FALL 2024

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MAGAZINE OF THE
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"More than 90 percent of the school's graduates plan to attend college. ... the school stands as a model and source of inspiration of teacher-led instruction, learning, collaboration, shared decision-making, and family and community engagement."

DATA BORDERS: HOW SILICON VALLEY IS BUILDING AN INDUSTRY AROUND IMMIGRANTS

Q&A WITH MELISSA VILLA-NICHOLAS

In her new book, "Data Borders: How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants," Villa-Nicholas investigates entrenched and emerging borderland technology that ensnares all people in an intimate web of surveillance where data resides and defines citizenship.

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"As library and information professionals, we want to know how to prioritize [the data of] undocumented people, immigrants and migrants. If they're part of library systems, they have the right to data privacy as well."

Cover image by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

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Embodying the principles of individual responsibility and social justice, an ethic of caring, and commitment to the communities we serve.

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"By involving families and community members in the educational process—and by partnering with businesses as well as with colleges and universities—community schools create a supportive network that has been shown to enhance student achievement and overall well-being and help build a robust and interconnected community."

At UCLA Ed&IS, one of the most notable ways we connect with local educators and students is through our work with community schools. This approach to schooling has received much attention in recent years, as the COVID-19 pandemic helped bring its value into stark relief. These institutions—which number more than 8,000 nationwide—are centers for academic learning, but they also serve as hubs for community engagement and support, integrating academic, health, and social services to address the diverse needs of students and their families. By involving families and community members in the educational process—and by partnering with businesses as well as with colleges and universities—community schools create a supportive network that has been shown to enhance student achievement and overall well-being and help build a robust and interconnected community.

In 2009, UCLA Community School (CS1) was launched as a partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the UCLA School of Education and Information Studies. In the intervening years, CS1 has become a beacon of success within the community and the larger community schooling world. Graduation rates began at 13 percent and are now at 98 percent, with significant groups of students attending UCs and CSUs, including UCLA. In 2016, UCLA Ed&IS partnered with LAUSD again to form Mann UCLA Community School in South Los Angeles.

The UCLA Center for Community Schooling works closely with both schools and the state network of community schools to provide support and research. In 2023, California committed $4.1 billion to making one in three schools in the state part of this movement.

This issue of the *Ed&IS Magazine* begins by spotlighting educational researchers who are focusing on this powerful trend. We start with a conversation with Karen Hunter Quartz, director of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, who shares insights into the state-level policy work she and the center are engaged with. We then shift to a conversation with Queena Kim, principal of the UCLA Community School, to learn more about what it's like to lead such a dynamic institution.

Next, we explore community schools' potential for teacher development. We look at research conducted by UCLA scholars Tomoko M. Nakajima, Natalie Fensterstock, and Jeffrey Yo in collaboration with Darlene Tieu, an educator at Mann UCLA Community School.

We then broaden the scope of our exploration of community by looking closely at the work of two Ed&IS scholars. First, in an excerpt from her book, *Data Borders: How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants*, Department of Information Studies Assistant Professor Melissa Villa-Nicholas describes the use of biotechnology to map and surveil undocumented individuals, revealing the sobering effects of defense technology manufacturing on Latinx immigrants.

Continuing our look at the connections between community and science, we explore Department of Education Assistant Professor Chris Jadallah's work on community-engaged science. Through a series of workshops at a small urban San Fernando Valley farm, Jadallah is training high schoolers to collect oral histories about their families' and communities' relationships to food, farming, and gardening.

Finally, we examine the Social Media and the Spread of Hate (SMASH) Project, a joint effort between Ed&IS and the Organization for Social Media Safety (OFSMS) that focuses on digital media well-being, including the effects of social media on children and young adults. In this article, we highlight OFSMS CEO Marc Berkman's testimony before Congress, in which he shared findings from SMASH's ongoing research efforts.

Through this collection of articles, we aim to underscore the vital ways that Ed&IS is engaged with, learns from, and is responsible to our community, both local and otherwise. We hope it inspires you to strengthen your connections to the world around you.

In unity
—Tina

BY JOHN MCDONALD

UCLA CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLING

PARTNERING TO MAKE

CALIFORNIA'S VISION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

A REALITY




In recent years, California has approved a $4.1 billion investment to expand and accelerate the development of community schools with a focus on whole-child education across the state.

The legislation defines a community school in the education code as a public school "with strong and intentional community partnerships ensuring pupil learning and whole child and family development," and specifically includes the following educational elements:

- **Integrated support services**
- **Family and community engagement**
- **Collaborative leadership and practices for educators and administrators**
- **Extended learning time and opportunities**

The legislation established the California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) to "build a cohesive statewide approach that mitigates the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on student learning, cognitive and social development, and emotional well-being." The CCSPP legislation also established a State Transformational Assistance Center (S-TAC) as well as Regional Technical Assistance Centers to support the development and expansion of community schools across the state.

Key to the CCSPP program are Planning Grants for local education agencies of up to $200,000 and Implementation Grants for new community schools or the expansion or continuation of existing community schools of up to $500,000 annually. To date, the CCSPP has awarded $2.6 billion in grants to nearly 500 local education agencies and more than 2,000 schools in support of community schooling.

Acknowledging its experience in the development of the groundbreaking UCLA Community School at the Robert F. Kennedy Education Complex in Los Angeles, the California Department of Education selected the UCLA Center for Community Schooling to serve as a lead partner in the CCSPP State Transformational Assistance Center. Joining with the Alameda County Office of Education, the National Education Association (NEA), and Californians for Justice, the Center is providing a range of support and technical assistance to the program and its grantees.

Photos by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

Interview with Karen Hunter Quartz

Director, UCLA Center for Community Schooling

Photo by Matt Harbicht

The UCLA Center for Community Schooling (CCS) is a campus-wide initiative to advance university-assisted community schools. CCS is led by Karen Hunter Quartz, a UCLA researcher who has been involved in the development of community schools since the earliest days of outreach and planning for the UCLA Community School began in 2006. Quartz spearheaded the design team behind the RFK UCLA Community School and in 2017 served on the design team for the Mann UCLA Community School. She leads a team of researchers and educators who bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise to the work of community schools.

UCLA Ed&IS: What is the role of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling (CCS) in the California Community School Partnership Program (CCSPP)?

KAREN HUNTER QUARTZ: Our role is to help grantees realize the state's vision for the CCSPP, to accelerate efforts to "reimagine schools in ways that are aligned with the equity goals that support the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of California's families."

UCLA Ed&IS: What does the Center bring to the CCSPP effort?

QUARTZ: CCS was selected as a State Transformational Assistance Center partner because of our deep understanding and commitment to community schooling. With a partnership with two local community schools—the UCLA Community School in Koreatown and Mann UCLA Community School in South Los Angeles—we have more than 15 years of experience supporting, studying and sharing the work of community schools.

Our team brings deep knowledge and on-the-ground wisdom to this effort—earned from working inside community schools. Leyda Garcia, our associate director for professional learning, was the principal of the UCLA Community School more than a decade. Wendy Salcedo-Fierro was the lead social studies teacher at the UCLA Community School and a mentor teacher for the UCLA Teacher Education Program. Brenda Benitez attended the UCLA Community School before graduating from Wellesley College in 2022 and returning to our team as a community school coordinator. Marisa Saunders is our associate director for research. With decades of policy research experience,

her work focuses on K–12 transformation efforts to address long-standing educational inequalities. Our efforts are strengthened by the support of our team of graduate students, as well as the contributions of other UCLA faculty members and research staff.

I also think one of the most important things our team brings to the effort is our commitment to equity and social justice as central to schooling. We have seen and learned its value in our work with the UCLA community schools. It is core to who we are and essential to our work with California community schools.

UCLA Ed&IS: What are your key areas of work?

QUARTZ: Our state-center work is guided by a commitment to research-practice partnerships. We collaborate with a set of deep-dive transformation partners to understand community school implementation from a systems perspective—helping build capacity to improve and transform community schooling.

We also help create and curate research-based resources that are aligned with the California Community Schools Framework to help meet the needs of education practitioners in community schools across the state.

Our team also leads the collection and analysis of data from all CCSPP grantee organizations, builds the capacity of grantees to utilize data, and produces data reports to inform and ensure public accountability.

UCLA Ed&IS: Can you give us some specific examples?

QUARTZ: Our team played an important role in grounding the California Community Schools Framework in the work of schools, LEAs, and other partners.

You can see some of this work in a resource that our lead researcher Marisa Saunders helped develop with our partners in the State Transformational Assistance Center (S-TAC), "Diving Deep into the California Community Framework: Identifying Overarching Values." The document provides an overview of the California Community Schools Framework and introduces its overarching values as a means of helping schools bring the framework to life. These include the development of Racially Just, Relationship-Centered Spaces, Shared Power, Classroom Community Connections, and, A Focus on Continuous Improvement. These "values" are highlighted in the "Diving Deep" resource. The document also includes and defines core conditions for learning, proven practices, and cornerstone commitments for community schools.

The idea is to be field setting. It's to say, "Look, community schooling is not just about implementing a checklist of expanded learning opportunities and partnerships. There is a lot more to this."

When our work started in May of 2022, the selection and funding of regional technical centers had not yet occurred. We responded by working on the ground. Leyda Garcia and other members of our team and S-TAC partners began working with local communities across the state to identify three deep-dive partner districts and co-lead learning exchanges. With our S-TAC partners, we supported a statewide Collective Learning Space, engaging more

"I also think one of the most important things our team brings to the effort is our commitment to equity and social justice as central to schooling. We have seen and learned its value in our work with the UCLA Community schools. It is core to who we are and essential to our work with California community schools."

Center for Community Schooling team (L–R) Wendy Salcedo-Fierro, Leyda W. Garcia, Karen Hunter Quartz, and Marisa Saunders. Photo by Matt Harbicht.

> **"Another key is to really listen to the people in your local community. Listen to parents, listen to neighbors, and engage together in democratic deliberation. Who are we? What do we bring? What do we need? What do we envision? How can we make it happen?"**

than 200 grantees. UCLA Community School teachers and leaders have joined us in this space and on webinars to share their expertise. We have also established communities of practice to support teacher leadership, superintendents, community storytelling, and the use of multiple measures to understand the implementation and impact of this historic initiative. And that is just a partial list.

UCLA Ed&IS: What have you learned in your work with UCLA that you hope will inform the development of California's community schools movement?

