



# Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention

## Annual Report

**July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**

## **Alberti Center Leadership**

**Jean M. Alberti, PhD**, Benefactor

**Amanda B. Nickerson, PhD**, Director

**Stephanie S. Fredrick, PhD**, Associate Director

**Brie Kishel**, Program & Operations Manager

**Hannah Rapp, PhD**, Postdoctoral Associate

**Toni J. Torchia, PhD**, Community Programming Consultant

## **Student Team**

**Swapna Balkundi**, Graduate Assistant/Schomburg Fellow

**Julianna Casella**, Presidential Fellow

**Dylan Harrison**, Graduate Assistant

**Kay Huang**, Graduate Assistant

**Rahnuma E Jannat**, Graduate Assistant/Presidential Fellow

**Jay'ana King**, Graduate Assistant/Schomburg Fellow

**Jake Lis**, Research Assistant

**Katherine Margiotta**, Graduate Assistant/NASP PREPaRE

**Bea Mask**, Graduate Assistant/Schomburg Fellow

**Brianna Schlierf**, Research Assistant

**Lucia Sun**, Graduate Assistant

**Sarah Woyken**, Research Assistant

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## **Alberti Center Mission & Goals**

### **Mission Statement**

The Alberti Center promotes the well-being of youth by reducing bullying abuse and other forms of school violence through research, evidence-based tools and outreach to students, educators, and communities.

### **Goals:**

- Conduct and disseminate research on individual and contextual contributors to bullying abuse and school violence.
- Develop and evaluate prevention and intervention approaches to promote healthy social-emotional skill development and reduce bullying abuse and other types of violence that impact children, schools and communities.
- Provide education for faculty, students and the community through training and events to promote a positive and inclusive school climate and prevent bullying abuse and school violence.
- Collaborate with schools and community partners to maximize our efforts in promoting safety, mental health and inclusivity.
- Share knowledge and be recognized as a national international resource on bullying abuse and other forms of school violence.

### **History of the Center**

A generous gift from Graduate School of Education alumna, Jean M. Alberti (PhD '70, Educational Psychology) established the Dr. Jean M. Alberti Center for the Prevention of Bullying Abuse and School Violence (Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention) at the University at Buffalo. The center was introduced to the public on April 27, 2010, through its symposium, "Prevention of Bullying Abuse and School Violence," and was officially launched in July of 2011 when Amanda Nickerson, PhD, became the inaugural director.

## Statement of Contributions and Impact

This annual report reflects on the progress and milestones achieved by our team and partners throughout the 2024–25 year, underscoring their critical role in advancing the mission of the Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention within the University at Buffalo’s Graduate School of Education (GSE). The commitment and cooperation of our colleagues and community collaborators continue to be instrumental in driving our shared vision forward.

Alberti Center–affiliated faculty have remained deeply engaged in research dissemination efforts. Their work has appeared in high-impact, peer-reviewed journals, and they have actively contributed to professional dialogues and scholarly presentations through national and international conferences. These scholars have also successfully secured external funding to support new and ongoing research projects. Beyond academia, our team has delivered a wide range of trainings, workshops, and presentations to schools and organizations across New York State and beyond, translating research into practice.

This year’s report also recognizes the recipient of the 2024 Alberti Center Early Career Award, celebrating their notable contributions as an emerging leader in the study and prevention of bullying and youth violence. We also honor the continued service of our advisory council—comprised of respected scholars and community leaders—whose insight and leadership are invaluable to our work.

As a New York State Education Department–approved provider, we continue to deliver Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) training. Each year, we prepare prospective school professionals with strategies to prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to creating inclusive, supportive school climates.

The Center’s work exemplifies GSE’s core values of inquiry, engagement, and impact, supporting both student learning at UB and the professional development of those working in the field. We remain deeply grateful to our team and partners for their tireless efforts and generous collaboration in pursuit of a safer and more compassionate educational landscape.

