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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS HIGHLIGHTS

SPRING 2025



Academic Affairs Highlights is a newsletter 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.

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AWARDS & GRANTS

College of Science, Engineering, & Technology



Dr. Messaoud Bahoura, Professor of Engineering and Director of the Center for Materials Research (I), received the 2025 Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education and Dominion Energy.

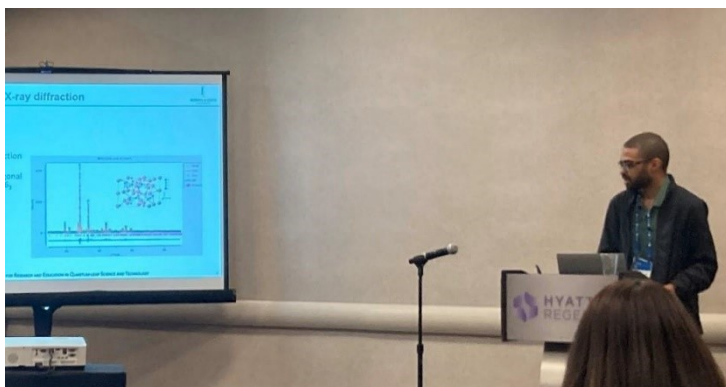
In summarizing Dr. Bahoura's accomplishments, the SCHEV award website states, "Dr. Messaoud Bahoura is a distinguished Professor of Engineering and Director of the Center for Materials Research at Norfolk State University (NSU). With over 20 years of leadership in cutting-edge research, he has spearheaded pioneering projects in renewable energy and advanced nanomaterials. Dr. Bahoura secured \$36 million in funding, the largest in NSU's history, and mentored the highest number of STEM doctoral graduates at the institution. He has authored over 100 peer-reviewed publications and presented at 177+ global conferences. His impactful STEM outreach initiatives have empowered underrepresented youth in the community. In recognition of his exceptional contributions, Dr. Bahoura received NSU's highest honors: the University Professor Award and the Distinguished Scholarship Award in 2024. He holds a B.S. in Physics from USTHB, Algeria, and an M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Physics from Paris-Sud University, France."

1st Place Clean Sweep for NSU Physics at the ERN Conference

Layla Smith (senior physics major) won 1st Place oral presentation for her talk in the Undergraduate physics/Materials Science Competition and **Orrin Clarke-Delgado** (Masters Physics/MSE student) won 1st place oral presentation for his talk in the Graduate Physics/Materials Science Competition at the Emerging Researchers Conference (ERN), April 5th, 2025, Atlanta, GA



(Layla Smith, Kent Smith, Wei Pan, Leroy Salary, and Doyle Temple presenting on "Quantum Hall Measurements in InAs Quantum Wells")



(Orrin Clarke-Delgado, Leroy Salary, and Doyle Temple presenting on “Single Crystal Growth of BaFeGaO₄ using floating zone technique”)

Dr. Rasha Morsi, Computer Science Graduate Program Coordinator and Professor, and **Dr. Desideria Hacker**, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research, presented at the IEEE EDUCON 2025 Conference in London, England on Wednesday, April 23, 2025. The presentation was entitled “Pirates of the Sea++: A Serious Game for Computer Science Education”. The paper was awarded the Best



Paper Award for the Game-based Learning and Gamification Topic Area. This paper is based on the work of **Walker Cherry** (MS in CSC, 2022) whose game was awarded the Best Student Developed Game Award in 2022 at the I/ITSEC Serious Games Showcase and Challenge. Pirates of the Sea++ will be formally assessed in the classroom during the Fall 2025 semester.



School of Social Work



Dr. Sharon Alston, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work, was awarded \$50,000 in grant funding for her project on “Youth Exposure and Victimization of Community Violence: An Extension of the Syndemic Production of Health Disparities Among Adolescents in Public Housing in Hampton Roads Eastern Virginia Project”.

School of Graduate Studies and Research

Dr. Desi Hacker, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research, was elected to serve on the Executive Board as the Vice President Elect for the [Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools](#). (CHBGS) which was founded in 1970 to support and promote graduate education at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Dr. Desi Hacker and **Dr. Rasha Morsi**, Professor and Computer Science Graduate Program Coordinator, received a \$74,978 Exemplary Pathways Program Planning Grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in partnership with Virginia Tech University to develop a program designed to increase participation in graduate programs in Computer Science.

College of Liberal Arts

Dr. Proshot Kalami, Associate Professor in Film Studies in the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, published “Futurist Androgynes, Persian Ironies: An interview with Rah Eleh” in *Queer Contemporary Art of Southwest Asia North Africa* from *Critical Studies in Architecture of the Middle East*, Series Editors: Mohammad Gharipour and Christiane Gruber, Intellect Books, Bristol, UK. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1386/9781835950265_5

PRESENTATIONS

School of Social Work

Brown-Meredith, M. (2025). “Supporting Mental Well-being in the Black Church,” Historical First Baptist Church, March 30.

