



ENGAGE ANNUAL REPORT

U-M SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

2021-22



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
ENGAGE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ENGAGE

Year in Review

ENGAGE is a strategic effort connecting the School of Social Work to community issues, partners and movements for greater equity and social change.

1. We provide an organizing framework for the school's engagement efforts, lifting the profile of the good work happening and helping coordinate toward greater impact.
2. We offer a mechanism for the school to rapidly respond in times of crisis and bring issues of equity and social justice to the forefront of our school community and profession.
3. Our rootedness in community and trusted relationships connect the School to activism, current social justice issues and real-time community needs at both the grassroots and institutional levels.
4. We are flexible, nimble and able to adapt our activities to align with the community engagement priorities of other units of the School, faculty-led initiatives and courses.



MEET OUR TEAM



Trina Shanks

Engagement and Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professor of Social Work

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Dr. Trina Shanks is Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professor of Social Work and director of the Center for Equitable Family & Community Well-Being. Since 2018 she has overseen the School's strategic goal of community engagement, and she leads the evolving ENGAGE team.

Trina also serves as faculty advisor to the New Leaders in African-Centered Social Work Scholars Program. From 2010 to 2012 Shanks was appointed by Michigan Governor Granholm to serve two years on the State Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity.

She is currently one of the national network co-leads for the Social Work Grand Challenge: Reducing Extreme Economic Inequality and a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute. Shanks earned a Ph.D. in Social Work from Washington University and an M.S. in Comparative Social Research from the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar.



Sonia Harb

Strategist

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Sonia Harb has decades of experience promoting the alleviation of poverty and development of communities of color across southeast Michigan. Currently, Sonia serves as Engagement Strategist for the School of Social Work and served as a strategic advisor for the provost's office on Detroit engagement.

Prior to joining the University of Michigan she led the establishment of a multimillion-dollar employment and training operation for ACCESS, developed youth and education programming and innovative initiatives for the organization and

launched ACCESS Growth Center, a department focused on community and economic development.

She has served on numerous boards and state commissions, most recently as present vice-chair of the Michigan League for Public Policy's board of directors and past chair of Michigan's Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity.

MEET OUR TEAM



Ayesha Ghazi-Edwin

Program Manager

ayeshag@umich.edu

Ayesha Ghazi Edwin, MSW '10, is a political social worker and community organizer with over 10 years of experience in various social justice areas, including labor, healthcare, voting, immigration, housing and disability. Ayesha, a certified Six Sigma Green Belt, is the current program manager of the ENGAGE initiative at the School of Social Work.

In 2020 she was appointed to the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission by Governor Whitmer and appointed to the Ann Arbor Human Rights Commission by Mayor Christopher Taylor.

Ayesha received the University of Michigan James T. Neubacher Certificate of Appreciation in October 2020. In 2021, she received the DEI Impact Award from the School of Social Work and was one of five faculty university-wide to receive the University of Michigan Provost's Teaching Innovation Prize. Ghazi Edwin is current city council member-elect for the city of Ann Arbor.



Fatima Salman

Program Manager

fsalman@umich.edu

Fatima Salman is part of the ENGAGE team, serving as program manager for the Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative. Fatima completed her undergraduate education at the University of Michigan in 2000 and taught language and linguistics at a local private school.

For three years she lived in Madison, Wis., and worked as the principal of a local elementary school. She came back to Michigan, completed her MSW from U-M, and worked as the executive director for the Muslim Students' Association during the organization's time of transition.

She is currently the president of the NASW-Michigan, the chair of the Council of Chapter Presidents for NASW National and a member of the Program Committee for The Children's Center in Detroit, Mich.

MEET OUR TEAM



Leslie Leong

MSW Field Intern

Leslie Leong is a dual degree MSW/MPA '23 candidate and is a Community-Based Initiative in Detroit Scholar. She received her B.A. in Public Health from Wellesley College where she developed a passion for social justice and increasing access to equitable health care and social services.

This led her to work for a managed health care organization focused on underserved communities, serve in the Peace Corps in Guatemala to improve public health programs and services in rural communities and later join a COVID-19 emergency response team where she advised local health jurisdictions in California on their



Anika Sproull

MSW Field Intern

Anika Sproull is a 16-month MSW '22 candidate. She is a Community-Based Initiative in Detroit Scholar pursuing the Community Change and Policy and Political Social Work pathways. She received her B.A. in Psychology and Environmental Studies from Kalamazoo College and completed her senior thesis on food and environmental justice.