QUARTZ: At the core, it's a lot about teachers and teaching. Too often, community schools are narrowly identified as places with school-based clinics and integrated services. What we have learned working with the UCLA Community Schools is that nothing is going to happen without the deep engagement and mobilization of the teaching faculty and the development of really good instruction. Teachers need to be involved from the start, listened to, engaged in the development of curriculum and instructional practice, and be part of the collaborative leadership of the schools.

Another key is to really listen to the people in your local community. Listen to parents, listen to neighbors, and engage together in democratic deliberation. Who are we? What do we bring? What do we need? What do we envision? How can we make it happen? That's the grounded work of social change that planned reforms often neglect. "Sitting around a table with people in your community and discussing what you want to do and change and make better, and how you will know your school is improving—that to me is the real crux of it." It has to live locally in ways that allow you to do something really different because the reform machinery is set up to replicate rather than invent.

UCLA Ed&IS: What do you want policymakers to understand about the community school effort?

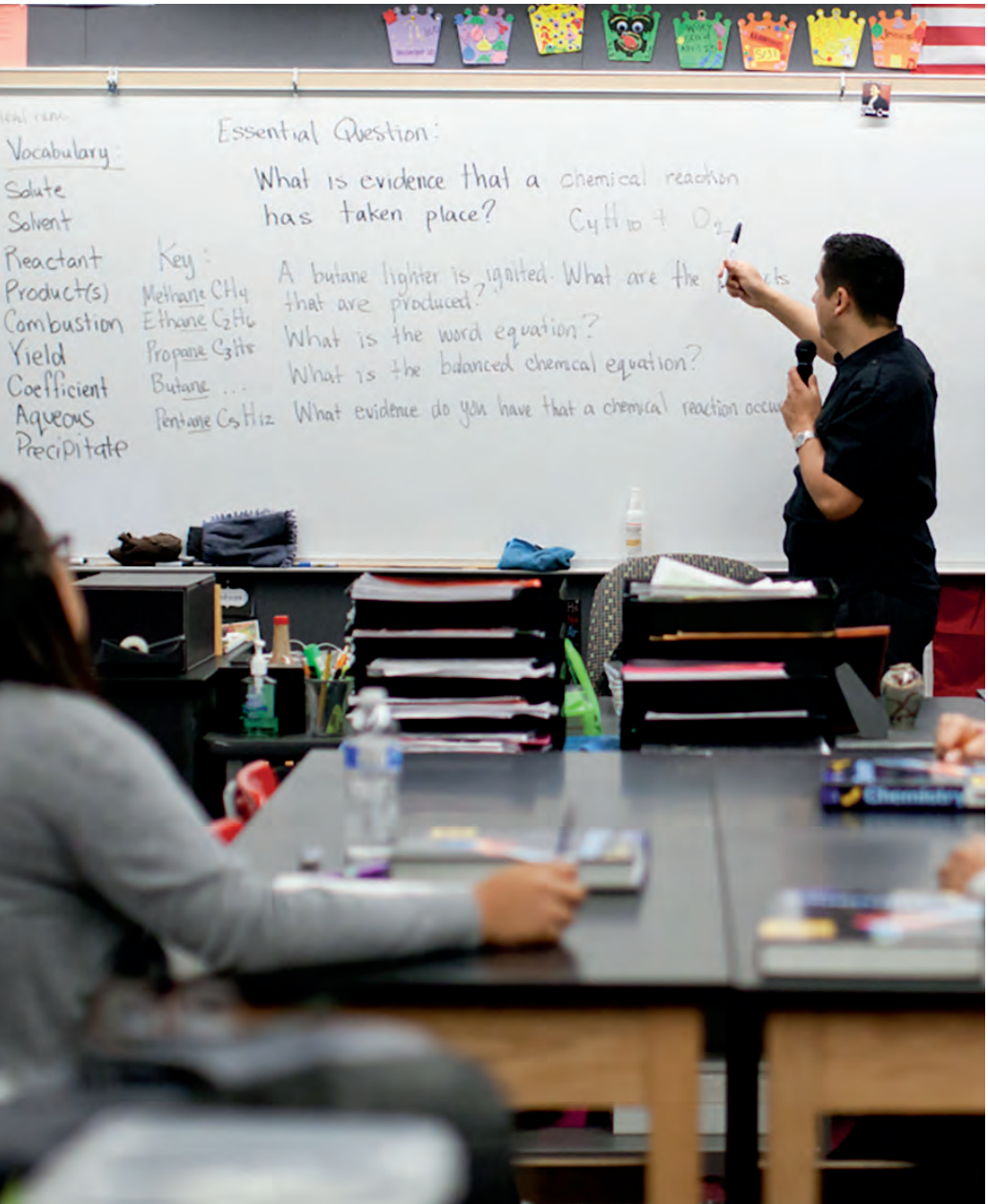
QUARTZ: We want to get policymakers to understand and think about assessment and accountability in ways that further learning and equity.

One big idea is to reframe the accountability debate and use data as a flashlight, not a hammer. At the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, we care a lot about measurement. Early on in the project, we created a multiple measures working group with research leaders from the eight regional TA centers. We developed a white paper, "Measuring What Matters," outlining a path forward for combining state and local measures to inform the development, monitoring, and improvement of community schooling across California. We are also piloting an online course for grantees to help them develop local measures to track and improve their own implementation and outcomes. Measures such as attendance and graduation rates will always be important, but there's a richer data landscape to explore, such as performance assessments, school climate surveys, and measures of student well-being. We want to make sure that when we talk about how we know a community school is successful, we are including a variety of good measures that people care about.

UCLA Ed&IS: What are the challenges ahead?

QUARTZ: One as I mentioned, is to use data to learn. Part of our work is to collect statewide data from grantees using an Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR is a great tool, but it's too often viewed as a compliance report you have to fill out to send to the state. We're trying to buck that trend and have people deeply engage in inquiry and learning at their site level and view this as not just a reform, but the way they do school.

The other big challenge is sustainability. There are a lot of people working on blending and braiding funding streams so that community schools outlive this round of reform funding. One strategy we recommend is tapping the potential of K–12 higher education partnerships. UCLA and other universities across the state and country take seriously their civic duty as community school partners. That's both a challenge and an opportunity. I'm on the national steering committee of the University-Assisted Community School Network. It's really a civic engagement higher education movement. We are working to support higher education anchor institutions to partner with community schools in mutually beneficial ways that will help secure the future of public education.



"At the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, we care a lot about measurement. Early on in the project, we created a multiple measures working group with research leaders from the eight regional TA centers. We developed a white paper, 'Measuring What Matters,' outlining a path forward for combining state and local measures to inform the development, monitoring, and improvement of community schooling across California."

Shining a Light on Community School Leadership

Q&A with Queena Kim

BY JOHN MCDONALD

Queena Kim is the principal of the UCLA Community School at the Los Angeles Unified School District's RFK educational complex in Koreatown. Planning for the school began in 2006, before it opened in 2009 as a K–5 university-assisted community school serving 345 neighborhood children. A key aspect of the program is an innovative dual-language instructional program, building on the assets of local Spanish and Korean families.

Today, the school is a nationally recognized TK–12 community school serving 900 neighborhood students. More than 90 percent of the school's graduates plan to attend college. With a theme of "Where We Grow Together," the school stands as a model and source of inspiration of teacher-led instruction, learning, collaboration, shared decision-making, and family and community engagement.

Kim is more than a principal. In some ways, she is the keeper of the flame. She has been at the school from the very beginning, taking part in early planning meetings, serving as one of the first lead teachers, and later as an administrator, assistant principal, and now principal. She lives in the neighborhood less than two miles from the school. She is part of and deeply connected to the school and community.

As California looks to expand community schooling across the state, her experiences offer insight and ideas for others working to develop community schools. She is a leader who can help to light the way.

UCLA Ed&IS: How did you get involved with UCLA Community School?

QUEENA KIM: I was in the right spot at the right time. I was teaching at a nearby elementary school and heard about an idea for a UCLA Community School in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District. I was drawn by the idea of working with UCLA because I earned my teaching credential and master's degree in education there and believe deeply in the mission of urban education and making a change in the community. I was taking classes in the UCLA Principal Leadership Program [at the time] and Karen Quartz invited me to a planning meeting—they were open to the public—and I wound up joining the advisory committee.

Part of the design of the school was that it would be a teacher-led, teacher-driven school that would be centered around the community. The idea of the autonomy we would have around curriculum really spoke to me. It would be an opportunity for teachers to have a say in how they would teach and what they would teach, and how they would meet the needs of students and also validate their culture and language. There was a big focus on bilingual education. It was a simple vision, but I felt very compelled to be part of the whole thing. It seemed, honestly, like a dream. A dream project that fell into my lap. I realized I was very interested in becoming a lead teacher. I didn't have to think about it twice. It was an immediate, automatic decision. I said, I want to be part of this. And that's how it all started. It was the best decision I made.

Ed&IS: How do you approach your work?

KIM: From a personal perspective, I've always approached this work as service to the community and in turn, servicing the outside world through that work. I use that as a mindset and a philosophy—serving the students, the parents, and the teachers. We all have gifts and abilities we can use towards the service of others and the common well-being. I hope I model that. I also try to be kind. Kindness and joy are a big part of this job. I also try to be very organized.

> "Part of the design of the school was that it would be a teacher-led, teacher-driven school that would be centered around the community."

Ed&IS: Karen Hunter Quartz, the director of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, says your school "leads from every chair." What does that mean, and how do you do that?

KIM: That has been something we've done from the beginning. It starts with identity building. Because we started as a school with a vision to transform education and to have productive democratic spaces, we've been able to practice that and over time, been able to grow that leadership.

We talk about leader identity in every space. If you're a teacher, you need to offer leadership, and we want them to say that to the students. A lot of the decisions we make, we make as a team. We strive for consensus, which means everyone needs to participate. And they are asked to participate. We've just really practiced that. You have to do a lot of leadership development. That's something we try not to take for granted. We do retreats at the beginning of the school year. Every time we meet, we talk about identity, we look at our norms. There are practical things we do during meeting that I think show people that we do consider them as a leader, versus just saying, "You're a leader," and then not treating them as one. Our tagline is "Where We Grow Together." It sounds corny, but it fits. We work hard to connect whatever we do to our core values and our mission. It's part of our language. Relationships, collaboration, and connections are key.

> "Where We Grow Together"

Teachers and staff from UCLA Community School meet with UCLA professors to discuss the various research projects.

