New Music Collective by the [Toledo Symphony Orchestra](#) in Ohio to celebrate the solar eclipse. Then in April and May of 2024, Dr. Neikirk's work "Thalassa Phases" for flute and guitar was performed at the College Music Society Mid Atlantic Regional Conference at the college of William and Mary and at the Tidewater Classical Guitar [Showcase Concert](#) at Virginia Wesleyan University. In May of 2024, Dr. Neikirk's work "Fables" for orchestra received two performances by the [Orchestra of the Eastern Shore](#) to close out their 2023/2024 season. This summer, Dr. Neikirk also completed a new work for saxophone quartet, "For the Birds," commissioned by the [H2 Quartet](#) to be premiered in 2025.

Assistant Professor and Music Education Area Coordinator **Devaughn Scott-Smith** joined the Virginia Wind Symphony associated with Old Dominion University as a clarinetist.

Theatre Director and Professor of Drama **Anthony Stockard** was honored by the Mayor of the City of Norfolk in April with a Mayoral Commendation for 10 Years of Exceptional Service to the Advancement of the Arts. Professor Stockard directed 2024's most nationally awarded collegiate production in America at Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, sweeping this year's awards ceremony with a total of 18 national awards. Professor Stockard also produced and directed America's first and only Professional Actors Equity Union Production at an HBCU with the 10th Anniversary Production of *The Brothers Size*.

Music Instructor **Chi-Yi Chen Wolbrink** served as co-director of Presbyterian Association of Musicians annual conference, June 16-29, and co-presenter on new Songs for the Church "All Shall Be Well" by Dr. Lim Swee Hong at the Hymn Society annual conference, July 14-17, at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

English and Foreign Languages

Professor of English **Dr. Rosalie Kiah** and Associate Professor of Spanish **Dr. Ingrid-Watson-Miller** contributed two chapters to a book titled *Teaching and Advocating to Prepare Student Leaders for a Diverse Workplace* published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in October 2024. Dr. Kiah's chapter is titled "Writing While Black: Using Poetry to Encourage Writing About Social Issues," and Dr. Watson-Miller's chapter is titled "Developing a Diversity Consciousness in Students through the Foreign Language Classroom." The book can be viewed here: <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-0364-1173-2/>.

Professor of English **Dr. Jen Malia** was signing books from her children's chapter book series, *The Infinity Rainbow Club*, and presenting on two panels, "Advocating for Neurodivergent and Disabled Kids and Creating Inclusive Classrooms Using Children's and Young Adult Books" and "Conflict Resolution in the Classroom: Lessons in Empathy

and Humanity in Middle Grade Novels,” at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in Boston, November 21-24, 2024.

Associate Professor of English and French **Dr. Bonaventure Balla**’s article titled “Mallarme’s Poetic Creation and Quantum Physics, Epistemic and Epistemological Similarities” was published online in *The International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies* (Summer 2024).

Department of Psychology

Undergraduate Mentoring and Research (URM) pair **Dr. Erica R. Russell** and **Kailah-Iman Lewis** (Psychology major and RCN Honors College scholar) virtually participated in two courses during Research Talk Summer Qualitative Research Intensive: *Coding and Analyzing Qualitative Data* course with Johnny Saldaña and *The Power and Practice of Autoethnography: Storytelling that Deepens Knowledge and Soothes the Soul* with Carolyn Ellis and Tony Adams.

Dr. Erica R. Russell is member of the 2024-2025 cohort of the Propel HBCU Faculty Fellows Academy: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/propel-center-celebrates-37-faculty-fellows-following-year-long-skills-enhancing-training-program-designed-for-historically-black-colleges-and-universities-professors-302187296.html>.

Dr. Erica R. Russell (FACE IT Scholars LC Coordinator) and Professor Brown (FACE IT Scholars LC Faculty) partnered with Dr. Desh Nendze and the Psychology Club to participate in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s Virginia Beach Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, September 28, 2024.

