



ANTIRACIST COUNSELING

in Schools and Communities

edited by
Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy

American Counseling Association

2461 Eisenhower Avenue • Alexandria, VA 22331
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DEDICATION

*I want to acknowledge and thank my father, Fred Holcomb, and my family, Alvin (husband), Niles (son), and Nia (daughter), for their endless love and support.
I am because of them.*



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PREFACE

*For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.*

—Amanda Gorman, “The Hill We Climb”

The Inspiration

I watched and cried as 22-year-old Amanda Gorman recited the words above at the inauguration of the 46th president of the United States, Joseph Biden, and the first Black/Asian woman vice president, Kamala Harris. Ms. Gorman’s poem, “The Hill We Climb,” resonated with me as a middle-aged Black woman and self-proclaimed social justice advocate. After 4 years of an administration that had stoked racial unrest, initiated sweeping anti-immigration policies, and openly devalued women, Amanda Gorman’s words summoned both pride and relief. Maybe, just maybe, we are now embarking on an era of harmony in which we can reckon with our country’s legacy of racism, sexism, and xenophobia and embrace the greatness of our collective good.

In so many ways, Amanda Gorman’s words also reflect our counseling profession’s long-standing promise to endear a more inclusive, equitable, and just society. I have always believed professional counselors play an essential role in our nation’s quest to be a more perfect union. My decision to become a counselor was based on this belief. For it is counselors who have the skills, awareness, and knowledge to produce social change, solve complex problems, and bring diverse people together; however, as Amanda Gorman implies, counselors have this power only if they are brave enough to act on it.

Although Amanda Gorman’s words inspired me, this book was conceptualized long before I knew who she was. The impetus for this book was the series of events that led up to the 2021 presidential inauguration. I could recount hundreds of years of racism and oppression placed on Black and Brown people, but it was the more recent angry white supremacist mob in Charlottesville and the murder

of George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, that set this book in motion. For those who do not know, Mr. Floyd was murdered by Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer, after a convenience store employee called 911 and told the police that Mr. Floyd had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit \$20 bill. Seventeen minutes after the first squad car arrived at the scene, Mr. Floyd was unconscious, lifeless, and pinned beneath a police officer. Nine minutes and 29 seconds is the amount of time one officer knelt on the neck of Mr. Floyd, killing him in the street in front of local citizens who recorded the event with their phones. Derek Chauvin was subsequently found guilty of murder. However, on the day of his conviction, just a few miles from the courthouse, another young Black man was killed by a police officer.

Like millions of people around the world, I have watched the senseless murders of unarmed Black people like George Floyd repeatedly on the news. Obsessed with the cruelty of police violence, thousands of protesters marched in the summer of 2020 calling for justice and chanting “Black Lives Matter!” Another inspiration for this book was to call for change in the face of anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and the brutality afforded not only George Floyd but also Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Daunte Wright, Rayshard Brooks, Daniel Prude, Atatiana Jefferson, the Atlanta spa workers, the congregants of Charleston’s Mother Emanuel Church, and the countless other Black and Brown persons killed by either the police, white supremacists, or hate-filled individuals. I came together with the authors of this book to evoke change, to rise up and speak up for justice. We believe counseling professionals are positioned to *act!* Silence is not an option. This book documents a movement to ensure that counselors, in particular school counselors, take an antiracist stance in their everyday practice. Merely talking about cultural differences and race as a demographic variable is not enough.

Like Amanda Gorman, we argue that counselors can make a difference if they are brave and courageous enough to act.

Reading the Book

Antiracism in counseling requires courage and a high level of understanding of the history of racism in the United States, including the racist structures that have perpetuated white supremacist views. The information presented in this book is intended to facilitate counselors’ comprehensive knowledge of antiracism, in particular compared to other constructs such as cultural competence and social justice counseling. As a whole, I firmly believe that antiracism is the foundation of cultural competence and social justice counseling practice. One cannot be a culturally competent counselor or a social justice advocate if antiracism is absent from one’s repertoire of understanding. Antiracism is an active stance in which counselors challenge and fight against racist ideas, behaviors, and, most important, policies. Professor Angela Davis, a noted Black activist, has stated, “In a racist society it is not enough to be nonracist, we must be antiracist.” More recently, Ibram X. Kendi, an antiracist scholar and 2021 MacArthur Fellow, made the same point to highlight the difference between being not racist and being antiracist. In his book *How to Be an Antiracist*, Kendi lamented that racist ideas have defined our society since its inception, and therefore practices that stem from racist views seem natural. Being antiracist is difficult because it requires us to act differently, think differently, and act in ways that contradict our typical practices and beliefs. Kendi (2019) stated,