This annual report captures our accomplishments and affirms our continued dedication to research, training, and service. Through strong partnerships and a shared sense of purpose, we aim to advance the field of bullying prevention and contribute meaningful strides towards positive youth development.

## Peer Refereed Journal Articles

**Fredrick, S. S.**, Ettekal, I., Domoff, S. E., & **Nickerson, A.** (2024). Patterns of child and adolescent digital media use: Associations with school support, engagement, and cybervictimization. *Psychology of Popular Media*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000570>

**Heidelberg, K.**, Sipior, C., **King, J.**, Cueto Brito, M., & **Fredrick, S.** (2024). A systematic review of cultural adaptations to social emotional learning interventions for PreK-12th Black students. *School Psychology*, 40(2), 121–132. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000676>

**King, J. S.**, **Fredrick, S. S.**, & Wang, W. (2025). Associations of racial discrimination with depression/suicidality and substance use among Black youth: The moderating roles of sexual identity and school connectedness. *LGBT Health*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1089/lgbt.2024.0096>

Li, M., Yu, J., Coplan, R. J., **Bowker, J. C.**, Xu, G., & Ding, X. (2025). The significance of best friends' motivations for social withdrawal: Associations with socio-emotional adjustment in Chinese children and adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 35(1), e13043. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.13043>

**Manges, M. E.**, **Nickerson, A. B.**, **Livingston, J. A.**, **Reynolds, A. L.**, & **Bellavia, G. M.** (2025). Targeting social norms to reduce bullying and sexual harassment in high school: An evaluative pilot study. *Journal of School Violence*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/153288220.2025.2491808>

Memba, G. V., & **Ostrov, J. M.** (2024). Executive functioning across the transition to kindergarten: Links with social and academic outcomes in early childhood. *Social Development*, 34(1), e12788. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sode.12788>

Millet, M. A., van den Berg, Y. H. M., Burk, W., & **Bowker, J. C.** (2025). Childhood shyness and negative social cognitions in emerging adulthood: Adolescent negative peer experiences as moderators. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221325.2025.2482188>

**Nickerson, A. B.**, Seay, D., **Manges, M. E.**, **Grossman, H.**, Delmerico, A. M., Godleski, S. A., ... & **Eiden, R. D.** (2025). Caregiving environmental risk and aggression from infancy to adolescence in a high-risk sample: An examination of between-family and within-family effects. *Aggressive Behavior*, 51(3), e70033. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.70033>

Perhamus, G. R., & **Ostrov, J. M.** (2024). Peer socialization processes in the development of callous-unemotional traits. *Development and Psychopathology*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579424001846>

Perry, K. J., **Ostrov, J. M.**, **Eiden, R.**, Lanza, S., Schuetze, P., Godleski, S., & **Nickerson, A.** (2025). Heterogeneity in callous-unemotional traits. *OSF*. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/HXMNQ>

Perry, K. J., **Ostrov, J. M., Nickerson, A. B.**, Godleski, S. A., Lanza, S., Schuetze, P., & **Eiden, R. D.** (2025). Early childhood temperament and environmental risk factors for callous unemotional traits. *Clinical Psychological Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21677026251339196>

**Rapp, H., Casella, J., & Nickerson, A.** (2025). Collaboration between parents, children with disabilities, and school personnel: A key component of school-based bullying prevention. In *Preventing Bullying Among Children with Special Educational Needs* (Chapter 5). <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-5315-8.ch005>

**Rapp, H., Fredrick, S., & Nickerson, A.** (2025). Cyber victimization reports between parents and children: An examination of agreement predictors. *Children and Youth Services Review*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108420>

Saban, L., Gal, T., Xu, J. W., Song, J. Y., **Rapp, H.**, Evans, M., Lee, D., & Enright, R. (2024). Forgiveness education in conflicted societies: The lived experiences of Arab and Jewish fifth-grade children in Israel. *Education Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14121300>

