

2022-2024 Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows

View more about the members of the Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows Program for the Academic Years 2022 – 2023 below.

**Olena Nesteruk**

Assistant Professor

Department of Family Science & Human Development

Office Location: University Hall 4039

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Olena Nesteruk is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Science and Human Development. She earned her Ph.D. in Human Ecology from Louisiana State University and joined Montclair State in 2007. Her main research interest is in studying immigrant family dynamics over the life course and across generations. She has published and presented work on acculturation and intergenerational relationships; development of heritage language and ethnic identity; as well as transnational bereavement and immigrants in middle and later life. Professor Nesteruk teaches courses on individual and family development, family theories, and immigrant families. Through various projects and initiatives, she has been engaging her students in work with communities, both local and international. Dr. Nesteruk is committed to bridging classroom experiences with community engagement and scholarship.

2021-2023 Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows

View more about the members of the Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows Program for the Academic Years 2021 – 2022 below.

**Christopher Kaczmarek**

Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art

Chair, Department of Art and Design

Office Location: Calcia Hall 110

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Christopher Kaczmarek is a New York based artist and educator whose work spans both experimental and traditional practices, including sculpture, site specific installations, performance, video, built circuits and solar-powered objects. His work is often interactive and designed to guide the viewer towards a deeper contemplation about the inhabited environment. Recent research interests have been concerned with the act of walking as a praxis for artistic production, and the shapes in which collective and collaborative environments can be formed to become spaces where imagination and creativity are used in the service of hopeful outcomes. He has had the opportunity to present work at national and international galleries and festivals such as Art Souterrain in Montreal, Canada; the Trinity College Science Gallery, Dublin Ireland; the Byzantine Museum of Agios Germanos, Prespes Greece; the New York Hall of Science, Queens NY; Real Art Ways, Hartford CT; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus OH; Art Museum of the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, China; Art Walk Projects, Edinburgh, Scotland; and the Czong Institute for Contemporary Art, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea.

2019-2021 Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows

View more about the members of the Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows Program for the Academic Years 2019 – 2021 below.

**Dr. Blanca E. Vega**

Assistant Professor, Higher Education

Department of Education Leadership

Office Location: University Hall 2191

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A native New Yorker, Dr. Blanca E. Vega is the daughter of Ecuadorian immigrants. Dr. Vega is currently an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at Montclair State University. She earned a doctorate (Ed.D) from the Higher and Postsecondary Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. During and prior to that time, she worked in various administrative positions within higher education spanning over 16 years. Some of these areas include financial aid counseling and coordinating and directing New York State opportunity programs such as the Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP) and the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). Dr. Vega earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology from Brandeis University and a Master of Arts degree in Higher Education at New York University.

Dr. Vega's scholarship broadly focuses on equity, access, and success in higher education among underserved populations. Her primary area of research situates racism as one of multiple barriers that affects higher education experiences and success – not just for students, but also for administrators and faculty. She is currently studying racial incidents in higher education and organizational responses to these incidents. Her secondary area of research explores leadership and policymaking and their impact on support for undocumented student in higher education, particularly in increasingly anti-immigrant political environment. Finally, Dr. Vega continues to explore Latinx intellectualism in higher education curriculum, instruction, and the professoriate.

2018-2020 Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows

View more about the members of the Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows Program for the Academic Years 2018 – 2020 below.



Dr. Milton A. Fuentes

Professor and Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising, Psychology Department

Director, Research Academy for University Learning

Office Location: Dickson Hall 361

Email: fuentesm@montclair.edu

Phone: **973-655-7967**

Dr. Milton A. Fuentes received his MA in Psychology with a Latina/o Psychology focus from Montclair State University and his PsyD in clinical psychology from the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University. He completed a pre-doctoral fellowship in clinical and community psychology at Yale University and secured post-doctoral training in epidemiology at Columbia University. He is the 2012 President of the National Latina/o Psychological Association; the current president of the Latino Mental Health Association of NJ, a former member of the American Psychological Association (APA)'s Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs; and a current ethnic minority delegate to APA's Council of Representatives. Dr. Fuentes's research interests are in the areas of Latina/o and multicultural psychology, child/ family psychology, pedagogy and motivational interviewing. He serves as a consultant to several programs, including the Violence Prevention Office of the American Psychological Association, where he serves as a Coordinator and Master Trainer for the ACT Raising Safe Kids program. Dr. Fuentes is currently a professor in the psychology department and the Director of the Research Academy for University Learning at Montclair State University as well as a licensed psychologist in New Jersey and New York.

