



**R(ED)
TABLE
TALK**

Experiencing Black Joy & Womanhood

PANELIST BIOS

Anna Almore

DOCTORAL STUDENT

Anna Almore is a fourth generation freedom dreaming educator. She came to Michigan by way of Texas, Virginia, New Jersey, NYC, and South Dakota—where her heart and nibblings are. Before graduate school, she coached and trained first and second year educators in rural South Texas and Lakota Sioux homelands, but she started her education career in the Bronx singing, reading, and learning alongside sixth graders. She is a second year doctoral student in the Joint Program in English and Education. She studies Black-Indigenous solidarity pedagogues, anti-colonial BIPOC education, queer possibilities, educator co-conspiracy, and student/teacher identity formation. Anna's self-care tip is that a village got you here and will see you through--stay connected to them.

Alyssa Brandon

STAFF MEMBER & MASTER'S STUDENT

Alyssa Brandon's purpose is to live a life characterized by learning, healing, growth, and creative expression that enables her to support herself and others to change for the better. When it comes to working, Alyssa is currently walking in her purpose as the communications coordinator for TeachingWorks at the University of Michigan School of Education, where she designs and implements strategic communications that visually and contextually communicate the work of TeachingWorks and empowers educators to use the power of teaching to disrupt injustice. Alyssa is also the Vice-President and Managing Director of The Menternship (pronounced men-turn-ship), a non-profit based in Los Angeles, California, that seeks to elevate the next generation of Black and Brown young women leaders through personal and professional development. She is also a master's student at the School of Education studying educational leadership and policy. Alyssa is interested in learning and studying how to translate complex ideas about teaching and teacher education practice, leadership, and educational justice into understandable human narratives in ways that empower people and drive systemic change. One of her favorite ways to exercise self-care is to manage her energy by obeying her ultradian rhythms; for every 90-120 minutes of work, Alyssa schedules 15-20 minutes of rest, relaxation, and play into her calendar to recharge.

Maisie Gholson

FACULTY MEMBER

Maisie L. Gholson is an assistant professor of educational studies at the University of Michigan. Within a Black feminist framework, her research seeks to understand Black children's identity development, particularly, in mathematics. Her current projects examine how social networks (i.e., relational ties) among young Black girls create different sources of power and privilege, including physical, racial, gendered, and social, and provide different learning trajectories within the mathematics classroom community. Maisie is a mother of an autistic child and advocates for autism awareness. She is also a former high school mathematics teacher and prior to that a patent writer in her hometown of Houston, Texas. She received her PhD in curriculum and instruction in 2016, as well as her MA in educational studies, from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). She received her BS in electrical engineering from Duke University in 2001.

Jessyca Mathews

K-12 TEACHER

Jessyca Mathews is a language arts teacher at Carman-Ainsworth High School and a Racial, Environmental Justice, and Institutional Racism activist. In 2017, Jessyca was named a finalist for the NEA's Social Justice Activist of the Year for her work on the Flint water crisis. Jessyca was recently named the Region 5 Teacher of the Year for 2019-2020 and was a finalist for Michigan Teacher of the Year. In 2018 she received the honor of Secondary English Teacher of the year from the Michigan Council of Teachers of English and the Samford Award for Most Inspirational Teacher of MI. Jessyca has done national interviews with USA Today, Time Magazine, and NPR. She has participated in protests and community action to speak on behalf of those affected by the Flint Water Crisis and multiple education areas. She recently has had essays published in McSweeney's and recently had two pieces featured in The Washington Post.

Mimi (Margaret) Owusu

DOCTORAL STUDENT

Mimi Owusu is passionate about centering Black feminism in teaching and teacher education. Currently in her second year as a PhD student in the SOE's Educational Studies program, she is exploring Black girls' performative literacies through social dance and Black women's pedagogical practices in teacher education. She is an elementary educator and teacher educator at heart and loves the connections that she continues to build and sustain with Black and Brown youth and Black and Brown teachers. She reps the Bronx hard and Ghana even harder (she is a Ghana Jollof ambassador) but has a special place in her heart for Newark and Philadelphia. She feels truly at home when she is dancing, fellowshiping with good people, and basking in the brilliance/humor of Black social media!