Alston, S., Brooks, M., & Lee, T. (2025). “Study Abroad as Instructional Strategy for Teaching in the Philosophical and Political Climate,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Robinson, S. (2025). “Enhancing BSW Student Learning through Utilization of the Main Idea,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Elliott, Shanita (BSW Student) & Callandar, Laura (BSW Student). “Empowering African American Adolescents: Utilizing Social-Emotional Learning to Shift the Narrative,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV. Faculty Advisor: **Dr. Phillip Riddick**.

Riddick, P., Jackson-Nevels, B., & Ericksen, K. (2025). “Ethics in Action: Insights from BSW Students’ Breakdown of Politically Based Ethical Dilemmas,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Ericksen, K. & Chung, I. (2025). “Strengthening and Advancing Social Work Education During Crisis through Collaboration at an HBCU,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Holley, P., Robinson, S. & Norman, B. (2025). “Navigating Field Education in a State of Crisis,” 42nd Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Gainey, B. & Glass, M. (2025). “Responding to The Alarm: Addressing Suicide in Black Children and Adolescents Through Restorative Practices,” National Association of Social Workers in Charlottesville VA, March 15.

- Jackson-Nevels, B., Holley, P., Davis-Wagner, D., Brown-Meredith, E., & Ericksen, K.** (March 20-21, 2025). "Imposter Syndrome: Undermining Female Professionals," Global Conference on Women and Gender, Newport News, Virginia.
- Livingston, V.** (2025). "Women, Military Life, and the Boy's Club," Conference on Women and Gender, Christopher Newport University. Panel presentation with 4 MSW students.
- Folk-Nagua, K., & **Mitchell, B.** (2025). "Confronting Racial Injustice in School Social Work: Developing Abolitionist Perspectives in School Social Work," Social Workers Confronting Racial Injustice Conference at the University of Wisconsin.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwUp0xZgYD8&list=PL_-TPxhNjQ9FFoIHC-lbDB_YUQSoXwUud&index=5&ab_channel=UW-MadisonSandraRosenbaumSchoolofSocialWork
- Tetteh, A. & Riddick, P.** (February 2025). "In Circle: An African Centered Approach to Healthy Relationships," Black Decolonizing Psychology Conference at Hampton University.
- Tetteh, A.** (2025). "Financial Wellbeing and the Connection to Trauma," The Millennial Social Work Conference.
- Tetteh, A.** (2025). "Financial Wellbeing and Psychological Trauma," National Association of Social Work Virginia/DC Conference.
- Tetteh, A. & Dunnaville, J.** (2025). "Storytelling: An African Centered Approach to Addressing Trauma," Conference on Women and Gender, Christopher Newport University.
- Folk-Nagua, K. & **Mitchell, B.** (2025). "Abolitionist Perspectives in School Social Work: A Call for Justice-Oriented Practice," School Social Work Association of American National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Lucio, R., **Mitchell, B.**, & Ding, X. (2025). "Unlocking the Power of Data: Research Skills for School Social Work Practitioners," School Social Work Association of American National Conference, Pre-Conference Research Session, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Lucio, R., **Mitchell, B.**, & Childs, T. (2025). "Connection to National Practice Model 2.0 Research," School Social Work Association of American National Conference, Pre-Conference Research Session, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Lucio, R., **Mitchell, B.**, & Souhrada, E. (2025). "Contemporary Advocacy in School Social Work During Contentious Political Times," School Social Work Association of American National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Lucio, R., **Mitchell, B.**, & Souhrada, E. (2025). "State of SSW Policy: Fireside Chat," School Social Work Association of American National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Alston, S.** (2025). "Policy Implications for Relocating Socially Vulnerable People Out of Public Housing," National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), Pittsburgh, PA.
- Alston, S.** (2025). "The Implications of Public Housing on Resident's Mental Health," National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), Pittsburgh, PA.

Alston, S. (2025). "The Implications of Public Housing on Residents' Mental Health." Aleila Rankin, Kamilah Bradley, & Sharon Alston (Faculty Sponsor), the 71st annual meeting Southeastern Psychological Association, Atlanta, Georgia.

Alston, S. (2025). "Policy Implications for Relocating Socially Vulnerable People Out of Public Housing," National Conference of Black Political Scientists.

PUBLICATIONS

School of Social Work

Fairfax, C. N. (2025). A Place Called Ilda: Race and Resilience at a Northern Virginia Crossroads by Tom Shoop. *Journal of Southern History*, 91(1), 176-177, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/soh.2025.a950539>

Mitchell, B. (2025). Education Censorship and the Chilling Effect on School Social Work. *Children & Schools*. Special Issue: School Social Work Practice Model. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdaf003>

Lucio, R., **Mitchell, B.**, Souhrada, E., Dibble, N., Braunginn, J. (2025). Integrating the School Social Work National Practice Model: The Chicken, not the Egg. *Children & Schools*. Special Issue: School Social Work Practice Model. DOI: [10.1093/cs/cdaf001](https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdaf001)

Greene, R., & **Greene, N.** (2025). Adopting an Evidence-Based Proactive Resilience Approach to Social Work Practice. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26408066.2025.2480399>