“To be an antiracist is a radical choice in the face of our history, requiring a radical reorientation of our consciousness” (p. 23).

Given the shift in mind-set necessary for antiracist counseling practice, this book offers you an opportunity to explore antiracist counseling through the voices of diverse authors who represent expertise across the counseling spectrum as well as intersectional diversity in terms of gender, sexuality, and race. Some are counselor educators, some are practicing school counselors, some are clinical mental health counselors, one is a Postdoctoral Fellow with a background in African American studies, and one is a teacher educator. The authors are diverse, but they all share a unique perspective on antiracism. In addition, many of the authors describe their personal journeys to becoming antiracist counselors. They offer their own self-interrogation of their racial consciousness. Like Kendi, they share their missteps as well as their resilience and willingness to persevere through the journey. Most important, I believe the unwavering and collective sense of urgency among these authors is what makes this book special. Their commitment to social change and lifting up our profession is the thread that binds them together.

Another important aspect of this book is its focus on schools and communities. Why schools? I believe schools are the epicenter of communities and neighborhoods. A strong school contributes to the success of a strong community. So the work of school counselors and clinical mental health counselors is intertwined. Both professionals should work in tandem. Antiracist practice in schools challenges racist practices in communities and vice versa. As more counselors, teachers, and administrators explore the racial histories and legacies of their schools, many are finally asking, “How we can listen to and support Black parents and community members if we aren’t emphasizing antiracist practices in schools?” Doing antiracist work means acknowledging that racist beliefs and structures are pervasive in all aspects of our communities—from education to housing to climate change—and then actively doing the work to tear down those beliefs and systems. These beliefs and structures do not exist just in schools *or* communities—they thrive in both interchangeably.

Beware of Criticism

Many counselors may reject this book’s premise because they believe talking about race and racism is divisive. A white colleague once told me, “All this discussion about racism makes me uncomfortable. It feels accusatory and like racism is my fault. I would rather concentrate on our cultural similarities and differences. Rehashing our racist past is not needed.” This comment is typical and is an excellent example of what Paul Gorski (2019) called a *racial equity detour*. My colleague wanted to fall back on comfortable conversations about diversity and culture rather than uncomfortable conversations about the long-standing racialized societal systems that permeate my life as well as hers. In my colleague’s perception there was an inherent benefit to maintaining the status quo of these systems, whereas I can clearly see how my family and I are negatively impacted by racism every day. The discomfort associated with these conversations triggers resistance and often anger. Racial equity detours do not represent racial progress. They represent the opposite and sometimes negatively impact the climate of an organization or school. For example, diversity appreciation days are often a comfortable detour for most white people but frustrate Black and Brown individuals who desire a

change in racist and oppressive practices. Just think—we love Mexican food but push Mexican students out of our schools. If detours are used continuously in organizations, they exacerbate the frustration and helplessness of Black and Brown people. So this book will *not* ascribe to racial equity detours. Some readers may be uncomfortable with the authors' perspectives. However, discomfort is a part of the journey to an antiracist perspective.

Recently, a discussion of antiracism and critical race theory has been taken up by conservative state legislatures. Republican lawmakers in Texas, for instance, want to ban history lessons that include historical facts about the subjugation of Black and Brown people in the United States (e.g., slavery, colonialism). Many conservative lawmakers and groups confuse antiracism and critical race theory, a theory developed by legal scholars to highlight the experiences and narratives of marginalized people. The two concepts are interrelated, but they are different. The first chapter of this book includes definitions of these concepts so you will be more knowledgeable about the root of these groups' uneasiness and attack on civic education and U.S. history. I argue that the aim of the lawmakers' claims is not only to politicize the history of racism in the United States but also to detour away from correcting racism in this country. The fear of losing the privileges and benefits of whiteness is at the core of this movement to deny historical facts.

