

# CASE ANNUAL REPORT

SUMMER 2020 • FALL 2020 • SPRING 2021



May 2021

Dr. Gaetane Jean-Marie  
Dean  
College of Education

Dear Dean Jean-Marie,

I am pleased to submit to you the Annual Report of the **Center for Access, Success and Equity (CASE)** for the period of Summer 2020 – Spring 2021.

After a year-long examination of the mission and purpose of CASE, an ad-hoc committee comprised of faculty of our College, worked together to redefine the vision and mission of the center. During summer 2020, we began planning and developing resources to fulfill the new goals of the center to enhance the work of our faculty and services to our educational partners.

This document will highlight the various programs, research, support and partnership engagement led by CASE throughout the academic year. It is our endeavor to provide our college faculty with an opportunity to share their research with members of the university and our external educational partners and serve as an educational resource.

Two of the signal programs of the year were the CASE Conversations and CASE Summit which were focused on critical educational issues facing faculty, administration and students in education during this unprecedented time of a pandemic and social injustice.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to you for your support of CASE over this past year. I appreciate the opportunity to work on this critical initiative for our College and educational community. I hope you will enjoy reading about the work of CASE.

Sincerely,



Tyrone W. McCombs, Ph.D.  
Interim Executive Director

## Redefining the Vision and Mission of CASE

During the January 2020 Faculty Retreat of the College of Education, faculty members engaged in a discussion focused on the present and future role of the *Center for Access, Success and Equity (CASE)* within the College of Education. The faculty members in attendance assembled into groups to address two major questions regarding CASE.

1. *What does CASE mean to you?*
2. *How do you see CASE in the future?*

## CASE Ad Hoc Committee Formation

Following the January 2020 Faculty Retreat, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed to examine current practices and provide recommendations for the future of CASE. The following faculty members were selected to serve on the CASE Ad Hoc Committee:

- Dr. Issam Abi-El-Mona, *STEAM*
- Dr. Stephanie Abraham, *LLSC*
- Dr. Yu-Chun Kuo, *STEAM*
- Dr. Jiyeon Lee, *IIE*
- Dr. Tyrone W. McCombs, *EDSL*
- Dr. Hajime Mitani, *EDSL*
- Dr. Nikki Rotas, *IIE*



The CASE Ad Hoc Committee examined the existing practices of the center. As a result of this effort, the committee reviewed the following aspects of CASE:

- Mission and Vision of CASE
- Organizational and financial structure for CASE
- Presence and impact of CASE internally and externally
- Faculty Research aligned with CASE
- CASE sponsored conferences, workshops and seminars

## **A New Mission and Vision for CASE**

As a result of the work of an Ad Hoc Committee, new mission and vision statements for the center were developed and used to promote the work and goals of CASE.

### **Mission:**

*CASE partners with students, faculty and community members to support research activities, lifelong learning, professional services, community engagement, and to address educational challenges to achieving access, success, and equity in education.*

### **Vision:**

*CASE will be a national leader in establishing the development of workable solutions towards eliminating barriers to access, success, and equity in education.*

## **CASE Organizational Structure**



The role of the Executive Director was redesigned to ensure that CASE continues to serve as a leading voice for educational equity. A key duty of the Executive Director is to identify and work with other faculty and professionals who are devoted to the work of increasing educational learning for the advancement of the mission and vision of CASE.

Tyrone W. McCombs, Ph.D., was appointed as Interim Executive Director for the 2020-21 Academic Year. Dr. McCombs has over 30 years of experience in higher education as a senior administrator and faculty and has worked on initiatives devoted on equity and access.

## **CASE Faculty Partners**

Throughout the academic year several faculty members were consulted on developing critical initiatives and plans. CASE Faculty partners contributed new ideas, programs and services.