Additionally, **Dr. Erica Russell** delivered the following conference presentations:

Russell, E.R. (2024, May 8) *The Weigh-in: Building skills and community using Flip*. Norfolk State University Innovative Teaching Faculty Symposium, Norfolk, VA.

Russell, E.R. (2024, October 16-19) *From first, still to Diverse Firsts: Centering the realities of Firsts in higher education*. HBCU Faculty Development Network Conference, Houston, TX.

Russell, E.R., Lewis, K., & Powell, T. (2024, November 2-4) *Making room to Matter: A necessary pathway toward success*. Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA) Conference, Charlotte, NC.



Pictured above are Dr. Erica Russell with Psychology majors and RCN Honors College scholars Kailah-Iman Lewis and Takyra Powell

Dr. Scott Debb was invited to contribute as a section editor and author for the *International Encyclopedia of Cyberpsychology*, which will be published by Palgrave/Springer Nature with an anticipated publication in late 2025.

Dr. Scott Debb has been added to the Scientific Committee for the CYPsy28 conference in Australia next summer.

Dr. Scott Debb delivered the following academic conference presentations:

Debb, S.M., Padilla, M., Lagbo, V., Gilbert, F., O’Dea, L., McClellan, M., Haschke, K. (2024, September 25). *Cyberpsychology is not just cybersecurity, but there's no cybersecurity without cyberpsychology*. Symposium presentation at the 27th CyberPsychology, CyberTherapy & Social Networking Conference (Phoenix, AZ).

Debb, S.M. (2024, September 24). *Facilitating Invariance on a measure of FoMO between Blacks and Whites in the United States: Validity and Reliability of the FoMOs-5*. Oral presentation at the 27th CyberPsychology, CyberTherapy & Social Networking Conference (Phoenix, AZ).

Debb, S.M., & Wansink, C. (2024, July 24). *Navigating difficult conversations and disinformation*. Oral presentation at the 16th Biennial Educators Conference, (Virginia Beach, VA).

Debb, S.M., McClellan, M., Haschke, K., Nabulsi, Y., Gilbert, F., Doty, A., Nguyen, T., & Lagbo, V. (2024, April). *The privilege of fear: Invariance testing of a FoMO questionnaire*. Oral presentation at the 96th Annual Midwestern Psychology Association conference, (Chicago, IL).

College of Science, Engineering, & Technology

Center for Materials Research

Dr. Messaoud Bahoura, Professor of Engineering and Director of the Center for Materials Research (I) and his group published a peer reviewed research article titled “Study of dielectric properties in stacked high-k dielectric metal oxide semiconductor capacitor (MOSCAP) devices”; in Springer Journal of Materials Science: Materials in Electronics, (2024) 35:1316. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10854-024-13031-3>.

Dr. Bahoura’s group is developing new materials to improve technology and reduce energy use. Current technology has hit size limits, so scientists are exploring materials like ZrO₂ and Ta₂O₅, which offer better performance. These materials, used in advanced devices, show promise with lower energy leakage and higher efficiency. Dr. Bahoura’s group results are encouraging, with very low leakage currents, which means better and more efficient electronic devices in the future.

Leila Hesami, a Ph.D. student at the Center for Materials Research, presented her research, “Anomalous Dispersion in Coupled Surface Plasmons and Excitons,” at the CLEO conference: Fundamental Science, Optica, May 2024. Abstract: “We studied dispersion in Rhodamine laser dyes (in the Kretschmann geometry) and found multi-branch “staircase” dispersion curves, emergence of the new dispersion “fork” branch, and effect of the energy transfer on the strong coupling”.

Biology Department

Assistant Professor of Biology **Dr. Suresh Subedi** co-authored a research paper titled “Transient vegetation dynamics in a tropical coastal wetland: Sea-level rise, glycophyte retreat, and incipient loss in plant diversity” and published in the *Journal of Vegetation Science* by Wiley. The project was a collaborative effort with researchers and scientists from other universities and government agencies. The paper is available at <https://doi.org/10.1111/jvs.13267>.

