



Joanne Marciano

LRA Board of Directors Nominee

Biography

Dr. Joanne E. Marciano is Associate Professor of English Education in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University. Her research examines possibilities for centering youths' evolving and dynamic literacy practices as strengths in literacy curriculum, teaching, and teacher education to contribute to more equitable schooling opportunities for students. In 2019, she collaborated with community partners to start The Youth Voices Project, an on-going community-based Youth Participatory Action Research initiative that seeks to disrupt educational inequities while acknowledging and extending youth participants' literacy practices as strengths across varied contexts. She is currently PI of the \$2.8 million National Science Foundation-funded project Community-Situated Data Practices in Multiethnic, Youth-Led Research Partnerships. Dr. Marciano's research has been published in peer-reviewed journals, including *Harvard Educational Review*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly* (in press), *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Journal of Teacher Education*, and *Urban Education*. She is co-author with Dr. Michelle Knight-Manuel of the books *Classroom cultures: Equitable schooling for racially diverse youth* and *College ready: Preparing Black and Latina/o youth for higher education – a culturally relevant approach*, both published by Teachers College Press. She is the recipient of the 2025 Michigan State University Distinguished Partnership Award for Community Engaged Teaching, and was awarded the 2019-2021 Reading Hall of Fame Emerging Scholars Fellowship. Dr. Marciano previously spent 13 years as a New York City public high school English Teacher. She received her Ed.D. in Curriculum and Teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Candidate Statement

I am honored to be nominated to serve as a member of the LRA Board of Directors.

I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education in the College of Education at Michigan State University, where I currently serve as Licensure Area Leader for the secondary English education program. I teach undergraduate, masters, and doctoral courses including secondary English methods, children's and young adult literature, and social foundations of education.

My research, teaching, and service demonstrate my commitment to engaging in participatory literacy research alongside youth and teachers that seeks to disrupt educational disparities by centering students' voices and varied perspectives across contexts of schools and communities. As one example, I serve as lead researcher, lead facilitator, and project manager of The Youth Voices Project, a participatory literacy initiative I co-founded in 2019 with the youth director of a subsidized housing community in the US Midwest. The Youth Voices Project amplifies the voices and literacies of youth who self-identify as Black, Lebanese-American, Mexican-American, Muslim, Native American, and white and who experience limited access to economic resources as they identify, examine, and take action about issues of importance to them through their enactment of Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR). I am PI of a \$2.8 million grant awarded by the National Science Foundation that examines how youth in two community-based research sites, including participants in The Youth Voices Project, engage in critical community-situated data practices in their YPAR work. The Youth Voices Project was recently recognized with the 2025 Michigan State University Distinguished Partnership Award for Community Engaged Teaching. My research has been published in peer-reviewed journals including LRA's *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Reading Research Quarterly* (in press), *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *English Journal*, and *Urban Education*.

Since my first presentation at the LRA annual conference nearly 10 years ago, I have sought to engage in and contribute to LRA's mission of enacting and promoting socially responsible and methodologically diverse literacy research. I currently serve as a member of the LRA Field Council (2020-2025), and have presented research alongside doctoral students and faculty colleagues at LRA's annual conference since 2015. I have additionally participated as an invited speaker for study groups at the LRA conference, including the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group: Democratizing Approaches to Literacy Study Group (2024), Building Infrastructure for Community-Based, Youth Led Inquiries in the Service of Educational Justice Study Group (2023), and Culturally Sustaining Literacy Pedagogy Study Group (2019). I served as a mentor for the LRA Doctoral Student Innovation Group Proposal Mentoring Project (2020), and participated as a proposal reviewer and discussant for the LRA annual conference across the years. Now, I am excited to consider possibilities for extending my contributions to the organization by serving on the LRA Board of Directors.

If elected to serve as a member of the LRA Board of Directors, I am particularly interested in contributing to two areas of the organization's work, urgent in these contemporary times: 1) continuing to recruit and sustain a culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse global membership; and 2) advocating for literacy research and practice, including work that amplifies the voices of children, youth, families, and educators across a variety of sociopolitical contexts.

My interest in continuing to recruit and sustain a culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse global membership is deeply rooted in my experiences as a member of the LRA Field Council since

2020. In that capacity, I engage in ongoing collaboration with colleagues to consider how LRA may serve as a welcoming space supportive of the varied intersectional identities, dynamic cultural practices, and global perspectives of its current and prospective members. Such work is particularly urgent at a time when literacy researchers are seeking to make sense of the rapidly changing political landscape in the US and the impact of such change across global contexts. LRA is well positioned to serve as an organization whose members work in solidarity to advocate for the humanizing literacy research, policy, and practices we need now. If elected to the LRA Board of Directors, I will work alongside colleagues to extend opportunities for LRA members to engage in conversation, discussion and critical reflection that extends beyond the annual in-person conference. By fostering ongoing and intentional dialogue, these engagements may remind literacy researchers and educators that LRA provides the welcoming spaces needed to work in solidarity to address the most pressing issues of our times.

In addition, I am eager to further LRA's longstanding commitment to advocating for research-informed changes in educational policy and practice by supporting efforts to promote literacy research and teaching, including work that amplifies the voices of children, youth, families, and educators across a variety of sociopolitical contexts. A deep and nuanced understanding of the experiences of those most directly impacted by educational practice and policy is a necessary step in disrupting persistent educational inequities. Yet efforts to enact such literacy research are increasingly impacted by restrictions to federal funding. If elected to the LRA Board of Directors, I will work alongside colleagues to continue to advocate for robust literacy research initiatives, to amplify the voices of those most directly impacted by literacy research and practice, and to promote evidence-based research findings that inform immediate and long-term educational reforms.