



ENGAGE Newsletter

October 2020

The ENGAGE Team



Dr. Trina Shanks, Director, Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professor of Social Work

Sonia Harb, Strategist,

Ayesha Ghazi-Edwin, Program Manager

Fatima Salman, Program Manager

Jamie Simmons, Student Intern

Blake Newman, Student Intern

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

The goals of the ENGAGE strategic efforts are:

1. Uplift current community engagement in the school and facilitate more and intentional engagement
2. Coordinate community engagement efforts across units, centers and courses within the SSW, and across the University
3. Facilitate community impact (signature projects; new sustained initiatives involving faculty and students, connecting the school to social justice movements)

Our activities include, but are not limited to:

- Signature projects with community partners
- Grants focused on community development, empowerment, and equity
- Uplifting and showcasing student work in communities
- Supporting and facilitating collaboration between faculty research and projects in communities
- Ongoing virtual discussion series featuring prominent activists and their involvement in current social movements
- Host of the Employment Equity Learning Community, comprised of over 50 community based organizations and stakeholders in Detroit working to improve employment opportunities in the City.

[Visit Our Website](#)

Upcoming Virtual Events



Get Out the Vote! Featuring Justin Hodge, Erin Byrnes and Sumaiya Ahmed Sheikh

With our power, resources, and knowledge, what can we do to make sure everyone's voice is heard when practicing the right to vote? How can we become more empowered and informed about voting, and actively join the fight against voter suppression? How can students get involved in Get Out The Vote efforts on campus? This session will focus on both School of Social Work and university-wide voter engagement initiatives such as Get Out The Vote (GOTV), and include student discussion on how we can become more engaged in the upcoming election. We will be joined by SSW Clinical Assistant Professor and candidate for Washtenaw County Commissioner Justin Hodge, Ginsberg Center Lead of Democratic Engagement Erin Byrnes, and the Michigan State Coordinator of Campus Vote, Sumaiya Ahmed Sheikh.

Thursday, October 15, 12- 1:30 PM

[RSVP](#)



Appropriating Food: Food Justice is Racial Justice

Food deserts have been purposefully and strategically created, aided by historic redlining and other discriminatory policies and practices that have segregated our Black and Brown communities into impoverished urban areas. These communities lack access to grocery stores and other vendors that provide wholesome, nutritious food, while liquor stores and fast food restaurants are prevalent.

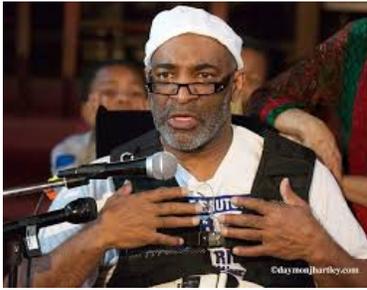
Join us in a virtual discussion featuring prominent Detroit food justice activists and organizers who have taken food sovereignty and environmental empowerment into their own hands. Panelists include: Executive Director of the Detroit Black Food Security Network Malik Yakini, Executive Director of Sustainable Community Farms Michelle Jackson, Executive Director of Oakland Avenue Urban Farming and Executive Director of Northend Christian Community Development Corporation Jerry Hebron.

Thursday, November 12, 12-1:30 PM

[RSVP](#)

[View all Fall Sessions Here!](#)

Ways to Take Action



Join Baba Baxter in his fight for justice!

Baba Baxter Jones, a disabled Black man in Detroit and victim of police brutality, filed a federal lawsuit against the Detroit Police Department for permanent injury they caused while attempting to violently detain him at a peaceful protest for water justice.

As of Tuesday, July 14, 2020, the court has handed us a precedent-setting ruling that defends Detroit police's brutal and violent mistreatment of local Black disabled community activist Baxter Jones. Baxter Jones is a Black man in 80% Black Detroit, where this incident occurred. Baba and others who are disabled are no longer *free* to safely exercise First Amendment freedom of speech rights without considerable risk.

To learn more about Baxter Jones' case, visit:

https://www.mlive.com/news/detroit/2017/06/disabled_man_claims_detroit_po.html

For more information on how you can support Baxter Jones' fight for justice, please reach out to him, a4bb.hgs@gmail.com



ENGAGE recognizes water as a human right!

We the People is an organization dedicated to community coalition building and to the provision of resources that inform, train and mobilize the citizens of Detroit *and beyond* to improve their quality of life.

The city of Flint has been without clean drinking water since 2014, and the people of Detroit have been fighting against water shut offs and for availability for decades.

For more information on how you can support the fight for water justice, please reach out to Monica Lewis Patrick, monica@wethepeopleofdetroit.com.

To learn more about this initiative, please visit their website www.wethepeople detroit.com.