Dr. Suresh Subedi organized a special session titled “Karst Forests of South Florida and the Eastern Caribbean” along with Dr. Michael Ross, Professor at Florida International University, at the North America Forest Ecology Workshop held in Asheville, NC, June 24-27, 2024. At the same conference, Dr. Subedi also presented a research paper on “Functional Traits of Trees in South Florida Hammocks.” Find more information about the conference here: <https://sites.google.com/ncsu.edu/nafew2024>.

Department of Nursing and Allied Health

Dr. Jill Comess, Instructor and Program Coordinator for the HSM-FSN Program, has been awarded the **2024 Outstanding Dietitian of the Year** for the Virginia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She has also been recognized by the National Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for her outstanding commitment and contributions to the field.

Mr. Christopher Stancil and **Dr. Jamela Martin** were awarded \$1.1 million in Title III funding to begin renovations to the Center for Innovation in Nursing Education Labs (Simulation Labs). The funds will be used to replace outdated electronic equipment and update audio/video capabilities to working condition so the CINE Center will be re-elevated to the “Largest State of the Art Simulation Center in the Tidewater Area” and continue meeting simulation learning best practices.

Department of Computer Science

Professor of Computer Science **Dr. Yen-Hung (Frank) Hu (PI)** and Assistant Professor of Computer Science **Dr. Musbah Abdulgader (Co-PI)** were awarded \$100,000 for 2 years from IBM-HBCU Quantum Center Seed Award for the proposal titled “Empowering NSU Quantum Computing Research and Education: High-Performance QKD

Algorithms for IBM Quantum Computing”. This research aims to 1) explore, implement, and evaluate a secure communication model using IBM Quantum Systems to counter vulnerabilities inherent in classical cryptography techniques, particularly those susceptible to future quantum attacks, and 2) create/arrange a course to introduce QKD concepts and practices using IBM Quantum Qiskit SDK to NSU undergraduate and/or graduate students.

Acting Department Chair and Associate Professor of Computer Science **Dr. Samuel B. Olatunbosun** presented at the annual Minority Serving Cyberinfrastructure Consortium (MS-CC) conference in Washington, DC, May 29-31, 2024. The presentation was titled “Generative AI and ChatGPT: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly (What faculty need to know!)”. **Dr. Olatunbosun** also participated in a panel that discussed and addressed participants’ questions on the topic “In Conversation: HBCU and TCU Perspectives on Generative AI in Teaching and Research”.

Dr. Samuel Olatunbosun received acceptance notification for the publication of the following papers at the 23rd International Conference on e-Learning, e-Business, Enterprise Information Systems, & e-Government (EEE'24) and the 23rd International Conference on Information & Knowledge Engineering (IKE'24), July 22-25, 2024, in Las Vegas (<https://american-cse.org/csce2024/conferences>):

- “Cybersecurity Threats: An Analysis of the Rise and Impacts of State Sponsored Cyber Attacks” Paper ID #EEE3397.
- “Models for Security Management” Paper ID #IKE3401.
- “A Comprehensive Analysis of Information Security Policy and Security Program Development” Paper ID #IKE3428.
- “Review of Emerging Threats in Cyberspace: A Replicated Study Based on a Year 2022 Research” Paper ID #IKE3435.
- “Cybersecurity: Sight and Foresight” Paper ID #IKE3443.
- “The Rising Threat Against Modern Technology in Cybersecurity” Paper ID #IKE3447.
- “The Use of Social Media and the Internet for the Facilitation of Human Trafficking” Paper ID #IKE3451.
- “Cybersecurity Techniques, Emerging Threats, and Industry Responses” Paper ID #IKE3453.

