

Nicole Joseph to receive the Louise Hay Award for Contributions to Mathematics Education

The Association for Women in Mathematics is pleased to announce the 2023 Louise Hay Award to **Nicole Joseph**, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education at Vanderbilt University. Joseph is being honored for contributions to mathematics education that reflect the values of taking risks and nurturing students' academic talent that are central to Louise Hay's legacy.



Joseph founded the Joseph Mathematics Education Lab (JMEL). A brain child of Joseph, the Lab meets weekly to support academic and scholarly endeavors as well as the overall wellbeing of Black girls and women in the field of mathematics. The Lab includes 15 scholars across the undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and postdoctoral trajectories emanating from institutions

across the nation. Under her leadership, mentorship and service, members of the lab have themselves applied for and received grants and published their research alongside Joseph. JMEL is an innovative initiative that resists Black women's limited access to research leadership in mathematics and to their silenced voices in the academy.

Joseph pushes on boundaries, seeking to enlighten the field's understanding and responsiveness to an ever-pressing challenge of understanding and improving the opportunities for Black girls and women in mathematics. Joseph's work exemplifies the goals and priorities of the Hay Award.

Citation

Professor Nicole Joseph's research is centered on the experiences and narratives of Black girls and women in STEM. Through an impressive record of publications, in journals such as *Teachers College Record*, *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* and the *Review of Educational Research*, and a vast number of keynote addresses and invited talks, to national organizations and societies such as the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI), and the Clemson University Women in Mathematics Lecture Series, Joseph has elevated the importance of this topic and widened the field's understanding of the complex and intersectional nature of educational inequity, opportunity and access. As one of her recommenders stated, Joseph's research exhibits, "scholarship in action." In other words, Joseph both investigates hard and retracted questions while doing the work necessary to undo these patterns. Joseph is the founder of an interdisciplinary research collective at Vanderbilt titled "Intersectional Study of Black Women and Girls in Society." This collective was supported by a \$200K internal award and centers Black women's and girls' experiences to interrogate as well as dismantle structural barriers across different sectors of society, including STEM educational contexts. Within this research collective, Joseph organized the March for Black Women in STEM, a space for multiracial and intergenerational solidarity to increase the visibility of racial-gendered oppression and agency among Black women in STEM.

Response from Nicole Joseph

I am deeply honored to join the list of distinguished awardees, including Dr. Virigina Warfield from the University of Washington, who was on my dissertation committee. Throughout my career I have aimed to carry out similar commitments as Louise Hay, specifically related to mentorship, advocacy, and leadership. I started this journey as a young Black girl who found herself in advanced mathematics courses in middle and high school alone...no one else looked like me...and that was a problem. I was young and did not have the words, but I knew as a young person that it was not right to not have other students in mathematics that looked like me.

I am a Black girl cartographer in the field of mathematics education; this means that I care about the wellbeing, outcomes, and learning experiences of Black girls and women. Through

my scholarship, teaching, and service, my goal is to elevate Black women and girls and their stories of mathematics learning because they are worth telling. Few mathematics education researchers focus on the intersectional experiences of Black girls and women--their identities are multiplicative and complex--how they show up in mathematics contexts is different and unique from Black boys and White girls. It is important to me to close the gap between theory and practice...I want to impact real students and their families. There is so much still to do to support Black girls and women in mathematics. We need more research--both critical quantitative and qualitative studies to better understand their experiences. I include more examples of what mathematics instructors can do

to better support Black women and girls in mathematics in my new book, published by Harvard University Press, *Making Black Girls Count in Math: A Black Feminist Vision of Transformative Teaching*.

<https://www.hepg.org/hep-home/books/making-black-girls-count-in-math-education>.

It gives me hope that the AMW committee recognized my work in this important way. I am grateful to the selection committee and the AWM for this tremendous honor.

Photo courtesy of Quentin Cox Photography

Established in 1991, the Hay Award recognizes outstanding achievements in any area of mathematics education. Louise Hay was widely recognized for her contributions to mathematical logic, for her strong leadership as Head of the Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science at the University of Illinois at Chicago, for her devotion to students, and for her lifelong commitment to nurturing the talent of young women and men. The annual presentation of this award is intended to highlight the importance of mathematics education and to evoke the memory of all that Hay exemplified as a teacher, scholar, administrator, and human being. It will be presented at the The Joint Mathematics Meetings, scheduled for January 4-7, 2023 in Boston, MA.