This laid the foundation to re-design education around food and environmental justice at Kalamazoo College and to build an on-campus hoop-house that provides hands-on learning for the

public health operations. Leslie has worked with ENGAGE since January 2022 and is supporting the Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative project.

Kalamazoo community. Anika has also worked as a self-defense instructor for over 10 years and spent a very influential year and a half working as a wilderness therapy field guide in Colorado and Utah. Anika has worked with ENGAGE since January 2022.

MEET OUR TEAM



Clio Walsh

MSW Field Intern

Clio Walsh was a 20-month MSW '22 student and has recently graduated! She received her B.A. in Philosophy: Ethics and Social Responsibility at the University of New Hampshire. Her academic experiences combined with her time working as the coordinator of a local food pantry led to her interest in the field of social work as a way of furthering equity and social justice. She will use the skills and relationships she built during her MSW to support work in community organizing and direct service efforts.

With ENGAGE Clio worked as a field student, coordinating virtual conversations to share community efforts around social justice with the U-M campus. Walsh also helped directly with the Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative project.



BY THE NUMBERS

320+

**ATTENDED VIRUAL
SOCIAL JUSTICE
WEBINARS**

78 DETROITERS PARTICIPATED IN
FOCUS GROUPS

60+

**ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS
WORKING TOWARD EMPLOYMENT
EQUITY FOR DETROITERS**

\$20,000

ISSUED IN SMALL GRANTS

6 WORKING PARTNERSHIPS
WITH U-M SCHOOLS & UNITS

Eight webinars, each drawing over 40+ activists, students and community partners to the conversation

The focus groups helped us understand more about barriers to employment and strategies to improve outcomes for job seekers and workers

We partnered with over 60 organizations to work on employment equity in Detroit

We issued \$20,000 in small grants this year

Partners outlined on the next page



OUR U-M PARTNERS

Detroit Urban Research Center to administer the Community Engagement Small Grants Program

DEI office to research faculty and staff perceptions on equity and inclusion in the School

Economic Growth Institute to facilitate Detroit's Equitable Development Workgroup and advise their research efforts

Center for Social Solutions to advise the Crafting Democratic Futures reparations initiative

Office of Field Education to expand reach to macro-practice field sites through supervision of field students

Program Evaluation Group to design a program evaluation for Washtenaw County's Office of Community and Economic Development

Social Justice Arts Collective and **UM Detroit Center** to introduce "Realm of the Dead" to Detroit



VALUES

REAL
AUTHENTIC
CONNECTION

RADICAL
RESPECT

PEOPLE
CENTERED
MISSION

INNOVATIVE
IDEAS &
APPROACHES

MISSION:

To promote student and faculty engagement with the community to address social justice issues, facilitate student learning and support community engagement efforts across the school.

Engagement for Equity centers on the voices and experiences of those we work with and prioritizes lived experiences and expertise.

Engagement for Equity intentionally challenges white supremacy and promotes policies, systems and structures where community members have equitable access to opportunities that improve quality of life.

Engagement for Equity is driven by our engagement principles creating equitable engagement opportunities for communities, students, faculty and staff.



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
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2021-22 OUTCOMES

2021 Academic Year: September 2021–June 2022

GOAL: PROMOTE AND SHOWCASE FACULTY AND STUDENT WORK

1. Curated the 2022 Student and Faculty Community Engagement Showcase
2. Created short videos featuring presenters and developed a web page to feature showcase information and video content

The ENGAGE team hosted a Community Engagement Showcase event on March 11 at the School of Social Work featuring impactful community engagement work that students, staff and faculty are doing in partnership with community-based organizations in communities. Short presentations on their community projects were featured, including efforts around criminal justice reform from a prior student and current founder of Michigan Liberation; a student project on a child perspective in the foster process; Dr. Christina Bares' work with Southwest Solutions around teen marijuana use and employment; and efforts around immigration assistance with new African immigrants and refugees, among other social justice projects.

Check out the SSW webpage that features information on the community engagement showcase and student videos: <https://ssw.umich.edu/assets/community-engagement/showcases>

This event was the first in-person public-facing event hosted at the SSW since the COVID-19 shutdown.