Department of Engineering Technology

Associate Professor of Engineering Technology **Dr. Carray Banks, Jr.** participated in the HBCU Building Decarbonization Training at Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA, on July 30 and 31, 2024. The training and workshop were hosted by the Stanford Building Decarbonization Learning Accelerator Department at Stanford University Palo Alto, CA. The project focuses on collaboration with HBCUs to underscore the importance of positioning Black AEC professionals in leadership positions in the building sector.



Dr. Carray Banks, Jr., participated in the Staten Island HBCU Experience Summer Series Podcast at 6:30 p.m. on August 1, 2024. The Faculty Athletic Representative at NSU, Banks will be participating in the fourth year of the Staten Island HBCU Experience Summer Series promoting the excellent benefits of an HBCU education and sports programs, especially for Staten Island, New York, athletes. Presenters include coaches, athletic directors, current or former athletes, or administrators at an HBCU who will present an overview of the HBCU sports program.

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar's proposal titled “Effect of Carbon-Negative Black on Concrete Properties” was awarded \$282,973 by the Virginia Transportation Research Council (VTRC) for the project period August 1, 2024, through July 31, 2026.



Dr. Sanjeev Kumar's paper titled, “Recent Advances in Bio-based Concrete Materials: A Critical In-depth Review” was accepted for publication in the *World Scientific Annual Review of Functional Materials*. The accepted version can be accessed at <https://www.worldscientific.com/doi/10.1142/S2810922824300046>.

Department of Nursing and Allied Health

Sandra Olanitori, MS, RN, Nursing Faculty, Academic Advisor, and Recruiter, was selected by the Virginia Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education to review the curriculum framework for a new initiative for Health and Medical Sciences Exploratory on December 11, 2024. This curriculum is for middle school students to introduce them to the world of healthcare.

Department of Chemistry

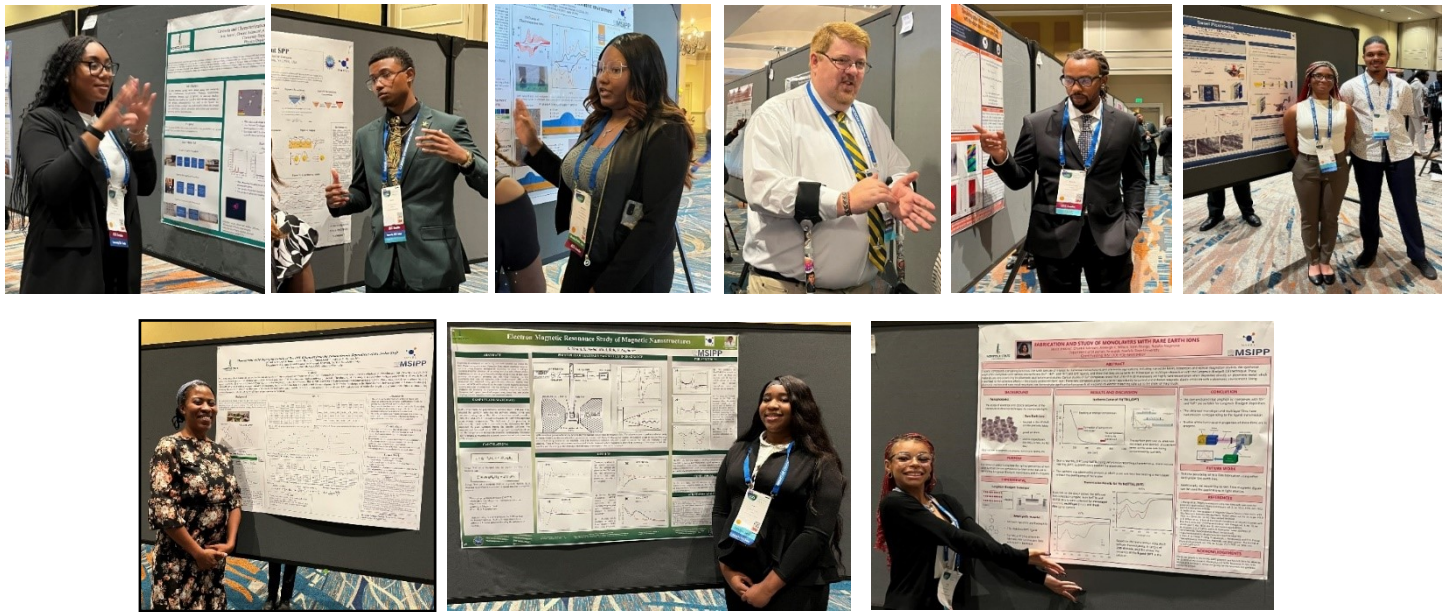
Dr. Suely Black and eleven NSU and VSU undergraduate and graduate students traveled to Orlando, FL, to present their research results, judge poster presentations and represent Norfolk State University. In the picture, they are joined by NSU NoVEL Consortium collaborators from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and by NoVEL participating students from Virginia State University. NoVEL is a 5-year funded consortium led by NSU, with the participation of Virginia State University and Elizabeth City State University, in partnership with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The project provides year-round financial support, mentoring, and educational, research and professional development activities for students at the three institutions. Currently, more than 40 STEM students participate in NoVEL.