**Schildkraut, J.**, Greene-Colozzi, E. A., & **Nickerson, A. B.** (2024). Balancing students' perceptions of safety and emergency preparedness: A quasi-experimental test of protection motivation theory as it relates to lockdown drills. *Victims & Offenders*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2024.2410999>

Weingarten, J., **Bowker, J. C.**, & Simms, L. S. (2024). A peer trade-off model of personality disorder traits during adolescence. *International Journal of Developmental Science*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.3233/DEV-230354>

White, H., **Bowker, J. C.**, Etkin, R. E., & Kamble, S. (2025). Reciprocal associations between social withdrawal motivations and peer difficulties among early adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12533>

Zumaglini, S., **Fredrick, S.**, Thompson, J. K., & Faith, M. S. (2025). Confronting pediatric weight-based cybervictimization: Time for action. *Obesity Science & Practice*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1002/osp4.70073>

## Additional publications

**Nickerson, A.** (2025). *Trauma-informed community support for the effects of mass violence: A roadmap* (SAMHSA Publication No. PEP25-06-003). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). <https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/trauma-inform-mass-violence-roadmap-pep25-06-003.pdf>

## Book Chapters

**Nickerson, A. B., Fredrick, S., Harrison, D., & Sun, L.** (2024). Cyberbullying, digital technology, and social media use: Research and practical implications for US schools. In J. S. Hong, H. C. O. Chan, A. L. C. Fung, & J. Lee (Eds.), *Handbook of school violence, bullying and safety* (pp. 218-228). Edward Elgar Press. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035301362.00027>

**Rapp, H., Casella, J., & Nickerson, A.** (2025). Collaboration between parents, children

with disabilities, and school personnel: A key component of school-based bullying prevention. In M. Kamran & S. Zahid-Siddiqui (Eds.) *Preventing bullying among children with special educational needs*. IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-5315-8>

## Books

**Allen, K. P.** (2025). *Stuck in our screens: Setting aside social drama and restoring human connection*. Self-published.

**Fredrick, S., Nickerson, A.,** Demaray, M., & Yang, C. (2025). *Cyberbullying: Helping children navigate digital technology and social media*. Wiley.

## Funded Research

**Nickerson, A. B.** (Principal Investigator), & **Fredrick, S. S.** (Co-Investigator). (2023–2025). *Building youth resiliency and school capacity to identify and respond to violent behavior through bystander intervention training* [Funded grant]. U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

## Professional Service

BAND Against Bullying (Amanda Nickerson, board member; Brie Kishel, vice president)

Center for Disability Studies at UB (Brie Kishel, community advisory committee)

The Cybersmile Foundation (Stephanie Fredrick, advisory panel)

Disability Education and Advocacy Network of WNY (Brie Kishel, social media content)

Editorial Board Appointments: *NASP Communiqué* (Amanda Nickerson, contributing editor), *School Psychology Review*, *Journal of School Psychology*, *School Psychology*, *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, *Contemporary School Psychology* (Amanda Nickerson, editorial board member), *Journal of School Psychology* (Stephanie Fredrick, associate editor), *School Psychology* (Stephanie Fredrick, editorial board member)

Erie County Law Enforcement Foundation (Brie Kishel, virtual program consultant)

National Association of School Psychologists (Amanda Nickerson, coordinator for research, school safety and crisis response committee, and Stephanie Fredrick, member of research committee)

Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium, Rockefeller Institute of Government (Amanda Nickerson, member)

Society for the Study of School Psychology (Amanda Nickerson, membership committee chair)

Spread the Word Inclusion WNY (Brie Kishel, event committee, social media content)



Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County (Alberti Center, member; Amanda Nickerson; schools subcommittee member)

Universidad CES Bullying Prevention Center (Amanda Nickerson, advisory board member)

Supporting Mental Health and Advocating for Resources Together (SMART) (Stephanie Fredrick, community Resources subcommittee member; Hannah Rapp, conference subcommittee member)

