

SHAPEL M. LA BORDE, MA

New York, New York

Email: sml2289@tc.columbia.edu | shapellaborde@gmail.com

Tel: 347-503-9819

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy and Education

Teachers College Columbia University | 2024-in progress

- Focused on Black Feminist Epistemology, Knowledge Construction, Critical Race Theory
- GPA: 4.09
- Dissertation: *The Descent into a Death: An Ancestral Education around Becoming*

Master of Art in Philosophy and Education

Teachers College Columbia University | 2021-2023

- GPA: 3.80
- Thesis: *Raising Shapel with RoseBud's Mornin' Musings a personal, philosophical, and pedagogical assurance examining Black grandmothers' voices.*

Master of Art in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Hunter College School of Education | 2016-2019

- GPA: 3.42
- Capstone Inquiry Project: *Imagining More Time*

Bachelor of Art in Philosophy

Spelman College | 2009-2013

- GPA: 3.09

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- **Black Feminist Philosophy and Epistemology**
- **Critical Race Theory and Educational Justice**
- **Ancestral Knowledge, Memory, and Autoethnography**
- **Philosophy of Education and Language (Wittgenstein, Moten, Wynter)**
- **Embodied Knowledge and Spiritual Pedagogies**
- **Culturally Sustaining and Community-Based Pedagogies**
- **Political Resistance, Care Work, and the Legacy of Black Political Prisoners**

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Principal Investigator

Project Title: *Knowledge from the Margins: Philosophy, Resistance, and the Education of Black Women Intellectuals*

Grant: Dean's Grant for Student Research

Institution: Teachers College, Columbia University

Amount: \$2,500 | Year: 2024–2025

- Conducted 8–10 in-depth interviews with Black women educators
- Examined lived experiences, pedagogical praxis, and epistemic frameworks of resistance
- Integrated critical race theory, Black feminist epistemology, and philosophy of education

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ENL Teacher, Grades 3–5

PS136Q The Roy Wilkins School, Queens, NY | 2017–Present

- Full-time ENL instructor for multilingual learners using integrated co-teaching and standalone models
- Created culturally responsive and inclusive curriculum rooted in critical inquiry and student voice
- Served on Instructional Leadership Team, Crisis Team, and UFT Consultation Committee

Middle School ENL Teacher

School of Performing Arts, Bronx, NY | 2016–2017

High School ESL Instructor (Summer School)

Long Island City High School, LIC, NY | Summer 2016

Foreign Language Teacher

Neoling English Centre, Vietnam | 2014–2015

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Student Senate, Teachers College Columbia University

2024-present

- Arts and Humanities Senator
- Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI)
- Student Senate Representative, Committee of Community and Diversity (CCD)

National Council of Teacher of English (NCTE)

2024-present

- Member

Philosophy of Education Society (PES)

2023- present

- Social Chair for the Graduate Student Committee for Philosophy of Education Society, Executive Board, (GSC-PES) 2024-present

North Eastern Philosophy of Education Society (NEPES)

2023- present

- Secretary, Executive Board, 2024-present

United Federations of Teachers (UFT)

2016-present

- Consultation member, 2021-present

New York State Licensed ESL (English as a Second Language) Educator

Licensed Esthetician & Licensed Nail Technician – New York State

Mandated Reporter Training, New York State – Current

Trauma-Informed Educator Certification – Breathe for Change, in progress

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Dean's Grant for Student Research

Teachers College, Columbia University

Awarded: 2024–2025

- Competitive funding to support dissertation research titled *Knowledge from the Margins: Philosophy, Resistance, and the Education of Black Women Intellectuals*.

Braven Leadership Coach Fellowship

Braven x City College of New York

Awarded: 2025

- Selected to mentor first-generation undergraduate students in career, leadership, and professional development pathways.

NEPES Emerging Scholar Award

Northeastern Philosophy of Education Society

Awarded: upcoming 2025, 2023

- Recognition for scholarly contributions in Black feminist philosophy, education, and critical epistemology.

NYC Teaching Fellows – Cohort 27

New York City Department of Education

Awarded: 2016

- Selected for one of the nation's most competitive alternative teacher certification programs, focused on high-need NYC public schools.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps | City Year New York

Awarded: 2014 and 2017

- Recognized for completing over 1,700+ hours of service in Title I schools, focused on academic support and youth empowerment.

United Way NYC College Access Stipend

United Way of New York City

Awarded: 2011

- Awarded for service and leadership as a college access mentor in South Jamaica, Queens.

YMCA Youth Volunteer of the City

YMCA of Greater New York

Awarded: 2009

- Citywide recognition for service, mentoring, and community impact as a high school student in Jamaica, Queens.

Selected Works in Progress

- **LaBorde, S.** *Speech is the Ceremony: Language, Liberation, and Sacred Epistemology in Black Feminist Thought*

A philosophical inquiry into Wittgenstein's language-games, sacred speech traditions, and Black feminist approaches to naming, mourning, and ceremonial language.

- **LaBorde, S.** *Baby Girl, Be Here Now: Love, Liberation, and Embodied Knowledge in the Shadow of Captivity* (Article manuscript, in revision)

Interweaves Ram Dass, Marvin Gaye, and Black feminist thought to explore the ontological demands of presence and intimacy for Black women educators.