Also, it is important to note that many Black and Brown people will criticize this book. Some of my Black colleagues believe that talking about racism and antiracism creates discomfort among their white colleagues and further exacerbates the racial divide. I find this rationale confusing but not surprising because it is a manifestation of internalized racism and oppression. In a study, Robin Nicole Johnson (2012) emphasized that internalized racism involves both conscious and unconscious acceptance of a racial hierarchy in which white people's thoughts, views, and feelings must be protected and valued as most important. Internalized racism also encompasses a wide range of instances in which Black and Brown people accept negative racial stereotypes, adapt to white cultural standards, and embrace any type of thought that denies racism exists. Again, antiracist practice challenges these norms of behavior and cognition and will often create angst among white and Black or Brown colleagues. This book is no exception.

The Use of Racial Labels

Racism and anti-Blackness permeate every aspect of life in the United States and beyond—including the language used to describe people. Throughout history, the use of dehumanizing names and the refusal to manipulate language used to refer to Black adults (e.g., "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Dr.," "Professor") have perpetuated racist ideas about which groups are inferior and superior. For these reasons, it was essential to address the capitalization of "Black" and "Brown" before writing this book. I agonized over whether to capitalize "Black" and "Brown" in the text. Many of the chapter authors shared the same agony. In my chapters, I capitalize "Black" and "Brown" and use these terms to describe the unified and shared oppression and political interests of people of African descent; people who identify as Latinx, Hispanic, or Asian; and people from an Indigenous population. Some of the chapter authors refer to "people of color" rather than "Black" and "Brown" people and some capitalize "white." Some of the authors use *BIPOC* (pronounced "buy-pock"),

an inclusive term that stands for “Black, Indigenous, and people of color.” It is intended to combat the erasure of these diverse cultures. The inconsistencies in our use of these terms illustrate the diverse viewpoints on which labels are most appropriate. Regardless, the term “minority” is avoided in this book because this label lacks specificity, denotes inferiority, and neglects an overall sense of humanity.

It is noteworthy that many U.S. publishers and authors have adjusted their practices around capitalizing “Black” and “Brown.” Many years ago, Kailin (2002) argued that comparing Black and white racial labels is flawed because “white” does not denote a particular ethnicity or nationality. Black, in contrast, represents an ethnicity describing peoples of African descent. She stated,

One of the reasons people of the African diaspora may call themselves Black rather than a specific ethnicity is because their true ethnicity was robbed from them during slavery when all attempts were made to erase the history and identity of the African peoples. (Kailin, 2002, p. xxi)

Hence, “Black” denotes nationality, whereas “white” denotes skin color. In June 2020, the Associated Press changed its usage rules to capitalize the word “Black” when used in the context of race and culture but will continue its practice of not capitalizing “white.” *The New York Times* followed suit and has now changed its policy to capitalize “Black.” It is important to note that the term “African American” is not wrong, and some prefer it. However, I believe that capitalizing “Black” and “Brown” is desirable because these descriptors are more inclusive of ethnicities united by shared oppression, race, geography, and culture.

Breathe

As counselors, we have been trained to empathize, to give unconditional positive regard, and to embrace diverse perspectives. These are attributes of an effective counselor. At the same time, it is critical that we acknowledge the difficulty of our work, in particular as we embark on an antiracist journey. Reading this book might trigger intense emotions, including anxiety, fear, frustration, isolation, resentment, and self-blame. For Black and Brown counselors, discussing one’s experiences with racism is exhausting and may create feelings of isolation and despair. So I suggest that you breathe before beginning this book and take self-care breaks throughout your reading. Take care of yourself on this antiracist journey. Discuss the concepts with trusted colleagues and others who are on the same journey. Self-preservation and antiracist practice are intertwined and complementary. As Black feminist writer Audre Lorde (1988, p. 129) stated, “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

Breathe. Exhale.

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I extend a special acknowledgment to two women who continue to inspire me: Ms. Colethia Holcomb, my late mother, and the late Associate Professor Vivian Lee, an unflappable school counselor educator, human rights activist, and friend.