**Any additions from Amanda?**

## **Community Service and Events**

BAND Against Bullying fundraising event at The Caz

Buffalo Pride Parade

Developmental Disability Awareness Day

Disability Pride Festival at Canalside

Early Childhood Research Center Halloween Parade

“Flag of Hope” Ceremony for Suicide Prevention Month

Friendship Fortress partnership for fundraising event

GLYS Western New York, Inc. 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary GAYLA

Safe Schools Initiative Seminar (21<sup>st</sup> Annual)

Spread the Word Inclusion WNY All Inclusive Event at Tri-Main Center

Suicide Prevention Coalition “Locks and Socks” assembling and distribution

## Supporting Mental Health and Advocating for Resources Together (SMART) Conference



### Select Honors and Awards

#### **Amanda B. Nickerson, PhD** (Director)

- Selected as a 2025 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Fellow
- Recipient of the 2025 “Making a Significant Difference in Community Safety” award from the Erie County Law Enforcement Foundation

#### **Stephanie S. Fredrick, PhD** (Associate Director)

- Appointed to The Cybersmile Foundation’s advisory panel

#### **Brie Kishel** (Program & Operations Manager)

- Received the UB Professional Staff Senate Outstanding Service Award for 2024-25

### Alberti Center Early Career Award (2024)



#### **Recipient – Lydia Laninga-Wajnin, PhD**

Senior Research Fellow

*University of Turku, Finland*

This award recognizes Dr. Laninga-Wajnin as an individual who has made exemplary scholarly contributions to the field of bullying abuse prevention and conducted research that has the potential to influence practice and policy.

## Relevant Publications

**Laninga-Wijnen, L.,** Huisman, M., Graf, D., & Salmivalli, C. (2025). Do targeted interventions diminish victimization? Testing the short- and longer-term effectiveness of condemning, empathy-raising, and combined approaches. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-025-02173-0>

**Laninga-Wijnen, L.,** Yanagida, T., Garandeau, C. F., Malamut, S. T., Veenstra, R., & Salmivalli, C. (2025). Is there really a healthy context paradox for victims of bullying? A longitudinal test of bidirectional within- and between-person associations between victimization and psychological problems. *Development and Psychopathology*, 37(1), 40–54. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579423001384>

**Laninga-Wijnen, L.,** Pouwels, J. L., Giletta, M., & Salmivalli, C. (2024). Feeling better now? Being defended diminishes daily mood problems and self-blame in victims of bullying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(4), 1294–1322. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12717>

**Laninga-Wijnen, L.,** Garandeau, C. F., Malamut, S. T., & Salmivalli, C. (2024). The longitudinal role of classroom defending norms in victims' psychological adjustment, causal attributions, and social comparisons. *Developmental Psychology*, 60(3), 522–535. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001629>

## Engaging: Interprofessional Collaborations/Events

### Advisory council

**Annahita Ball, PhD,** Associate Professor, School of Social Work | University at Buffalo

**Lyndsay Jenkins, PhD, NCSP,** Associate Professor, Educational Psychology and Learning Systems | Florida State University

**Jennifer Livingston, PhD,** Associate Professor, School of Nursing | University at Buffalo

**Jamie Pernick,** Assistant Principal | Lancaster High School

**Rene Petties-Jones,** President | National Federation for Just Communities of WNY Inc.

**Daniela Wolfe, LMSW,** School Social Worker | Amherst Central School District

### Faculty affiliates

**Ariel Aloe, PhD,** Professor, Psychological and Quantitative Foundations | University of Iowa

**Julie Bowker, PhD,** Associate Professor, Department of Psychology | University at Buffalo

**Catherine P. Cook-Cottone, PhD**, Professor, Counseling, School and Educational Psychology | University at Buffalo

**Melissa Dudley, PhD**, Assistant Professor, School Psychology | Alfred University

**Rina D. Eiden, PhD**, Professor, Department of Psychology, Consortium for Combating Substance Abuse | Pennsylvania State University

