

Melanie A. Sonsteng-Person

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

- 2024 - current **Assistant Professor**
School of Social Work
Salem State University
- 2022 - 2024 **Postdoctoral Associate**
School of Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood
Studies
College of Education
University of Florida
- Summer 2024 **Visiting Assistant Professor**
School of Social Work
Salem State University
- 2022 - 2023 **Adjunct Faculty**
Graduate School of Social Work
University of Denver
- Summer 2023 **Adjunct Faculty**
Silberman School of Social Work
Hunter College

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Department of Social Welfare, UCLA, June 2022
Dissertation: *The (re)production of violence and trauma in high schools: How institutional policies and practices influence teacher and staff decision making*
Committee: Todd Franke (Chair), Ron Avi Astor, Sheryl Kataoka, Jorja Leap
- M.S.W School of Social Work, Boston University, 2014
Advisor: Melvin Delgado, PhD
Concentration: Macro Practice
- B.A. Department of Psychology, Azusa Pacific University, 2011

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

*Community Researchers, **PhD Students, ***MSW Students, ^Undergraduate Students

- 2026 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, **Hilliard, B. T., Jagers, J. W., & ***Popham, A. G. Glimpses into the Heart of Motherhood: Assessing the Impact of a Photovoice Exhibit on Audiences' Empathy and Willingness to Take Action. *Journal of Community Practice* <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2026.2644406>
- 2025 Todić, J., Seneca Keyes, T., Joseph-McCatty, A., Bookser, Brita A., & **Sonsteng-Person, M.**. Resisting Political Backlash and Advancing Critical Scholarship through Collaborative Autoethnography. *Journal of Social Work Research*. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/737815>
- 2025 Splett, J. W., Gage, N. A., Chaparro, E. A., Lyon, A. R., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Alfonso, Z., & Halliday, C. A.. Differential Item Functioning in Teacher-Rated Universal Mental Health Screening in Elementary Schools. *School Psychology*. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fspq0000712>
- 2025 **Kidd J., Splett, J.W., **Lord R., **Varner, M., **Yost M., Corbin, C., & **Sonsteng-Person M.** Considerations for universal mental health screening in schools: A qualitative study of implementation determinants. *Journal for Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10634266251358175>
- 2025 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, **Vugić, L., ***Sandell, L., **Lowery, C. “The trauma of system failure.” How the Self, Supervisor, and System Collectively Impact MSW Intern Trauma Exposure Response. *Qualitative Social Work*, 24(6), 756-774. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14733250251324009>
- 2024 Ballentine, K., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Rai, A., Yampolskay, L., Lovato, K., Loomis, A., & Huang, H. Efforts to support high-quality research methods. *Families in Society*, 105(4). *Families in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104438942412957>
- 2024 *Oduro, A., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., ^Santos, A. Mikell, D. Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Social Work Education: A Policy Brief to Ensure Black Students Thrive in Social Work. *Families in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10443894241260071>
- 2024 *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *Oduro, A., Mikell, D.

- “The things we carry:” Interventions against the cumulative effects of racism in K-12 education. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2024.2323885>
- 2024 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., *Oduro, A., Mikell, D., *Barton, K., & *Cruz, B., “We are not ok:” A Photovoice Study on Educational Violence and Resistance by and for Black Undergraduate Students at Predominantly White Institutions. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2024.2327023>
- 2024 ***Lau, C., **Alqueza, K. L., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Copeland, V.
 “Unfortunately what's right isn't always what's best:” Exploring teacher and school staff experiences with mandated reporting. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2023.2301349>
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, **Fensterstock, N., **Highham, M. & **Kidd, J. “At what point do you ask a suicidal teen to do their math homework?”: How Los Angeles teachers are navigating the impacts of community violence and trauma. *The Educational Forum*, 88(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2023.2279762>
- 2023 Gutierrez, RA., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *King-Shaw, S., *Valmocena, M., For the Institution or For the Community?: Towards an Anti-Oppressive Research Praxis in Conducting Participatory Action Research. *Journal of Community Practice*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2023.2272162>
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, **Spoth, A.P., **Hostetter, R., **Akapnitis, I., Barbera, R., Joseph, A., **Mackey, C., Garcia-Perez, J. A new world cannot be built alone: An abolitionist framework for collective action in social work. *Abolitionist Perspectives in Social Work*. 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.52713/apsw.v1i1.18>
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jagers, J., Loomis, A. (2023). Academic Achievement after Violence Exposure: The Indirect Effects of School Attachment and Motivation to Succeed. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*. 16, 717-729.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-023-00546-w>
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, **Garcia-Perez, J., ** Liévano-Karim, L. **Copeland, V., *Abrams, D., *Van Leeuwen, J., *Bunney, R., *Cooley-Valdez, R., * Jarman, B., and *Taitingfong, S. (2023). “What I Would Do to Take Away Your Pain”: A Photovoice study with mothers of children with medical complexities. *Qualitative Health Research*, 33(3), 204-219. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323221146047>