During the NOBCChE Conference, students had the opportunity to interact with NSU alumni Dr. Harold Lee, Johns Hopkins APL National Security Analyst; Dr. Abram Ledbetter, Brookhaven National Laboratory DEI Specialist and Research Fellow; and Dr. Isaiah Speight, College of William and Mary Assistant Professor.



Norfolk State University representation at the 51st NOBCChE, the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers conference, September 28 to October 3, 2024.





Department of Engineering

Dr. Balakar Muniandi Engineering Department faculty, has recently published a journal article titled “Bi-Directional Charging with V2L Integration for Optimal Energy Management in Electric Vehicles” in *Electronics* 2024, Volume 13. The paper investigates strategies to achieve intelligent charge-to-load architectures between electric vehicles, the power-grid, and other electrical loads. This research will aid the application of EV technologies within the framework of the national grid infrastructure.

The Engineering and Computer Science Departments have been awarded a one-year \$50,000 grant from the Micron Foundation to conduct Microelectronics Bootcamps for first-year students. Sessions will be held in the spring and fall of 2025, and the sessions will feature hands-on activities, along with basic safety training, and an introduction to microelectronics as a field of study. Students will go through a full design and fabrication example, and they will receive novel micro-scale structures as well. The project leads include **Drs. Patricia Mead, Felicia Doswell, Hargsoon Yoon, Thong Le, and Ms. Yolanda Hinton.**

School of Education

Director of Spartans Teach Math and Science Program and Assistant Professor of Secondary Education and School Leadership **Dr. Ronald White** was a PI on a NOYCE Grant that awarded \$1.2 million to the School of Education to recruit Math, Biology, and Chemistry teacher candidates from two local, high-need, and historically Black high schools (Booker T. Washington High School in Norfolk and I.C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth). The project focuses on identifying the success elements needed to create a circular pipeline from high-need historically Black Urban high schools to historically Black colleges for educator preparation with a goal to return these high school students back to their alma maters as highly qualified and motivated STEM teachers.



Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Secondary Education and School Leadership **Dr. Cynthia Nicholson** represented NSU on the Tidewater Education Consortium that received an \$8.9 million Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant to directly address the region’s ongoing teacher shortage and empower staff members to become future educational leaders. This collaboration consists of Isle of Wight County Schools, Portsmouth Public Schools, Suffolk Public Schools, Norfolk State University, and University of Maryland.



School of Social Work

Below are some of the scholarly activities conducted by faculty members in the School of Social Work.