ABOUT THE EDITOR

Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, PhD, believes in the revolutionary power of school counseling. A fellow of the American Counseling Association with 30 years of experience as a kindergarten teacher, elementary school counselor, family therapist, and most recently university professor and administrator, she has a wealth of knowledge, expertise, and wisdom. Professor Holcomb-McCoy is currently the dean of the School of Education and a professor at American University (AU). She is also the author of the best selling book *School Counseling to Close the Achievement Gap: A Social Justice Framework for Success*. In her 5 years as dean, Professor Holcomb-McCoy founded AU's Summer Institute on Education, Equity and Justice and the AU Teacher Pipeline Project, a partnership with the (Washington) DC Public Schools and Friendship Charter Schools. She is also actively working to develop an antiracist curriculum for teachers-in-training. Prior to leading the School of Education at AU, she served as vice provost for faculty affairs campus-wide and vice dean of academic affairs in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University, where she launched the Johns Hopkins School Counseling Fellows Program and the Faculty Diversity Initiative. Professor Holcomb-McCoy has also been an associate professor in the Department of Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland College Park and director of the School Counseling Program at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. A decorated scholar, she has written 16 chapters in edited books and more than 40 articles published in peer-reviewed journals. From 2014 to 2016, she served as a consultant to former First Lady Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative, a program dedicated to supporting first-generation students in making it to and through college. She also serves on the board of Martha's Table, a nonprofit that supports health and wellness for children and families in the nation's capital. Professor Holcomb-McCoy's passion for school counseling, mental health, and wellness starts at home. As a proud mother of two, she knows firsthand the importance of systemic change to help students reach their full potential. A proud member of Delta Sigma

Theta Sorority, Inc., Professor Holcomb-McCoy holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Virginia. She earned a doctorate in counseling and counselor education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She lives in Potomac, Maryland, with her husband and two children.



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Gretchen Brion-Meisels, EdD, is a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education whose work draws on critical participatory action research approaches to understand how schools and communities can become more equitable and loving spaces. She completed her EdD at the Harvard Graduate School of Education after spending 10 years as a middle school teacher.

Julia Bryan, PhD, is a professor of counselor education at The Pennsylvania State University. Professor Bryan examines the role of school counselors in school-family-community partnerships and has developed an equity-focused partnership process model to promote care, academic achievement, antiracism, resilience, and equity for marginalized students. She also uses large national secondary data sets to research school counselors' roles in addressing academic achievement, college access, disciplinary referrals, school bonding, and other equity issues in schools that greatly affect students' lives, especially the lives of students of color. Professor Bryan has contributed numerous peer-reviewed empirical publications to the profession, including a special issue of the *Professional School Counseling* journal on collaboration and partnerships with families and communities. Professor Bryan was recently awarded the American Counseling Association's Extended Research Award, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision's Locke-Paisley Outstanding Mentor Award, and the National Career Development Association's Article of the Year Award.

Janice A. Byrd, PhD, is an assistant professor of counselor education in the Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education at The Pennsylvania State University. She earned her PhD in counselor education and supervision from the University of Iowa and has previous experience as a school counselor and career counselor. She has also counseled, taught, and mentored youth. Professor Byrd's scholarship seeks to situate the lived experiences of Black students within the broader ecological context to systematically examine how their personal, social, academic, and career success is interrupted and/or enhanced by school, family, community, and policies throughout all stages of the educational pipeline (i.e., K–12, postsecondary, and graduate studies).

Aubrey D. Daniels, PhD, LPC, is an assistant professor of counseling at Rider University. Her research is focused on complex trauma and the impacts it has on individuals and family systems both long term and short term. Much of her research focuses on the construct of resilience. She studies what factors lead to resilience despite the experience of trauma. Similar to her research interests, Professor Daniels's clinical practice is focused on trauma, more specifically childhood and complex trauma, crisis, and adult mental health.