- 2021 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Loomis, A. (2021). The Role of Trauma-Informed Training in Helping Los Angeles Teachers Manage the Effects of Student Exposure to Violence and Trauma. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*, 14, 189-199.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-021-00340-6>
- 2020 Loomis, A. **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jagers, J., and Osteen, P. (2020). School discipline as a consequence of violent victimization: Understanding the mediating roles of head injury and fighting. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(7-8)..
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520959635>
- 2020 Jagers, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Griffiths, A., Gabbard, W. J., & Murray, M. (2020). Behavioral problems and psychological distress among seriously delinquent youth: Assessing a mediational pathway of parental monitoring, peer delinquency and violence exposure. *Youth and Society*, 53(2), 230-251.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X20922114>
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Herrera, L., Koonse, T., & Zatz, N. (2020). “Any alternative is great if I’m incarcerated”: A mixed-methods study of court-ordered community service in Los Angeles county. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 48(1), 32-53.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854820923373>

Revise and Resubmit (with date submitted)

- 2/4/26 Jagers, J., Arciniegas, J., Rehn, K., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Osteen, P. Association between violent behavior & longitudinal patterns of health services use. *Journal of Applied Social Science*.

Under Review (with date submitted)

- 7/1/25 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Bookser, B., Joseph-McCatty, A., Seneca Keyes, T., & Todić, J. “I can see how this place has changed you” but “we will continue to build”: A Collaborative Autoethnography on Critical Scholarship Amid Systemic Suppression. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*.

Book Chapters and Encyclopedia Entries

- In press *King-Shaw, S.,*King-Shaw, N., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Mikell, D., *Oduro, A., & Hogan, T. P. *A “Racial Identity Shaped by Loss and Feeling Lost”: Afro-Latine student experiences navigating societal binarization of multilingual, multicultural, and/or multiracial identities*. In H. R. Stohry & B. Aronson (Eds.), *Asian and Latinx Anti-Blackness in Schools and Communities: Complicated Stories of Complicity and Resistance*. Myers Education Press.

- 2025 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** & *King-Shaw, S. *Liberatory Participatory Action Research*. In J.C. Báez (Ed.), *Issues of Equity: Key concepts in qualitative research*. Routledge. [10.4324/9781003560128-11](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003560128-11)

Technical Reports

- 2021 Franke, T.M., Litt, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Sabat Bass, N, and Leap, J. *LACOE Community Schools Annual Evaluation Report – Year 1*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Agile Visual Analytics Lab.
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** and *Van Leeuwen, J. *Cultivating engagement in a virtual photovoice project on a sensitive topic*. PhotovoiceWorldwide White Paper Series (1)2. Marlborough, MA: PhotovoiceWorldwide LLC
<https://www.photovoiceworldwide.com/vol-1-issue-2-cultivating-engagement-on-a-virtual-photovoice-project-on-a-sensitive-topic/>
- 2020 Franke, T., Blagg, R., & **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *The Antelope Valley Community Survey: Year 2*. Sisylana Evaluation and Consulting.
<http://www.antelopevalleysettlementmonitoring.info/>
- 2019 Herrera, L., Koonse, T., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Zatz, N. *Work, pay, or go to jail: Court-ordered community service in Los Angeles*. University of California, Los Angeles, Labor Center.
<https://challengeinequality.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/05/Work-Pay-or-Go-to-Jail.pdf>
- 2016 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *Promising Strategies for Youth Gun Violence Reduction: An Analysis of the Ceasefire Model*, Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies.
- 2014 **Sonsteng, M.**, *An Evaluation of Resident Engagement in Community Coalitions to Reduce Community Violence: Are We Doing It Right?* Boston Public Health Commission, Division of Violence Prevention and Intervention.

FUNDED RESEARCH

Current

Principal Investigator

Exploring the Black Undergraduate Experience at Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Salem State University

Faculty SEED Grant Award

Duration of the Study: 08/26-05/27

Direct Costs: \$3,000

The aim of this photovoice study is to understand the experiences of Black undergraduate students at Hispanic Serving Institutions. The findings from this study will inform grant proposals focused on creating policies and programs that promote belonging, well-being, and academic success for Black students at HSIs and PWIs.