Rodriquez, C, **Swedburg Ericksen, K., Vaughan-Eden, V., Jackson-Nevels, B., LeBlanc, S.** (2025). Evaluating the Impact of No Hit Zone Trainings in Preschool-Age Childcare Facilities for Child Maltreatment Prevention: A Quasi-Experimental Pilot Study, *Child Abuse & Neglect, The International Journal*, 164 (June), 107432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107432>

Livingston, V., Jackson-Nevels, B., Brown-Meredith, E., Mitchell, B. D., Riddley, C., Tetteh, A. O., Reddy, V. V., & Williams, A. (2025). *Poverty, Allostasis, and Chronic Health Conditions: Health Disparities Across Lifespan, Encyclopedia*, 5(1). <https://encyclopedia.pub/entry/57825>

Spearman, K., Marineau, L., Owolabi, B.A., Hardesty, J., **Vaughan-Eden, V.**, Alexander, K., Bethell, C., & Campbell, J. (Accepted for publication). Part of the abuse is not letting me get him medical care: A qualitative examination of intimate partner violence and children's health needs. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5017492>

PANELS, SERVICE, AND LEADERSHIP

School of Social Work

Fairfax, C. participated in the Rutgers University Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Leadership, Equity & Justice Making Scholarship Public Webinar Certificate Series (2025)

Fairfax, C. was invited as moderator for the documentary “The Tragic Case of Virginia Christian, first Black female electrocuted by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1912,” March 3, 2025, and Encore March 22, 2025. <https://www.hampton.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=5788&ARC=12290>

Brown-Meredith, E. (2025). “ElevateHer: Black Women Leading with Purpose through Partnership and Collaboration,” Womens History Month, March 28.

Brown-Meredith, E. organized a mental health event in collaboration with the NSU Counseling Center, “Say it Out Loud,” on March 11. The event included an interactive presentation and conversation on mental health for NSU students.

Tetteh, A. served as mentor for the 2025 MFP Fellows through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Tetteh, A. was invited to and presented at Union County Delta Sigma Theta Women’s Conference. The conference theme was “Increasing Financial Awareness.”

Alston, S. organized a “Black Girls in Stem Workshop” with a subaward from the National Science Foundation, a four-day workshop for up to 30 girls in middle and high school. Participants visited the Paradise Creek Nature Center, Learning Barge, and the Ryan Resilience Lab and spent time with biology faculty from NSU and Hampton University, April 16-19.



Dr. Viola Vaughan-Eden was extremely honored to be invited to the UN Women Headquarters with colleagues Danielle Pollack, GW University National Family Violence Law Clinic and Katie Spearman, John Hopkins University PhD Nursing Candidate, to consult with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Innocenti (UNICEF-Innocenti), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank Group (WBG), and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) for an expert meeting to review the findings of a systematic review examining the scientific evidence on the impact of family court proceedings on the health and well-being of women and children in cases involving violence in the home. “What an amazing experience collaborating on upstream solutions with an international group of key stakeholders the findings, implications for policy and practice, and explored potential next steps addressing Violence Against Women and Children,” Dr. Vaughan-Eden said.



Dr. Isiah Marshall Jr., Dean and Professor of the Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work, represented the International Federation of Social Workers in North America (IFSW) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for the annual Social Work Day at the United Nations. The meeting focuses on exposing students to the critical role that social workers play in supporting populations impacted by global social issues. Dr. Marshall was selected to attend this meeting by current NASW President, **Dr. Yvonne Chase**, who is a graduate of the social work doctoral program at NSU. **Dr. Marshall** also participated in a faculty roundtable discussion held at Fordham University where he argued the need for more students from HBCUs to consider international careers with organizations such as the UN, UNICEF, and World Bank. Norfolk State University was the

only HBCU represented at both events on Friday, April 4th. Next year, Dr. Marshall plans to select two social work students to attend this event in New York City.

In Fall 2024, **Dr. Williamson-Ashe**, Professor of Social Work, received the **Certified Social Work Manager** credential from the Network for Social Work Management. The CSWM™ credential is a mark of excellence for social work managers who have demonstrated the highest levels of competence and dedication to the profession. By earning the CSWM™ credential, professionals demonstrate their commitment to advancing their leadership skills and knowledge, as well as their ability to effectively manage the complex challenges facing social work/human service organizations today. To earn the CSWM™ credential, candidates must meet rigorous eligibility requirements, including a combination of education, experience, and professional development.

In Spring 2025, **Dr. Williamson-Ashe** has been recognized as by the Future World Changers in the Academy (FWCA) as a **2025 Distinguished Nominee** for the **Zenobia L. Hikes Award**. The **Zenobia Lawrence Hikes Award** from Virginia Tech University recognizes a woman of color with a distinguished career (more than 15 years) in higher education demonstrated by scholarly endeavors or administrative and professional accomplishments. Additionally, she is an engaged member of her campus and community, with a history of advancing the development of women of color as they pursue their education and prepare for careers in the academy and beyond.