Beth O. Day-Hairston, PhD, is dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies at Fort Valley State University. Professor Day-Hairston has presented extensively at numerous local, state, and national conferences on differentiated instruction, service learning, coteaching, inclusion, problem-based learning, experiential teaching, best practices for working with culturally and linguistically diverse families, best practices for teaching at-risk students, and teaching strategies for working with children with behavioral and emotional disorders. Professor Day-Hairston is the recipient the 2010 Wachovia Excellence in Teaching Award for Winston-Salem State University and the recipient of the 2000 Alumni Achiever of the Year Award for the School of Education and Performance at Winston-Salem State University.

Norma L. Day-Vines, PhD, serves as associate dean for faculty development in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University and maintains a faculty appointment as professor of counseling and human development. Prior to joining the faculty at Johns Hopkins University, she held tenured faculty positions at Virginia Tech and William & Mary. Professor Day-Vines's research agenda examines the importance of multiculturalism as an indispensable tool in the delivery of culturally competent counseling and educational services for clients and students from marginalized groups. More specifically, she specializes in the measurement of attitudes toward discussing the contextual dimensions of race, ethnicity, and culture with ethnic minority clients or students and the identification of strategies that reduce barriers to well-being. She has consulted with school districts across the country to address issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her scholarship has appeared in leading counseling journals, such as the *Journal of Counseling & Development*, the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, the *Journal of Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, and *Professional School Counseling*. Professor Day-Vines was recognized with an Exemplary Diversity Leadership Award in 2013 by the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development. In 2018 she received an Excellence in Teaching Award at Johns Hopkins University, and in 2019 she was awarded a Presidential Citation from the American Counseling Association in recognition of her scholarship on multiculturalism.

Traci Dennis, EdD, is a professorial lecturer in American University's School of Education. In her current role, she teaches undergraduate and graduate students in various education courses. Professor Dennis has a strong record of teaching in underfunded prekindergarten–Grade 12 schools. Her scholarly work focuses on examining how Black students experience school and schooling and the intersection of anti-Black racism and antiracist teaching. Through her teaching and scholarship, she aims to address the impact of inequities in education on students of color; support the development of antiracist knowledges, literacies, and capacities among teacher candidates; and assist teacher

candidates in translating antiracist theories and research into practice in pre-kindergarten–Grade 12 schools, classrooms, and curricula. Her goal is to use research to counter harmful dominant narratives, improve educational outcomes for students experiencing marginalization and oppression, amplify the voices of racially minoritized students, and create opportunities for adaptive and sustainable change.

Mary Edwin, PhD, LPC, NCC, is an assistant professor of counselor education at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. She received her doctoral degree from Pennsylvania State University, where she also served as a career counselor. Prior to earning her doctoral degree, Professor Edwin served as an elementary and middle school counselor. Her research interests include career development across the life span and fostering career development in K–12 schools.

Derek Francis, MA, is the manager of counseling services for Minneapolis Public Schools and a professional development consultant for Hatching Results. Derek, who specializes in helping students and staff build trusting cross-cultural relationships, has presented at state and national conferences around the country. In the summer of 2020, Derek led a webinar for more than 25,000 counselors and educators on proactive school counseling after a major racial incident. Some of Derek’s published work includes contributions to *Contemporary Case Studies in School Counseling*, the published blog “This Is Not a Fire Drill—Supporting Students After George Floyd,” and articles published for the American School Counselors Association and in the *American School Board Journal*. Derek was quoted in the November 2020 *Time* magazine article titled “‘You Can’t Be Silent.’ Schools Brace for the Presidential Election Aftermath.” Derek believes that school counselors are key to bridging our country’s racial divide. Spending time with his daughter, eating, and traveling are Derek’s favorite hobbies.

Dana Griffin, PhD, is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she teaches in the School of Counseling, Human Development and Family Studies, and Applied Developmental Sciences and Special Education programs in the School of Education. Professor Griffin also serves as a consultant for the university’s World View program, where she travels to school districts across North Carolina conducting workshops with schools on how to have courageous conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Professor Griffin teaches a variety of courses related to her research and interests in social justice and advocacy, cultural diversity, parent involvement, adolescent development, and school-family-community partnerships. Across these courses, Professor Griffin emphasizes the need for counselors, teachers, administrators, and other school stakeholders to address their biases and fight against institutional racism and other isms that exist in schools to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students, in particular Black, Indigenous, and other students of color and low-income students.