Co-Investigator

Gator Connect School Based Mental Health Program

Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant Program

Duration of the Study: 1/23-1/28

Direct Costs: \$4,800,000

The aim of this study is to diversify and train school based mental health practitioners and their supervisors in evidence-based, trauma-informed, culturally responsive care. As a Co-Investigator I will be creating and evaluating the trauma-informed, culturally responsive training for practitioners and supervisors.

Completed

Co-Principal Investigator (with community researchers)

Black Resistance and Joy at PWIs: A PhotoVoice Study on the Black College Experience at University of Florida

University of Florida Advancing Racial Justice Through Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Grant No. 00131895

Duration of Study: 10/22-10/23

Direct Costs: \$38,500

The aim of this project is to utilize photovoice research to practice what Bishop (2017) calls “Black life making” on university campuses where students work to reimagine the university in a way that advances racial justice. Through the use of photovoice, this study will highlight how Black students at the University of Florida create a space for themselves and their communities to experience joy within predominantly white institutions.

Co-Principal Investigator (with community researchers)

“Black Lives Matter All the Time:” A PhotoVoice Study on the Black College Experience

University of California, Los Angeles School of Public Affairs, Frank D. Gilliam, Jr. Social Justice Award

Duration of Study: 11/20-6/22

Direct Costs: \$1,500

Through the use of photovoice, this study obtained a better understanding of the diversity of the Black experience navigating predominantly white spaces. Students at two predominantly white institutions participated in a critical analysis of their daily lives to create and share their own knowledge about the conditions of their lives, and identify and create recommendations for higher education institutions.

Principal Investigator

Educational Implications of Community Violence and Trauma: How Los Angeles Teachers are Dealing with the Effects in the Classroom

University of California Los Angeles, Graduate Division, Graduate Summer Research Mentorship

Duration of Study: 6/2019-12/19

Direct Costs: \$6,000

This was a mixed-methods exploratory study with teachers from Los Angeles County. This study used survey data to assess whether training on violence and trauma is related to trauma-informed knowledge and difficulty responding to traumatized students. Interview data and open-ended survey responses were combined to further explicate how and why teachers respond to students' violence related-trauma in the classroom.

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

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| 2025-2026 | Emerging Scholar Award , Association for Community Organizing and Social Action (ACOSA) |
| 2020-2022 | Teaching Fellowship , UCLA Department of Social Welfare |
| 2019-2020 | Social Justice Graduate Fellowship , UCLA Institute of American Cultures |
| 2018-2019 | Social Justice Graduate Fellowship , UCLA Institute of American Cultures |
| 2017-2022 | Meyer and Renee Luskin Fellowship , UCLA Department of Social Welfare |
| 2012-2014 | Urban Practice Scholarship , Boston University School of Social Work |

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

*Community Researchers, **PhD Students ***MSW Students

Symposiums

- | | |
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| 2026 | <i>Politics as Praxis: Moving From What is to What Could Be</i> . Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
Organizer: Melanie Sonsteng-Person, PhD
Discussant: Cheryl Hyde, PhD |
| 2024 | <i>Detecting and responding to racial bias in school mental health service delivery decisions</i> , National Center for School Mental Health Conference. Orland, FL.
Organizer: Joni Splett, PhD
Discussant: Aijah Baruti-Goodwin |
| 2024 | <i>Ethics Against Extractivism: Reconsidering our Ethical Commitments and Research Praxis in Participatory Action Research</i> , Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
Organizer: Melanie Sonsteng-Person, PhD
Discussant: Cheryl Hyde, PhD |

2023 *Institutional Sources of (In)Equity in PreK-12 Education: Systems-Change Social Work Research, Policy, and Practice*, Society for Social Work Research. Phoenix, AZ.