The following faculty served as CASE partners during the year:

- Dr. Susan Browne, *Diversity In Action (DIA) Committee Chair*
- Dr. Beth Wassell, *LLSC*
- Dr. Anna Sun, *MSA*
- Dr. JoAnn Manning, *EDSL*
- Ms. Erica Watson Brown, *IIE*
- Dr. David Lindenmuth, *MSA*

## **“CASE CONVERSATIONS”: A LEADING VOICE FOR ACCESS, SERVICE AND EQUITY**

“*CASE Conversations*” was an initiative developed to connect the groundbreaking research on access, service and equity of the faculty of the College of Education with partnering school districts, educational leaders, entrepreneurs, and many other stakeholders desiring to remain current with effective educational approaches and solutions. In addition, the *CASE Conversations* also provided an opportunity to invite guests to share new research and developments for our faculty and partner school districts. A special emphasis was placed on educational issues related to the pandemic and social justice.

The goals of the 2020-21 CASE Conversations were to:

- Foster engagement in emerging and critical educational matters and developments;
- Explore data and research targeting the mission and vision of CASE;
- Provide professional development guided by research and practice;
- Host community engagement and events;

**Conversation:** A Professional and Personal Journey to Why

**Presenter:** Dr. Lisa Vernon-Dotson



The rationale for inclusive education and effective inclusive practices is well defined in educational literature. In this monologue, Dr. Vernon-Dotson shared her journeys as teacher, parent, and teacher educator. She emphasized why intentional acts of inclusion were important and essential to students’ feelings and their basic fundamental sense of belonging.

Dr. Vernon Dotson is a Professor and the Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education, as well as, the Director of ASPIRE to Teach and the PI of the LRC-South.

**Conversation:** Understanding the Effects of Trauma on P-12 Students

**Presenters:** Dr. JoAnn Manning and Dr. Bobbie Mann

Social Justice leaders in P-12 schools play an important role in creating a safe, equitable learning environment for all students – regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or developmental challenges. To reach this goal, one of their top priorities is identifying trauma that negatively impacts students' academic performance, and helping the administration develop appropriate support for these children.



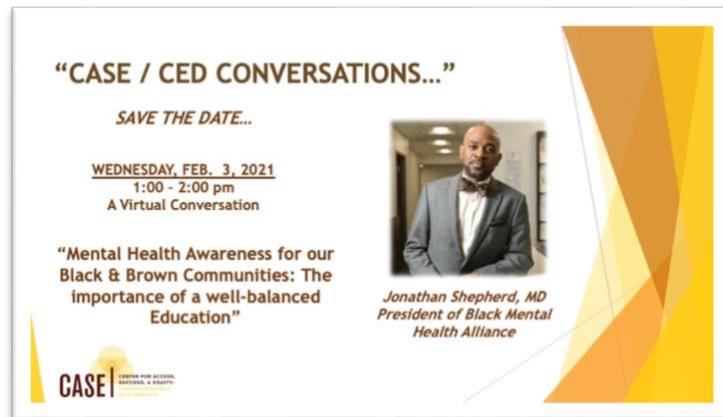
Dr. JoAnn Manning serves as an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership. She has served in the positions of School Principal, Regional Director, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent in various school districts. Her research and work have focused on building family, school, and community partnerships, turning around low-performing schools and educational leadership.

Dr. Bobbie Downs graduated Rowan University with an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership in Spring 2020. She is currently the Director of the Educational Services Unit for Burlington County. She currently presents professional development to districts on trauma-informed practices, youth mental health, staff self-care, and social-emotional learning.

**Conversation:** Mental health awareness for our Black and Brown communities & the importance of a well-balanced education for students and educators.

**Presenter:**

Jonathan Shepherd, M.D., President, Board of Directors of Black Mental Health Alliance.



The conversation focused on the mental health and well-being of the Pre-K - 20 educational community. Educators learned how to support students' mental health and learning needs, as well as, received resources to help with their own self-care.

Jonathan Shepherd, M.D. is an award-winning mental health professional. Named "Top Doctor" in the field of psychiatry. Dr. Shepherd has served

and provided treatment for clients in a variety of areas including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders, and more. A graduate of University of Illinois at Chicago Medical School and Adult Psychiatry Program as well as Johns Hopkins University Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship, Dr. Shepherd blends professionalism and compassion to create healthier communities. He is currently the Chief Medical Director of Hope Health Systems, Inc. Dr. Shepherd serves on numerous boards that impact and shape programs for the mental well-being of persons in diverse settings and various communities. He was bestowed the honor of Fellow by the American Psychiatric Association and Distinguished Fellow by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.



