

American Educational Research Association  
Professional Development Grant  
Final Report  
Arkansas Tech University

Tennille J. Lasker-Scott, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Professional Studies  
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**B. Restatement of professional enhancement opportunity**

AERA – American Educational Research Association is the largest gathering of scholars in the field of education research. It is a showcase for ground-breaking, innovative studies in a diverse array of areas -from early education through higher education, from digital learning to second language literacy. It is a conference to encounter ideas and data that will shape tomorrow's education practices and policies, and where to connect with leading thinkers from the U.S. and around the world. I presented my current research about the mentoring relationship with Dr. Johnson-Bailey and the importance of mentorship for faculty of color at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) at the *Critical Examination of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender* special interest group forum at the national conference held in San Antonio, Texas April 24 – May 1, 2017.

The purpose of taking on this role is to gain knowledge and experience in educational program planning on large scale (more than 15,000 participants) and to also network with esteemed scholars in the field of cultural diversity, social justice and educational reform.

With university communities around the world becoming increasingly diverse, it is important for us, as scholars, to give a voice to those who have been traditionally disenfranchised when researching and discussing education. The climate and culture of a university is crucial part of recruiting and retaining students and faculty, especially faculty of color. The purpose of my attendance at this national conference is to further advance my scholarship in the field of adult education, specifically in the promotion of race and ethnicity, social class, and gender being critical lenses utilized when performing critical reflection and evaluations of educational theories and practice in institutions of higher education.

Also as a scholar participant in the Graduate Student Panel the presenter will discuss her experiences seeking mentorship while as a student and faculty member at a PWI. In that, the presenter discussed her reasons for seeking out mentorship from a colleague who is not a faculty of color and who may not share in her research interest. The presenter will also discuss the phases of her mentorship with Dr. Johnson-Bailey from the perspective of a student, a graduate assistant, a co-author, and now a colleague.

**C. Brief review of the professional enhancement opportunity**

Attending this conference provided me with the opportunity to share my research and experiences with other colleagues in the field of adult education and those who are also teaching and researching diversity in education. As a facilitator and panelist, the faculty member will also have the opportunity to attend other sessions, workshops, and professional development programs. The presenter's desire is to apply the new information received in the workshops and professional development programs, along with the feedback on her research, in her teaching, service, and future research. There will also be an opportunity to represent Arkansas Tech and share how new implementations by the President and administration has resulted in a more diverse and open university and how that has affected her mentorship.

**D. Summary of experiences**

The presenter participated in the Scholars Panel for the *Critical Examination of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender*. The presenter was invited to serve in the position of facilitator and panelists by the special interest group Chair, Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey of The University of Georgia. The faculty member accepted the position and tasks of the position are (invitation letter included):

- Participate in the virtual interview series - Mastering Mentorship: How To Get And Keep The Many Mentors You Need Today To Be A Powerhouse Professor In Your Field Tomorrow.”
- Participate in the in-person, working breakfast - “The Mastering Mentorship Graduate Student Breakfast: Workshopping Ideas, Strategies, & Approaches Together.”
- Present and discuss our current project on the phases of our mentoring relationship along with your mentoring experiences at PWI’s.

### **E. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The presenter’s participation in the panel served as a foundation to introduce her research to peers and students who ordinarily wouldn’t access her work and provided the opportunity to network with other scholars in the field. Due to the participation and attendance at this conference, the presenter was able to begin a collaboration research project with colleagues she met during her panel presentations and the various presentations she attended. I am extremely grateful to the Professional Development committee and the Office of Academic Affairs for providing scholarly opportunities for faculty to grow in their fields of study.

### **F. Bibliography**

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