Pascale Lafountain

Assistant Professor, Department of World Languages and Cultures

Email: lafountainp@mail.montclair.edu

Pascale LaFountain is an Associate Professor of French and German. Her Research is largely on German and French theater from the eighteenth century to the present, and she teaches courses from 101 through the Masters level. Dr. Lafountain is passionate about learning both inside and outside the classroom, and has been instrumental in establishing a very active German garden plot at the Montclair Community Garden Plot on campus, as well as a "SPARK for German Lab" at which about fifteen students per semester teach German in local elementary schools enrichment programs.

Ali Boak, MPH

Director

Global Center for Human Trafficking

Office Location: Conrad J. Schmitt Hall

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Ali Boak (she/her/hers) is the Director of the Global Center on Human Trafficking located within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Montclair State University. Ali is a passionate leader in the global movement to end human trafficking. For more than 25 years, she has worked alongside survivors of all forms of trafficking to develop innovative, survivor driven approaches to prevent and address human trafficking across the United States, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia. She began this journey when she discovered that traffickers were recruiting children and youth out of the schools, universities and orphanages where she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer and Fulbright Scholar in the Baltic States. As a pioneer in the anti-trafficking movement, Ali co-founded several organizations, networks, and coalitions at the forefront of the anti-trafficking field today including the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA), Freedom Network USA, the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force, and the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group. A recognized expert on the issue of child and adolescent trafficking and exploitation, she has provided training, technical assistance and capacity building support to hundreds of criminal justice, social service, and community organizations in more than 12 countries. Ali is a frequent lecturer, keynote speaker, and advisor to numerous organizations including Catholic Charities USA Advisory Task Force on Domestic Child Trafficking, the National Child Welfare Advisory Board, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime Expert Working Group on Trafficking of Minors, and the U.S. Department of Justice, President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. Ali graduated *Magna Cum Laude* from the State University of New York at Albany with a B.A. in Political Science, International Affairs concentration and earned a Master of Public Health (MPH) from the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, the Division for Population and Family Health.

**Dr. Shannon O'Connor**

Assistant Professor, Psychology

Office Location: Dickson Hall 119

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Dr. Shannon O'Connor is an Assistant Professor in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at Montclair State University. She completed her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at Michigan State University in 2018 after completing her APA-accredited pre-doctoral internship at the UCSD Eating Disorder Center and Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego. Dr. O'Connor then completed a post-doctoral fellowship on the Midwest T32 for Eating Disorder Research at the University of Chicago.

Dr. O'Connor's research interests center on identifying environmental risk factors for eating pathology using genetically-informed designs. She directs the **BeFed** ("Biological and Environment Factors underlying Eating Disorders) lab on campus. Dr. O'Connor's research has been published in numerous high impact peer-reviewed journals, such as Journal of Abnormal Psychology, Journal of Psychiatric Research, and International Journal of Eating Disorders. Additionally, she has been recognized for her scholarship through a number of awards, including receiving the Early Career Investigator Award from the Eating Disorder Research Society in 2019. As a Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellow, Dr. O'Connor is eager to partner with community organizations to understand how experiences related to access to food may impact eating behaviors and other mental health factors.

**Yingying (Jennifer) Yang, PhD.**

Assistant Professor, Psychology

Email: yangyi@montclair.eduPhone: **973-655-7639**

Yingying (Jennifer) Yang received her doctoral degree in Developmental Psychology from the University of Alabama. She joined Montclair State University in 2017. She is interested in learning and cognition in typically developing children aged 4-12 years old and individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Her research has implications for designing more friendly physical environments for children and people with intellectual disabilities, and for developing training programs to improve people's cognitive abilities. She has published in various cognitive and developmental psychology journals such as Research in Developmental Disabilities, Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, and Memory and Cognition. Her research is currently supported by the National Institute of Health.