> "We have a lot of meetings, and those meetings are comprised of groups of people with specific roles that come together for specific purposes. There is a lot of shared information and shared decision-making and you need to be able to see it from other points of view, to see it in a systemwide view."

Ed&IS: Running a community school is a big challenge. Can you share some insight into the organizational leadership of the school?

KIM: I think you have to be very organized and be able to leverage your organizational leadership and structure to manage information and communication. I think that is a strength of mine. A massive amount of information comes at us. You have to be able to respond to it, be able to synthesize it, and share it in a way that makes sense to all the people that you have to communicate with. That alone is a big job.

You need distributed leadership, you need clear roles, and you need a space where all that information is housed, where it's accessible. You need a really good system of communicating where everyone knows where to go for everything, but that's just on that informational level. You need to have opportunities to discuss it and make sense of it. You need sense-making spaces, those places where we can make sense of all of that and process and make it applicable to the school. We have a lot of meetings, and those meetings are comprised of groups of people with specific roles that come together for specific purposes. There is a lot of shared information and shared decision-making and you need to be able to see it from other points of view, to see it in a systemwide view. We have worked really hard on how to map out these systems.

Ed&IS: How do you help and support teachers?

KIM: Our teachers are constantly looking to improve their practice, and they need tools, a process, and space to do that. Collaboration, meaningful professional development with actual feedback, and a space for reflection are key to the effort and are three areas that we are constantly working to strengthen. With collaboration, we have lead teachers who have regular meetings to determine what they want to work on around curriculum and instruction. I can pull resources, whether it's time or materials to support that. With professional development, there's a sense that we're all improving and getting new information, or maybe we're getting better strategies, and those professional development opportunities can be directly related to the classroom. That's something we've done with writing and with math.

The last is around reflection. This is one area I wish we had more time for. Some of it is informal, where a newer teacher can just go talk with other teachers and get ideas from them, or even just a thought partner to throw an idea at and get feedback right away. And we've built those relationships. The culture of the school we want is that teachers know that if there's something they want to

get feedback on, that is something we do. It's part of our professional interactions and collaboration. Every teacher is part of a team and we give teachers time to plan together. We also have national board teachers who serve as mentors, and we have coaches, some of whom focus on our new teachers. My job has always been trying to bring it all together to connect the pieces.

Ed&IS: How do you listen to and engage the voice of students and parents?

KIM: I always want to see more student voice and parental engagement in ways that challenge what we have been doing and what we need to do.

At our school, everyone is expected to be an active, critical participant. That's one of our core competencies. That includes students and adults. We have formal spaces where kids sit in councils, and we have leadership councils. I know a lot of schools do that, but I think this is a little different, it just feels more part of the culture, and it's more organic. I would hope that our students feel like they can always bring something up. I also think teachers value student voice, their culture, and their stories. That builds on this foundation that who they are is very much valued. Our teachers do an amazing job of validating their voices and asking them to share, maybe through a reflection or maybe a survey.

Listening to parents has been a big part of our school since the beginning. If parents have ideas, we take them seriously and try to show we are supportive. If they want to get a group going, or if they're curious about a certain activity or just want to know about something, we try to deliver for them, so they know that we are working to meet their needs.

I always ask, is there something for parents? I think the parents love coming to school when they see their child doing something. That's key. There's got to be a reason why they're coming, and it needs to be about their child. I think having inviting events for parents, having food and music, to be able to see their kid thriving, just makes people feel happy. You can utilize those moments.

I also think parents need to sense that the whole school, all the adults, not just the principal or just the teacher, but also the support staff who they may be interacting with, have [a] kind and inviting demeanor. And it's important that parents see you and that you respond to them. If we separate ourselves from parents, then I think inadvertently, they will start distancing themselves from us.

Ed&IS: Are there some universal principles for community school leadership?

KIM: I think, essentially, when it says community schooling, you have to know the community. You have to know the students, their parents, their families. There should be a lot of places where kids are telling stories, and teachers and community members are sharing their experiences and hearing from others. I think that's vital.

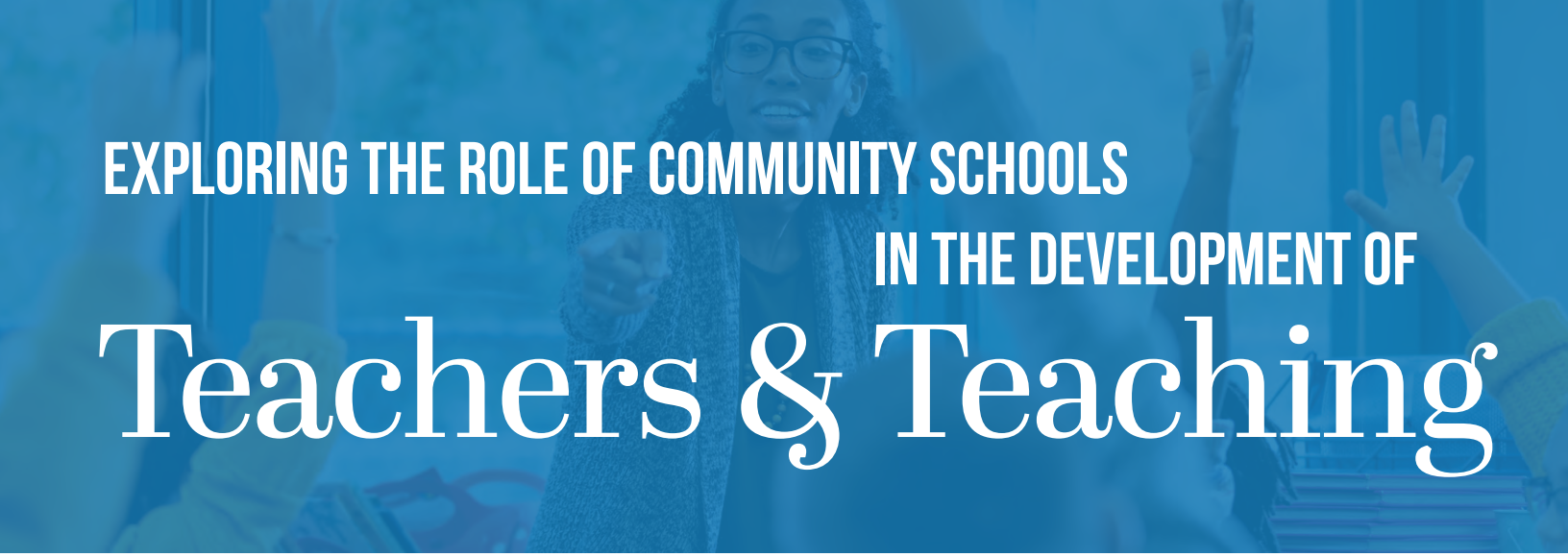
Partnerships are also key. Partnerships with community organizations, or as in our case, the university, can heighten the level of thinking, coordination, and collaboration a community school needs to learn. They can also connect you to important resources.

Quality instruction is essential. It's the bread and butter of a school. Teaching and learning for the adults and the students need to be central. Teachers need to be engaged in and lead instruction.

Ed&IS: Do you have specific advice for new community school principals?

KIM: They need a core team, and ideally, that starts with the teachers. Teachers are going to do the work in the classroom and may be the first person that the parent may interact with. Teachers need to be partners. It takes longer, but it's vital. You have to work with the teachers because that's where amazing ideas come from. You won't be able to involve everyone if you don't have the teachers.

Secondly, having the support of the school district is key. You can go a lot further if you have district support, especially with the operations and logistics and helping you to make things happen.



EXPLORING THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF Teachers & Teaching

Research presented at AERA highlights the work of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling in exploring the importance of teacher retention—particularly for teachers of color—and how California's investment in the expansion of community schools may provide an opportunity for doing just that.

BY JOHN MCDONALD

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the challenges faced by too many children, shining a bright light on the inequities that plague our students, our schools, and the communities they live in. In response, the State of California has made a multi-billion dollar investment in the expansion of community schools across the state. The idea is to accelerate the development of schools with a focus on whole-child education. Much of the conversation has focused on connecting "community schools" with a range of integrated services—healthcare, mental health counseling, economic assistance, and more—to address the social and emotional needs of children and families.

Those services are desperately needed and tremendously important. But as the community schools movement in California expands, education researchers at UCLA contend that whole-child education in community schools requires, "an intent focus on what happens in the classroom and really good teaching."

"The role of teachers and teaching in community schools has been somewhat neglected," says Marisa Saunders, lead researcher for the UCLA Center for Community Schooling (CCS).

"We need to expand our focus beyond student supports and services to better understand what is going on in the classroom and the important role of teachers in community schools. A focus on teacher development and the supports they need are critical."

Saunders believes that community schools can and should provide the workplace conditions and a learning environment that supports good teaching and student learning. And California's investment in the expansion of community schools may provide an opportunity for doing just that.

"We have a perennial shortage of teachers and a huge need to recruit and retain teachers of color," Saunders says. "Community schools may offer a potential strategy for helping us to do so."

To explore this potential, researchers at UCLA CCS, with funding from the Hewlett and Stuart Foundations, began conducting research exploring community schools as a strategy for retaining teachers, particularly teachers who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). They wanted to examine the role of teachers in community schools where there is a focus on whole child education, what was happening with the retention of teachers, and why teachers leave the profession. The research team, including Natalie Fensterstock, Tomoko Nakajima, and Jeffrey Yo, presented their findings at the 2024 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in Philadelphia.

"Our purpose primarily was to elevate the role of teachers and to engage in a discussion about teachers in community schools. The research presented provides valuable insights into the potential of community schools as learning environments that teachers actively shape, while also highlighting how that environment, in turn, influences teachers' experiences," Saunders says.

The UCLA team shared highlights of three research papers. Together, their research makes the case that whole-child education, like community schooling, requires a "whole teacher" approach. Teachers want to bring their full selves to their work, bringing their interests and activism to the classroom to help students. Systems need to be developed to support teachers as trusted "agents" and leaders to craft and design learning. And that these conditions can influence teacher satisfaction and retention.

> **"We have a perennial shortage of teachers and a huge need to recruit and retain teachers of color. Community schools may offer a potential strategy for helping us to do so."**

Teachivists: Community Schools as a Setting for "Transformation in Our Society"

BY UCLA RESEARCHER
TOMOKO M. NAKAJIMA

Nakajima's presentation highlighted findings from a research-practice partnership conducted with UCLA colleagues Marisa Saunders, Darlene Tieu, and Rosa Jimenez. In this secondary data analysis, the team looked at 53 interviews conducted with teachers at a local public school district. Their analysis explored what features at community schools attract Black, Indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC) as teachers and how the strategy might encourage stronger BIPOC teacher retention than at traditional public schools.