SSW Student Engagement Highlights



Justin Woods

Justin is a current MSW/MBA dual degree committed to advancing racial justice by developing emotional intelligence. Over the course of the past year, he has worked to found EQUITY Social Venture which is the vehicle for carrying out the work at the intersection of emotional health and racial equity that inspires him. Rooted in social-emotional learning, EQUITY provides training and consulting services to support individuals and organizations to enhance their emotional capacity to engage in meaningful action and dialogue around racial justice. During the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and anti-Black racism, he has provided free webinars on his work including recent ones on Healing Race-based Trauma, Racial Microaggressions, and Emotionally Intelligent Engagement.

To hear about upcoming webinars and learn more about his work, join the [EQUITY newsletter](#), or follow EQUITY on social media: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Sidney Arrington

Sidney Arrington-Ashford is a two time Wolverine studying Social Policy and Evaluation with a concentration on Community and Social Systems. Arrington currently serves as a mentor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Umich Collegiate Chapter, an intern at Office of City Council Raquel Castaneda-Lopez, and a Detroit Fellow for IGNITE. . Most recently, she co-created an online crowdfunding source entitled Fund Racial Justice to collect and accept donations to support: Breonna Taylor, Pimento Relief Fund, Detroit Bail Fund, and Communities United Against Police Brutality. Feel free to reach out to Sidney Arrington at sidarrin@umich.edu for more information.

Instagram: Pilot Sidney

PayPal:

<https://www.paypal.me/fundracialjustice>

Fund Site:

<https://sites.google.com/umich.edu/fundracialjustice/home>

ENGAGE Team Spotlight



Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professorship in Social Work

We would like to congratulate Trina Shanks for being named the Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professor of Social Work. The Harold R. Johnson Collegiate Professorship was created to support a scholar whose teaching and research address advancement of race relations, diversity and inclusion.

Trina is the director of community engagement and founding director of the newly created Center for Equitable Family and Community Well-Being at the School of Social Work. In addition, she is a faculty associate in the Survey Research Center in the Institute for Social Research and a faculty affiliate of Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan. Trina has made original and significant contributions to the study of public policy for families, social and economic development, and the relationship between assets, poverty and children's well-being. She is a leader in the field of social and community development in social work, both off-campus and on.

Congratulations, Trina!

Detroit Public School Community Schools

DPSCD is recruiting individuals to assist with neighborhood canvassing in an effort to engage over 6,000 students who have not yet shown up for school. Canvassing will commence over a week-long period providing families support needed to ensure their children are back in school. Canvassers will be trained prior to deployment.

If you are interested in getting involved, please complete this interest form. <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=3NCiLp2lvEKbTDAnH4LjNU9jkFL3NP1CqSYJ3yvnxkpUNzI3WE5BRUpBVU0wSTg4RzY0NVJQQk5QSC4u>

This volunteer opportunity is pending approval for field credit hours.

Michigan Voter Protection Team

They are recruiting and training volunteer attorneys and others to join in our efforts to make sure all Michigan voters can access a ballot (by mail or in person), cast their votes, and have their votes counted.

Volunteer opportunities available immediately:

The Voter Protection Hotline has volunteer shifts available now through election day. (This is a great chance to learn and to learn to stay calm!)

Recruiting other Voter Protection volunteers. Are you a part of a group or organization whose members might be good candidates? Do you have a large social media presence?

Sign up at MichiganDems.com/VoterPro so that you can get started with necessary online trainings!

This volunteer opportunity has not been approved for field credit hours.

Michigan Movement

Michigan Movement provides aid to individuals, families, and students experiencing homelessness and poverty in our local community.

There are opportunities in 3 areas: Educating members about issues related to systems change, homelessness, food systems; Providing leadership on a committee devoted to affordable housing or health disparities; or Planning an event to support local community members who are experiencing homelessness. See the message below for brief descriptions.

If interested, please reach out directly to Michigan Movement via Lindsay Calka: lacalka@umich.edu

This volunteer opportunity has not been approved for field credit hours.

FATE Program

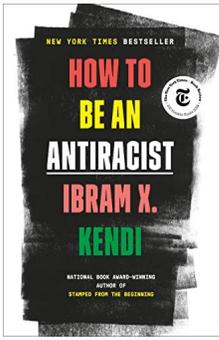
[FATE](#) is a four-year, cohort-based program for high school students in Detroit who attend the Jalen Rose Leadership Academy. Its mission is to provide resources and opportunities for underserved youth to embrace education and become world-class citizens, with a goal to motivate each student to graduate high school and attend college.

Check out [this video](#) to learn more about the FATE Program!

If you are interested in mentoring for the [FATE](#) Program during the 2020-2021 academic year, email Give Merit's Program Director, Rachel Mazzaro, at rmazzaro@umich.edu for more information!

This volunteer opportunity has not been approved for field credit hours.

Suggested Reading of the Month



In “How to Be an Antiracist,” Kendi takes readers through a widening circle of antiracist ideas — from the most basic concepts to visionary possibilities — that will help readers see all forms of racism clearly, understand their poisonous consequences, and work to oppose them in our systems and in ourselves.

To find out more about ENGAGE and our virtual discussions, please visit [our website](#).

*You have any questions, please reach out to
ENGAGE at sswcommunityengagement@umich.edu*

The ENGAGE Team