**Kathryn Curto**

Adjunct Faculty

Department of English

Office Location: Dickson 115

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Kathy Curto teaches at The Writing Institute and Montclair State University. She is the author of *Not for Nothing-Glimpses into a Jersey Girlhood*, published by Bordighera Press. Her work has been featured on NPR, in the essay collection, *Listen to Your Mother: What She Said Then, What We're Saying Now*, and in *The New York Times*, *Barrelhouse*, *La Voce di New York*, *Drift*, *Talking Writing*, *The Inquisitive Eater*, *Voices in Italian Americana*, *Ovunque Siamo* and *Lumina*. She has been the recipient of the Kathryn Gurfein Writing Fellowship, the Montclair State University Engaged Teaching Fellowship and also serves on the faculty of the Joe Papaleo Writers' Workshop in Cetara, Italy. Kathy and her family live in the Hudson Valley.

**Nicole A. Fackina**

Director, Paralegal Studies Program

Adjunct Professor

Department of Justice Studies

Office Location: Dickson 330

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Nicole A. Fackina is the Director of the award-winning American Bar Association (ABA) Approved Paralegal Studies Program at Montclair State University (MSU). Nicole is a proud MSU alumna, she obtained her BA in Justice Studies with a concentration in Justice Systems with minors in Pre-Law and Sociology in 2002, her MA in Legal Studies with a concentration in Dispute Resolution in 2005 and completed the Paralegal Studies Certificate in 2006. She has been an adjunct professor for 15 years, teaching a variety of Justice Studies and Paralegal Studies courses. Nicole currently serves as an academic advisor to over 200 Paralegal Studies students in the program. She has received the Professing Excellence Award from MSU for Outstanding Dedication to Student Education, the Dean's Recognition Award for Outstanding Service and the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Certificate of Merit for New Outstanding Academic Advisor. MSU's ABA Approved Paralegal Studies Program, under her direction was named, "*The Best of the Best in New Jersey*" by ParalegalEDU in 2018, and the program was recently ranked #3 in "*the 25 Best Bachelor's in Paralegal Degree Programs*" for 2020 by Bachelor's Degree Center. Nicole is excited to bring service learning and community engagement to the Paralegal Studies Program to ensure new and innovative ways to deliver and enhance the applied learning experience for all students.

Dr. Ashley Ermer

Assistant Professor, Family Science and Human Development

Office Location: University Hall 4209

Email: ermera@montclair.eduPhone: **973-655-6842**

Dr. Ermer's research primarily relates to social relationships, particularly romantic relationships and friendships, older adulthood and wellbeing. Her research includes examining how the social environment matters for older adults, including forgiveness in the context of health and social relationships. Dr. Ermer often includes a community-based component in the undergraduate courses she teaches, including Families in Later Life and Aging and Social Policy. She earned her PhD from the University of Missouri in 2017.

Dr. Manveer Mann

Assistant Professor, Marketing

Email: mannm@montclair.edu

Manveer Mann is an assistant professor of Marketing at Montclair State University. She has over five years of experience in higher education teaching in areas including international business, marketing, and retailing. Before joining Montclair State University, she was an assistant professor at Old Dominion University, Virginia. She received a PhD from Auburn University, Alabama. Her research interests span a number of topics in marketing including consumer behavior, retailing and ethics. Her research has appeared in several academic journals including Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Business Research, and the International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management. She has presented her research in numerous international and national conferences including Society of Consumer Psychology, Transformative Consumer Research, Academy of Marketing Science, and American Collegiate Retailing Association.

