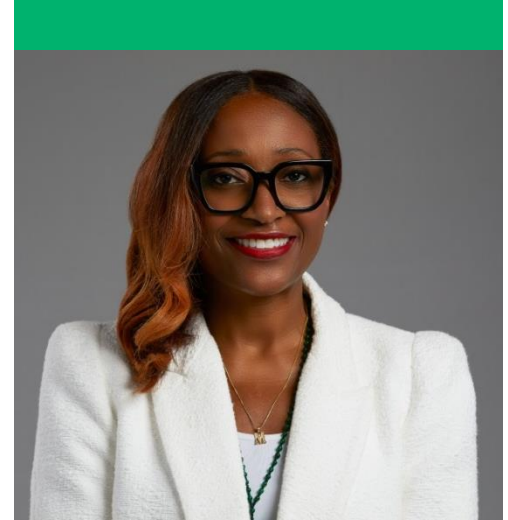




Monique Reed, PhD, MS, RN, FAAN

The Independence Foundation Professor of
Nursing Education



Advancement of Nursing

The year 2025 marked my second year as the Independence Foundation Professor of Nursing Education at Rush University and my first year completing my tenure as vice president of the American Nurses Association of Illinois. I remain deeply committed to dismantling systemic inequities that limit the representation and advancement of minority communities in nursing education, research and practice. Through my research program, Black Girls Move, we continue to co-create culturally responsive health promotion strategies that honor the voices, needs and strengths of Black mothers and daughters. With your generous support, our work has grown in scope, impact and visibility — advancing scientific knowledge while building pathways for the next generation of nurse scientists.

Research Progress and Impact

Thanks to your philanthropy, our team made substantial progress in evaluating the feasibility and impact of Black Girls Move during the final year of our 2022-2025 National Institutes of Health, or NIH, pilot award of \$1.1 million. This foundational work integrates innovative frameworks to assess recruitment, engagement and retention among Black mother-daughter dyads — filling a longstanding gap in obesity-prevention science.

We also expanded our research capacity through the following avenues:

- Hiring generalist entry master's, DNP and PhD nursing students as research assistants
- Providing opportunities for these students to participate in data collection, analysis and manuscript development
- Increasing diversity in the research pipeline by mentoring DNP and PhD faculty from historically underrepresented backgrounds in nursing



Scientific Dissemination

In 2025, our team presented emerging findings at the Midwest Nursing Research Society, contributing to regional conversations on culturally grounded health interventions for Black adolescent girls.

Our team also significantly advanced scientific dissemination through multiple peer-reviewed publications that deepen the evidence base for Black Girls Move and extend the conversation to include mental health and trauma-informed approaches.

Our scholarship this year reflects a strategic progression: from defining the cultural foundations of obesity prevention for Black adolescent girls, to refining methods for culturally responsive recruitment, to introducing a race-conscious clinical trial framework for evaluating our intervention. These publications collectively demonstrate rigorous scientific contributions and Rush's leadership in equity-centered, community-engaged research.

Published Research in 2025

- **Centering Cultural Identity and Determinants of Health**

We published a comprehensive scoping review examining racial identity, racial socialization, and Africentric worldview as key contextual factors influencing obesity among Black adolescent females (Webber-Ritchey et al., 2025). This work provides essential theoretical grounding for Black Girls Move and has contributed to broader discourse on culturally anchored determinants of health.

- **Advancing Culturally Responsive Recruitment Strategies**

A second publication, "Culturally Responsive Recruitment of Black Daughter-Mother Dyads Through Community Engagement" (Banks et al., 2025), highlights our innovative recruitment strategies rooted in trust-building, transparency and longstanding community relationships. These methods have strengthened engagement and retention — areas in which Black adolescents and their families are historically underrepresented.



- **Introducing Our Race-Conscious Clinical Trial Framework**

In partnership with an interdisciplinary research team, we published the rationale and design of our race-conscious, school-linked pilot randomized controlled trial (Reed et al., 2025). This manuscript positions Black Girls Move as one of the first interventions to operationalize race-conscious approaches in obesity-prevention trials with Black mother-daughter dyads.

Expanding Dissemination into Mental Health

This year also marked the expansion of our dissemination efforts into mental health scholarship, reflecting our growing investigative lens on trauma, emotional well-being and how these experiences shape health behaviors.

Two 2025 publications contributed substantially to this broader impact:

- A study on incorporating population health into advanced nursing practice (Bejster et al., 2025), which supports the development of nursing leaders who can respond to community mental-health needs.
- A community-engaged analysis of traumatic stress among incarcerated women (Dickins et al., 2025), which informs our team's emerging inquiry into trauma exposure, mental wellness, and health behaviors among marginalized populations—including mothers and daughters participating in *Black Girls Move*.

Together, these publications establish a strong scientific foundation for our laboratory's next phase of work, which will integrate mental-health frameworks into obesity prevention and examine the interconnected pathways linking trauma, stress, and health.

Faculty Mentorship

Your support also enabled our team to mentor three junior faculty members, guiding them through research design, manuscript development and dissemination strategies. One DNP-prepared faculty mentee secured internal funding to extend our work by examining intersections among trauma exposure, mental wellness and obesity prevention.



Education & Community Engagement

Building on the Black Girls Move laboratory's prior accomplishments, we advanced our community partnerships with eight Chicago Public Schools. Through these collaborations, we integrated tailored health education and career exploration activities to support student well-being and spark interest in health care and STEM fields.

At one partner school, we delivered a customized curriculum that introduced students to nursing, research careers and the broader health sciences workforce. These sessions reflect our commitment to listening to community-identified needs and creating sustainable programs that equip youth for future opportunities.

The Year Ahead: 2026 and Beyond

Our priorities ahead include:

- Analyzing Black Girls Move results and disseminating findings through peer-reviewed publications and national scientific conferences
- Submitting a National Institute of Nursing Research P20 Exploratory Grant application as co-investigator of the Community Capacity Building Core
- Deepening collaboration with community organizations to co-develop tools and training materials addressing systemic barriers in health and education
- Enhancing mentorship for nursing students and emerging faculty scholars

With Gratitude

The progress described in this report is possible only because of your steadfast generosity. Your investment fuels student learning, faculty development, community engagement and groundbreaking research that uplifts Black families and strengthens the nursing profession. Thank you for believing in this mission — and in the power of research, education and partnership to create lasting change. I am deeply grateful for your support.