

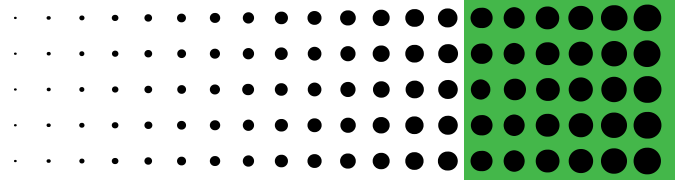


2024 Annual Report

**Advancing Black Health Through
Research and Advocacy**

www.mbrace.ca

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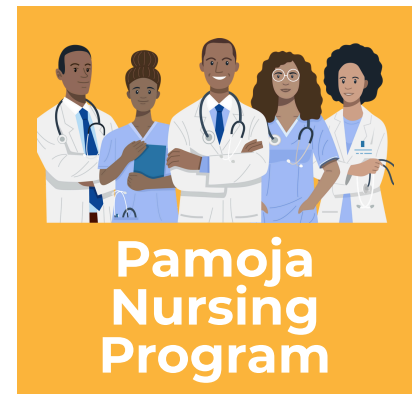


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Executive Summary

The first year for MBRACe has been a journey full of excitement, building meaningful connections, conducting impactful research, and launching evidence-informed programs. In 2023-24, MBRACe successfully secured over \$100,000 in research funding and mentored 20 students through initiatives such as MBRACe Ideas and the Pamoja Nursing Program.

Main Topics



Message From The Team



We are eager to share the 2024 MBRACe annual report, showcasing highlights from the past year as well as upcoming activities.

Over the past year, we have been fortunate to work with and learn from exceptional researchers from across Canada and the Caribbean. We are also grateful for the trust and support we have received from organizations, funding agencies, and, importantly, communities.

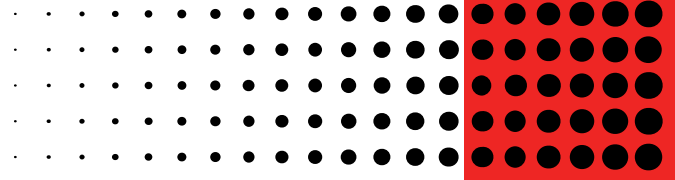


Since 2023, MBRACe has created a welcoming space for learning, mentorship, and meaningful engagement with students, research interns, and employees. We are especially proud of our progress towards supporting Black nursing students through the Pamoja Nursing Program.

We are excited about the future activities for MBRACe. Thank you to everyone who has supported MBRACe and Pamoja – we appreciate you!

Dr. Keisha Jefferies, MBRACe Director
Crenda Marfo, Program Manager

About MBRACe



Our Vision

To be a multidisciplinary research hub for high quality evidence to advance the health of Black populations.

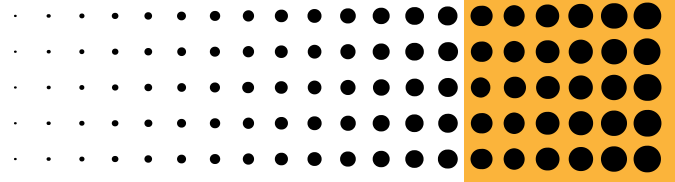
Our Mission

At MBRACe, we combine traditional scientific methods with critical social research methodologies to examine chronic health issues and systemic barriers that impact Black populations, while developing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-informed interventions to advance Black health.

Our Objectives

- » To synthesize evidence through robust systematic reviews and evidence syntheses.
- » To conduct primary research through qualitative and mixed methods multidisciplinary research.
- » To develop evidence-informed theoretical, conceptual, and practical frameworks.
- » To implement and evaluate evidence-informed interventions, initiatives, and programs.

Building A Research Hub



Developing the Team

- » Hiring program staff.
- » Mentoring summer research interns and student volunteers.
- » Recruiting graduate students.

Securing New Funding Grants

- » Applying to Institutional, Provincial, and Federal Funding Competitions.
- » Submitting seven (7) funding applications.