Dr. Brian Abrams

Associate Professor, Cali School of Music

Email: abramsb@montclair.eduPhone: **973-655-3458**

Brian Abrams, PhD, MT-BC, LCAT, Analytical Music Therapist and Fellow of the Association for Music and Imagery, has been a music therapist since 1995, with experience across a wide range of clinical contexts. Prior to his current position at Montclair State University as Associate Professor of Music (2008-present) and Coordinator of Music Therapy (2010-present), he served on the faculty at Immaculata University (2004-2008) and Utah State University (2001-2004). He has published and presented internationally on a wide range of topics such as music therapy in cancer

**Michele McCormick**

Adjunct Professor, Writing

Email: mccormickmi@montclair.edu

Michele McCormick received her master's degree in Teaching of English from Teacher's College, Columbia University. She worked as a high school English teacher for over a decade before joining Montclair State University in 2018 to teach WRIT105 and WRIT106. She also teaches First-Year Writing Courses at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Florham. Her pedagogy is informed by strong student/professor relationships and creating community within her courses. She takes pride in helping students develop personal voice in their writing and creates safe spaces for them to tell their unique stories. Her interests and research include extending opportunities for students to publish their writing beyond the traditional confines of course spaces.

**Thomas Killian**

Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling

Email: killiant@montclair.edu

Dr. Tom Killian (he/him/his) is an Assistant Professor of Counseling in the Department of Counseling in the College of Education and Human Services. Dr. Killian earned his PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision with a minor in Applied Statistics and Research Methods from the University of Northern Colorado. He is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) in New York, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in New Jersey, and a National Certified Counselor (NCC). Dr. Killian has over a decade of clinical experience. He has worked for university counseling and psychological services, a university athletic department, and a residential facility. Broadly, his research agenda focuses on multicultural and social justice competency development within counseling and counselor education, which is evaluated and disseminated through community-engagement. He views his research as opportunities to work with communities, by breaking down academic silos and barriers to communal access and through the active joining of diverse perspectives. Specifically, through the Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellow's program, he plans to develop a school-based mental health counseling training pipeline, through Montclair State University, in partnership with local school districts.

Sze Yan Liu, PhD, MPH

Assistant Professor, Public Health

Email: lius@montclair.edu

Sze Yan Liu is an Assistant Professor of Public Health at Montclair State University. She teaches courses in the health systems and administration concentration. Broadly, her research uses a life-course framework to examine how social processes and policies create, perpetuate or diminish health inequities. Currently, she is studying the impact of gentrification on healthcare utilization. She is interested in incorporating a community-based component into her research and teaching.

Dr. Helen M Roberts

Professor, Mathematics

Email: robertsh@montclair.eduPhone: **973-655-7886**

Dr. Helen Roberts is a Professor in the Department of Mathematics. She received her PhD in Biostatistics from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her scholarly interests lie in the general area of applications of statistical tools to practical problems and her work has covered applications in genetics, population growth, energy use in obtaining food, threats to marine transportation, measurement of the gender gap, and Bayesian methods to aid in minimizing shortages of water. She collaborated with a Life Science professor to write a book on Genetics and most recently has been working on a series of "briefs" to explain the use of statistical tools to help policy makers achieve the United Nations sustainable development goals. Dr. Roberts chaired the Department of Mathematical Sciences for 16 years. Education is a key component of her work. She chaired the development and implementation of Montclair's General Education Requirement, has developed new transdisciplinary educational programs at a variety of levels, and is currently particularly interested in ways to involve students in addressing societal problems.

Dr. Aihua Li

Professor, Mathematics

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Dr. Aihua Li is a professor of Mathematics at Montclair State University. She earned her Ph. D. in mathematics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her current research involves number theory, difference equation, matrix theory, graph theory, and mathematical education. Dr. Li has been active in servicing the local community by making presentations to local public schools on general mathematics topics such as "Beauty of Mathematics and Amazing Numbers Around Us", "Crypto Kids", "Contributions of American Women Code Breakers", etc.

**Rosa Espinal-Perez**

Adjunct Professor

Department of Teaching and Learning

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Rosa Espinal-Perez graduated from Seton Hall University with an undergraduate degree in Psychology & Education and a graduate degree in School Counseling from Montclair State University. She started her teaching career as an Elementary teacher in Newark Public Schools. She worked for the NJ Department of Education, Department of Early Literacy as a Reading Coach from 2003-2009.