**Thomas Feeley, PhD**, Professor, Department of Communication | University at Buffalo

**Kamontá Heidelberg, PhD, NCSP**, Assistant Professor, School Psychology | The Ohio State University

**Lyndsay Jenkins, PhD**, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology and Learning Systems | Florida State University

**Sunha Kim, PhD**, Associate Professor, Counseling, School and Educational Psychology and Learning and Instruction | University at Buffalo

**Melinda Lemke, PhD**, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy | University at Buffalo

**Jennifer Livingston, PhD**, Associate Professor, School of Nursing | University at Buffalo

**Katheryne T. Leigh-Osroosh**, Assistant Professor, Counseling, School and Educational Psychology | University at Buffalo

**Jamie M. Ostrov, PhD**, Professor, Department of Psychology | University at Buffalo

**Amy L. Reynolds, PhD**, Professor, Counseling, School and Educational Psychology | University at Buffalo

## 2024-2025 Colloquium Series



**September 2024**

**Hannah Schacter, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Psychology | Wayne State University

*Understanding the effects of peer victimization on adolescent health: Pathways and protective factors*

**40 attendees**



**November 2024**

**Marla Eisenberg, ScD, MPH**, Professor, Department of Pediatrics | University of Minnesota

*Bias-based bullying and emotional distress among marginalized adolescents: Taking an intersectional approach*

**35 attendees**



**February 2025**

**Francisco X. San Miguel Torres, PhD**, Educator, researcher and speaker | Seguros en Confianza

*Knowledge and skills of public elementary school teachers on bullying prevention and management in Puerto Rico*

**31 attendees**



**April 2025**

**Rebecca Schwartz-Mette, MSSW, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology | University at Buffalo

*Friendships in adolescence: A lifeline or a load?*

**63 attendees**

**ALBERTI CENTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE – October 23, 2024**

***Current Practices for Preventing Bullying and Promoting Safety in Schools and Online - 135 attendees*** (in-person)

**Keynote Presentations**



*Integrating and advancing the evidence-base in school-based violence prevention and mental health promotion*

**Catherine P. Bradshaw, PhD, MEd**

Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Research  
School of Education and Human Development, University of Virginia



*Meta's approach to online safety*

**Kira Wong O'Connor**

Head of Youth Well-Being and Creator Safety Policy Engagement  
*Youth Safety Policy at Meta*

## **2024 Conference Exhibitors**

*BAND Against Bullying*

*Free2Luv*

*BryLin Hospital*

*Spectrum Health and Human Services*

*Cleveland Play House*

*UB Graduate School of Education*

## **2024 Conference Sponsors**

**Presenting Sponsor**

*Spectrum Health and Human Services*

**University Sponsor**

*University at Buffalo, Graduate School of Education*

**Silver Sponsors**

*Lawley Insurance*

*University at Buffalo, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*

**Bronze Sponsor**

*National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, Inc.*





## Collaborative Events

### Spread the Word Inclusion



#### **All INclusive Event**

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 – Tri-Main Building, Buffalo, NY

Since 2014, the Alberti Center has actively participated in the Spread the Word Inclusion initiative through the Western New York (WNY) committee. The campaign initially began as Spread the Word to End the R-Word, a national effort aimed at eliminating the use of hurtful language directed at individuals with disabilities. Over time, the mission has grown to encompass a broader commitment to building inclusive and accepting communities.

In 2025, Spread the Word Day brought together local organizations, guest speakers, and community members for an engaging day of advocacy and connection. Attendees had the opportunity to interact with vendors, network with organizations, and sign a pledge to support inclusion throughout the year.

#### **Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County Training & Events**



Formed in 2012, the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County brings together a wide range of community partners dedicated to preventing youth suicide and strengthening resilience across New York State.