"The term teachivist emerged in the first year of our data collection," said Nakajima, "It was a portmanteau invented by a study participant—a BIPOC community school teacher—who was telling me about the sense of camaraderie that they felt with their colleagues. Teacher combined with activist became this word, teachivist. That delightful moment inspired this new inquiry."

By focusing on how BIPOC community teachers spoke about their passions, values, and past experiences, Nakajima found that their activist leanings motivated BIPOC individuals to choose the teaching profession and drew them to the community schools they currently serve. They were also integral to their daily work, as teachers strengthened their commitment to their place of work, their coworkers, and their students. Teachivists recognize and challenge inequities and aim to inspire and mobilize their students. They value solidarity, supportive leadership, and ongoing professional learning.

Nakajima said that in the interviews, "Our participants had identified as activists long before they became teachers. They had spoken animatedly about recognizing and calling out societal inequities, expressing dissenting opinions they held, and about wanting to disrupt the status quo in education." This identity played out in participants' pathways into teaching. One teacher explained that theirs was a deliberate choice to teach in the neighborhood public school where they grew up because they were "giving my community the education that we deserve."

After choosing teaching as their career, BIPOC community teachers said they sought workplaces where the conditions were ripe for activism, where they could work as catalysts for social movements alongside like-minded folks where the movement was already in motion. This sense of solidarity with others on campus was a powerful and necessary condition of their employment. Teachers in the study also deliberately navigated toward schools where the leadership and governance structures supported teachivism and offered an atypical level of trust and classroom autonomy from the powers that be.

When asked what strengthens BIPOC teacher retention, participants responded that they wanted to grow in their capacity to serve their students and be on a never-ending continuum of learning. They called for ongoing guidance and learning opportunities to help them adapt with the times and push against normative practices. Teachivists challenged themselves and their colleagues to do better and bring about positive change in the world.

Nakajima hypothesized that community schools, which aim to center social justice, teacher leadership, and integrated supports, can be attractive workplaces for BIPOC teachers looking to align their values with their school's unifying principles. With site leaders who encourage, appreciate, and amplify teacher voice, community schools can catalyze transformative change in education and simultaneously sustain BIPOC teacher retention.

"These practices and conditions can be adopted anywhere, not just in community schools, and they should be, according to our participants," said Nakajima. "Doing so would undoubtedly protect and strengthen the profession for all teachers."

"Nakajima hypothesized that community schools, which aim to center social justice, teacher leadership, and integrated supports, can be attractive workplaces for BIPOC teachers looking to align their values with their school's unifying principles."

"You Can't Talk About the Whole Child Without the Whole Teacher"

BY NATALIE FENSTERSTOCK
UCLA DOCTORAL STUDENT

The presentation draws on the study, "Beyond Teacher Leadership: The Role of Teachers as Learners, Innovators and Designers for Whole Child Education," conducted by Fensterstock and Saunders in collaboration with Barnett Berry and Peter Moyi at the University of South Carolina. Karolyn Maurer of UCLA also contributed to the study. The research looks at how two school districts, Surrey in British Columbia and Anaheim Union High School District in Southern California, supported whole-teacher development in community schools.

"We were really focused on understanding district systems of support for teachers and how those district systems of support enabled teachers to deliver on the promise of whole child education," Fensterstock says. "We were trying to understand what it took to support teachers by exploring the perspectives of district staff, teachers, and teacher coaches."

The presentation explored the idea that education systems need to be developed to support teachers as "agents," trusted as leaders to craft and design learning.

Natalie Fensterstock, UCLA doctoral student

The findings highlight the ways that schools and districts understand the concepts of whole teacher and whole teacher development, underscoring the need to put teachers first to put students first.

They also identify conditions of whole-teacher development with a focus on school or district approaches aimed at holistically supporting teachers. These include a space for open and honest feedback, a willingness to innovate and collaborate, and a focus on relationships and building a sense of belonging. Teachers also need opportunities for personal development.

Fensterstock's presentation emphasized the need for systemic support, including release time for professional development and collaborative leadership. She also highlighted the moves the districts made towards curricula that focus on student competence in subject matter content, self-assessment, and holistic assessment systems. The conversation also highlighted the importance of systemic support for teacher well-being, such as non-evaluative peer coaching, collective efficacy, and release days for collaboration.

By treating teachers as professionals and fostering a supportive environment, Fensterstock noted, community schools potentially can improve teacher retention and job satisfaction.

"Community school teachers are whole child teachers," Fensterstock said. "These are teachers that collaboratively design learning opportunities for school and community, who promote a culturally responsive curricular approach that builds on students prior learning, identity development, and local community needs and assets. They adapt curriculum to address real-world challenges and center social and emotional learning alongside traditional academic content. They are focused on building trusting relationships with students and families.

"We need to really think about the role of the district and the role of supporting these teachers from the systems level," Fensterstock concluded." It cannot simply be individual-level approaches. We need systemic solutions to systemic issues."

"Exploring Teacher Satisfaction and Teacher Retention in a District Supported Community Schools Initiative"

BY UCLA RESEARCHER JEFFREY YO

Jeffrey Yo examines BIPOC teacher retention and the experiences of BIPOC teachers in community schools. The study is part of a three-year longitudinal partnership between UCLA and a large urban school district implementing a community schools initiative. The district's community schools director is a co-author. The mixed methods study seeks to understand the ways community schools can be an effective strategy for teacher retention.

Yo began by sharing data on the racial divide and teacher shortage. Over half of K–12 students in the U.S. are Black, Indigenous, or other people of color (BIPOC), but less than 30 percent are BIPOC educators. The racial divide stems in part from ongoing teacher shortages in K–12 schools. The problem has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In a 2022 National Education Association survey of teachers, more than half (55 percent) said they planned to leave the profession. The number was even higher among Black and Latino teachers. California schools face similar challenges.

Yo's presentation looked at the potential of community schools to address the retention of BIPOC teachers and their experiences in community schools to understand the ways community schools can serve as an effective strategy for teacher retention.

"One thing that's special about community schooling is that it's a promising strategy for retaining BIPOC teachers," Yo said. "As democratic spaces, they can empower teachers and be a place for them to serve as activists and leaders where they can grow and thrive. There's this idea that community schools can address issues that often lead to teacher attrition, such as feelings of isolation, frustration, and lack of influence."

Analyzing human resources data from the participating school district, the study compared retention rates between community schools and traditional public schools, finding similar rates but noting higher retention in community schools at the elementary level. It is less clear whether community schools or traditional schools had higher retention rates overall.

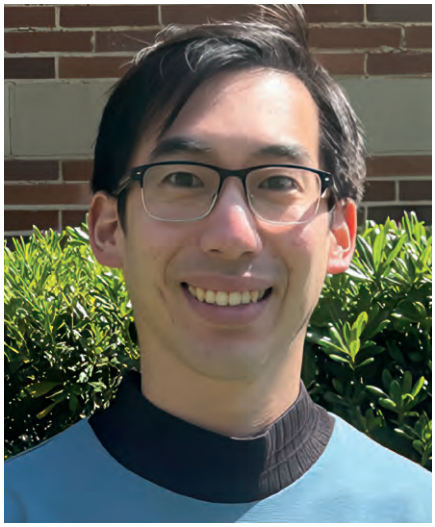
Another key aspect of the research is a focus on the "shifting" rates of teachers in community schools versus traditional schools and its impact, if any, on teacher retention. "Shifters" are classroom teachers who may leave the classroom to take on an out-of-classroom teaching role, such as an instructional coach or coordinator or an administrative role but stay within the school. The analysis calculated the BIPOC Teacher Retention/Shifting rate for each school in the study.

Research suggests that higher rates of shifting may support BIPOC teacher retention.

"Community Schools might utilize teacher shifting more than traditional public schools as a strategy to retain staff," Yo said. "This approach may foster a more supportive teaching environment, where the school community supports teachers' roles both inside and outside the classroom, allowing them to continue contributing to the school in various capacities."

Community schools at the elementary grade level had higher or equal in-school shifting rates among BIPOC teachers compared to traditional elementary schools. Community schools at the middle and high school grade levels showed higher shifting rates for BIPOC teachers compared to traditional schools, with some nuance in the data for differing years.

Yo's presentation underscored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers in community schools and the implications for teacher retention. Previous research has illustrated challenges related to pandemic-induced trauma, and case-study findings reveal that BIPOC teachers experienced student and family trauma, complicating their retention in the school.



Jeffrey Yo, UCLA Researcher

Overall, the findings indicate that BIPOC teacher retention is similar between community schools and public non-community schools in the school district. Retention and shifting rates varied by school type, but the differences were not significant enough to indicate a true disparity. That said, elementary community schools showed slightly higher retention, which may suggest that community schools support BIPOC retention.

To better understand how community schools support BIPOC teachers, Yo is expanding his analysis to a larger sample of community and traditional public schools, with a focus on specific teacher subgroups to determine which schools and teachers benefit the most.