Organizer: **Melanie Sonsteng-Person, PhD**

Discussant: Susan Stone, PhD

Papers

- 2026 *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Mikell, D., *Oduro, A., & Hogan, T. P. A “*Racial identity shaped by loss and feeling lost*”: *AfroLatine student experiences navigating identity binarization*. American Educational Research Association (AERA). Los Angeles, CA.
- 2026 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Joseph-McCatty, A., Bookser, B., Seneca Keyes, T., & Todić, J. “*I can see how this place has changed you*” but “*we will continue to build*”: *A Collaborative Autoethnography on Critical Scholarship Amid Systemic Suppression*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2026 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Purvis, L., *Edouard, N., & *McLeod, D. *Community as Resistance: Using Photovoice to Build a Supportive Network of Black Undergraduate Students in Florida*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2026 Vugić, L. & **Sonsteng-Person, M.** “*I’m Flying By the Seat of My Pants:*” *Supervisors’ Ability to Identify and Respond to MSW Intern Trauma Exposure*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2025 Littman, D., Christensen, M.C. **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Pinto, R. *Coalition & community building for arts-based work in non-arts fields*. American Alliance for Theatre Education: Amplify & Ignite. Salt Lake City, UT.
- 2025 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Seneca Keyes, T., Bookser, B., Joseph-McCatty, A., & Todić, J. “*We will continue to build*”: *Collaborative Autoethnography on Advancing Critical Scholarship Amid Systemic Suppression*. Council on Social Work Education. Denver, CO. [Withdrawn due to funding constraints].
- 2024 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Gutierrez, RA, *King-Shaw, S. & Valmocena, M. T. *For the Institution or For the Community?: Towards an Anti-Oppressive Research Praxis in Conducting Participatory Action Research*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Splett, J., **Campbell, R., Machado, M., Jean-Philippe, S., Purvis, L. *Evaluation of Trauma-Informed, Culturally Responsive Training for SBMH trainees, and practitioners*. National Center for School Mental Health, New

Orleans, LA.

- 2023 ****Kidd, J., Sonsteng-Person, M., **Higham, M., & **Fensterstock, N.** *How Los Angeles Teachers are Navigating the Effects of Violence-Related Trauma in the Classroom.* National Center for School Mental Health, New Orleans, LA.
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M. & **Vugić, L.** *A Training Pilot to Provide Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed Supervision.* Council on Social Work Education. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 ****Vugić, L & Sonsteng-Person, M.** *“It’s Complex:” How Supervisors Respond to Interns Following Exposure to Individual and Institutional Trauma.* Council on Social Work Education. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 Silva, C., Alvarado, B., Bennett, R., Burghardt, S., Halarewicz, A., & **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *It’s Time to Act NOW!: Activism from a Nationwide, Anti-Racist Social Worker Equity Campaign.* Council on Social Work Education. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M., *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., *Orduro, A., & Mikell, D.** *“We got us, but they don’t:” A Photovoice study with Black undergraduate students at predominantly white universities.* American Educational Research Association (AERA). Chicago, IL.
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *The (Re)production of Violence and Trauma in High Schools: How Institutional Policies and Practices Influence Teacher and Staff Decision Making.* Society for Social Work Research. Phoenix, AZ.
- 2022 **Sonsteng-Person, M., *King-Shaw, S., *King-Shaw, N., *Orduro, A., & Mikell, D.** *More than an 8 Week Project- Photovoice as a Liberatory Space Outside of and Within Academia.* 30 Years of Photovoice- Past, Present, and Future. Virtual
- 2022 ***King-Shaw, S., Sonsteng-Person, M., *King-Shaw, N., *Orduro, A., & Mikell, D.** *“It has everything to do with us:” Positioning Photovoice within Black Feminist Knowledge Production and Research Justice Praxis.* 30 Years of Photovoice- Past, Present, and Future. Virtual
- 2022 **Sonsteng-Person, M. & Mikell, D.** *Re-Lensing Predominantly White Universities: Examining and Advocating for Black Thriving within PWI through Photovoice.* Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.

- 2020 Lee, D., Umemoto, K., Nguyen, T., **Sonsteng-Person, M.** & Allen, T. *Ethnic Studies and Public Scholarship: The Co-Creation of K–12 Curriculum Using University-Based Archival Materials*. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA <http://tinyurl.com/srzk2wn> (Conference Canceled)
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Zatz, N., Koonse, T., and Herrera, L. *'Any Alternative is Great if I'm Incarcerated: ' A Mixed-Methods Study of Court-Ordered Community Service in Los Angeles County*. Society for Social Work and Research. Washington DC. <https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2020/webprogram/Session11107.html>
- 2019 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *Educational Implications of Community Violence & Trauma: How Los Angeles Teachers are Dealing with Effects in the Classroom*. National Center for School Mental Health Conference. Austin, Texas. <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/media/SOM/Microsites/NCSMH/Documents/ASMH-2019/Presentations-2019/CS-1.09.-Educational-Implications-of-Community-Violence-&-Trauma.pdf>