The Alberti Center joined the coalition in 2017 and has since played an active role in supporting its efforts. Each September—recognized nationally as Suicide Prevention Month—the Center co-hosts events during Suicide Prevention Week at the University at Buffalo and regularly participates in local awareness initiatives such as the “Out of the Darkness Walk” and “Rock for Hope,” as well as frequent trainings provided by Dr. Nickerson on “Helping Students at Risk,” through the coalition’s schools subcommittee, to help promote mental health and suicide prevention in schools and in the community.

## **BAND Against Bullying**



### **Empowering Students to Use Their Voice Against Bullying**

Tuesday, April 8, 2025 – University at Buffalo, Center for the Arts

This high school performing arts competition, centered around the theme of dignity, was designed to spotlight bullying-related issues and inspire students to become agents of positive change within their schools, families, and communities. The event aims to elevate awareness while giving youth a platform to express powerful messages through the arts. Proceeds from the event benefit bullying prevention and intervention programs at participating schools as well as provide incentives for participation of schools and students.

## **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Safe Schools Initiative Seminar**



### **Working Together to Reduce the Threat of Violence in Our Schools and Community**

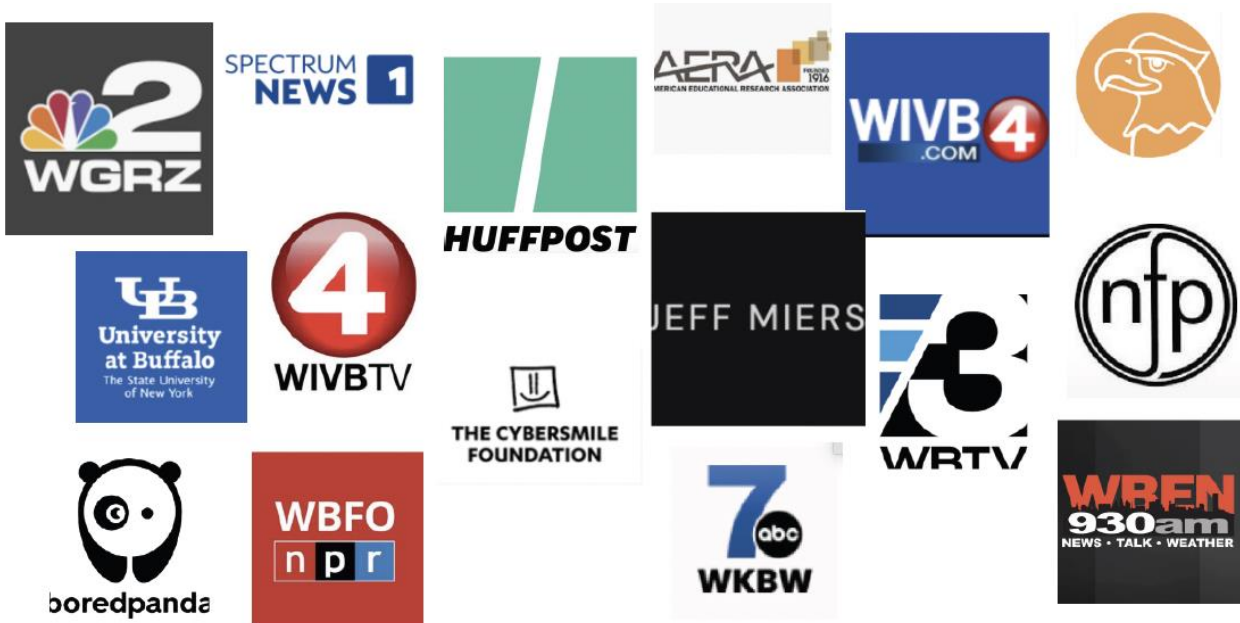
March 19, 2025 – Center for the Arts, University at Buffalo

Since 2004, the annual Safe Schools Initiative Seminar has provided a critical platform for collaboration among educators, law enforcement, first responders, and other community stakeholders committed to enhancing school safety. The event fosters the exchange of knowledge, strategies, and experiences to address pressing concerns related to violence prevention and the protection of children and communities. The Alberti Center continues to serve as a key planning partner and sponsor, helping to ensure the ongoing impact and relevance of this important initiative.