Dominiqua M. Griffin, PhD, NCC, is an assistant professor of school counseling at California State University, Fresno, and the program coordinator for the Master’s in School Counseling and Pupil Personnel Services program. She focuses on school counseling and international education to advance school counseling domestically and internationally. She centers Barbadian school counseling roles. Professor Griffin’s research extends to school-family-community partnerships and compassion fatigue in K–12 educators.

Paul C. Harris, PhD, is an associate professor in the Counselor Education program at Pennsylvania State University. He earned his BSEd in health and physical education with a concentration in sports medicine and his MEd in school counseling from the University of Virginia. He worked as a high school counselor for several years prior to completing his PhD in counselor education from the University of Maryland, whose program emphasized promoting systemic equity, access, and justice in schools through counseling. He also holds an MDiv from Virginia Union University. Professor Harris's research focuses on achieving three goals: (a) improving the college and career readiness of underserved students, (b) promoting the identity development of Black male student athletes, and (c) facilitating the empowerment of antiracist school counselors. He is the creator of Men Passionately Pursuing Purpose, a program that exists to see Black male athletes thrive in and outside of sport. He is also the former president of the Virginia School Counselor Association and a former member of the board of directors of the American School Counselor Association.

Malik S. Henfield, PhD, is the founding dean of and a professor in the Institute for Racial Justice at Loyola University Chicago. He received a BA in biology from Francis Marion University, an MEd and EdS in school counseling from the University of South Carolina, and a PhD in counselor education from The Ohio State University. Professor Henfield's scholarship situates Black students' lived experiences in a broader ecological milieu to critically explore how their personal, social, academic, and career success is impeded and enhanced by school, family, and community contexts. His research has resulted in external funding, including most recently a grant from the National Science Foundation focused on increasing the number of students of color entering computer science professions and a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences aimed at determining the extent to which school districts provide equity and excellence in their gifted education programming.

Lynette M. Henry, PhD, is the manager of college success programs in the Office of Counseling and College and Career Readiness in Fairfax County Public Schools. She uses a systems approach to close opportunity gaps for college for students who are historically underserved in college. She manages programs designed to promote high-quality college access, readiness, and success among many underrepresented students. Many of the students served by these programs are the first in their families to attend college. Professor Henry has served in the field of education for the past 26 years, from prekindergarten through college, as a professor, school counselor, college and career counselor, and teacher in the United States and Barbados. Her passion for giving children access to opportunities through innovative school-family-community partnerships has led to her receiving the Superintendent We Deliver Miracles Award from the School District of Hillsborough County and Hillsborough Education Foundation for going above and beyond for schoolchildren and the community, the Ida S. Baker Diversity Educator of the Year from Just Elementary School (School District of Hillsborough County), and the Outstanding School Counseling Professional of the Year from Hayfield Secondary School (Fairfax County Public Schools).

Erik M. Hines, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems at Florida State University as well as the coordinator of the Counselor Education Program and School Counseling Track. Professor Hines prepares graduate students to be professional school counselors. Professor Hines's research agenda centers around (a) the college and career readiness of African American males; (b) parental involvement and its impact on academic

achievement among students of color; and (c) improving and increasing post-secondary opportunities for first-generation students, low-income students, and students of color (in particular African American males). In 2020 Professor Hines was selected as a fellow of the American Counseling Association.

Kara Ieva, PhD, is an associate professor in the Counseling in Educational Settings program at Rowan University. Her educational career, which spans more than 20 years, includes work as a Spanish teacher, as a professional school counselor, and in school counselor education. She received her BA in Spanish secondary education and an MEd in secondary education curriculum and administration from Towson University. In addition, she earned an MEd in school counseling from Loyola College in Maryland and her PhD in counselor education from the University of Central Florida. Kara's areas of research interest include promoting equity and wellness in education for children and adolescents from marginalized populations in the areas of college and career access, social-emotional development, and group counseling. She consults with regional school districts and provides professional development to prekindergarten–Grade 12 school counselors, teachers, and administrators on how to embed culturally affirming social-emotional development into curricula and strategies for cultivating safe and welcoming mental health and a neurodiverse culture in schools.