## CASE: SUPPORTING FACULTY RESEARCH

A priority of CASE is to serve as a resource and support for faculty research development. Throughout the year, CASE offered workshops focused on topics such as writing for publication, finding grant support, developing a methodological framework, critical theory in education, and many other critical aspects of research.

**Conversation:** Research Funding Opportunities in Education

**Presenter:**

Stephen Robishaw, MPA,  
Manager, Office of Proposal Development Division of University Research

The workshop provided faculty with an opportunity to explore search tools for research funding in the areas of education, diversity and equity. Participants learned about research funds from various entities including federal, state and foundations. Participants also received information on how to find funding and each attendee was provided with instructions and individual assistance with PIVOT a database of funding opportunities. In addition, the university research team reviewed institutional procedures and resources for grant proposal development and submission.



Stephen Robishaw, MPA, is currently the Manager of the Office of Proposal Development within the Division of University Research. Mr. Robishaw specializes in prospect research, narrative editing, and the proposal submission process.



## CASE Conferences, Professional Development & Outreach

Hosting seminars, workshops, and conferences is key to connecting research and practice and impacting education. With a wide range of interests and collective capacity among CASE affiliated faculty as well as collaborative work with partnering organizations, CASE works to provide a myriad of opportunities to learn about and discuss challenges in access, success, and equity in education, structural barriers, and educational and social policies, programs, and practices that could solve these problems.

The year, our CASE Summit provided learning opportunities to various members of the educational field including the following:

- Superintendents
- Principals
- Teachers
- Professional staff
- Higher Educational Professionals
- University faculty, administration, staff and students

## 2021 CASE VIRTUAL SUMMIT

***Theme: impact of a pandemic & social injustice on access & equity in education***



The poster for the 2021 CASE Virtual Summit is a vertical rectangular graphic. At the top left is the Rowan University logo with the text 'COLLEGE OF EDUCATION'. To the right, it says 'Center for Access, Success & Equity (CASE) presents'. The main title '2021 CASE VIRTUAL SUMMIT' is in large, bold, yellow letters on a dark red background. Below it, the subtitle 'Impact of a Pandemic and Social Injustice on Access and Equity in Education' is in white. The date and time 'Friday, March 5, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.' are also in yellow. The poster is divided into sections: 'KEYNOTE SPEAKERS' with photos of Dr. Marc Lamont Hill and Dan Habib; 'GUEST PRESENTERS' with photos of Dr. Fabienne Doucet and Mr. Angel Santiago; and 'FACULTY MODERATORS' with photos of Dr. Susan Browne, Dr. Beth Wassell, Dr. Corey Dixon, Dr. Brent Elder, Dr. Anna Sun, and Ms. Erica Watson Brown. At the bottom, there is a 'JOIN ZOOM MEETING' section with a meeting ID, passcode, and a 'SPONSORS' section listing the College of Education, CASE, Diversity in Action Committee (DIAC), and the Department of Interdisciplinary & Inclusive Education (IIIE).

Rowan University  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Center for Access, Success & Equity (CASE) presents

**2021 CASE VIRTUAL SUMMIT**  
**Impact of a Pandemic and Social Injustice on Access and Equity in Education**  
**Friday, March 5, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.**

Faculty, students and administrators in education are experiencing unprecedented academic challenges due to COVID-19 and social justice struggles. The dual pandemic has created many challenges in regard to access and equity in education.