2021-22 OUTCOMES

2021 Academic Year: September 2021–June 2022

Student Presentations

- The Detroit Initiative - Arim Lee & Stephen Herrod
- Capacity Building with Alliance - Audrey Montgomery
- Youth Advocacy Project - Brittney Barros
- Michigan Liberation - Nicholas Buckingham
- Promoting Community Conversations about Research to End Suicide - Lauren White
- Gynecological Care within the Transgender & Nonbinary Community
- Flyn Alexander & Corktown

Faculty and Staff Presentations

- Improving our City: The Ann Arbor Human Rights Commission Project
- Ayesha Ghazi Edwin
- SW 649: Policy Practice with Current Events - Carrie Rheingans
- UM School of Social Work Program Evaluation Group - Lisa Greco
- Welcome to the Motor City: Exploring Refugee Resettlement Among Afghan Refugees in Detroit and Beyond - Ashley Cureton & Shadin Atiyeh
- Housing Options for Older Adults Moving Towards Equity in Southeastern Michigan
- Beth Glover Reed
- Youth Engagement Through Cannabis Prevention & Employment Training
- Cristina Bares & Southwest Solutions

2021-22 OUTCOMES

2021 Academic Year: September 2021–June 2022

GOAL: FACILITATE COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS

1. Administered the Small Grants Program.

ENGAGE: SSW launched a Small Grants Program in 2018 to encourage faculty to build partnerships with Detroit community-based organizations and work to support resident-led efforts to strengthen Detroit neighborhoods. These awards are supported by the Office of the Provost and are part of the school's strategic effort to connect Detroit engagement efforts and increase impact in the city. ENGAGE partners with the School of Public Health's Detroit Urban Research Center in administering the Small Grants Program.

2022 Awardees:

Project Title: Youth Engagement Through Cannabis Prevention and Employment Training

Faculty Member: Cristina Bares, Associate Professor of Social Work <https://ssw.umich.edu/faculty/profiles/tenure-track/cbb>

Community Partner: Kartav Patel, Manager of Youth Services, Southwest Economic Services

Project Title: Welcome to the Motor City: Exploring Refugee Resettlement Among Afghan Refugees and Beyond

Faculty Member: Ashley Cureton, Assistant Professor of Social Work and Educational Studies <https://ssw.umich.edu/faculty/profiles/tenure-track/curetona>

Community Partner: Shadin Atiyeh, Ph.D., Director of Employment and Economic Empowerment Programs, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County and Detroit

Project Title: Tuxedo Project Community Map

Faculty Member: Maureen Okasinski, LEO Lecturer II <https://ssw.umich.edu/faculty/profiles/leo/mokasins>

Community Partner: Rose Gorman, Executive Director, The Tuxedo Project

Project Title: Enacting Action Goals Informed by HOMES Survey: Services and Options for LGBTQ+ Older Adults in Metro Detroit

Faculty Member: Beth Glover Reed, Associate Professor of Social Work and Women's Studies <https://ssw.umich.edu/faculty/profiles/tenure-track/bgr>

Community Partner: Angela Gabridge, Executive Director, SAGE Metro Detroit

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The Small Grants Program process involved meeting with prospective grantees, helping them solidify their ideas and connecting them with community partners. Some individuals did not apply for a small grant this year but will refine their ideas and possibly apply in the future. Our ENGAGE team also connected faculty with partners to support their research and engagement activities more broadly. For example, Dr. Shanks connected Dr. Addie Weaver with colleagues in the medical school to support an NIH grant application to study approaches to increasing cancer prevention and screening in rural primary care settings.

GOAL: LEAD CURRICULUM INNOVATION THAT PROMOTES/STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Curated Virtual Discussions

ENGAGE facilitated monthly virtual discussions open to the university at large on pressing equity issues. The events featured community activists and organizational leaders that are spearheading efforts to address disparity and promote justice for individuals in Detroit and across Michigan. Topics covered current events and pressing social justice issues, including the need for Black, Indigenous and people of color to run for elected office; how social justice can be achieved through the arts; the increase of economic inequality; the rise of anti-Asian American sentiment; and a recent ballot initiative in Detroit and its impact on the city.