- **LaBorde, S.** *Resurrecting the Beloved: Black Feminist Grief, Ancestral Knowledge, and the Practice of Educational Becoming* (Conference paper and article manuscript, in development)

Reimagines the "Beloved Community" through Black feminist griefwork, ancestral autoethnography, and the pedagogy of resurrection. Draws from Sylvia Wynter, Joy James, and bell hooks to argue that mourning is an educational method and a radical form of community-making.

Selected Conference and Invited Presentations

- **LaBorde, Shapel M.** (2025, July). *Pearls from Grandma Babe: Embodied Black Feminist Praxis as Pedagogy for Joy and Liberation* [Workshop presentation]. **Reimagining Education Summer Institute**, Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2025, April). *The Archive is in My Skin: Nails, Scars, Stretch Marks, and Ancestry*. **Pan-Africanism & Education: Interdisciplinary & Critical Approaches in the 21st Century**, Teachers College, Columbia University. Presented original work exploring embodied memory and ancestral

knowledge as living archives, situating Black feminist aesthetics and intergenerational healing as pedagogical praxis.

- **LaBorde, S.** (2025, March). *Beyond the Future: Education as a Radical Act of Presence Using Black Feminist Epistemologies*. **Panel Presentation**, Philosophy of Education Society (PES) 81st Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. Engaged in an interdisciplinary roundtable exploring Black feminist epistemologies, radical presence, and educational futurity alongside educators and independent scholars.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2024, October). *Session Chair & Discussant*, Panel: *Examining Democracy across the United States of America*. **NEPES 2024 Annual Conference**, Boston College. Facilitated a dialogue on civic agency, anti-democratic trends, and philosophical readings of democracy in education.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2024, March). *Narratives of Gender Knowledge Across Generations: Battling Misinformation by Documenting the Historical Status of Women in Philosophy of Education*. **Committee on the Status of Women (COSW) Intergenerational Oral History Panel**, Philosophy of Education Society (PES) Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT. Served as an invited early-career scholar in dialogue with senior scholars about gendered labor, memory, and epistemic justice within PES; recorded as a living archive for future research and institutional reflection.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2024, February). *Radicalizing Black Excellence: An Educative Conversation between Anna Julia Cooper and Alain Locke around Belief as a Practice*. **Southeast Philosophy of Education Society (SEPES) 76th Annual Meeting**, Greenville, SC. Explored belief as an embodied pedagogical and philosophical practice in Black intellectual traditions, tracing Cooper and Locke's dialogue toward a radical education of the self.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2024, March). *On Self-Determination: The Black Aesthetics of Political Prisoners*. **Philosophy of Education Society (PES) Annual Meeting**, Salt Lake City, UT. Presented as part of the Works in Progress Session "Identity, Injustice, and Education." Explored the intellectual and aesthetic legacy of Black U.S. political prisoners as a philosophy of self-determination, liberation, and insurgent education.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2023, October). *Raising Shapel with RoseBud's Mornin' Musings: A Personal, Philosophical, and Pedagogical Assurance*. **Northeastern Philosophy of Education Society (NEPES) Annual Conference**, Teachers College, Columbia University. Presented in an emerging scholar session exploring ancestral knowledge, maternal pedagogy, and personal testimony as educational philosophy.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2023, February). *My Great-Grandmother, RoseBud's Morning Musings*. **GSCOPE Graduate Student Conference on Philosophy of Education**, The Ohio State University. A poetic-philosophical paper exploring ancestral memory, intergenerational wisdom, and the role of grandmothers in shaping epistemologies of care and becoming.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2023, January). *Original Spoken Word Performance* (Live Oratorical Presentation). **7th Annual MLK Oratorical & Spoken Word Event**, Milbank Chapel, Teachers College, Columbia University. Selected as a featured student orator honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., presenting original speech rooted in Black feminist thought, remembrance, and liberation.
- **LaBorde, S.** (2022, February). *On Self-Determination: The Black Aesthetics of Political Prisoners*. **GSCOPE Conference**, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Analyzed the aesthetics of liberation through the lived experience, resistance, and writings of Black political prisoners, situating their voices within a broader Black philosophical tradition.

- **LaBorde, S.** (2025, March). *Beyond the Future: Education as a Radical Act of Presence Using Black Feminist Epistemologies*. **Panel Presentation**, Philosophy of Education Society (PES) 81st Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. Engaged in an interdisciplinary roundtable exploring Black feminist epistemologies, radical presence, and educational futurity alongside educators and independent scholars.

Skills

- **Curriculum Design & Facilitation** – Expertise in culturally sustaining pedagogy, multilingual learner engagement, and embodied learning
- **Qualitative Research** – Autoethnography, narrative inquiry, oral history, and Black feminist research methods
- **Public Speaking & Workshop Facilitation** – National conference presenter, panelist, and invited speaker on education, Black feminism, and epistemology
- **Educational Consulting & Coaching** – Over 12 years of experience in ESL instruction, instructional leadership, and teacher mentorship
- **Digital Design & Content Strategy** – Experience with Canva, Wix, Google Suite, Zoom, and social media management (Instagram, YouTube, TikTok)
- **Grant Writing & Program Development** – Secured institutional and federal grants for educational equity initiatives
- **Leadership & Event Planning** – Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, Community Service Chair, Conference Organizer

Languages

- **English** – Native proficiency
- **Spanish** – Proficient in reading, listening, and conversational speaking
- **Mandarin** – Academically studied for 6 years

References

Available upon request.