Roundtables

- 2025 Hyde, C., Jackson, S., Tomczak, S., Leisey, M., Burghardt, S., Dettlaff, A., & **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *Activist Joy: Supporting and Celebrating Social Change Makers in Tumultuous Times*. Council on Social Work Education. Denver, CO.
- 2024 Brady, S. R., Gutiérrez, M. Harty, J. S., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Grinnell-Davis, C. L., Bailey, D., Hyde, C. A. Carter, K., & BlackDeer, A. A. *Defending and Supporting DEIB Educators and Scholars Against Censorship and State Bans*, Council on Social Work Education, Kansas City, MO.
- 2024 ****Spoth, A.P., Sonsteng-Person, M., **Hostetter, R., Barbera, R., & Joseph, A.** *A new world cannot be built alone: A framework for action in social work*. Council on Social Work Education, Kansas City, MO.
- 2024 Lloyd, S., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & *Oduro, A. *In the end what do we have? A roundtable dialogue on the potential of social change following photovoice projects*, Photovoice Worldwide Aiming for Impact Conference, Virtual.
- 2024 Todic, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Bookser, B. A., Joseph, A., & Seneca Keyes, T. *Resisting Political Backlash through Ethical Disobedience: A Roundtable for Critical Reflection and Solidarity*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2024 Littman, D., Hamilton, G., Guitierrez, L., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Pinto, R. *Democratizing knowledge through teaching, collecting, and disseminating*

arts-based research. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.

- 2024 ****Rodriguez, M., Sonsteng-Person, M., Copeland, V., & Lown, J.** *The Necessity of Action: Following through on the promise of action in Participatory Action Research*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2023 Hyde, C., Ivery, J., Ohmer, M., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Brady, S., Barbera, R., Sarantakos, S., & Grinnell-Davis, C. *Mobilizing Against Attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support for Marginalized Educators and Students*. Council on Social Work Education. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 Mikell, D., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jordan, S., & Copeland, V. *Keeping the P in PAR during Analysis: A Critical Discussion on Participatory Strategies to Analyzing Data and Building Solutions to Social Problems*. Society for Social Work Research. Phoenix, AZ.
- 2023 Spishak-Tomas, M., Toppenberg, L., Bonilla, P., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Lob, S. *Can't Fight Poverty in Poverty: Organizing for Good Jobs in Social Work*. Society for Social Work Research. Phoenix, AZ.
- 2023 Bookser, B. A., Todic, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Joseph, A., & Seneca Keyes, T. *"New Terrains of Justice:" Directions for Systems-Change Research and Praxis Spanning the PreK-12 Educational Continuum*. Society for Social Work Research. Phoenix, AZ.
- 2022 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jordan, S., Copeland, V., & Mikell, D. *Keeping the P in PAR during Analysis: A Critical Discussion on Participatory Strategies to Analyzing Data*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington DC. (canceled due to COVID restrictions)
- 2021 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Ritterbusch, A., Mikell, D., Jordan, S., & Brock-Petroshius, K. *Centering Social Justice in the Social Work Research Process: Reflections from Doctoral Students' Participatory Action Research Initiatives in Southern California*. Society for Social Work Research. Virtual.
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Richards-Schuster, K. Teixeira, S., Ritterbusch, A., and Mikell, D. *Advancing Justice or Tokenism? Critical Discussion of the Past and Future of Participatory Approaches to Research in Social Work*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington DC.
<https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2020/webprogram/Session10523.html>

Posters

- 2025 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *A Photovoice Study on Black Life Making Within Predominantly White Institutions*. Massachusetts Teacher Association Higher Education Conference. Worcester, MA.
- 2024 ****Lau, C., Sonsteng-Person, M. & Copeland, V.** “*Unfortunately What’s Right Isn’t Always What’s Best*”: *Exploring Teacher and School Staff Experiences with Mandated Reporting*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.
- 2023 **Sonsteng-Person, M.,** Halliday, C., Splett, J., Baker, C., Hollins-Sims, N., & Hilliard, B. *Reimagining Implicit Bias Training for PBIS Teams Amidst State Policy Restrictions*. Association for Positive Behavior Support. Jacksonville, FL.
- 2022 **Sonsteng-Person, M. & **Vugić, L.** *MSW Interns’ Secondary Traumatic Stress: The impact of Self, Supervisor, and System*. Council on Social Work Education. Anaheim, CA.
- 2022 **Sonsteng-Person, M.,** Lesser, D., *Abrams, D., *Van Leeuwen, J., *Bunney, R., *Cooley-Valdez, R., *Jarman, B., and Taitingfong, S. ‘*What I Would Do to Take Away Your Pain.*’ *A Photovoice study with mothers of children with medical complexities*. Rady’s Children’s Hospital Pediatric Research Symposium. San Diego, CA.
- 2022 Loomis, A. M., **Sonsteng-Person, M.,** Coffey, R., & Freed, S. *Using multilevel modeling to identify trauma-informed mechanisms of change for preschool expulsion risk*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington DC.
- 2021 Jagers, J., Loomis, A., **Sonsteng-Person, M.,** & Osteen, P. *Victimization and Suspension/Expulsion in Adolescence: Exploring Pathways through Fighting and Head Injury*. Society for Social Work Research. Virtual.
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M., **Vugić, L., ***Sandell, L., & Easton, S.** *Secondary Traumatic Stress: How Prepared are MSW Interns and Supervisors?* Council on Social Work Education. Virtual.
- 2020 Jagers, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.,** Church, W. *Mediating Factors Contributing to Psychological Distress in Serious Delinquent Offenders*. Society for Social Work Research. Washington DC.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Salem State University, School of Social Work