Kaprea Johnson, PhD, is an associate professor in counselor education at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her interests are broadly situated in interrogating education and health care systems as it relates to addressing social determinants of health needs, equity, access, and justice. In education, she is interested in school counseling practice, training needs, and outcomes in underresourced schools that serve predominantly minorities. She is an experienced scholar with more than \$4.5 million in grant-funded projects as either a principal investigator or a co-principal investigator, 51 peer-reviewed journal publications, two books, more than 80 presentations, and several practitioner-oriented publications. She is passionate about supporting the mental health and wellness needs of youth through assisting in the development of caring, knowledgeable, anti-racist, equity-driven school counselors.

Erin Mason, PhD, LPC, CPCS, is an assistant professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta and was previously a faculty member at DePaul University in Chicago. She spent 13 years as a middle school counselor. Her greatest joys as a counselor educator come from teaching, and she values most the fact that students provide her with ongoing opportunities to learn. Professor Mason's primary area of interest is the relationship between professional identity and professional practice in school counseling. Her scholarship has covered antiracism, antibias, and a justice philosophy for school counseling and school counselor preparation.

Renae D. Mayes, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies at the University of Arizona, where she prepares master's- and doctoral-level students to be counselors and counselor educators. Professor Mayes's research agenda centers around the academic success and college readiness of gifted Black students with dis/abilities and Black girls. Her research details the experiences of students and families navigating schools while also providing recommendations for dismantling systems of oppression through policy and practice. Furthermore, Professor Mayes has extended this research to include implications for leadership, advocacy, and collaboration for school counselors and school administrators.

Laura Owen, PhD, is the executive director of the Center for Equity and Postsecondary Attainment at San Diego State University. Formerly an urban school counselor and district counseling supervisor, she is a passionate advocate for closing college opportunity gaps. Her research focuses on evaluating the impact of interventions and programs designed to address the systems, structures, and policies that drive inequitable access to high-quality postsecondary advising support. Laura has researched interventions targeting financial aid and completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the transition from high school to college, text messaging and virtual advising, the impact of technology on college-going decisions, and how students prefer to receive college and career information. Her research includes interventions and partnerships with nonprofit college access organizations, technology companies, cross-institutional researchers, and school districts from Baltimore, Maryland, to San Diego, California.

Whitney Polk, PhD, is a licensed professional counselor in Pennsylvania and previously provided therapy to K–12 students in Philadelphia public schools. She is currently a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania researching discrimination, school discipline, and youth mental health.

Mandy Savitz-Romer, PhD, is the Nancy Pforzheimer Aronson Senior Lecturer in Human Development and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her research examines how schools structure counseling support systems and specifically what conditions are critical to effective practice. Professor Savitz-Romer is the author of *Fulfilling the Promise: Reimagining School Counseling to Advance Student Success* and coauthor of *Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success*.

Joshua Schuschke, PhD, is an assistant professor at Johns Hopkins University. Professor Schuschke is a scholar of Black academic identity development across multiple media contexts. He earned his PhD in 2019 from the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education's Urban Education Policy program. His concentration was in educational psychology with a special focus on intersectional educational experiences. Before his doctoral studies, Professor Schuschke earned his BS and MA degrees in Pan-African Studies from his hometown school, the University of Louisville. In his master's thesis he developed a theoretical framework of online Black academic identity development for Black students through the use of social media platform affordances. Professor Schuschke's dissertation, *#RepresentationMatters: Constructing Black Academic Identities Through Popular & Social Media*, received the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education PhD Dissertation of the Year Award.

M. Ann Shillingford, PhD, is an associate professor of counselor education at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Professor Shillingford has written several articles and book chapters on multicultural issues focused in particular on disparities among people of color. Professor Shillingford has a keen interest in exploring measures to deconstruct educational, social, and health disparities among marginalized communities. Professor Shillingford's coedited book *The Journey Unraveled: College and Career Readiness of African American Students* was published in the fall of 2015. Her coedited book *Demystifying the DSM for School Counselors* was published in September 2020.