

ISSUE 8 | SPRING 2023

# IGPE

## Spring Bulletin

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**HEAR ABOUT OUR**

**UPDATES**

# IGPE Director Announcement



**BRANDON KAWA**

**IGPE DIRECTOR**

In Buffalo, as we welcome the start of spring, we are excited to share with you the latest updates and highlights from IGPE. In this newsletter, you will find valuable information including our very own IGPE faculty and student spotlights.

Commencement is soon approaching, and we are thrilled to celebrate the achievements of our graduating students. As some of our students are wrapping up their degree programs, we are reflecting on how proud we have been to see them thrive and excel in their academic pursuits. We wish them all the best in their careers and hope they will stay in touch with their alma mater!

As we look ahead, we are committed to providing the best possible learning experience for our students. Our dedicated team of faculty and staff are continuously developing new strategies and approaches to ensure that our students receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for success in the classroom and beyond.

We are honored to be a part of your educational journey and we look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you for your continued support and we hope you enjoy this edition of our IGPE newsletter.

**SPRING INTO**

**OUR NEW**

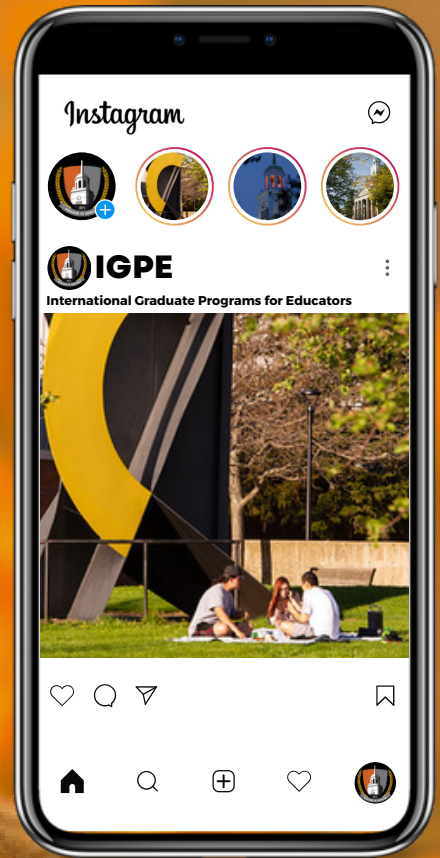
# Social Media

Through our new social media platforms, we hope to virtually connect our alumni network and current students, share exciting updates and promote the growth of our program on the Buffalo State campus.

We are looking forward to introducing our new social media platforms in the Spring of 2023. We are excited to be able to share our offices updates with our network of students and alumni.

**KEEP UP**

**WITH IGPE**



**SPRING 2023**

**COMENCEMENT**

We are excited at the opportunity to once again host graduates from our program and share in this momentous event. Plans are underway for commencement weekend, and we are working on making this a memorable weekend for IGPE graduates and their family and friends. Please contact our Graduation Coordinator, Cathy Beecroft, for information regarding the ceremony and assistance with obtaining travel documents, regalia and lodging information.

We are excited to extend the invitation to all IGPE graduates from August 2022, December 2022 and May 2023 to join us in person at the Buffalo State University commencement ceremony being held on Saturday, May 20, 2023.

**PLEASE CONTACT CATHY AT  
MOLENDCA@BUFFALOSTATE.EDU FOR  
MORE INFORMATION.**

## ADMISSIONS

### UPDATE!



**PLEASE CONTACT KERA AT  
FRANCEKM@BUFFALOSTATE.EDU WITH  
ANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE!**

Hello! My name is Kera Franceschini, and I am proud to now serve as the Admissions and Advisement Coordinator in the IGPE office. I grew up in New York City and spent much of my childhood living in Sardegna and Italy. I am a recent graduate of SUNY Geneseo and studied International Relations with a concentration in the Developing World. From my experiences working with teens and young adults from countries around the world, I have developed a passion for building relationships and working with international students.

My experiences and interests have provided me with opportunities to build upon my enthusiasm for international education. In 2020, I was presented with the chance to work remotely with a rural community development center in Jinja Uganda. I actively worked with the community's youth on their English comprehension, leadership skills, and environmental awareness. Through the creation of the Kera Cares Club, students took part in developing and executing club leadership roles, holding community clean-up projects, and educating village leaders on solid waste management. This opportunity provided me with the ability to experience the culture, practices, and lives of those who live a life different than my own, all while accepting the professional and emotional responsibilities that are necessary for community development work.