## **News Publications and Social Media**



Links to all media publications can be found on our website at <https://ed.buffalo.edu/alberti/news>



### Social Media Efforts/Center Reach



**1044 Followers**



## 1166 Followers



## 3586 Contacts



## 16 Followers (new)



## 121 Followers

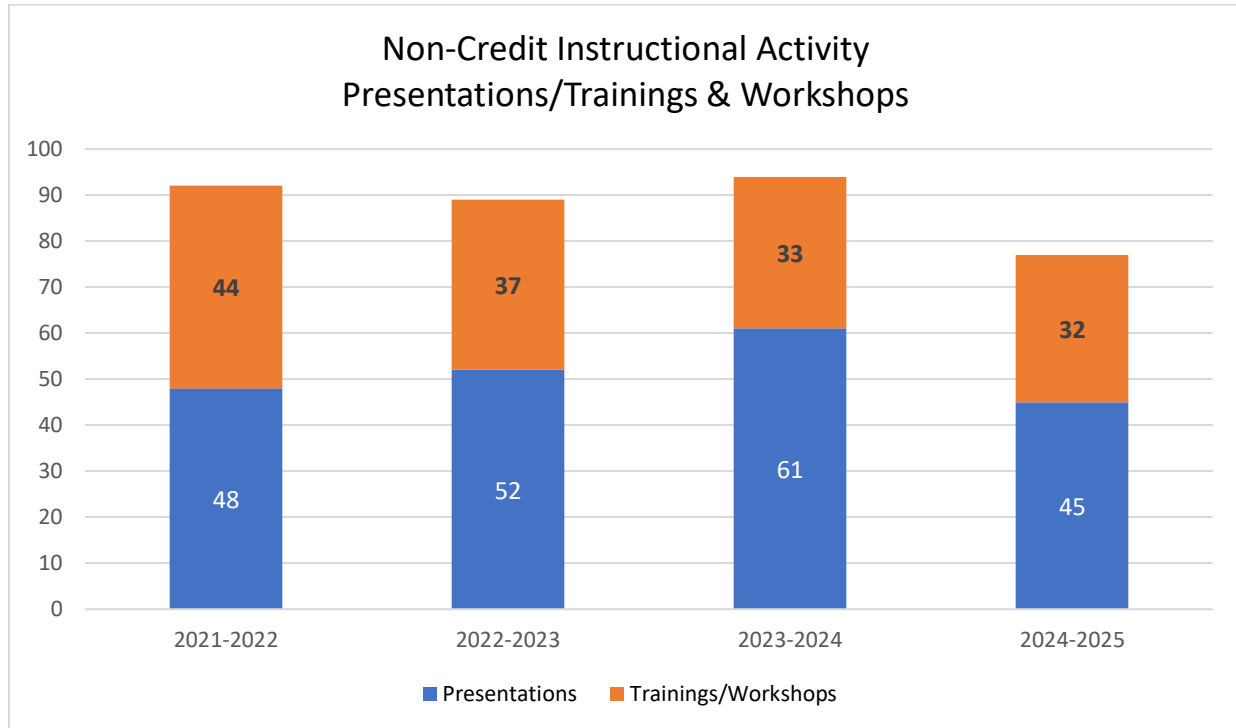


**307 Followers**



## 66 Subscribers

## Pedagogy of Inquiry, Engagement, and Impact



During the **2024-25** academic year, the Alberti Center provided **a total of 74** trainings, presentations and workshops to **just under 4000 participants and attendees**. Numbers of trainings and workshops decreased slightly in 2024-25 due to Amanda being on sabbatical for the spring semester while working on publishing three books.