

June 2023

Introducing the Michigan Reading Journal's Incoming Editorial Team...

Laura Gabrion
Wayne RESA

Aaron Johnson

Rui Nui-Cooper
Grand Valley State University

Leah van Belle
313Reads

Jenelle Williams
Oakland Schools

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj>

Recommended Citation

Gabrion, Laura; Johnson, Aaron; Nui-Cooper, Rui; van Belle, Leah; and Williams, Jenelle (2023) "Introducing the Michigan Reading Journal's Incoming Editorial Team...", *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 55: Iss. 3, Article 4.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol55/iss3/4>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Michigan Reading Journal by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Introducing the *Michigan Reading Journal's* Incoming Editorial Team...



Dr. Laura Gabrion



Dr. Aaron Johnson



**Dr. Rui
Nui-Cooper**



Dr. Leah van Belle



**Jenelle Williams,
Ed.S.**

The *Michigan Reading Journal* has officially formed its new editorial board with a mission and vision of supporting all writers for publication. This year the journal themes are: Literacy for Community; Literacy for Joy; Literacy for Agency; and Literacy for Liberation. We are seeking submissions that address these themes—including theoretical pieces, research-based write ups, bridging research to practices pieces, and book reviews.

The editorial board is eager to engage new voices and diverse perspectives in sharing your work, expertise, and passion with our readers. Whether you are an accomplished writer or new to the publication process, our editorial team is committed to providing you with the support you need in order to craft your article.

Please visit <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/> for more information about the types of articles you might craft. We look forward to seeing what you will share with MRA members and the literacy community!

Dr. Laura Gabrion is a Literacy Consultant at Wayne RESA. Laura has served as a public educator for 35 years in secondary and post-secondary settings. She is interested in disciplinary literacy pedagogy, writing self-efficacy research and application, and integrating technology to enhance instruction. You can reach her at <gabriol@resa.net>.

Dr. Aaron Johnson is a teacher, administrator, higher education faculty, and author working as an equity leadership coach. Aaron has twenty years of experience as a teacher, principal, director of instruction, and assistant superintendent with a commitment to equity in public school environments. He most recently served as the assistant superintendent for diversity, equity, and inclusion in a public school district. Aaron presents locally, regionally, and nationally on developing literacy for African American students. He is the author of the Teachers College Press book, *A Walk in Their Kicks: Literacy, Identity, and the Schooling of Young Black Males*. Aaron is also the creator of the Black Male Literacy Paradigm, which is a framework used by schools to engage Black youth in school literacy practices. He served on the Coalition of Chairs for MRAs 2022 Annual Conference. He is active in the Detroit area and is the founder of The American Literacy Society, a nonprofit whose vision is to engage citizens in literacy to participate in the democratic process. You can reach him at <amdj9265@gmail.com>.

Dr. Rui Niu-Cooper is an associate Professor and the Director of the ESOL Certificate and ESL Endorsement Programs in the Grand Valley State University (GVSU) College of Education and Community Innovation. Dr. Niu-Cooper earned her Ph.D. from Michigan State University in Teacher Education with a concentration in English as Second Language, English as a Foreign Language and Foreign Language teaching. Dr. Niu-Cooper has won multiple awards and grants from various grant agencies and organizations to support her community engagement work, including two federal grants at \$2.53 and \$2.73 million for working with ESL teachers. She has presented at multiple local, state and national conferences and has published various academic journal articles and book chapters. Dr. Niu-Cooper's research interests are focused on how higher education teacher preparation programs can improve pre-service and in-service teachers' understanding of K-12 students from diverse backgrounds as well as teaching them effectively. She has also been focusing on how higher education institutions can better engage themselves in providing services to support local minority and migrant communities and ways higher education can collaborate with local schools for the language and literacy development of students from diverse backgrounds. Her current project is to address the language and literacy development needs of local students from an African refugee background, which involves collaboration among refugee parents, local schools, and higher education. You can reach her at <niucoope@gvsu.edu>.

Dr. Leah van Belle serves as the President of MRA and chaired its 2022 Annual Conference. She serves as the Executive Director of 313Reads, a collective impact coalition working alongside community and families toward literacy access, equity, and justice. A proud Detroitier and first-generation high school and college graduate, she holds a PhD in Educational Studies with a concentration in Literacy, Language, and Culture from The University of Michigan. She was previously a classroom teacher, literacy coach, faculty in teacher education, clinical teaching practice director, and consultant to the Michigan Department of Education on literacy and growing educator diversity. She serves on the MAISA/GELN Early Literacy Task Force and MDE's Special Education Advisory Committee. Passionate about the need for diverse educators in and out of school, she serves on the boards of the Black Male Educators Alliance and Detroit Parent Network. Most importantly, she is the mama of a neurodiverse little human who is a student in a Detroit public school and is teaching her how to build with LEGO. In return, she is teaching him about jazz. Reading together at bedtime is one of their favorite parts of every day. You can reach her at <leah@313reads.org>.

Jenelle Williams, Ed.S. is a Literacy Consultant within the Leadership and Continuous Improvement unit at Oakland Schools, an intermediate school district supporting the 28 districts in Oakland County, Michigan. She joined the organization in 2017 following 18 years of experience in public schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She has served as a classroom teacher, IB Middle Years Programme Coordinator, teacher leader, and educational technology coach. An IB Educator and Examiner since 2013, Jenelle leads professional learning workshops and marks e-assessments for the International Baccalaureate Organization. She holds an Education Specialist in Leadership degree and a Master's degree in Reading and Language Arts through Oakland University. In addition, Jenelle serves as an Adjunct Professor in Grand Valley State University's Graduate Program. Jenelle is passionate about supporting teachers, building leaders, and central office administrators in the area of secondary literacy, and she is especially excited to be able to support Michigan's work around disciplinary literacy through her role as Co-Chair of the statewide Disciplinary Literacy Task Force. On a personal level, Jenelle enjoys spending time with her husband and two children, along with their cat and dog. She is most peaceful when practicing yoga or spending time on Lake Michigan beaches. You can reach her at <jenelle.williams@oakland.k12.mi.us>.