The 2021 CASE Summit will feature expert practitioners and leading voices in education who will share valuable research and recommendations for those committed and engaged in the development of education.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

Dr. Marc Lamont Hill  
Professor, author and social justice activist

Dan Habib  
Award-winning filmmaker

**GUEST PRESENTERS**

Dr. Fabienne Doucet  
New Jersey Teacher of the Year

Mr. Angel Santiago  
Foundation officer

**FACULTY MODERATORS**

Dr. Susan Browne Dr. Beth Wassell Dr. Corey Dixon Dr. Brent Elder  
Dr. Anna Sun Ms. Erica Watson Brown

Registration and information:  
Dr. Tyrone W. McCombs  
mccombs@rowan.edu

**JOIN ZOOM MEETING**  
Meeting ID: 837 538 1534  
Passcode: 839980  
One tap mobile  
+1(202)785-6262,8375381534#...  
\*839980# US (Washington DC)  
+1(202)267-7959,8375381534#...  
\*839980# US (Chicago)

The CASE Virtual Summit is open to all members of the University and our educational partners.  
SPONSORS: College of Education, CASE, Diversity in Action Committee (DIAC) and Department of Interdisciplinary & Inclusive Education (IIIE)

In the early part of the Spring semester, we sponsored our annual CASE Summit for university faculty, students, alumni, partner school districts and the educational community. The Summit featured expert practitioners and leading voices in education who shared valuable research and recommendations for those committed and engaged in the development of education.

Our keynote speakers were Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, and Dan Habib. We also featured Dr. Fabienne Doucet and Mr. Angel Santiago.

Faculty were highlighted for their related research and work and served as moderators: Dr. Susan Browne, Dr. Corey Dixon, Dr. Brent Elder, Dr. Anna Sun, Ms. Erica Watson Brown and Dr. Beth Wassell.

## CASE SUMMIT: Keynote Speakers



### Dr. Marc Lamont Hill

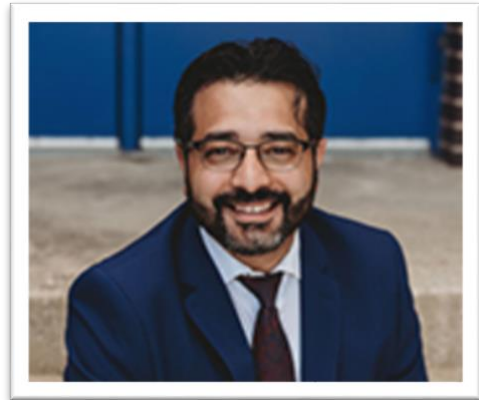
Dr. Marc Lamont Hill is one of the leading intellectual voices in the country. He is currently the host of BET News and the Coffee & Books podcast. An award-winning journalist, Dr. Hill has received numerous prestigious awards from the National Association of Black Journalists, GLAAD, and the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences. Dr. Hill is the Steve Charles Professor of Media, Cities, and Solutions at Temple University. Ebony Magazine has named him one of America's 100 most influential Black leaders. Dr. Hill is the author or co-author of six books: the award-winning *Beats, Rhymes, and Classroom Life: Hip-Hop Pedagogy and the Politics of Identity*; *The Classroom and the Cell: Conversations on Black life in America*; *Nobody: Casualties of America's War on The Vulnerable from Ferguson to Flint and Beyond*; *Gentrifier*; *We Still Here: Pandemic, Policing, Protest, and Possibility*; and *Except For Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Politics*. He has also published two edited books: *Media, Learning, and Sites of Possibility*; and *Schooling Hip-Hop: New Directions in Hip-Hop Based Education*.

### Dan Habib

Dan Habib is the creator of the award-winning documentary films *Including Samuel*, *Who Cares About Kelsey?*, *Mr. Connolly Has ALS* and many other films on disability-related topics. Habib is a filmmaker at the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability. His latest documentary, *Intelligent Lives*, examines our society's narrow perceptions of intelligence. The *Intelligent Lives* project also contains four short films focusing on effective practices in transition for youth with disabilities from high school to higher education and employment. Habib received the Champion of Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association, and the Justice for All Grassroots Award from the American Association of People with Disabilities. In 2014, Habib was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.