Spring 2026

Community Practice and Social Change, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Fall 2025

Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Social Work and Social Welfare Policy, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Dynamics of Privilege and Oppression, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Summer 2025

Dynamics of Privilege and Oppression, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Spring 2025

Community Practice and Social Change, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Fall 2024

Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Social Work and Social Welfare Policy, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Dynamics of Privilege and Oppression, Assistant Professor (Course Lead)
Summer 2024

Dynamics of Privilege and Oppression, Visiting Assistant Professor

University of Denver, MSW@Denver Online

Fall 2023
Power, Privilege, and Oppression, Adjunct Faculty

Winter 2023
Power, Privilege, and Oppression, Adjunct Faculty

Fall 2022
Trauma Informed Assessment & Intervention, Adjunct Faculty

Hunter College, Silberman School of Social Work

Summer 2023
Childhood Trauma, Adjunct Faculty

University of California, Los Angeles

2020-2022
MSW Capstone, Interpreting & Disseminating Research, *Department of Social Welfare*, Teaching Fellow

2020-2022
MSW Capstone, Data Gathering & Analysis, *Department of Social Welfare*, Teaching Fellow

Fall 2021

Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools (Undergraduate Level), *School of Public Affairs*, Teaching Fellow

STUDENT SUPERVISION

2025-2026 **Graduate Research Assistant**, Salem State University, School of Social Work

2025-2026 **MSW Practicum Supervisor**, Salem State University, School of Social Work

Summer 2023 **Roosevelt Scholar**, Hunter College
1 Undergraduate Policy Intern

2016- 2017 **MSW Practicum Supervisor**, Wayne State University, School of Social Work
5 Clinical Students
1 Community Practice Student

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Editorial Board

2023-Present **Methodological Review Committee**, *Families in Society*

2022- Present **Editorial Board Member**, *Abolitionist Perspectives in Social Work*

Peer Review

2023-Present **Ad Hoc Reviewer**, *Psychology in the Schools*

2022-Present **Ad Hoc Reviewer**, *Qualitative Health Research*

2021-Present **Reviewer**, *Journal of Social Work Education*

2019-Present **Ad Hoc Reviewer**, *Journal of Criminal Justice and Behavior*

Profession

2024-Present **Special Interest Group Convener**, Arts-Based Research and Praxis, *Society for Social Work Research*

2022-Present **Faculty Mentor**, Coffee with a Scholar, *Society for Social Work Research*

2022-Present **Special Interest Group Convener**, Abolitionist and Social Change Collective, *Society for Social Work Research*

2022- Present **Committee Member**, Leadership, Equity, Accountability, and Diversity Committee, *Association for Community Organization and Social Action, ACOSA*

2022-Present **Co-Founder**, The Social Worker Activist Collective

2020- 2023 **Steering Committee**, Social Worker Equity Campaign

- 2020-2022 **Doctoral Student Planning Committee**, Mentoring Sub-Committee, *Society for Social Work and Research Conference*
- 2020-2021 **Doctoral Student Planning Committee**, Conference Planning Sub-Committee, *Society for Social Work and Research Conference*
- 2020-2022 **Doctoral Student Mentor**, *Society for Social Work and Research Conference*

University

- 2026 - **Advisory Board Member**, Center for Social Work, Innovation, and Excellence, *Salem State University, School of Social Work*
- 2024-2025 **Member**, DEI, Social Justice, and Globalization Committee, *Salem State University, School of Social Work*
- 2024-2025 **Member**, MSW Curriculum Committee, *Salem State University, School of Social Work*
- 2023-2024 **Supervisor**, Undergraduate Roosevelt Scholar, *Hunter College*
- 2022-2024 **Member**, Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee, *University of Florida*
- 2018-2022 **Creator & Chair**, Ph.D. Sunshine Committee, *UCLA Department of Social Welfare*
- 2019-2020 **Mentor**, Incoming PhD Students, *UCLA, Department of Social Welfare*
- 2019 **Hiring Committee**, UCLA, Department of Social Welfare
- 2019-2020 **Student Representative**, Doctoral Committee, *UCLA Department of Social Welfare*
- 2019 **Conference Organizer**, Civil Rights in California- An Ethnic Studies Perspective, *UCLA Department of Education*
- 2018-2019 **Mentor**, Community College to Ph.D. Program, *UCLA*
- 2018-2019 **Student Representative**, Luskin Dean’s Committee, *UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs*
- 2018-2019 **Chair**, Ph.D. Professional Development Committee, *UCLA Department of Social Welfare*
- 2017-2018 **Conference Organizer**, Resistance Through Research: Social Justice Research + Activism in the Trump Era, *UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs*
- 2014 **Student Representative**, School of Social Work Hiring Committee, *Boston University*
- 2012-2014 **Member**, Macro Student Government Subcommittee, *Boston University*