Raising Awareness About MBRACe Research

- » Publishing a research protocol.
- » Presenting at local and national conferences.
- » Refreshing the MBRACe [website](#).

MBRACe Ideas

Mentoring & Engaging Students in Research

MBRACe Ideas is a weekly, hybrid drop-in meeting that provides an opportunity for students and research interns to learn about, and actively contribute to, research-focused discussions.

MBRACe Ideas is led by Dr. Jefferies and is supported by Ms. Marfo and the MBRACe team. Students involved over the past year brought in diverse perspectives from backgrounds in science, health, medicine, and nursing.



MBRACe Research

The past year has been an exciting time for research at MBRACe. Two active projects in each of our Research Areas helps us advance our vision and mission. Of particular note is our team's ability to successfully secure research funding.

>**\$100K**
In research funding

Research Areas

Black Populations Health

Project Title: People of African Descent with Uterine Fibroids: A Scoping Review

Project Title: A Critical Examination of the Social and Structural Factors that Impact People of African Descent with Uterine Fibroids in Nova Scotia

Inclusivity In Nursing

Project Title: Belonging and Success in Nursing: An Exploratory Mixed Method Study

Project Title: Environmental Scan and Review of Select Cases of Success Initiatives for Black Students in Canadian Institutions

Black Populations Health

People of African Descent with Uterine Fibroids: A Scoping Review

January 2024 to December 2025

Project Background

Emerging data shows an alarming increase in the incidence and severity of uterine fibroids with debilitating symptoms among Black people of African descent. Currently there is no comprehensive systematic synthesis of the existing literature on uterine fibroids among People of African Descent globally.

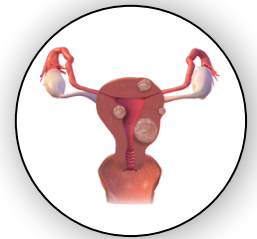


Image credit Blausen Medical Communications, Inc. (Creative Commons 4.0; retrieved July 3rd, 2024), cropped.

Project Overview

The purpose of this scoping review is to map the available evidence on the experiences of People of African descent with uterine fibroids. An interdisciplinary team, backed by \$10,000 of institutional funding from Dalhousie Faculty of Health, will conduct this scoping review using a JBI scoping review methodology to screen, review, extract, analyze, and combine information from the literature.

Project Objectives

- » Understand the extent and type of literature available regarding Black people of African descent with uterine fibroids globally.
- » Identify gaps within the existing literature.
- » Provide recommendations for future research involving Black people of African descent with uterine fibroids.

Black Populations Health

A Critical Examination of the Social and Structural Factors that Impact People of African Descent with Uterine Fibroids in Nova Scotia

January 2024 to December 2025

Project Background

Uterine fibroids are non-cancerous growths in the uterus that are generally considered harmless. Many people with uterine fibroids experience symptoms such as heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain or pressure, and a reduced quality of life. Available research indicates that Black women are disproportionately impacted by uterine fibroids and experience more severe symptoms.

Project Overview

Supported by a New Health Investigator Grant from Research Nova Scotia valued at \$99,626, our interdisciplinary team used a combination of interviews and demographics forms to examine the social and structural factors impacting the health and wellbeing of people of African descent with uterine fibroids in Nova Scotia.

Project Objectives

- » Understand the social and structural factors that impact people of African descent with uterine fibroids in Nova Scotia.
- » Develop recommendations to enhance accessible, person-centered, and culturally appropriate healthcare for people of African descent with uterine fibroids in Nova Scotia.
- » Build research capacity in Nova Scotia to advance Black health research.

Inclusivity In Nursing

Belonging and Success in Nursing: An Exploratory Mixed Method Study

September 2024 to December 2025

Study Background

Ongoing issues of discrimination and anti-Black racism in nursing education have significant implications for Black health, the delivery of competent care, and representation within the nursing workforce. Despite efforts to address these issues, gaps exist in addressing discrimination and racism in nursing programs across Nova Scotia.