## **CASE SUMMIT: Partnership and Student Session**



### **Mr. Angel Santiago**

In an effort to enhance our partnerships with Pk-12 schools as well as provide recruitment and inspiration for our university students to consider a career in education, we held a special session led by Mr. Angel Santiago, *New Jersey Teacher of the Year*. Mr. Santiago presented “Teaching: The Gateway to Equity” and discussed the importance of building internal and external educational partnerships. As the NJ Teacher of the Year, Mr. Santiago also shared his personal journey as a teacher and educator.

Angel Santiago is an elementary school teacher at Loring Flemming Elementary school in Blackwood, New Jersey. Santiago is the 2020-2021 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year. His passion for education is rooted in fostering strong relationships with his students, their families, his colleagues, and the community in which he serves. Angel has taught his entire professional career in Camden county. In 2012, he began teaching for Lindenwold Public Schools, and in 2013 Angel moved to Gloucester Township Public School district. During his sabbatical, Angel has worked with the New Jersey Department of Education in the area of diversifying the teacher pipeline.

## **Research Funding Session**

In an effort to continue our commitment to providing research support resources, we hosted open forum as well as individual faculty consultation sessions with our partners from the William T. Grant Foundation.

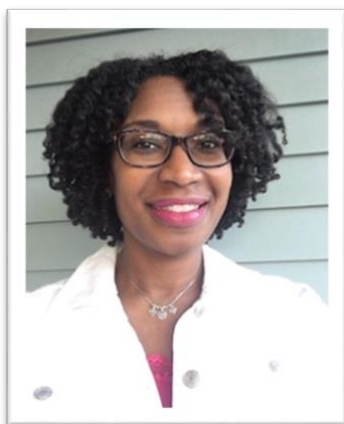
Our guest presenter was Dr. Fabienne Doucet, Program Officer of the William T. Grant Foundation and an Associate Professor of Early Childhood and Urban Education at New York University. Dr. Doucet has a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies from UNC-Greensboro and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Education with fellowships from the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation.



## CASE and Outreach Programs

CASE continues to identify and respond to key issues facing our communities and provide support to faculty, students, alumni and our educational partners who are actively engaged in meaningful work to overcome challenges.

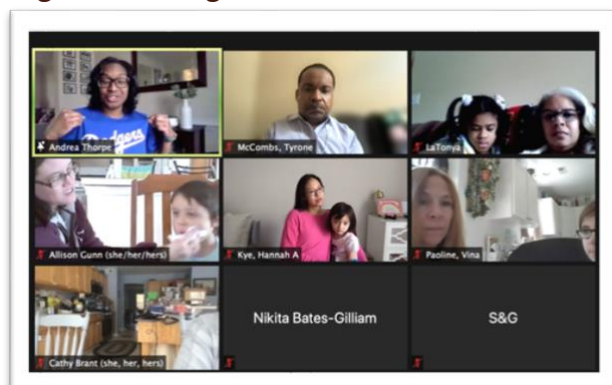
### CASE Conversation: Take Your Child to “Virtual” Work Day



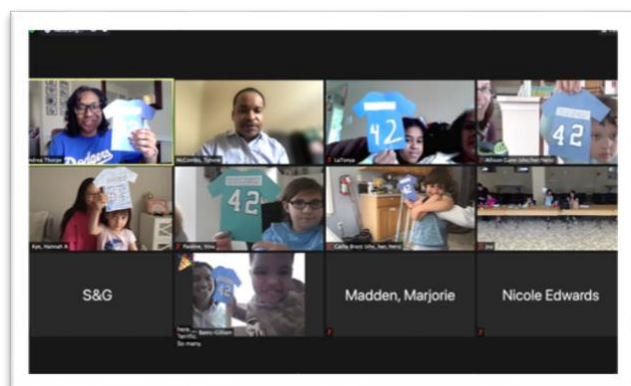
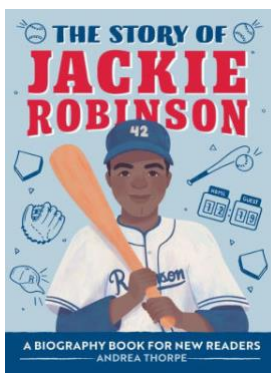
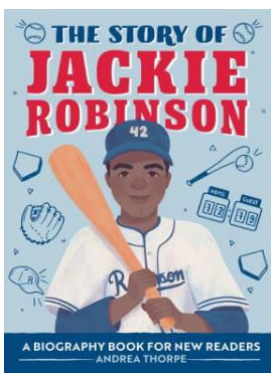
On “National Take Your Child to Work Day” CASE and the College of Education sponsored a special CASE Conversation that was open to all of the young College of Education and university family members as well as our educational partners.