Drs. Jackson-Nevels, B., Davis-Wagner, D., Chung, I., Green, G., & Ericksen, K. S. published an article (2024). "An HBCU examination: flourishing and psychological well-being of college students during a pandemic." *Social Work in Mental Health*, 22(3), 374–392. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332985.2024.2314469>.

Dr. Williamson-Ashe, S. published a research report (2024) titled *The Tropman Report 2024: Thinking Through Nonprofit Leadership* (pp 20-23). The Forbes Funds. <https://forbesfunds.org/innovate/#learn>.

Dr. Sharon Alston received a subaward in the amount of \$30,000.00 from the University of Virginia for her project titled "Focused CoPe: Enhancing Resilience and Equity in Urban Coastal Communities the Co-Generation of Community Capitals."



Dr. Colita Fairfax published an article (2024) "The Idea of Abolition: Ending Social Work Sanctioned State Violence." *Journal of Social Work and Welfare Policy*, 2, <https://doi.org/10.33790/jswwp1100114>.

Dr. Fairfax, Colita Nichols & Sophia Nelson. 2024. April 7. "Restorative Justice Must Revive What Black Communities Lost." *The Virginian Pilot and Daily Press*. Accessed at <https://www.pilotonline.com/2024/04/06/column-restorative-justice-must-revive-what-black-communities-have-lost/>

Dr. Colita Fairfax "A Disquisition on Project 2025." Norfolk State University Campus Lecture, August, 2024. Accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f21_h3ZeNFM&t=1143s.

Dr. Rowena G. Wilson, Contributor, CSWE 2024. *Specialized practice curricular guide for military and veteran social work. 2022 EPAS Curriculum Guide Series*. CSWE Press. ISBN 978-0-87293-221-0 (print); 978-0-87293-222-7. [8353 cswe_MilitaryandVeteranSW_text.indb](#).





Dr. Liyun Wu co-authored the following articles:

Wu, L. & Wang, G. (2024). "Fairness, Trust, and Well-being among young adults." *Healthcare*. 12, 2186. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12212186>.

Shen, Y., Wu, L., Richter, H., & Turner, C. (2024). Digitalization and inequality: Digital disparities and mental health among adolescents in the US. *Proceedings of the 35th International RAIS Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities*. 80-88. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12212186>.

Zhang, Z., Peng, J., Wang, G., Wu, L., & Du, K. (2024). The impact of specific health warning messages on Chinese young people's perception of smoking risks and quitting intentions. *Tobacco Induced Disease*, 22: 168. DOI:[10.18332/tid/194169](https://doi.org/10.18332/tid/194169).



Dr. Viola Vaughan-Eden received the Alumni Star Award for the 2024 Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Alumni Stars event. This year's event recognizes VCU graduates who have contributed significantly in humanitarian and professional endeavors and who embody VCU's core values. <https://www.vcualumni.org/news/awards/alumnistars/>.

Dr. Phillip Riddick was Keynote Speaker at the 2024 Virginia School Social Work Tidewater Region Fall Conference on September 27, 2024.



Dr. Colleen Downes was speaker at the Black Multiple Sclerosis Experience Virtual Summit and the topic was "Sexual Health and Intimacy with MS," June 2024.

Dr. Val Livingston co-authored the following articles:

Livingston, V., Merriwether, H., Marcus, C., Trower, A., & Waddy, P. (2024). "On Becoming a Professional Social Worker: Stressors and Successes." *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, 30(3), 77-89. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6178-4927>.

Davis-Wagner, D., Jackson-Nevels, B., Chung, I., Livingston, V., & Ericksen, K.S. (2024). "The intersectionality of Race, Gender and Low-wage Work." *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity*, online August 19, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2024.2390421>.

Livingston, V., Nevels, B. J., Davis-Wagner, D., & Chung, I. (2024). "The Therapeutic Accord: The Impact of Subjective Religiosity on the Utilization of Mental Health Services Among College Students." *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, online March 5, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2024.2318446>.