Rosa Espinal-Perez is currently a 7th grade English Teacher for Linden Public Schools and a Middle School Reading Coach since 2009. In addition has been an adjunct professor at Montclair State University Department of Teaching & Learning since 2008.

**Kaitlin Stilwell**

Adjunct Professor

Department of Theatre and Dance

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Kaitlin Stilwell (Adjunct Faculty, BA Theatre Studies, Department of Theatre & Dance) is a dramaturg specializing in new play development and audience and community engagement. She has previously worked at McCarter Theatre, the Southern Writers' Project and the mainstage at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, and Luna Stage. Along with Cheryl Katz, she is currently a Co-Director of The New Jersey Play Lab. At MSU, Kaitlin teaches Theatre in Society, Drama in Text, and Student New Play Festival, and assists on Theatre for Community Impact, taught by CETL fellow Jessica Brater. Kaitlin is a co-curator of the Acts of Resistance Reading Series, a program of theatrical events and discussions designed to spark conversation and action around important issues including racism, sexism, nativism, and fascism in our country and on our campus, produced by the BA Theatre Studies program.

care, music psychotherapy, humanistic music therapy, and the interdisciplinary area of Health Humanities, including his role as one of five authors of a 2015 book by that title. He has also contributed to the establishment of several medical music therapy programs. He has served on the editorial boards of numerous journals, such as Music Therapy Perspectives, the Nordic Journal of Music Therapy, and Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy. From 2005 to 2011, he served on the Board of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), including as President from 2007-2009. From 2005 through the present, he has served on the AMTA Assembly of Delegates, including as Assembly Representative on the AMTA Board of Directors from 2010-2013, and as Assembly Speaker from 2012-2013.

**Dr. Minsun Shin**

Associate Professor, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Literacy Education

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Phone: 973-655-6961

Minsun Shin, EdD, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education at Montclair State University. She currently serves as a MAT Graduate Early Childhood Education Program coordinator. With a strong belief that education takes place in and through human relationships, her research interests include the development of caregiver-child relationships, social cognition and joint attention, caring pedagogy, infant caregiving, early childhood teacher education, and professionalism in early childhood education.

**Dr. Leslie Sylvan**

Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders

Email: sylvanl@montclair.edu

Dr. Lesley Sylvan is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Montclair State University. Dr. Sylvan is a certified speech-language pathologist with over 12 years of clinical experience working with school-aged children both in public school and private clinical settings. She completed a master's degree in educational policy and management as well as a doctorate degree in human development and education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Broadly, Dr. Sylvan's scholarly interests center on the intersection between the field of education and the field of speech-language pathology. She studies the challenges SLPs face in K-12 school settings as well as issues related to the instruction of aspiring SLPs in higher education settings. She has a strong interest in current practice patterns and personnel preparation needs in the field of speech-language pathology.

At Montclair State, she teaches courses focused on language acquisition in children and school-aged communication disorders.

Dr. May Chae

Associate Professor, Program Head of Fashion Design and Merchandising
Department of Art and Design
Office Location: Life Hall 0424
Email: chaem@montclair.edu



Dr. May Chae, an associate professor of Fashion Design and Merchandising (FADM) in the Department of Art and Design, is not just a researcher and educator but an active member of the fashion design and merchandising community. She received a Ph.D. in Clothing and Textiles from Virginia Tech, specializing in functional design. Her research interests are centered on fashion and adaptive and inclusive design for people with physical disabilities. Her work is a beacon of empathy and understanding, aiming to make fashion accessible to all. Her background and experience in research and teaching are embraced with community-engaged pedagogies, scholarship, and project work. She continuously incorporates her research into teaching to benefit learning outcomes that can result in fashion design students being more creative, engaged, and critical thinkers. She has presented and published her work at various conferences and journals internationally and nationally. Additionally, she has been awarded several grants from Cotton Incorporated to identify clothing issues and develop prototypes reflected by the needs of her research participants, such as people with physical impairments, baby boomers for golf and tennis wear, and juniors for golf wear. Her active involvement in the International Textile and Apparel Association, the Costume Society of America, and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences further connects her to the broader fashion design and merchandising field. As a CETL fellow, Dr. Chae fosters a collaborative environment by integrating a project-based learning research project with fashion design senior students. This allows them to delve into the clothing needs of senior citizens, an underserved population living with physical challenges. The students and seniors form pairs to work together. The culmination of their efforts is showcased at the FADM annual fashion show, where senior citizens model the finished garments designed by the fashion students.