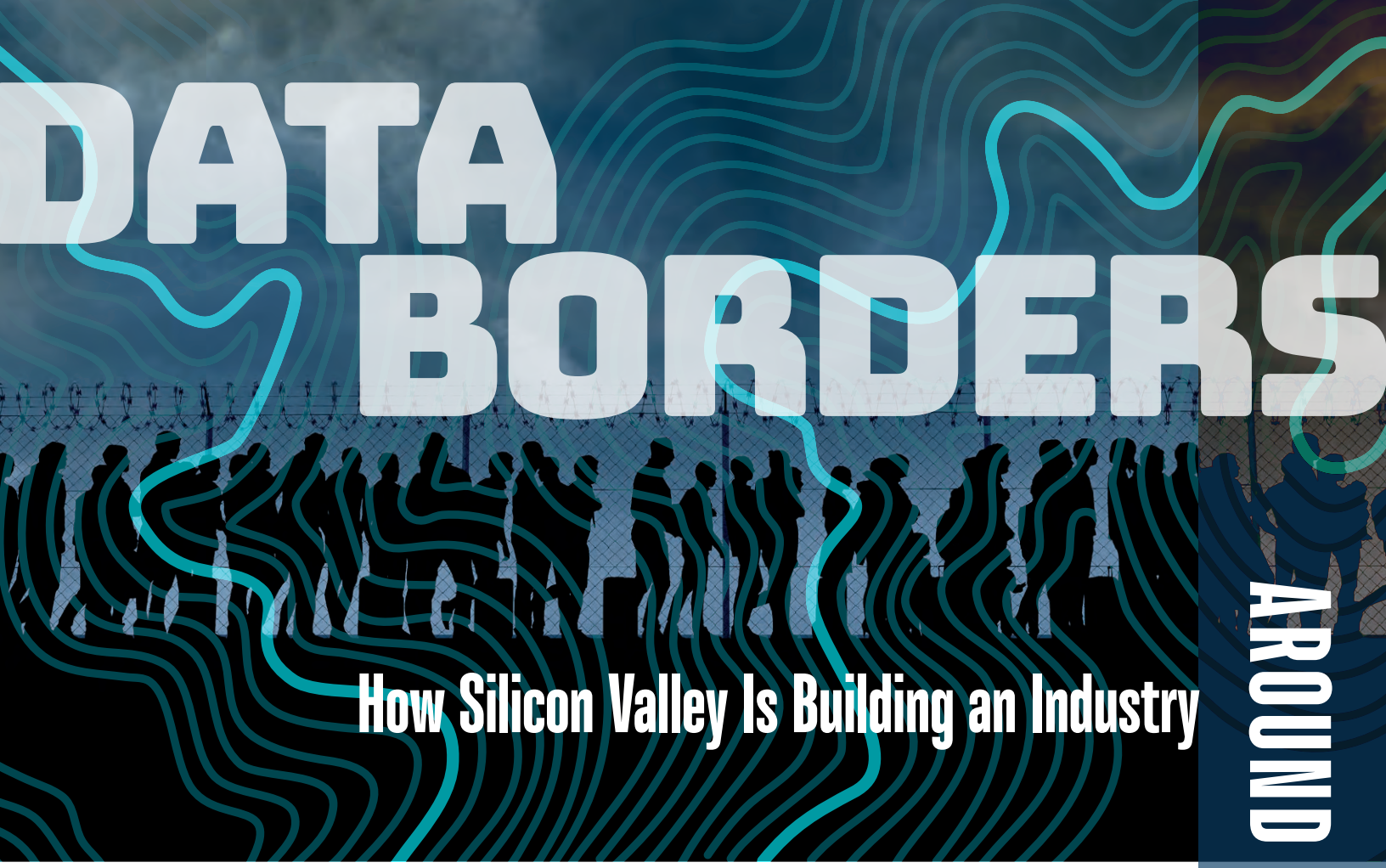
The study recommends that community schools embrace efforts such as in-school shifting as a school practice that enables teachers to move in and out of the classroom as needed yet remain connected to their school community. It also recommends policies and initiatives that sustain and support a whole-teacher approach wherein teachers can integrate all aspects of themselves into their work while receiving holistic support—not only for their pedagogy but also for their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

The researchers contend that these policies, such as rebuilding practices that promote teacher collaboration, strengthening teacher-community connections, providing stable school administrations, and fostering democratic leadership, can empower and support teachers and ultimately help them foster long and fulfilling teaching careers.

"The research presented by our team at AERA represents a growing and exciting body of work focused on community school teachers," says Saunders. "With a focus on teachers, it offers important contributions to a more complete understanding of the potential of community schools as places that can tend to the needs of the whole child and the whole teacher.

"Our hope is that this research will help policymakers and education leaders to understand that a focus on whole-teacher supports, in community schools and beyond, represents a potential strategy for California to strengthen its teaching recruitment and retention efforts. Let's take what we're learning from the research and create the spaces teachers need so that they can thrive in the profession to which they were called."

"Community Schools might utilize teacher shifting more than traditional public schools as a strategy to retain staff. This approach may foster a more supportive teaching environment, where the school community supports teachers' roles both inside and outside the classroom, allowing them to continue contributing to the school in various capacities."



DATA BORDERS

How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants

Q&A with Melissa Villa-Nicholas

BY JOANIE HARMON

In her new book, "Data Borders: How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants," Villa-Nicholas investigates entrenched and emerging borderland technology that ensnares all people in an intimate web of surveillance where data resides and defines citizenship. Detailing the new trend of biologically mapping undocumented people through biotechnologies, she shows how surreptitious monitoring of Latinx immigrants is the focus of and the driving force behind Silicon Valley's growing industry within defense technology manufacturing.

> **"ICE can basically use LexisNexis as a database to gather information about anyone in that database."**

When Melissa Villa-Nicholas was a doctoral student at the at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, she linked her research to her Los Angeles roots, with her dissertation on the fight to increase Latinx representation in the telecommunications workforce in the 1970s. Her dissertation became the 2022 book, "Latinas on the Line: Invisible Labor in Telecommunications," published by Rutgers Press.

Villa-Nicholas, who recently joined the faculty this fall as an assistant professor in the UCLA Department of Information Studies and an affiliate of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center and DataX, has expanded on the complicated histories of Latinx populations and technology with her second book, "Data Borders: How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants," which was released in July 2023 by UC Press. "Data Borders" has received the 2023 Book Award for the McGannon Center from Fordham University.

Professor Villa-Nicholas focuses her work on Latino information and technology histories and practices in the U.S., critical information science, and the social construction of technologies.

"UCLA is a dream school to work at because it's the place that everyone loves when you're from out here," says Professor Villa-Nicholas. "I was born in Torrance, and my family lives all over L.A. I'm excited to join the faculty and to bring my work here."

UCLA Ed&IS: In what ways did your work on "Latinas on the Line" influence or inspire your broader research into Latinx contributions to technology and the history of information? How did this project shape your understanding of these topics and guide your future inquiries?

MELISSA VILLA-NICHOLAS: I had gotten into my Ph.D. at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and like many students, was searching for a dissertation topic. I started to take courses on the history of technology and history of telecommunications.

And then, I looked at my own life. I'm second-generation Mexican American. My grandparents came from Chihuahua a long time ago, and my mom and all of my aunts and uncles were telephone operators in Southern California in the 1970s. I realized this is a history of telecommunications that hasn't been written. It's a Latinx history of technologies that we need to offset the idea that Latinx [people] have a deficit around technology.

I started asking my family about their experience, how they got involved in the phone company, and saw it was connected to bigger structural change and telecommunication. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) had a lawsuit against AT&T for unfair practices, hiring practices, and promotion. Essentially, AT&T had to start diversifying and giving women that were already in the company promotion[s]. There was this huge shake-up in the early 1970s, right when my mom and my aunts and uncles were in their early twenties, looking for jobs.

Photos by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

> **"The smart wall is essentially a bipartisan project that both parties agree is a more peaceful initiative than a physical wall. It basically opened bids, especially to Silicon Valley companies, to build different types of technologies for surveillance and deportation along the U.S.-Mexico border."**

[AT&T] started to recruit, especially locally in Southern California. It hit the other independent telephone companies as well, this major affirmative action movement. A lot of folks that might have not had [an] entrance into telecommunications before, suddenly could get these jobs. These were jobs that helped people come from blue collar [to the] middle class at that time in California, solid, well-paying jobs would pay for college, retirement fund.

It's interesting to go back and see where everyone has their history in telecommunications. My grandpa had come to California to work with the trains. A lot of Mexican men got work with the trains … in the late 19th century and early 20th century, but he happened to get that work later on. He also went into telecommunications [through] airplane repair and train repair. In my book, I say Mexican men have an early relationship to telecommunications because … big data centers where Google puts a lot of the data storage and warehouses are built along the train lines, and the major telecommunications infrastructure is built along the train tracks of the early 19th century.

UCLA Ed&IS: In what ways did your first book influence or contribute to the development of "Data Borders"? How did the themes, research, or insights from that project shape or inform your approach to this later work?

VILLA-NICHOLAS: As a doctoral student and as a Latina, I felt I needed a technology history to be able to write about the present. I needed to write "Latinas on the Line," [to see] where we were before, and where we are now.

In about 2010, big data and data mining was really taking off. Generative AI wasn't quite there yet, but a lot of folks were taking on big data projects. During my Ph.D., I was concerned because I could see how big data was being built for purposes of surveillance. I got my first job as assistant professor at the University of Rhode Island, and as I was finishing "Latinas on the Line," I started to see a lot of journalism and articles in library and information studies about how tech companies hold contracts with ICE and the Department of Homeland Security.

For us in library and information studies, it became alarming because it includes LexisNexis and Elsevier, major data groups that we teach our students. Ideally, our students are going to go on to manage libraries and to teach [their] students how to use databases like LexisNexis.

My colleague, Sarah Lamden, broke this open by saying, "ICE can basically use LexisNexis as a database to gather information about anyone in that database," and LexisNexis had been gathering a lot of data, basically, about everyone. It was concerning for us because if we're teaching students how to use LexisNexis, they're creating profile IDs and we can't ensure security or privacy for immigrants, and certainly not for undocumented people.

Along with that, a lot of journalists were finding that Amazon had a DHS contract and they were managing the information and data for ICE. And then there were these growing companies named Palantir and Anduril, who, it was being revealed, were building data mining programs around predictive policing, especially of communities of color. This was all coming out in 2016, 2017, and I was getting increasingly concerned.

During the Trump administration, [there was] open bidding to build the smart wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. The smart wall is essentially a bipartisan project that both parties agree is a more peaceful initiative than a physical wall. It basically opened bids, especially to Silicon Valley companies, to build different types of technologies for surveillance and deportation along the U.S.-Mexico border. But the way the policy works, even up until now, is that type of surveillance can be applicable to 100 miles within any border, and that includes the ocean. That actually covers two-thirds of the U.S. population. These technologies being built along the premise of fear around immigration and the U.S.-Mexico border are also going to be applied to different defense systems, wars that we're going into, and anywhere that's considered a borderland.

My family moved out to Murietta [California] when I was younger, [which] has a border detention center. Temecula has a border checkpoint. We see border patrol daily. I've been around that my whole life. I saw my mom questioned by border patrol. What I want people to know is the way I feel and [how] families feel in this area, which is heavily surveilled by border patrol and ICE.

I don't tell people how they should feel (though I do advocate for immigrant/migrant data rights). I do include interviews with undocumented people who have been held in detention centers on their preference for rights. What I try to express in the book is that in the same way we can feel the geographic borderlands through affect and experiences, we need to feel the data borderlands to be aware of the expansiveness of the surveillance network on immigrants and migrants in which we reside by way of our data. These systems are being used on people that I know, but because it's data and surveillance, it happens sort of invisibly. We don't always know when our data or other people's data is being exploited until years later.