Study Overview

This exploratory mixed methods study involved participants from nursing programs in multiple institutions across Nova Scotia including Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia Community College, Cape Breton University, and St. Francis Xavier University. Knowledge gained from this project will inform the Pamoja Nursing Program and advance efforts towards enhancing diversity within the nursing workforce.

Study Objectives

- » Examine the clinical, academic, and life experiences of Black nursing students in Nova Scotia to identify the facilitators and barriers to belonging and success for Black nursing students.
- » Inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of recruitment and retention strategies for Black nursing students in Nova Scotia.
- » Inform nursing curricula and institutional policies to enhance nursing education.

Inclusivity In Nursing

Environmental Scan and Review of Select Cases of Success Initiatives for Black Students in Canadian Institutions

September 2024 to August 2025

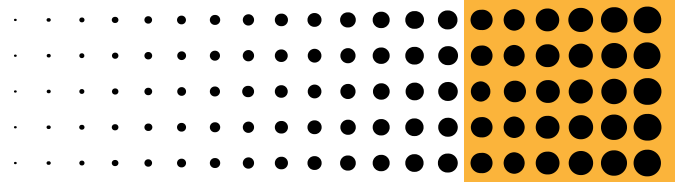
Project Overview

This project seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of resources and initiatives that support the success of Black nursing students.

Approach

- » **Phase 1:** A review and key informant interview of a select number of cases (programs that have a demonstrated track record of a direct commitment to supporting Black students in post-secondary education within Nova Scotia). These cases include: PLANS, Imhotep Legacy Academy, the Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq Initiative, Etowa Dal School of Nursing Program, Transition Year Program and Africentric Bachelor of Social Work Cohort – Dalhousie University.
- » **Phase 2:** A comprehensive review of websites, publicly available documents, reports, policies, and success programs across selected academic institutions in Canada at various U15 institutions. Focused on Health, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and other allied health professions.

Pamoja Nursing Program

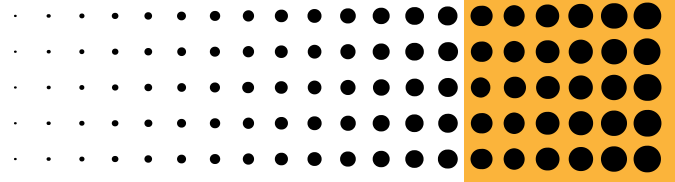


Officially launched in August 2024, Pamoja is an evidence-informed program designed to foster a sense of community for new and current Black nursing students in Nova Scotia.



Pamoja means “together” in Swahili.

Pamoja Nursing Program



Program Overview

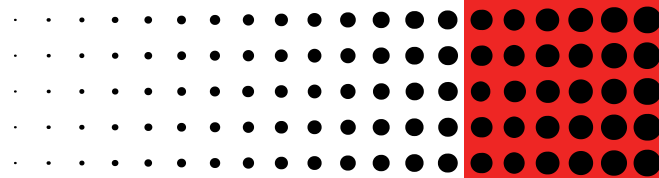
Pamoja offers academic support, career guidance, personal wellness, and professional development to support the learning experiences of Black nursing students and increase diversity and success in the nursing profession.

Program Components

- » An annual three-day Pamoja nursing school primer.
- » Enrichment workshops and social events hosted throughout the academic year.

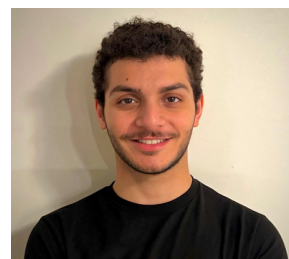


Looking Ahead



New Research Associate

We are delighted to welcome Ali Hammoud to the team as our new Research Associate. Ali brings valuable experience in evidence synthesis, community health, and advocacy. Welcome Ali!



New Funding

» A **New Investigator in Addictions and Mental Health Grant** (\$90,562) over two years for the project “*Understanding the mental health experiences of Black women in Nova Scotia: A qualitative study guided by Black feminist theory*”.

» A \$10,000 **SSHRC Explore Grant** from Dalhousie University.