To Community

- 2025-2028 **Commission Member**, Salem City Council, Race Equity Commission
- 2024-2026 **Member**, Equity Committee, *Massachusetts State College Association*
- 2022 **Organizer**, Banned Books Drive, *Imagine Learning Center, Gainesville, Florida*
- 2019- 2022 **Educational Rights Holder**, Los Angeles Children’s Law Center
- 2016-2017 **Task Leader** for Social Service Impact on Violence Prevention, *Detroit Community Accountability Network*
- 2016-2017 **Victim Advocate**, *Detroit Community Clergy Alliance*

PUBLIC IMPACT

Policy Changes

Study: “Black Lives Matter All the Time:” A Photovoice Study on the Black College Experience

Outcome: Co-researcher used findings to create a protocol for responding to incidents of racism on her college campus.

Study: Community Service as an Alternative Sanction to Incarceration

Outcome: Findings used to influence the State Bill SB71 and the motion to repeal LA County’s fees passed in February 2020.

Program Changes

Study: “Black Lives Matter All the Time:” A Photovoice Study on the Black College Experience

Outcome: Co-researcher used findings to create a mentoring program for Black elementary school students in San Diego.

Media Coverage

December 2021. *Black Lives Matter All the Time Collective*. Macro Social Work Stories Podcast.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djab7CX_z8Q

June 2022. *IMPACT: A Framework to Guide Campus Responses to Racial Incidents*. Diverse Issues in Higher Education.

<https://www.diverseeducation.com/opinion/article/15293039/impact-a-framework-to-guide-campus-responses-to-racial-incidents>

Professional Development Trainings

2024 *Trauma-informed and Culturally Responsive Supervision*. Continuing Education Workshops. School of Social Work, Salem State University.

2024 *Monitoring Mental Health and Race Related Blindspots in School Mental Health Team Meetings*. Project THRIVE. College of Education, University of Florida.

2023 *Trauma-informed and Culturally Responsive Supervision for School Mental Health Professionals*. Gator Connect. College of Education, University of Florida.

2023 *Secondary Traumatic Stress, Burnout, and Caring for Self and Community*. Gator Connect, Summer Institute. College of Education, University of Florida.

- 2023 *Cultural Considerations for Trauma-Informed Practice*. Gator Connect, Summer Institute. College of Education, University of Florida.
- 2023 *Identifying and Addressing Student Trauma in Elementary Schools*. Project THRIVE. College of Education, University of Florida.
- 2022 *Identifying and Addressing Student Trauma in Elementary Schools*. Project THRIVE. College of Education, University of Florida.

Invited Talks

- 2023 *The kids are not alright: Racial discrimination and mental health in K-12*. Challenging Structural Racism Series. School of Social Work, California State University, Long Beach.
- 2022 *The impact of trauma on education: Understanding how to create a safe space for students*. A.M.A.N.I. Project, San Diego State University
- 2022 *Self-care won't save you: Systemic stressors students experienced as harbingers of long-term burnout*. NASW, New York State Chapter.
- 2021 *Advancing Smart Decarceration Through Research: A Two-Part Virtual Conversation*, University of Chicago, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, Smart Decarceration Project,
- 2017 *Careers in Macro Social Work and Beyond*, Wayne State University School of Social Work
- 2017 *Providing Trauma-Informed Responses to Crime Victims*, Detroit 8th Police Precinct Radio Patrol Members, Detroit, MI
- 2017 *Trauma Exposure Response for Clinicians Working with Crime Victims*, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University
- 2017 *Experiencing a Crime: The process, common reactions, and community resources*, Grandmont Rosedale Neighborhood Association, Detroit, MI
- 2017 *Domestic Violence and Teen Dating Violence in Detroit*, Church of the Messiah, Detroit, MI
- 2016 *Active Listening and other Clinical Tools for Victim Advocates*, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University