Social Justice Through the Arts

April 7, 2022

with Satori Shakoor, founder, storyteller and actress of The Secret Society Of Twisted Storytellers and Gary Anderson, Producing Artistic Director of the Plowshares Theatre Company

[Session Recording](#)

Grand Challenges: Extreme Economic Inequality and Agents of Change

March 17, 2022

with Reverend Joan C. Ross, Director of the North End Woodward Community Coalition

[Session Recording](#)

New American Leaders: Michigan BIPOC Elected Officials Paving the Way

February 17, 2022

with Ghida Dagher, President of New American Leaders

[Session Recording](#)

Capitalism and Consumerism: The Work-Life Balance

January 20, 2022

with W. DeWayne Wells, Executive Director of the Economic Justice Alliance of Michigan and Beatrice Klokpah, Founder and Provider at the Wellmind Culture Institute

[Session Recording](#)

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ENGAGE: The Rise of Anti-Asian American Sentiment and Community Resiliency

November 11, 2021

with Frances Kai-Hwa Wang, writer, author and LSA of American Culture lecturer; Roland Hwang, former Assistant Attorney General of Michigan and Co-Founder and President of American Citizens for Justice; and Jayesh Patel, MSU Law Adjunct Professor and Executive Director of Street Democracy

[Session Recording](#)

After Proposal P: Detroit's Continued Fight for Social Justice

October 7, 2021

with Raquel Castañeda-López, Detroit City Councilmember; Art Reyes III, Executive Director of We the People Michigan; Monica Lewis-Patrick, President and CEO of We the People Detroit; and John Sloan III, Co-Lead Organizer of BLMDetroit

[Session Recording](#)

ENGAGE: Faith in Action - Interfaith Leaders Working Together

September 23, 2021

with Rabbi Alana Alpert of Detroit Jews for Justice; Sumaiya Ahmed Sheikh, Executive Director of the Oakland County Democratic Party; Chandru Acharya, President of South Asian American Voices for Impact (SAAVI) and appointed member of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Faith-Based Security Advisory Council; and La'Ron Williams, longtime leader of the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice

[Session Recording](#)

ENGAGE: Back to School - Advocating for BIPOC History in K-12 Curriculum

September 9, 2021

with Stephanie Chang, State Senator; Roland Hwang, Northville School Board member and former Assistant Attorney General; Sherry Gay-Dagnogo, former State Representative; and Dr. Matthew Stiffler, University of Michigan LSA American Culture Professor of Arab and Muslim American Studies

[Session Recording](#)

2. Supported student-run events and workshops through independent study and work study.

As a featured field site, ENGAGE supports and co-sponsors equity-focused student-led projects, events, programming and activities. This is done by providing supervision for independent or work studies, helping students find speakers for events, brainstorming programming ideas with students and co-sponsoring events in coordination with student groups. ENGAGE also helps students find funding for their programming ideas.

SSW API Coalition Spring/Summer 2021 Independent Study/Work-Study Placement

During the Spring/Summer 2021 semester, ENGAGE supported and supervised the SSW's

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Asian Pacific Islander (API) Coalition’s development of a series of equity-focused conversations, along with the creation of an equity toolbox that contained resources on how to lead conversations focused on API history, identity and discrimination, among other topics.

The [API toolkit](#) offers guidance to student groups interested in holding similar DEI-focused virtual discussions and events. As part of this project, students from the API Coalition created [a website that houses their organizing toolkit](#) and links to [recorded virtual discussions](#) that cover a variety of equity issues.

3. Submitted course proposal linked to Grand Challenges.

The ENGAGE team submitted a Grand Challenges course proposal to the curriculum committee and is awaiting a response.

Course Topic: Grand Challenges in Social Work (Macro-focus on “Just Society”)

This special topic 1-credit course will help students learn about the “Just Society” Grand Challenges and connect an issue to local practitioners who are working in these areas. Students will have the opportunity to research best practices and become up-to-date on the latest science on how to address one of the Grand Challenges. They will also have an opportunity to reflect on how these Grand Challenges appear in their local community and are affected and shaped by local, state and/or federal policy. Ideally, they will leave with a personal plan of action for how they want to continue to engage with these issues going forward.

GOAL: LEAD COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVES

1. Facilitated the Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative in Detroit

ENGAGE received a two-year grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to continue to convene the Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative (EELAC) in Detroit.

The Employment Equity Learning and Action Collaborative (EELAC) in Detroit brought together more than 60 organizations across sectors to promote employment equity and economic opportunity for Detroiters. This includes collaboration with other campus efforts, such as Poverty Solutions’ integration with the Mayor’s workforce initiative, and with other state and local officials.

During the first year of the grant, we established three action-oriented workgroups that engage in activities to address barriers to equity. The focus areas for the workgroups include:

Workgroup #1:

Facilitating Detroiters’ advancement along health care career pathways

Members are implementing a pilot that seeks to support the advancement of entry-level workers at Henry Ford Health in Detroit.