As library and information professionals, we want to know how to prioritize [the data of] undocumented people, immigrants and migrants. If they're part of library systems, they have the right to data privacy as well. We don't always know when data is being gathered or where it moves because these algorithms are property of those companies. Even as citizens paying taxes that fund DHS, we don't necessarily get to look into the proprietary algorithm of Anduril, Palantir, or Amazon.

UCLA Ed&IS: How will you incorporate this work into your teaching?

VILLA-NICHOLAS: There's a lot of great work being developed out there, especially by Latinx scholars, so I'm excited to implement that and see where it takes us … about how surveillance and the borderlands are always present when we're using different data systems, and looking at what scholars are saying.

Sarah Lamdan wrote a wonderful book called "Data Cartels," about LexisNexis and Elsevier, and how they have the same net worth as Google because they have no overhead. Their bread and butter is basically our academic research, which they get paid for, but we do not. They also collaborate with DHS. It's that kind of thing we're going to mull through in information studies courses and tackle how we approach that in our careers and in libraries.

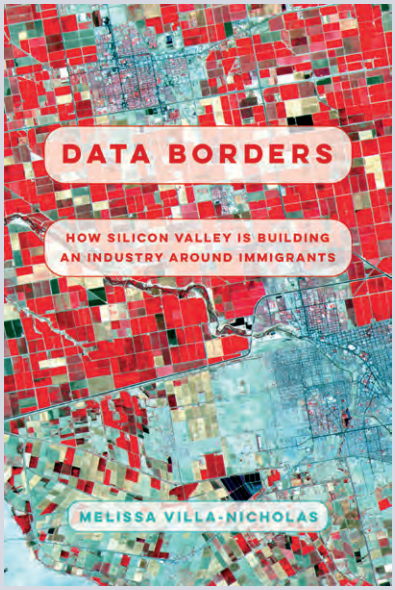
Villa-Nicholas's most recent publications include the co-written articles, "Digitizing the Latina Information Worker" (American Quarterly, 2022); "Latinx Digital Memory: Identity Making in Real Time" (Social Media and Society, 2019); and "Information Provision and the Carceral State: Race and Reference Beyond the Idea of the 'Underserved'" (The Reference Librarian, 2019).

Professor Villa-Nicholas achieved her Ph.D. in information science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; her MLS in library and information studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; her M.A. in cultural studies at Claremont Graduate School; and her B.A. in literature and global studies at Azusa Pacific University. She is currently working on a co-written book on Latinx histories of technology titled, "Border Ecologies."

EXCERPT FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF:

"Data Borders: How Silicon Valley Is Building an Industry Around Immigrants"

Flame of the West



In 2019, Palmer Luckey held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Irvine, California, for his new technology defense company, Anduril Industries. Luckey had just come out of a tumultuous business relationship with Facebook, who had purchased his company Oculus, a tech company that came out with state-of-the-art 3-D virtual reality headsets. He was shifting his work toward a new vision: borderland defense technology. To cut the ribbon, Palmer had wanted to use his replica Lord of the Rings sword named Anduril that was carried by Aragorn in J. R. R. Tolkien's popular novels, but he didn't have time to sharpen it (Dean, 2019). Nevertheless, he drew on the Lord of the Rings mythos to convey the importance of this event:

"Anduril," he said, leaning into the long Elvish vowels, "means Flame of the West. And I think that's what we're trying to be. We're trying to be a company that represents not just the best technology that Western democracy has to offer, but also the best ethics, the best of democracy, the best of values that we all hold dear." (Dean, 2019)

Anduril would go on to win a large bid from the Trump administration to bring together commercial technologies such as VR goggles, drones, and AI with the defense industry. Their experimental playing fields? The US-Mexico border. The aim? To capture immigrants crossing the border with the most advanced technologies developed in Silicon Valley, and to further build data profiles out of immigrant data.

This event symbolizes the evolving new threshold in borderland technology. The US-Mexico borderlands, always in cultural, political, and geographic flux, have shifted once again. Unlike the past, when new borderlands were drawn from the US-Mexico War of 1846–48, or the construction of a physical border wall, or burgeoning maquiladoras from the globalized economy of the mid-twentieth century onward, this change has cast the borderland as ubiquitous, digital, and often invisible to the eye. This emerging borderland stems from the partnership of various arms of the Department of Homeland Security, alt-right-leaning Silicon Valley startups, government agencies (such as state motor vehicle departments), and unfortunately for us, consumers like you and me.

I name this trend the data body milieu. Data body milieu is the state of borderland surveillance that brings all people, citizen and immigrant, into an intimate place of surveillance where our data lives together and defines us in a data borderland. It places Latinx immigrant data at the center of technological innovation and development. In describing these data borders, I'm concerned with the liminal state in which almost every US resident lives: we cannot feel, describe, or point to when that data is in movement in favor of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), border patrol, and their parent

the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This interstitial border is always at play and yet rarely perceptible. In these emerging data borders, state, technological innovation, and data organization subjects coexist in a way that leads to the surveillance, capture, and deportation of undocumented people, without those subjects necessarily aware that they are interacting.

A New Virtual Border Threshold

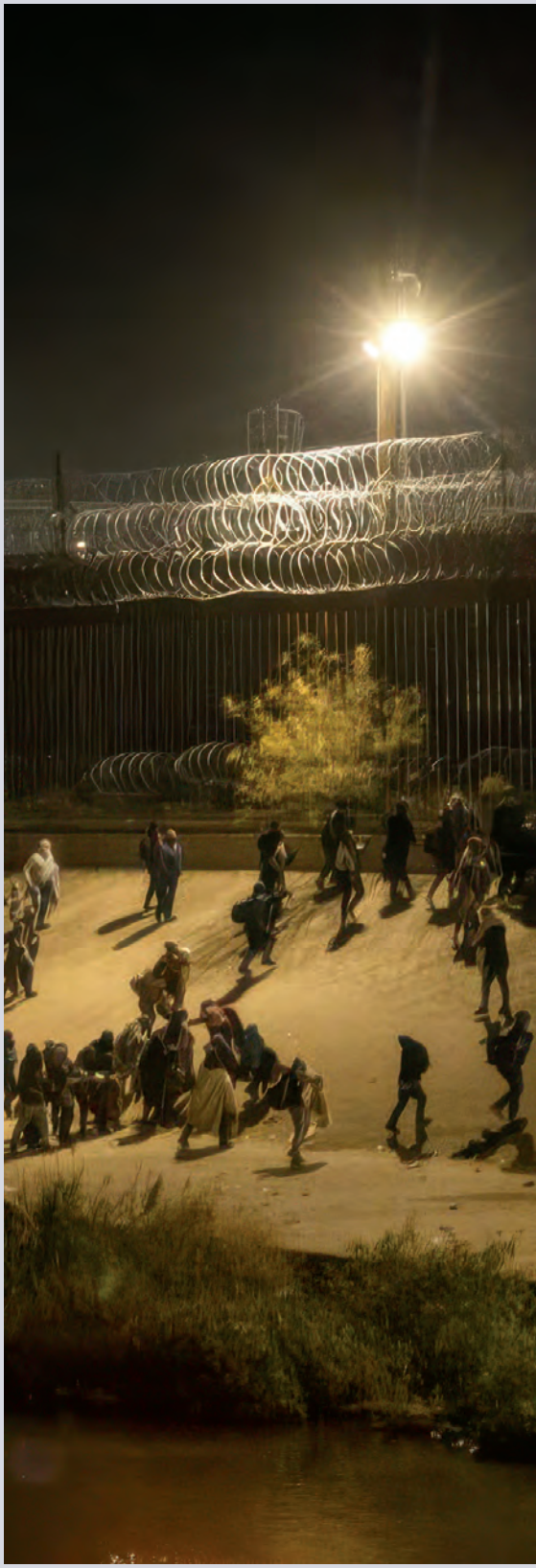
In March 2018, US Congress approved $400 million of the 1.3-billion-dollar budget for the 1,954 miles of virtual border wall, also known as a "smart" wall (Davis, 2019). It was estimated by the Office of Biometric Identity Management that DHS will be conducting 180 million biometric transactions a year among 260 million unique identities by fiscal year 2022, with that number rising every year that passes (Homeland Advanced Recognition Technology, 2021). The virtual border wall was approved without the fiery debate about the physical border wall. But the rhetoric included promises that went beyond the physical border wall: Not only would immigrants be kept out of the United States, but they could now be known, documented through digital technology's biological mapping. The promise of the virtual border wall goes beyond the brick-and-mortar wall: It promises to solve the Latinx immigrant threat (Chavez, 2008)—a threat that reaches beyond the idea of citizenship in the United States into a source of anxiety concerning nonparticipation in producing data that is crucial for digital capitalism.

With the virtual border wall, technology accomplishes what ICE, the border patrol, white nationalists, English-only policies, Proposition 187, and voters in the borderlands could not accomplish over centuries of attempts to reverse the influx of the Latinx population in the US borderlands; a promise of technological futurity that arose with more gusto in the 2010s, when border technology proposed a United States with a controllable immigrant influx at the border.

We are increasingly seeing Latinx immigrants in borderlands referred to as data and engaged as the object of mobilizing information technology and defining citizenship inclusion. Recent investment in the collection of biodata on the border and around the "belonging" of citizenship is a highly profitable grab around different groups of immigrants, Latinx undocumented people, permanent residents, and Latinx citizens (Cagle, 2017). The surveillance of Latinx immigrants and development of technology around Latinx bodies is not new (Chaar-López, 2019); but the scale and networked circulation of that data has changed. As data gathering increases, US citizens and Latinx immigrants become more intertwined in the borderland milieu that historian Oscar Martínez originally theorized, into what is now a state of data body milieu.

This book is about the emerging state of borderland surveillance that brings all people, citizen and immigrant, into an intimate place of surveillance where our data lives together and defines us in a digital borderlands. This surveillance places the Latinx immigrant body at the center of technological innovation and development and an emerging industry at the crossroads of Silicon Valley and ICE. Companies such as Quanergy Electric, Anduril, BI2, Palantir, Amazon, LexisNexis, and DNA testing companies all have a stake in gathering data of undocumented people at ports of entry, borderlands, detention centers, and immigrant-populated cities—and subsequently US citizens as well. While surveillance and contentious relations along the US-Mexico border are not new, what is new is both the scale at which data is gathered and the move to biological data—from retina scanning to DNA testing.