Our guest presenter was Ms. Andrea Thorpe (CED '95, '02) who recently authored a children's book, *The Story of Jackie Robinson*. Ms. Thorpe led our young university members through an interactive and fun learning experience about the amazing man who broke baseball's color barrier and his work within the Civil Rights Movement.

While at Rowan, Andrea earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, an Elementary Teaching certificate, and a Master's degree in Student Personnel Services. During her many years in public education, Andrea worked as a classroom elementary teacher and guidance counselor. She currently serves as a Board Member of a regional homeschool organization and teaches high school English classes within the homeschool community.



## WELCOME





## CASE & Our Community: Impact of Education on hate crimes

The conversation focused on research and work conducted by our faculty in relation to the impact of education on race and social justice within our schools, higher education institutions and communities. Through this conversation, participants had an opportunity to learn from our presenters as well as engage in a meaningful and resourceful discussions during these critical times in education and our lives.



### Presenters:

**Dr. Anna Sun** is an Associate Professor of School Administration in the Department of Educational Services and Leadership. Her ongoing scholarship and research include educational leadership and policies, social justice in schools, online education for educational leadership preparation programs, and international development and studies in education.

**Dr. Adrian Barnes** is an Assistant Professor, and co-coordinator of Music Education. Dr. Barnes has worked closely with students from historically marginalized communities, as well as neurodivergent learners. Dr. Barnes research interests includes collegiate pathway programs that increase the representation of historically marginalized populations into 4-year institutions of higher education (IHEs) institutional agency and outreach in historically marginalized communities, and the recruitment practices used to recruit Black and Latinx students by music educators at minority serving institutions.

**Dr. Kate Kedley** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Education. Dr. Kedley is a former secondary English Language Arts and Drivers Education teacher in Iowa, Arizona, and the Central American country of Honduras. Dr. Kedley's research centers around critical literacy and education, public engagement, LGBTQ and young adult literature, language education, and social and educational movements in Honduras. Kate has published work in various journals such as the *English Journal*, *Sex Education*, the *eJournal of Public Affairs*.

**Dr. Adam Alvarez** is an Assistant Professor of Urban Education in the Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education. His research examines how structural racism shapes the social context of teaching and learning. With respect to the intersection of race, exposure to violence and trauma, his work aims to support schools and teachers in building equitable policies and practices that recognize and disrupt historically marginalizing systems of oppression.

## **CASE SUMMER FELLOWS**

The Center for Access, Success and Equity (CASE) Summer Faculty Fellow will provide an opportunity for College of Education faculty who are interested in accomplishing the following goals:

- Working to plan and develop services and programs to promote research;
- Develop professional development initiatives in equity and access in education;
- Assist in planning lecture series and enhance school and community partnerships;
- Assist with Annual CASE summit planning;
- Assist with Advisory Board composition and strategic planning.

## **CASE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR PLANS**

As we approach another academic year, CASE will focus on the following areas of continued support, growth and expansion:

- Identifying and highlighting new research by faculty;
- Examining the state of education in a post-pandemic time;
- Creating scholar-practitioner partnerships with College and Pk-20;
- Seeking funding opportunities to support the center, faculty and partners;
- Engaging with faculty, partners, and alumni to formally establish an Advisory Board;
- Planning resourceful CASE Conversations, forums and annual CASE summit;
- Collaborating with university departments and programs to foster a greater impact;
- Promoting the mission and vision of CASE through various social media platforms;
- Continuing to serve as a leading voice for access, success and equity.