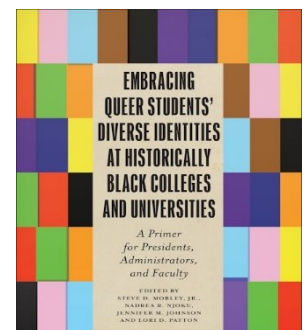
Livingston, V., Benjamin, T., Freeman, J., Goode, C., Jones, Y., & Salgado, W. (2024). "Subjective Religiosity and Mental Health Service Utilization: A Descriptive Study of the Help-seeking Attitudes and Behaviors of Students Attending an HBCU." *Social Work in Mental Health*, 22(3), 412-430. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332985.2024.2315271>.



Dr. Isiah Marshall co-authored the following book chapter:

Lewis, M.K. and Marshall, Isiah (2024). "Queering the Yard: LGBTQ Advocacy, Experiences, and Socialization at Two Public HBCUs" in S. Mobley, Jr., Nadrea Njoku, Jennifer Johnson, and Lori Patton (Eds.), *Embracing Queer Students' Diverse Identities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities*. Rutgers University Press.

Dr. Isiah Marshall was Keynote Speaker at the 2024 Virginia School Social Work Tidewater Region Fall Conference on September 27, 2024.



DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has been busy this semester supporting our faculty and enhancing student success. Here are some highlights:

- Over the summer, CTL partnered with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund to provide faculty development courses on how to use AI to support teaching and learning. Sixty participants gained access to the four one-hour, self-paced AI Quick Study course.
- To help start the semester off strong, CTL shared a resource that was tailored to address some of the key challenges and opportunities in the classroom: “Start Strong Spartans Semester Readiness Checklist.” The guide offered practical strategies for engaging students and utilizing classroom technologies.
- CTL held a joint workshop with the Writing Center: “AI in Higher Education: Navigating the AI Revolution.” In this workshop faculty explored the AI resources students use to enhance their academic writing and learned about AI-driven solutions for structuring and grading assessments, including tools that create grading rubrics based on students’ work.



- Walk it Out Wednesdays: Faculty have been walking and talking in our monthly “Walk it Out Wednesday” sessions, fostering community and meaningful discussions. Recent topics have included Ethics in AI and Strategies to Prioritize Faculty Mental Health.



- Enhancing Student Reading Skills: To address concerns about students' reading habits, CTL is hosting workshops focused on engaging students and building their critical reading and comprehension skills.

- Virtual Reality and Immersive Technology: Our new Faculty Learning Community is exploring cutting-edge VR and immersive tech, equipping faculty to integrate these tools into their teaching and research.
- Faculty Mentorship Program: CTL has developed resources and training for our mentor program, providing new faculty with guidance and support to ensure their success. New faculty were welcomed to CTL with a session titled “Building Your Teaching Toolbox: A Welcome from the Center for Teaching and Learning.” The mentoring program was officially launched with a luncheon for new faculty and mentors. CTL, in partnership with The Office of Sponsored Programs, also held a workshop for the new faculty on “Funding Opportunities and the Role of Sponsored Programs.”



- The Leadership Institute for Academic Affairs is set to launch its second cohort of participants for the 2024-2025 academic year.