In addition, I worked as a program leader for an international education company called Zuma Education which is primarily for students from across Europe. Throughout my time in this position, I implemented a comprehensive cultural activity program while integrating the English language curriculum being taken by the students at a secondary school level. Having lived a cumulative 5 years in Italy, I was able to develop personal relationships with my European students as well as group mentors through our shared culture. The cultural connection and shared language made it possible to facilitate deeper connections with the students and work.

Lastly, I served as an intern in the SUNY Geneseo Study Abroad Office for 2 years working as a study abroad advisor. I had the chance to develop and facilitate "getting to know study abroad" advising meetings, advertise for the variety of programs that the university offers, run the office's social platforms, and manage study abroad fairs and events for the university. I believe that experiences like these will only help me grow and prosper in my new professional experience at Buffalo State University. I look forward to using the knowledge and skills I have developed thus far to help curate and design new social media platforms and advertising for the IGPE program. I am excited to implement these new branches of communication into the IGPE office to broaden its impact and footprint in the world of international education.

I am excited and proud to be a new member of the Buffalo State community and especially the IGPE office. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding admissions or advisement, or just to get to know me! I look forward to working with you all.

YEMISI OLAITAN'S

STORY

# Alumni Spotlight

Growing up as an only child in a family of educators, I was instilled with a love for learning and developed various vocational skills, such as cooking, baking, and beading. My education involved moving back and forth between Nigeria and the United Kingdom during my teenage years. However, adapting to cultural differences proved to be a significant challenge for me. My classmates would often mock my cultural gestures and practices, which severely impacted my self-confidence and made me hesitant to express my creative ideas until my university years.

This experience pushed me to learn more about other cultures and to be more culturally aware. I began exploring different countries and immersing myself in various cultural practices, including music in different languages. This allowed me to become more tolerant and respectful of different cultural perspectives.

Eventually, I had the opportunity to move to Doha, Qatar, and was privileged to be introduced to the Masters's program. I was fortunate to meet Ms Tammy McNeil, who became an unwavering source of support and encouraged me to put in extra effort and stand out. At the beginning of the program, being exposed to people from different backgrounds made me reflect on my past experiences with cultural differences. However, fortunately, it was a receptive team that supported my growth and development. While in the master's program, I faced a difficult decision as I was also dealing with age and gender discrimination at my job. Despite my proven abilities and suitability for the role, I was considered too young to lead and manage a school. This only added to the pressure of balancing work and the demands of the rigorous program. However, I ultimately chose to prioritize my personal and professional growth by pursuing the master's program, so I quit my job and focused on the program.

The master's program proved to be a turning point in my career as it equipped me with the necessary tools and knowledge to excel in my field. Within six months, there was a significant shift in my intellectual capacity. It opened many opportunities for me, and I was able to accelerate my career growth. Today, I am proud to say that I am a principal of a reputable school in Qatar. The master's program provided me with the necessary tools to support teachers, parents, and students, and I can now relate better to my community. I am grateful to everyone (Ms. Catherine and Mr. Brandon) who supported and encouraged me on this path, and I hope to continue making a positive impact on the lives of those around me.



# Kristen Moreland

**PROFESSOR**

**SPOTLIGHT**

Education is about healing and wholeness. It is about empowerment, transcendence, liberation, about renewing the vitality of life. It is about finding and claiming ourselves and our place in the world.  
~Parker Palmer



For almost 25 years, I have traveled the globe as both teacher and student; learning as much as possible wherever my professional and personal wanderings have led me. From my first international experience in Cameroon as a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) volunteer with the Peace Corps (U.S. service organization), to Turkey, Brazil, and across the United States, I have taken all of the new insights and understandings to craft my philosophy of education and dedicate myself to the mission of becoming a human-focused leader. Allow me to share some of my core beliefs:

**I BELIEVE THE ROLE OF AN EDUCATOR IS TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS THAT ALLOW FOR 'EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSCENDENCE.'**

As leaders in education, we must nurture not only our students, but continue to grow and develop the teachers who are in the classrooms every day. With high levels of emotional intelligence and authenticity, educational leaders can help navigate and remove obstacles to great teaching and allow for our teachers to model what it means to show up as your 'best self,' inviting our students to do the same.