2025 Summer Research Students



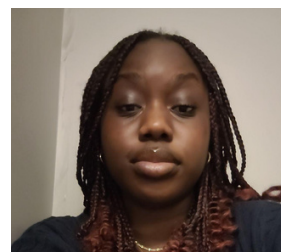
Vitória de Paula Santos
Mitacs
Globalink
Research
Intern



Tarelle Sterling
Imhotep's
Legacy
Research
Scholarship



Eshaa Amer
NSERC
Summer
Research
Award



Samantha Kieyele
NSERC
Summer
Research
Award

Acknowledgements

2024 MBRACe Alumni



Lisa Bland

Research Coordinator 2023- 2024



Tatiana Mesa Vanegas

Mitacs Globalink Summer Research Intern



Miguel Angel Monsalve Vallejo

Mitacs Globalink Summer Research Intern



Ahmed Galal

NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award



Ty Martin

NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award



Adara Robart

SSHRC Undergraduate Student Research Award

Acknowledgements

2024 Pamoja Speakers

Josephine Muxlow

Dr. Terrence Lewis

Courtney Oliver

Crystal Watson

Dr. Kelly Lackie

Bukola Oladimeji

Evelyn Abudulai

Nadine Ezzedine

2024 Pamoja Supporters



**Dalhousie University Library
and Writing Centre**



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

Global Health Office

PLANS

Promoting Leadership in
health for African Nova Scotians

Black Student Advising Centre (BSAC) Dalhousie University

Program Advisor for African Nova Scotian/African Descent
Student Cohort, Dalhousie School of Nursing

Acknowledgements

Programs, Organizations & Institutions



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Acknowledgements

Research Co-Investigators, Associates and Collaborators

A Critical Examination of the Social and Structural Factors that Impact People of African Descent with Uterine Fibroids in Nova Scotia

- **Keisha Jefferies, PhD** – Principal Investigator – Assistant Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University.
- **Josephine Etowa, PhD** – Co-Investigator - Full Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa.
- **Oluwabukola Salami, PhD** - Co-Investigator – Full Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa.
- **Megan Aston, PhD** - Co-Investigator – Full Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University.
- **Angela Alleyne, PhD** - Co-Investigator - Senior Lecturer, Biochemist, University of the West Indies, Barbados.
- **Shane Austin, PhD** - Co-Investigator - Lecturer, Biochemist, University of the West Indies, Barbados.
- **Bukola Oladimeji, MN** - Associate - Instructor, School of Nursing, Dalhousie University.
- **Emma Stirling-Cameron, PhD Candidate** - Associate - Research Associate, Department of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia
- **Lisa Bland, BscN** - Associate - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University.
- **Vanessa MacLennan, RN** - Associate - IWK Health Centre, Halifax

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- **Emma Stirling-Cameron, PhD Student** - Collaborator - Research Associate - Department of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia
- **Lisa Bland, RN** - Collaborator - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University.
- **Ashley Osa-Peters, MD Candidate** - Collaborator - Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University
- **Elizabeth Nkrumah, MN** - Collaborator - Nova Scotia Sisterhood, Nova Scotia.
- **Ahmed Galal** - Collaborator - NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award 2024, MBRAce, School of Nursing, Dalhousie University

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Belonging and Success in Nursing: An Exploratory Mixed Method Study

- **Keisha Jefferies, PhD** – Principal Investigator – Assistant Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University.
- **Florence Luhanga, PhD** – Co-Investigator – Associate Professor - Faculty of Nursing, University of Regina.
- **Josephine Etowa, PhD** – Co-Investigator - Full Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa.
- **Oluwabukola Salami, PhD** - Co-Investigator – Full Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa.
- **Christine Cassidy, PhD** - Co-Investigator – Assistant Professor - School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- **Britney Benoit, PhD** - Co-Investigator – Assistant Professor - Rankin School of Nursing, St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- **Crystal Watson, Academic Chair** - Co-Investigator - School of Health and Human Services, Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- **Courtney Oliver, RN** - Co-Investigator – Faculty – Practical Nursing Program - Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia, Canada.



Let's Connect!

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