Describe the site where you work and how you decided on this type of placement.

I work at the Miami University as an assistant professor in school psychology. I wanted to go into academia after graduation because I love research. I enjoy the intellectual stimulation, the creativity, and the meticulousness, in addition to the opportunities research provides to question what we know about the world and to reimagine how we do things in school psychology. The school psychology program is in the College of Education, which has a history of incubating social justice researchers, which is the core focus of my research. There is also a big emphasis on interdisciplinary research, which is necessary because often programs and departments have common overlapping interests but do not share knowledge because of disciplinary silos. I think interdisciplinary research is very important to fostering creativity and developing new insights into the nature of schooling. So this was a great fit for me.

What are your areas of expertise at this point in your career?
I graduated in 2019 with a PhD in school psychology and concentration in Race and Policy in K–12 Education. This was not a concentration offered in the doctoral program. I worked with my advisor and mentors to create an interdisciplinary concentration overlapping school psychology, critical race theory, and critical policy studies because I think it is important to take a multidisciplinary look at education and schooling. There are so many fields within K–12 education, and each of these has created important theoretical, methodological, and practical tools to address different aspects of schooling. Nevertheless, I find that these fields often work separately; this lack of knowledge sharing can lead to a stagnation, as each discipline withdraws deeper into its orthodoxies. My areas of expertise are critical race theory and qualitative methodologies. I also draw on critical policy studies and disability studies to inform my research.

Describe your engagement in the local community and how this impacts your work.

As a former international student and now an immigrant, the concept of community is interesting because there is a certain cultural barrier that is difficult to overcome, especially when there are very few people who look like you where you live. I have been in the Midwest for 2 years now, one of which was lost to the uncertainty and shutdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic. I would love to develop more engagement with the local community. My role as a practicum supervisor has helped me connect to school psychologists in local school districts in order to set up practicum placements. I leverage these relationships to bring in several school psychologists as guest speakers in my classes every year. I am currently involved in organizing a day-long conference for interns in all school psychology programs in Ohio. As a member of the NASP Social Justice committee, I am also involved in developing educational resources for practitioners about equity-informed approaches to trauma, our theme for this year.

Describe a challenge that you have faced in your early career. How did you handle it? What advice do you have for others with similar challenges?

I recently completed 2 years at this job. As an early career academic on the tenure track, one of the biggest challenges is time, because I am trying to balance the publishing demands of academia with the courses I teach, as well as various forms of service to the university and school psychology organizations. I don’t know if I have effectively handled the challenge of time management. There are times when I have to force myself to take a day off in order to prevent burnout. My advice to other early career tenure-track faculty in
school psychology is to be more mindful and realistic about time commitments. It can be hard to say ‘no’ when you get asked to be on various committees, boards, projects, and organizations. Although all of these might interest you, you can risk overcommitting and overextending yourself.

What specific aspects of NASP membership and involvement have benefited you in your career thus far? Why is membership in NASP important to you?

I appreciate the NASP convention and have been attending it for the past several years. The convention is an excellent place to get to know new and exciting research in the field. It has also allowed me to meet other researchers with common interests to collaborate on future projects. I also appreciate the NASP Communities, which have evolved into a lively community where school psychologists seek and provide helpful advice, share resources, and occasionally argue.