**I BELIEVE STRONG RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF TRUE LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT.**

**"SPEAK IN SUCH A WAY THAT OTHERS LOVE TO LISTEN TO YOU; LISTEN IN SUCH A WAY THAT OTHERS LOVE TO SPEAK TO YOU." ~UNKNOWN**

When teachers take the time to get to know the human beings in front of them, they can focus on making the learning experiences relevant to their students' lives. When students know that you care about them as individuals, letting them know that they are more than just a data point, it increases motivation and can push students to even greater achievements. This same sentiment applies to the teachers we support; we can create connections and demonstrate empathy to help our teachers thrive.

# Continued...

**I BELIEVE CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS AND A GLOBAL MINDSET WILL HELP HEAL OUR FRACTURED HUMANITY.**

**“IT IS NOT OUR DIFFERENCES THAT DIVIDE US. IT IS OUR INABILITY TO RECOGNIZE, ACCEPT, AND CELEBRATE THOSE DIFFERENCES.” ~AUDRE LORDE**

I hold a deep and unwavering commitment to educational equity. Every child has the right to a quality education, no matter skin color or socio-economic status. The words, ‘these kids can’t,’ have no place in schools. It is our charge as educators to consistently seek out ways for our students - and adult learners- to be seen and embraced for who they are and what they bring, nurturing a rich garden where all can bloom.

To the SUNY Buffalo students, alumni, and educators everywhere, thank you for all you do for your students everyday, and for your commitment to your on-going, professional growth.

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East Asia Regional Council of Schools

Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools

Mediterranean Association of International Schools

Tri-Association Conference

Association of International Schools in Africa

**I BELIEVE YOU CANNOT BE SPONTANEOUS WITHOUT BEING EXPERTLY PLANNED.**

Educational leaders need a strategic mind. It is essential to know where you are going (the summative assessment) and plan backwards from there. When planning ‘with the end in mind,’ you can expertly pivot when ‘life happens’ in the school community. This applies to dedicated professional learning - especially the courses SUNY offers through the IGPE -, as well. When we value our teachers enough to provide the right learning opportunities at the right time, we honor the lived experience of our educators while maintaining a focus on the overall schoolwide goals.

**OUR FALL**

**CONFERENCES**

We are Excited to share that we will be continuing our global footprint into the fall with our attendance at a number of international conferences. We are excited to share our continued wealth of knowledge and experiences with you all.

# University News

**BUFFALO STATE**

**UNIVERSITY**

SUNY Buffalo State formally changed its name from Buffalo State College to Buffalo State University, effective January 15, 2023. The institution's official State Education Department title will change from State University College at Buffalo to SUNY Buffalo State University.

I'm proud and excited that after much discussion, Buffalo State is becoming a university," said Buffalo State President Katherine Conway-Turner. "Just last year we celebrated our 150th anniversary and the many facets of Buffalo State's rich history. As we look to the future, embracing the university designation is one of the many ways in which Buffalo State is aligning with the changing landscape of higher education."

The university designation, endorsed by the Buffalo State Council, follows new guidelines from the New York State Board of Regents for what constitutes a university. The guidelines require institutions of higher education to "offer a range of registered undergraduate and graduate curricula in the liberal arts and sciences, including graduate programs registered in at least three of the following discipline areas: agriculture, biological sciences, business, education, engineering, fine arts, health professions, humanities, physical sciences, and social sciences."

"The university designation recognizes Buffalo State's 79 competitive undergraduate programs and 64 rigorous graduate programs, as well as the tremendous efforts the faculty and staff make on a daily basis to support Buffalo State's mission of transforming lives," said Buffalo State Council Chair Linda Dobmeier, '71. "As an alumna myself, I am thrilled to see Buffalo State making this transition."

Buffalo State joins several other colleges in SUNY, as well as some private colleges, that have adopted the university designation over the past year.

Switching from college to university is expected to help elevate recruitment efforts domestically and abroad.



# Check This Out!

International Graduate Programs  
Admissions Instructions  
Pre-Major Admissions  
Supplemental Requirements  
Graduation Process  
Transcript Request  
Independent Online Courses  
Degree Works  
Transfer Credits  
Registration

## OUR HELPFUL LINKS

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INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE  
PROGRAM *for* EDUCATORS

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