- 2016 *Court Preparation and Accompaniment for Crime Victims*, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University
- 2016 *Detroit Crime Statistics and the Impact on the Community*, Detroit Community Empowerment Summit, Detroit, MI
- 2016 *Trauma Exposure: The Emotional and Behavioral Responses in Students*, East Detroit Public School District
- 2016 *Crisis Response and Brief Treatment for First Responders*, Detroit Community Clergy Alliance, Detroit, MI
- 2016 *The Criminal Justice Process*, Detroit Police Department Chaplain Corps, Detroit, MI

Guest Lectures

- 2023 *Providing ethical care in a hostile political environment: School Based Mental Health in Florida*. University of Florida, School Psychology Seminar: Cultural Diversity.
- 2022 *More than an eight week project: Photovoice and social change in the Social Work profession*. National Catholic School of Social Service, Social Justice: Theory and Practice.
- 2021 *Trauma and the Helping Profession*, Lewis University School of Social Work, Practice with Individuals and Families
- 2021 *The Impact of Trauma on Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, School of Social Work, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2020 *The Impact of Trauma on Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, School of Social Work, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2019 *The Impact of Trauma on Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, School of Social Work, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2017 *Violent Communities, Trauma, and Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, School of Social Work, Urban Families and Resilience

Seminars

- 2022 *Writing for Publication*, University of Florida, College of Education, Yearlong seminar for Ph.D. Students

Photovoice Exhibits

- 2023 “Blooming Through the Darkness” Cultivating Peace Through Adversity.” In-person exhibit at the University of Florida.
- 2020 “‘Black Lives Matter all the Time:’ A Personal PhotoVoice Project by Black College Students Navigating Predominantly White Universities.” Virtual Exhibit, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbmGhJAjiU8&feature=youtu.be>
- 2020 “‘What I Would do to Take Away Your Pain:’ Glimpses into the Heart of Motherhood.” Virtual Exhibit, <https://www.melaniesonsteng.com/two-moms-a-researcher>

PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

- 2016- 2017 Certified Trauma Practitioner, St. John Providence Health System, Detroit, MI
Worked with a multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, lawyers and community agencies to provide crisis intervention and court advocacy after homicides and violent crimes occurred. Lead psychoeducational trauma and grief support groups for adults and children. Conducted outreach and education on the impact of trauma and grief on individuals and the community.
- 2015-2017 Program Manager, Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies, Domestic Violence Advocate Project, Detroit, MI
Worked as the program manager and field instructor for the Domestic Violence Advocate Project. I recruited and trained MSW staff to work within 10 police stations throughout Detroit. I aided in professional development of staff through weekly supervision, training in crisis response and brief treatment, and self-care practices. Along with this I wrote successful grants and ran fundraisers to increase program funding.
- 2014-2015 7th grade Science Teacher, Brooklyn East Collegiate Charter School, Brooklyn, NY
Designed and implemented lesson plans that lead to a 5% increase in mastery on Interim Assessments. Utilized a variety of instructional methods including cooperative learning, discovery, and discussion.
- 2013-2014 Program Evaluator, Boston Public Health Commission Division of Violence Prevention, Boston, MA

Evaluated intermediate outcomes of community coalitions through a mixed methods study. Utilized evaluation findings to train coalition leaders on best practices for community outreach, engagement, and sustainment. Aided in collective action to homicides through action research, and implementation.

2012-2013 Program Manager, City Mission Society, Boston, MA

Worked to increased educational attainment and decrease student suspension and expulsion in a low performing elementary school. Developed a mentoring and tutoring program for students at risk of falling behind in school through needs/assets assessment, identifying best practices, creating a curriculum, and recruiting volunteers. Increased 4th grade state math scores by 4% by creating math-based day camps during breaks. Designed after school parent programs to increase parent involvement.

2011-2012 Clinical Case Manager, Guiding Our Youth Group Home, Los Angeles, CA

Worked with young women ages 14-18 within the foster care system to assess needs, create care plans, and achieve goals. Delivered health, educational, and behavioral services and conducted crisis intervention.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

2022-Present Social Worker Activist Collective

2021-Present Association for Community Organization and Social Action (ACOSA)

2021- Present Social Welfare Action Alliance

2020-Present Council on Social Work Education

2019-2023 Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research

2018-Present Society for Social Work Research

2017-2022 California Center for Population Research, UCLA

2016-2017 Detroit Police Department, Aftercare Program

CERTIFICATIONS

2023-Present Core Curriculum on Childhood Trauma Facilitator, *National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

2019-2022 Certified CLASS observer, Toddler, *Teachstone*

2019-2022 Certified CLASS observer, Pre-K, *Teachstone*

2016-Present Certified Trauma Practitioner, *National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children*
2016-Present Danger Assessments for Intimate Partner Violence, *John Hopkins University
School of Nursing*
2015-2017 Limited License, Master of Social Work, *Michigan Department of Regulatory Affairs*