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Workgroup #2:

Identifying shared measures for EELAC members and others in the region

Members are working on identifying interim measures that contribute to population-level changes in educational attainment, employment status and income. These are the indicators that member organizations and others in the ecosystem can focus efforts around and improve.

Workgroup #3:

Supporting the navigation of college, training and career opportunities that connect youth and disconnected workers to nontraditional careers

Members are working with Marygrove High School to administer a pilot that trains students on career pathway options and skilled trades, networking, soft skills and informational interviewing. The workgroup will also explore creating a user-friendly website that hosts information about nontraditional career options and programs.

2. Convened the Equitable Development Workgroup in Detroit in collaboration with the UM Economic Growth Institute.

<https://economicgrowth.umich.edu/>

ENGAGE facilitates a workgroup of like-minded individuals coming together to leverage resources and foster just and equitable development in the city of Detroit. Equitable development and intermediary organizations, developers, community activities and university representatives are part of this group.

This year the workgroup underwent a strategic planning process facilitated by the U-M's Economic Growth Institute that helped us develop shared definitions and purpose and honed our priorities. We are now focusing on creating an "Equitable Development Scorecard" for Detroit that can aid community members, city officials and developers to engage in development that is more inclusive and offers benefits to the communities most impacted.

The Workgroup's Definition of Equitable Development

Equitable development is a development that seeks to address larger social and economic disparities in addition to benefiting developers and investors. Over time, following equitable development practices can create healthy vibrant communities of opportunity where low-income people, people of color, new immigrants and people with disabilities participate in and benefit from systems, decisions and activities that shape their neighborhoods.

Equitable development should be inclusive of and benefit the community in which the development occurs, addressing affordable housing, local hiring needs or environmental injustices. These developments represent a broad array of land use and support the development of the community holistically.

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Equitable development practices require evidence that policies and programs work to prioritize community-based financial intelligence, sustainable wealth creation and high-quality job opportunities. Additionally, they provide decent, safe affordable housing and prevent unwanted displacement of residents and small businesses from low-income communities and communities of color.

3. Partnered with the Center for Social Solutions on the “Crafting Democratic Futures” reparations project.

Our team represents the School of Social Work at the planning table for the Center for Social Solutions’ “[Crafting Democratic Futures](#)” initiative. We helped connect program staff and researchers with community-based activities that are leading reparations work in the city of Detroit.

GOAL: PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Provided LMSW supervision for field students placed at community-based organizations.

Collaborated with the Office of Field Instruction to provide LMSW field instructor supervision to macro-practice students placed in community-based organizations.

ENGAGE is providing field instruction for students placed at the [Community Connections Grant Program](#) and [Community Development Advocates of Detroit](#). These organizations are engaging in innovative macro-practice social work and provide excellent exposure to social work students studying community change and policy.

ENGAGE is working closely with the Office of Field Instruction and the Community Scholars initiative at the school to ensure students engaging with the city of Detroit have meaningful opportunities to learn and engage in change-making activities.

2. Developed a case statement and op-ed in partnership with a community organization to support their work and increase the reach of their advocacy efforts.

This year we collaborated with the Community Connections Grant Program to develop a case statement highlighting their work with Detroit-based childcare providers during the pandemic. The case statement highlighted policies that were impeding success and highlighted possible solutions. The [piece](#) was the basis for an article featured in [Bridge Detroit](#), a news publication that tells the story of communities and highlights issues and solutions for Detroit.

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GOAL: ENGAGE IN INVENTORYING, MAPPING, AND COORDINATING ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE GREATER COHESION AND IMPACT AMONG ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AT THE SCHOOL

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Research Project

ENGAGE worked with the DEI office to conduct 18 interviews with faculty and staff members that lead the work of the School's various centers, labs and groups to better understand the barriers to and opportunities for greater collaboration and coordination. The interviews also explored diversity, equity and inclusion practices and perceptions.

The results of the study are in the process of being finalized and will be used to inform the School's DEI plan 2.0, while offering a basis for collaboration between ENGAGE and DEI.

Thank you!

Thank you for joining us on this journey of civic and community engagement throughout the last year. We look forward to our continued work together!

Dr. Trina Shanks
Sonia Harb
Fatima Salman
Ayesha Ghazi Edwin
Leslie Leong



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