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Dr. Li is also active in the mathematical societies at the national and regional levels. She has been an undergraduate mentor in the *National Alliance for Doctoral Studies in the Mathematical Science* since 2009. She served in several national committees in the *Mathematical Association of America* (MAA) and was the recipient of the “2021 Sr. Stephanie Sloyan Award for Distinguished Service for the MAA-NJ”. Dr. Li was a council member for the *Council on Undergraduate Research* (CUR) for eight years. In 2013, she was awarded the “Faculty Mentoring Award” by Division of Mathematical Science and Computer Science of CUR. At MSU, Dr. Li served as the director of MSU’s *Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation* (LSAMP) program from 2015 to 2019.



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https://www.montclair.edu/center-for-community-engagement/2021-2022-community-engaged-teaching-and-learning-fellows/

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Dr. María Cioè-Peña

Assistant Professor

Department of Teaching and Learning

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María Cioè-Peña earned her PhD in the Urban Education from The Graduate Center – City University of New York, where she was also an Advance Research Collaborative fellow and a Presidential MAGNET Fellow. In 2019, María was named the first-place winner for Outstanding Dissertation by the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE). She is a former elementary school teacher whose passion for children and social justice in education pushes her to fight for equity and full inclusion for children of diverse backgrounds and abilities. With a B.A. in English and a M.S.Ed. in teaching urban students with disabilities, María's research focuses on bilingual children with dis/abilities, their families and their ability to access multilingual learning spaces within public schools. Her interests are deeply rooted in language practices and dis/ability awareness within schools and families. María is currently an Assistant Professor and a Community-Engaged Teaching Fellow at Montclair State University.

Dr. Reba Wissner

Adjunct Faculty, Cali School of Music

Email: wissnerr@montclair.edu

Reba Wissner (John J. Cali School of Music) received her MFA and PhD in musicology from Brandeis University and her BA in Music and Italian from Hunter College of the City University of New York. She is the author of articles on seventeenth-century Venetian opera, Italian immigrant theater in New York City, music in 1950s and 1960s television, and music history pedagogy and has presented her research on these topics at conferences throughout the United States and Europe. She is the author of *A Dimension of Sound: Music in The Twilight Zone* (Pendragon Press, 2013) and *We Will Control All That You Hear: The Outer Limits and the Aural Imagination* (Pendragon Press, 2016) and is currently working on both her third book, *Music and the Atomic Bomb in American Television, 1950-1969* (under contract with Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, forthcoming in 2020) and a collaborative book and database project called *Cues and Contracts: Music and the American Television Industry* that examines music cues and their reuses, as well as administrative documents related to American television music production. She is also co-editing a volume on the music and sound design in *Twin Peaks*. Dr. Wissner is the recipient of numerous awards and grants including a Sight and Sound Subvention from the Society for American Music, a James and Sylvia Thayer Short-Term Research Fellowship from UCLA, a Wallis Annenberg Research Grant from the University of Southern California, and a 2018 recipient of a research and teaching service award from the Montclair State University Adjunct Union Local 6025. During the 2017-2018 academic year, she was an Engaged Teaching Fellow at Montclair and this year she is serving as a program mentor. Aside from Montclair, Dr. Wissner also teaches at New York University, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, and Ramapo College of New Jersey.

**Dr. Maisa C. Taha**

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology

Email: taham@mail.montclair.edu

Maisa Taha is an anthropologist trained in the linguistic, cultural and applied subfields. She has conducted fieldwork in southeast Spain and the U.S., focusing on multicultural educational environments, immigrant and refugee inclusion and the communicative construction of shared value systems in changing democracies. By exploring both state and non-state contexts of intercultural meeting, she builds on a lifelong interest in the meanings of “home” and place, multilingualism and the experiences of migrants and their children. Her work as a CETL Fellow with the Center for Community Engagement focuses on building an advanced undergraduate anthropology seminar and outreach effort around the theme of “language as community resource.” This work aims to bring awareness and attention to the myriad ways that language and ways of using language hold value and creative potential for people in northern New Jersey.