Silicon Valley's move to design technology around Latinx immigrants



is building on a long history of surveillance projects networked into and justified around communities of color as a perceived threat to white and citizen safety. Data body milieu is the name I give this recent trend, but it is always interconnected and built onto the ways in which surveillance and technologies have been encoded with bias, racism, sexism, classism, and ableism to benefit normative and acceptable states of citizenship.

This book does not encapsulate all immigrant experiences across the United States and is not comprehensive of the Latinx immigrant experience. I'm focused on the US-Mexico border, the Latinx immigrants traditionally targeted in political rhetoric by way of US anxieties along that border (Mexican and Central American), and the communities built around migrations and residencies from that launch point. There should be work that focuses further on the ways in which surveillance technologies and the developing data body milieu sets its gaze on different immigrants, and how these forms of policing are interconnected.

Another group drastically impacted by these developed and emerging surveillance technologies are the Indigenous nations that live along the border. Native Americans live and have lived in the ever-changing borderlands since before colonization, and they experience surveillance projects intensely themselves. Most recently, the Integrated Fixed Towers, built by Elbiet systems, Israel's military defense company, have been forced onto the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona. Those Indigenous groups are harassed by CBP daily, and their own lives have changed in the span of one lifetime, the borderlands so militarized that their previous more fluid movement and community from Mexico to the United States has lost its flexibility and severed their previous community network (Jaacks, 2020; Parrish, 2019).

Internet scholar Safiya Noble (2016) observed the seemingly "neutral" technologies of our everyday lives as deeply intertwined in the power dynamics that are embedded in our social structures. Noble lifted this veil by naming

"Not only would immigrants be kept out of the United States, but they could now be known, documented through digital technology's biological mapping."

these "algorithms of oppression": she searched for "Black girls" on Google and found solely pornographic images on the first page of results of the web and image search; she found the same for Latina and Asian girls (Dave, 2022; Noble, 2018). She described the bigger picture here: technologies in our everyday lives are not neutral and value free but indeed reflect the anti-Black and misogynist social structures that have been established in the United States. Now that same racism, sexism, and class inequality is built into algorithms—algorithms that determine home loans, medical coverage, and other everyday life necessities. African American Studies scholar Ruha Benjamin (2019) calls the benign and often altruistic ways in which these technologies are developed, designed, and delivered into consumers' hands the New Jim Code, justified through the necessity of progress. We will see those justifications used to embed data border technology into everyday systems of information frequently throughout this book.

The contemporary surveillance state is a messy network, like that box of old electronic cords that you have in your garage. This immigrant data surveillance state is a large ball of tangled mess that works together to connect and network in data that determines everything from our medical coverage and eligibility for loans to our movement across borders. This book attempts to pull on some of those wires and untangle this mess that is the contemporary surveillance state that organizes around Latinx immigrants along the US-Mexico border. I circle around questions such as: How are most people in the United States now connected to ICE systems of surveillance? How are technologies designed around Latinx immigrant data? How are US residents' data bodies living outside of our physical bodies? Also important to this study is: How are most people experiencing a borderland by way of their data, consciously or not?

One purpose of this book is to promote and accelerate immigrant data rights as a part of new necessary movements for immigrant rights overall, by demonstrating what this intimate digital surveillance state centered on Latinx immigrant (and perceived immigrant) data looks like, how it operates, how it builds on what came before and moves beyond, how it classifies and categorizes, how it expands beyond just Latinx people, how it is commercialized and consumed. I weave personal stories of growing up in the physical borderlands as a second generation Mexican American Latina to illuminate the contrast of the disembodied and embodied data borderlands. I'm concerned with the question: What does it mean that many people's data is in a constant state of correlation to ICE systems of surveillance, but they can't feel those borderlands? I continually reflect on my experience growing up in borderlands, and I bring in Latinx immigrant experiences of the borderlands to both put the body back in the data body and contrast the data border experience that is so pervasive in everyday lives.

My intention is to describe what is going on with the emerging commodified surveillance state and push toward immigrant data rights. But my hope is to tell the story of how I ended up networked into immigrant surveillance. The story of how you are networked into immigrant surveillance and deportation. The call to action for this story is to lead with undocumented immigrant data rights in policy by pivoting with parable in the concluding chapter, by ending with immigrant experiences of the borders and imagining techno-futures. Pivoting from story, I hope immigrant experiences of crossing the border, their awareness of the constraining technology of surveillance, and their imaginings of alternate borderland techno-futures act as a parable to counter the larger story structure in which we find ourselves.

A Passion for Community Engaged Environmental Education

BY JOHN MCDONALD

As a young boy, UCLA's Chris Jadallah spent a lot of time in his grandparents' backyards in Northern California. Palestinian immigrants to the United States, his grandparents were "fellahin," an Arabic term historically referring to peasant agricultural workers or farmers with a deep connection to the land. His grandparents and his ancestors before them had farmed olives in Palestine for generations, and they had transformed their backyards in northern California into lush gardens. It was there that Jadallah spent many an hour playing and working, learning about gardening and plants, and developing a deep interest in and bond with nature, rooted in his Palestinian heritage. It is a bond that drives his work today.

Chris Jadallah, assistant professor of environmental justice in education.
Photo provided by Chris Jadallah.

"I think the initial seeds of my interest in environmental education came from gardening and just being outside alongside my grandparents. It's not just an intellectual exercise for me. It's foundational to who I am."

Jadallah built on that passion to become an assistant professor of environmental justice in education at the UCLA School of Education and Information Studies. His research focuses in great part on community-based approaches to science and environmental education, examining the social, cultural, and political dimensions of teaching and learning, with a specific focus on community-based and place-based learning environments. His work takes place across a range of settings—from diversified farming systems to river restoration efforts—as well as projects in urban communities.

"Scientists do amazing work and I am a scientist by training. But I think that we often put too much stake in the idea that science is the answer—that science alone will save us," Jadallah says. "In my mind, it's scientists working alongside communities that will likely move us toward better solutions for environmental problems."

Jadallah believes scientific knowledge, technical skills, and expertise are essential to resolving challenging environmental problems, but he also places great value on the knowledge and ideas of local community members. As an example, he offers a story from his research on a community watershed monitoring project in western Montana near Missoula. There was a fly fisherman with a deep connection to a creek where a dam removal project was taking place. From hours of fishing on the creek, the fisherman had developed a nuanced understanding of how its channel was braided and where fish were most likely to be. He understood how and where the large woody debris, which was an important feature of the creek habitat, was likely to be situated. That fly fisherman had an intimate knowledge and understanding of the creek. He may not have had formal science training, but he made valuable scientific contributions that were very helpful to the project.

Jadallah's belief in the value of community knowledge and input traces back to his experiences working as an ecologist. He spent several years doing native pollinator research, spending a lot of time doing fieldwork at agricultural sites, literally catching bees all day with a net and recording the plants he was catching them from. He would meet farmworkers and began casually talking with them, explaining as a scientist what he was doing. And they started sharing information back, telling him what they were noticing about the bees, explaining he was coming too late in the day and that if he came earlier, right after sunrise, that's when the most bees would be out, and he would be able to catch more and understand them better.

"Scientists do amazing work and I am a scientist by training. But I think that we often put too much stake in the idea that science is the answer—that science alone will save us. In my mind, it's scientists working alongside communities that will likely move us toward better solutions for environmental problems."

"These farm workers knew about the bees," says Jadallah. "They had a connection to the land and ecology. They knew things that I didn't know, even though as an ecologist, I would be considered by outside audiences to be the expert."

Jadallah never forgot that experience, and his work today is rooted in community. Key to his scholarship is a deep belief in the importance of humility and respect for community knowledge and the need for building robust relationships with community partners.

"Environmental problems are often called wicked problems because they are so complex. They're not just scientific problems, they are social and political problems as well, and there is a real need to remediate historical injustices and bring multiple knowledge sources to bear on addressing their root causes," Jadallah says.

"What I try to do in my research is to expand the boundaries of political engagement in environmental problem solving, to broaden the knowledge sources from which environmental decisions are made."

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A major focus of Jadallah's research is developing partnerships with nonprofit organizations or other community-based organizations. Much of his work takes place in the context of community-based projects where youth are working to revitalize, repair, and renew social and ecological relations in the greater Los Angeles area. These include working collaboratively with Indigenous youth and educators at Academia Anawakelmekak, as well as scientists at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, to support curricular projects focused on urban wildlife habitat revitalization with land recently returned to the Gabrielino-Shoshone Nation in Northeast Los Angeles. Jadallah has also been working with the nonprofit organization Clockshop, co-designing curriculum development and conducting program evaluations in support of youth programs that engage young people in using arts and advocacy strategies to explore alternative stories of the Los Angeles River and surrounding neighborhoods.

"These projects demonstrate how the knowledge of different communities who may have been traditionally excluded from environmental decision-making represents an essential asset in designing more healthy, just, and sustainable futures," Jadallah says.

"If there is a common thread to all my projects, it's exploring the cultural, social, and political questions in environmental challenges, and working with the larger community in addressing them as such through learning and education."

Photo provided by Chris Jadallah.

One of the projects Jadallah is most excited about is his work with Black Thumb Farm in the San Fernando Valley. The aim of the organization is to grow the connection of young people to the natural world, nourish their passions, and empower them to advocate for a sustainable future for themselves and their communities. The farm engages Black, Indigenous, and other people of color in the development of leadership skills, offering mentorship, and access to healthy, quality produce through hands-on training and experience in farming and gardening. Black Thumb Farm's programming focuses on educating youth and restoring the vital, broken connections of communities with nutritious food and the land. Food is grown sustainably with an eye on long-term soil health. The farm offers neighborhood workshops and maintains school garden programs at two schools in the San Fernando Valley.

"Black Thumb Farm's work is focused on garden education, community gardening, and school gardening, but it's more than that as well," Jadallah says. "They think deeply about the sociopolitical dimensions of farming and gardening and challenge the idea that

gardening is just like this kind of neutral or apolitical practice that people engage in. Gardening holds a lot of deep significance, especially for communities of color who have long histories growing particular crops and engaging in land-based stewardship practices, and from these histories and practices comes deep ecological knowledge."

Over the next year, Jadallah is planning to work with Black Thumb Farm to pilot a small research and design project. Many of the young people at the farm are youth of color, and while they live in an intensely urban area, they come from families who have different connections to farming and agriculture and who may have knowledge about farming, the land, and relationships to the land. The idea is to explore and surface those relationships and the knowledge that exists.