The Writing Center’s New AI Initiative

- Since the commercial release of OpenAI's ChatGPT in Fall of 2022, the NSU Writing Center has fostered campus discussions on Generative AI in higher education and the impacts on student writing. The Writing Center has recently been awarded a grant from the SWCA to pursue a study on the relationship between student use of AI and writing center programming, and to ground this approach both **Mr. Curt Hutchison**, Writing Center Assistant Director, as well as **Dr. Karen Beardslee Kwasny**, former writing consultant, committed to several months of research on the varied resources available to students and faculty, culminating in a presentation which surveys the opportunities and challenges afforded by Generative AI.
- On September 6, the Writing Center partnered with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to host the first faculty development session on GenAI resources, which saw participation from approximately 30 faculty members representing all academic colleges at NSU. This successful event marked the launch of ongoing conversations about how best to support students as they adapt to evolving academic expectations. Those interested in participating in this discussion or future workshops may also join the Writing Center-managed NSU Faculty & Staff AI Listserv where our community will share challenges facing each department and strategize how to best support students. To join this listserv, please email writingcenter@nsu.edu with your request and Director Andrew Burlile will add you to the discussion group.



OUTREACH

Department of Engineering

NSU Veterans Training Program Celebrated by CHIPS for America

Congratulations to **Drs. Hargsoon Yoon** and **Thong Le** (Department of Engineering), and the full staff of The SCENE (Southeastern Coalition for Engagement and Exchange in Nanotechnology Education). The group's showpiece training programs for veterans were recognized by **Margarita Devlin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Labor, and Dr. Morgan Dwyer, Chief Strategy Officer, CHIPS for America**. The two federal officials traveled to Norfolk to visit the Micron-NSU Nanofabrication Cleanroom, home to the veterans training programs, and hosted a press conference and media event. Along with **NSU President Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston**, and a host of industry and public sector leaders, the event underscored the significant impact of these training programs on national efforts to accelerate microelectronics manufacturing in the U.S. Local news coverage, including live interviews and highlights from the presentations, was provided by WVEC TV13 News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjGLw2ulWE>.

Nursing Program

Norfolk State University Ranks #14 Among Nursing Schools in Virginia and Nationally Recognized in RNCareers.org's 9th Annual Nursing School Review

On March 1, 2024, RNCareers.org, a leading nursing education resource, recognized Norfolk State University as one of the best nursing schools in Virginia. This accolade further cements the university's reputation as a nationally recognized Nursing School of Distinction. "Norfolk State University has long been recognized for its commitment to excellence in nursing education. The institution's rigorous curriculum, state-of-the-art facilities, and dedicated faculty ensure that nursing students receive the highest quality education and training in California and the nation. Their graduates are well-prepared to make significant contributions to the healthcare profession. This recognition by RNCareers.org underscores the university's unwavering dedication to preparing its students for successful careers in the healthcare profession," said Jeff Morrow, Publisher at RNCareers.org.

Each year, RNCareers.org evaluates over 1,700 nursing schools to compile its merit-based rankings. Factors include program accreditation, tuition costs, academic excellence, faculty qualifications, student satisfaction, program offerings, career outcomes, and school reputation. View the Rankings and Methodology at <https://www.rncareers.org/nursing-school/virginia/>.

School of Social Work

On July 10, 2024, the **Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work** hosted the inaugural one-day STRONG SUMMER CAMP in Brown Memorial Hall. The purpose of the camp was to introduce 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students to the profession of social work and the NSU campus. Approximately 50 students and volunteers participated in the daylong camp. Student participants and chaperones were from Newport News and Hampton City Public Schools. One chaperone reported that "our students could not stop talking about the program and their desire to learn more about the field of social work." The camp was developed and organized by BSW Program Director **Dr. Insoo Chung** and supported by current students, faculty, and staff. The camp will be held again in July 2025.





About the Academic Affairs Newsletter:

Academic Affairs Highlights is published twice a year by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to promote the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students in the areas of research, scholarship, professional development, and service. The submission deadline for the Fall issue is November 10, and the submission deadline for the Spring issue is April 10. Good news items, and any accompanying pictures, should be submitted in concise format via email in a Microsoft Word document. For submissions, please contact Dr. Lamiaa Youssef @ lsyoussef@nsu.edu. View the current issue on the Academic Affairs website at www.nsu.edu/academic-affairs. View archived issues at <https://www.nsu.edu/academic-affairs/academic-resources/highlights>.