**Dr. Jessica Miller**

Assistant Professor, Earth and Environmental Studies

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Phone: **973-655-4500**

My research falls at the intersection of human-environment interaction. I am an Assistant Professor in the Earth and Environmental Studies department. I received my doctoral degree from The Graduate Center at The City University of New York. I focus on research that explores human-environment interaction through environmental perception and policy, identity and planning. My work in the past has focused on the impacts of environmental policy and the production of urban space through greening policies. I am interested in environmental inequity and restoration, and how this process is shifting as a result of changing landscapes.

My research interests concern: environmental and human geography, sustainability policy, urban political ecology, environmental inequity, perception, and health, planning, water contamination and resources, environmental gentrification and displacement, brownfields and waterfront redevelopment.

**Dr. Stephen Ruszczyk**

Assistant Professor, Sociology

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Stephen Ruszczyk, PhD, is a sociologist. His main work focuses on undocumented youth and their context for becoming adults. To date, publications on this theme have appeared in the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, American Behavioral Scientist, Comparative Migration Studies, and Migration Studies. Ongoing work also looks at how organizations support urban citizenship. At Montclair State, he has taught courses on immigration, urban sociology, Latinxs and social problems.

**Dr. María José García Vizcaíno**

Associate Professor of Spanish and Director of the Graduate Certificate Program in Translation and Interpreting in Spanish at Montclair State University

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Dr. María José García Vizcaíno is Associate Professor of Spanish and Director of the Graduate Certificate Program in Translation and Interpreting in Spanish at Montclair State University. Here she teaches courses on Translation and Spanish. Her main current lines of research are Advertising, Translation and Audio Description. She has published extensively in prestigious academic journals such as Journal of Pragmatics, Sociocultural Pragmatics: An International Journal of Spanish Linguistics, and Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice, and has presented her work at numerous conferences, panels, and symposia around the world. Currently, Dr. García Vizcaíno is teaching a course on Audio Description in Spanish at Montclair State and engaging students in projects to bring the Performing Arts closer to the Spanish-speaking low vision audiences. In particular, she is leading a project to make live theatre in Spanish accessible to the Latino visually-impaired community in NY.

Dr. Rachel Garver

Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership

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Dr. Rachel Garver is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Montclair State University. She studies how educational equity is impacted by policy implementation and by safety and discipline practices in schools. Prior to getting her doctorate at New York University, Dr. Garver taught 5th and 6th grade in New York City, worked for the Racial Justice Program at the American Civil Liberties Union, and conducted applied research for youth-oriented organizations and school districts. Dr. Garver's current projects examine how equity-oriented policies are implemented in racially and economically segregated schools and the role of police in schools. She is also working in partnership with a local community organization to leverage youth voices to inform educational policies and practices.

Dr. Jessica Bacon

Assistant Professor, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Literacy Education

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Dr. Jessica Bacon is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education at Montclair State University. Jessica is the program coordinator inclusive education dual degree/ dual certification program in K-6 and P-3 education. Jessica is a co-founder and co-coordinator with Dr. Susan Baglieri of the Increasing Access to College project, which provides inclusive higher education opportunities to early adults with intellectual and developmental disability labels. Jessica's research is informed by the field of disability studies and she investigates how neoliberal educational policies impact the inclusion of students with disabilities. She also researches the role of advocacy and self-advocacy in impacting-12 and higher educational systems towards more inclusivity. She has recently published in journals such as *Disability & Society*, the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, and *Teacher Education and Special Education*.