"It's just a matter of bringing it out and drawing it out," Jadallah says. "We are going to work with the kids to explore the possibilities of doing oral history work in their communities where they will learn how to do interviews. They will then conduct their oral histories with their family members and learn about their family's connections to the land."

The project is in some ways a natural extension of a research project Jadallah has been doing, interviewing over two dozen garden educators across California.

He says that one of the main things that came out in the interviews is that educators said they want to identify ways to engage in garden teaching that is more historically responsive and culturally situated; not just basic plant life cycle and nutrition information, but going deeper in ways that can actually enrich teaching about those things.

"It has made me think about what it would mean to bring a richer view of gardening to education, to more deeply engage histories and futures around our environment, and make school gardening something that is socially and ecologically transformative," Jadallah says.

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BY JOANIE HARMON

The SMASH Project

Social Media and the Spread of Hate (SMASH)

ONLINE HATE SPEECH

Interdisciplinary partnership between the UCLA Departments of Education and Information Studies collaborates with the Organization for Social Media Safety as part of UCLA's Initiative to Study Hate.

Researchers in the UCLA School of Education and Information Studies are collaborating with the Organization for Social Media Safety (OFSMS), a Los Angeles-based nonprofit centered on protecting users of social media—especially K–12 students—to study the impact of online hate speech on adolescents. Ed&IS Wasserman Dean Christina Christie serves as principal investigator, along with Anne Gilliland, UCLA professor of information studies; Mark Hansen, associate adjunct professor and UCLA CRESST researcher; and Arif Amlani, Ed&IS director of new initiatives, who serve as co-principal investigators for the Social Media and the Spread of Hate (SMASH) Project. The national study analyzes data about students' exposure to online hate speech, as gathered by OFSMS through discussions with teens across the country, via focus group and advisory board sessions.

Established in 2022 to gain meaningful, human understanding of the experience of hate speech in social media on young people, SMASH has amassed data from over 7,700 individuals and more than 30 schools nationally. The second year of the project will continue current work while widening its demographic sample to include four lower-resourced schools, a pilot study of UCLA undergraduates, and a deeper dive into qualitative data collection. Recently, the UCLA Semel Healthy Campus Initiative Center has been added to the partnership, in order for the research team to explore questions of youth psychological well-being.

The SMASH project is part of the UCLA Initiative to Study Hate, which brings together scholars from across campus along with external partners with the aim of better understanding and ultimately mitigating hate in its multiple forms. The SMASH study was among 23 projects to be funded in the first year of the Initiative, supported by a $3 million gift to UCLA from an anonymous donor.

"Use of social media amongst children and young adults has increased exponentially in the last two decades," said Dean Christie. "Yet, we understand so little of its effects and how it is impacting the lives of our new generation. Our partnership with the Organization for Social Media Safety enables us to research these effects through data collected from

responses of thousands of students and from school administrators nationwide."

"The UCLA Initiative to Study Hate builds on … the expertise we collectively have on a topic that has been recognized as a national priority," said Professor Gilliland. "It's a topic that both departments in Ed&IS have been concerned about for a long time."

SMASH examines hate speech on social media through data gathered by the OFSMS, which holds assemblies at schools across the nation, and how exposure to hate speech varies among school types (private vs. public), student demographics (race/ethnicity, grade level), and overall use. The initial focus of the project is to understand what youth perceive as hate speech or hateful content, their levels of exposure, and types of hate speech they encounter

Using this study as a springboard, SMASH aims to address critical questions such as whether or under what conditions certain groups are at greater risk in encountering hateful content; the impact of school polices on propagation of social media related harms; and the efficacy of various interventions. SMASH also lays a foundation for future studies of how hate speech on social media affects adolescent mental health, learning trajectories, and educational achievement, as well as monitoring trends over time in schools across the United States.

"This study is a first step to understanding more about what's happening and how students conceptualize or define hate speech," said Christine Ong, research scientist at UCLA Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing (CRESST). "It's important to gather their views."

Professor Gilliland, working with a team of undergraduate researchers, conducted several studies examining anti-Asian hate speech on Twitter during the COVID-19 pandemic. She said the SMASH study reveals closer definitions of what hate speech and content mean to different generations.

"That's actually the fundamental question we have to answer first, and I would say, the question that all the projects funded through the UCLA Initiative to Study Hate are grappling with: How do people of different ages, in different circumstances, and in different disciplines define hate?" Gilliland says. "If you can't define what you're grappling with, it's really hard to counter it."

Recently released data from SMASH revealed that eight in ten young users have seen online hate speech on social media per month; 46 percent report having been cyberbullied; and more than half of the study's subjects reported seeing hate speech directed [at] someone they know personally. More than a quarter of subjects reported being on social media for seven or more hours a day; nearly 13 percent reported 11-plus hours. The study has also been significantly affected by world events.

"We've been gathering data across time," said Ong. "Right after October 7, [2023], we saw a significant increase in reports of hate speech around religious beliefs and overall, but not for other types of hate speech, such as hate speech related to gender. I think there's something there, the ability to understand what things in the larger world might be impacting."

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Cyberbullying

46% of students experienced cyberbullying.

Q. Have you been cyberbullied?

Yes: 11,766
No: 14,014

Number of responses: 25,780

Online Hate Speech

81% of students saw online hate speech.

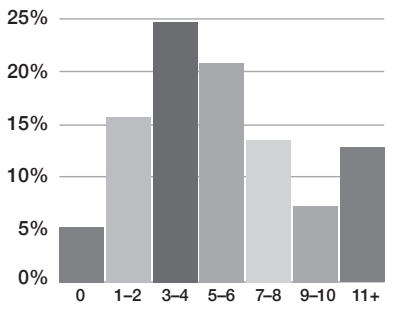
Q. In the last month have you seen hate speech on social media?

Yes: 20,141
No: 4677

Number of responses: 24,818

Daily Online Usage

Hours



Have you observed hate speech on social media directed at someone you know personally?

Yes: 57%

Christine Ong, research scientist, UCLA Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing (CRESST)

One surprising finding, said Ong, was the observation that users often reporting having no reaction to viewing online hate speech.

"One question was about their emotional reaction, or their reaction to hate speech the last time they saw it," she said. "[Approximately] a third reported that they really had no reaction, they scrolled by. I think that's really concerning. This is where qualitative work is important. Why is that happening? Why are they reporting that? Is there truly no emotion? Is it because they've seen so much of it that they're growing desensitized? Is it their way of protecting themselves, a mechanism to lessen the effects of what they're seeing? This is an area for further investigation."

Speaking from her experience as a parent, Ong said that being able to have honest conversations with children and teens about social media is important but not always easy.

"This is a very broad brush … but young people report that there are benefits in using social media such as being able to connect with family and friends, that's a positive," she said. "But there are also potential harms. We're definitely not saying that social media is all bad, it's more [about] mindful use.

"What kind of skills are needed to be considered a "healthy" or "critical user" of various types of media? Those are conversations that probably need to begin much earlier than they oftentimes do. I think an important skill to learn is how to engage in conversations with your child about social media so it doesn't only feel punitive … maybe thinking about your own phone behavior. Being curious and having conversations with young people in your life about what they like about social media, what they don't like, what concerns they have, might get you a lot further than simply enforcing a policy."

> "A study conducted among 14-year-olds found that increased social media use was related to poor sleep, harassment, lowered self-esteem, negative body image, and higher rates of depression. Policymakers globally need to take action to protect our children and we are proud that LAUSD is leading the way."

Impact on Policy

Earlier this year, Marc Berkman, CEO and co-founder of OFSMS, testified in Congress on the dangers of social media for adolescent users, with findings from the SMASH Project, regarding bipartisan draft legislation to sunset Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act. Berkman shared data from the SMASH study of more than 14,000 students in grades 5–12, in more than 60 schools across the United States. These include:

- **53 percent** self-reporting using social media for **more than five hours a day**; **20 percent spent nine hours**
- **81 percent** reported seeing hate speech via social media, a majority of students reported seeing hate speech related to **race/ethnicity (71 percent), gender (72 percent), and/or religious beliefs (62 percent)**

Other social media-related harms that Berkman underlined included drug-related and eating disorder content, as well as sextortion, which has resulted in suicide by several victims.

A former senior staffer in Congress and the California State Assembly, Berkman co-founded OFSMS, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit centered on protecting users of social media—especially K–12 students—in 2017, as the first and leading consumer protection organization focused exclusively on social media. In June 2024, he shared SMASH Project findings at a meeting of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which helped result in the board's passing of a resolution to ban smartphone use in LAUSD K–12 schools during the school day.

"This resolution is incredibly timely," said Berkman in his remarks to the LAUSD board. "It was just yesterday that the Surgeon General called for warning labels on social media platforms advising parents that using the platforms might harm adolescents' mental health.

"A study conducted among 14-year-olds found that increased social media use was related to poor sleep, harassment, lowered self-esteem, negative body image, and higher rates of depression," Berkman said. "Policymakers globally need to take action to protect our children and we are proud that LAUSD is leading the way."

Seul Lee, a UCLA IS doctoral candidate who is working on the SMASH Project, said that while body image issues and low self-esteem among teens predates social media, "... They may be simply more visible online [and] exacerbated by social media. We need to better understand the dynamics of these online subcultures and the personal identity development of adolescents, along with gathering more comprehensive and accurate data and better tools to identify and assess these adolescent behavioral patterns."

Amlani highlights another possible effect of social media that could be studied for its reverberations across society.

"If we know that children are spending this much time on social media, it also means they're getting a lot of information about world events, their communities and what's going around them," Amlani said. "That raises a question about misinformation, disinformation. You could be creating a kind of a self-contained world view, a bubble which might not be healthy at all, and it could just be a very skewed perception of reality. That's a massive danger here as well."

UCLA Professor of Information Studies Anne Gilliland

The SMASH research team is a collaboration between the UCLA Departments of Education and Information Studies, and includes Christine Ong, research scientist, CRESST; Arif Amlani, Ed&IS director of new initiatives; Mark Hansen, Ed&IS associate adjunct professor and research scientist, UCLA CRESST; Wendy Slusser, associate vice provost, Semel Healthy Campus Initiative Center at UCLA; Marc Berkman, chief executive officer, OFSMS; and Sarah Krongrad, vice president of programs, OFSMS; as well as graduate student researchers and undergraduate students. Tyrone Howard, UCLA professor of education, serves as advisor on the project.

Marc Berkman, CEO and co-founder, OFSMS; and Ed&IS Wasserman Dean Christina Christie. Photo by Mitsue Yokota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