Steven Shapiro

Interim Head of Multimedia Resources Department/Electronic Resources Librarian

Email: shapiros@montclair.edu

No Photo Available

Steven Shapiro is Interim Head of the Multimedia Resources Department/Electronic Resources Librarian at Harry A. Sprague Library. He administers all aspects of the Library's large array of electronic resources including databases, reference collections, and streaming audio and video products. He handles contract negotiations with vendors and consortia and provides technical support to faculty and students experiencing database access issues. In addition, he arranges trials of new electronic resources for faculty to evaluate and review. He also manages the Library's discovery service. He is past-president of ACRL/NJ (NJLA/College and University Section) and continues to be active professionally. He has contributed articles to several professional library journals including Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship, which is devoted to issues and practices of electronic resource management and Library Hi-Tech News. He has presented at a number of different conferences including NJEdge.net, NJLA, and VALE on the topic of marketing electronic resources.

Steve earned his BA in Anthropology and Sociology from Lafayette College, MLS from University of Maryland and MA in Social Sciences/History from Montclair State.

Dr. Jessica Brater

Assistant Professor, Theatre and Dance

Email: braterj@montclair.edu

Dr. Brater's research aims to bring attention to art, artists, and audience communities, especially women, who have been underrepresented historically by theatre critics and scholars. Her work emphasizes the relationship between theatrical performance and social and political engagement.

Her book, RUTH MALECZECH AT MABOU MINES: WOMAN'S WORK, was published by Methuen Drama in 2016. Chapters on Mabou Mines appear in WOMEN, COLLECTIVE CREATION, AND DEVISED PERFORMANCE and in CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO ADAPTATION IN PERFORMANCE, both published by Palgrave Macmillan. Other writing has appeared in publications including AUJOURD'HUI/SAMUEL BECKETT TODAY and THEATRE JOURNAL. Current writing projects include "Shaping Broadway and Off-Broadway Plays Through Collaborations: Playwrights, Directors, Designers, and Companies" for the CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO AMERICAN THEATRE, "Nora, Lucia, and Lear: Gender and Performance at Mabou Mines" for ANALYZING GENDER IN PERFORMANCE (Palgrave MacMillan) and a chapter on Lee Breuer for the new series GREAT NORTH AMERICAN STAGE DIRECTORS (Methuen Drama).

Brater is the founding Artistic Director of **Polybe + Seats**. Over the company's fifteen-year history, they have partnered with other Brooklyn cultural organizations including the Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at BLDG 92, the Waterfront Museum and Showboat Barge, and the Old Stone House to create socially engaged work. Most recently, Brater directed Sarah Badiyah Sakaan's THE ART OF HIJAB, KOHL BLACK, AND THE RIGHT WAY TO PRAY, a new play that explores Muslim feminist identity. The project was supported by a 2014-16 residency at LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, several Creative Space grants from ART/NY, and a grant from the Brooklyn Arts Council. The production was presented

at the Bay Ridge Brooklyn Public Library and in a performance residency at the Obie-award winning gallery FiveMyles in partnership with the Arab American Association of New York.

Brater’s teaching encourages students to map connections between theater literature, history, and theory and their own stage practice, challenging them to excel both intellectually and creatively and to examine connections between the performative and the political.

She is the program coordinator for the BA and MA in Theatre Studies, a 2018-2020 Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellow, and serves on the University Senate. Brater holds a PhD from the CUNY Graduate Center and a BA from Barnard College.



Dr. Ashwin Vaidya
Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences
Email: vaidyaa@montclair.edu

Dr. Ashwin Vaidya is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences and holds a joint appointment in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. His scholarly interests lie in the general area of complexity theory which examines systems as a collection of interacting parts, where feedback leads to pattern formation and self-organization in nature. His work spans the areas of mathematical modeling of physical and biological systems, experimental physics, science education and philosophy of science. Dr. Vaidya directs the Complex Fluids Laboratory at Montclair State University where his team comprising of students and faculty collaborators conduct experiments as well do theoretical work. As an educator, he is committed to getting students to see education as a life-long and creative process and promoting a unified approach to teaching and learning.



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 Campus Map

    

Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships	Montclair State	Policies
Meet Our Team	About Montclair	Copyright and Disclaimer
Public Service Programs	Academics	Title IX Information
University Community Action Nexus	Admissions	Emergency/Plans
For Faculty: Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellows	Alumni	Notice of Non-Discrimination
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