CURRICULUM VITAE

Christiana Best, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Associate Professor of Social Work | Educator | Oral Historian
Email: cbest@usj.edu | Podcast: Inside Out/Outside In | Google Scholar | Website
Cell: (917) 557-8450; Work: (860) 231-5508

Education

Ph.D., Social Welfare, 2008, The Graduate School and University Center of New York, New York, NY
M.S.W., Social Work, 1989, Silberman School of Social Work, New York, NY
B.A., Sociology, 1982, St. John's University, Jamaica, Queens, NY

Clinical Training & Experience

The Training Institute of Mental Health, New York, NY (1992-1994)
Private Practice, New York, NY (1994-2000)

Award

NASW-NYS 2026 Champion of Justice

Current Research Projects

Pilot Study - Self-Deportation and Migration Decision-Making: Experiences of Immigrants Affected by U.S. Immigration Policies and Enforcement

Oral History Project*: Rising from the Waves: Carriacou's Stories of Survival and Strength*
A 12-month oral history project documenting the lived experiences of Carriacou residents before, during, and after Hurricane Beryl.

Academic Appointments

2026–2027, Sabbatical Research Project — Rising From the Waves: Oral history research on disaster resilience and community recovery in Carriacou, Grenada (IRB-approved; international fieldwork)

2023–Present, Associate Professor, MSW Program, University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT

2017–2023, Assistant Professor, MSW Program, University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT

Social Work Practice Experience

New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS), New York, NY

2012–2017, Senior Advisor for Child Welfare Policy and Training Implementation, ACS

2005–2012, Executive Deputy Director for Professional Development and In-Service Training, ACS

Current Professional, Academic, Community, and Scientific Memberships

New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), Co-chair, Standard Four

NASW-NYC Immigration and Global Social Work Collective — Co-founder and Co-chair (2017–Present)

The Lucinda's House Black Maternal Health Collective — Leadership Collective

University of Saint Joseph Institutional Review Board Committee (2023–Present)

University of Saint Joseph Antiracist, Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Committee (2023–Present)

Professional Service

National Association of Social Workers, NYS and NYC Transition Committee (2025)

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), New York City Chapter — Vice President (2014–2019)

Professional Presentations

Best-Giacomini, C., Beho, K., & Aboni, E. (2026, June). Beyond Borders: Educating Migrant Children in a Changing America. NASW National Conference, Washington, DC.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2026, May). At the Margins of Nation & Narrative: Centering Black Immigrant Voices in the Pursuit of Justice. NASW-NYS Continuing Education Conference.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2026, May). Migrant Children in U.S. Schools. The Agora Series, Center for Student Research & Creative Activity, University of Saint Joseph.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2025, May). Introduction to a video presentation at the Healthcare Summit, sponsored by the Connecticut Health Council, University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2025, April). Navigating Social Work Practice with Immigrants in Today's Shifting Landscape. 2025 NASW-NYC/NYS Immigration Series.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2025, February/March). Social Work Practice with Immigrants. Webinar for the MSW Field Education Program (preceptors and students), University of Saint Joseph.

Best-Giacomini, C., Levine, E., & Levin, L. (2024, October). Immigration 101. Fall 2024 NASW-NYC Immigration Series.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2022, May). Understanding Implicit Bias in Recruiting & Hiring Practices. Virtual workshop, XPERI.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2022, May). Microaggressions in the Workplace. Virtual workshop, XPERI.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2021, September). Beyond the Ivory Tower: Using Podcasting to Educate, Build Relationships, and Inspire Change. The Agora Series, Center for Student Research & Creative Activity, University of Saint Joseph.

Publications - Refereed Journal Articles

Published

John, M. S., Costa, M., Best-Giacomini, C., Mangino, H., Hinds, L., Cheah, J., & Hightower, H. (2026). Interprofessional virtual simulation to advance equity and advocacy in healthcare: An educational innovation. Teaching and Learning in Nursing. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2026.08.021

John, M. S., Best-Giacomini, C., Buchanan, V., & Reid, K. (Eds.). (2026). Shades of Excellence: Stories from Scholars of Color. Lauren Simone Publishing.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2024). Teaching While Black: A Call to Decolonize the Social Work Curriculum. A Call for Social Work Educators to Confront and Dismantle Systemic Racism WITHIN Social Work Programs. Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping, 30(1), 12–29.

Best-Giacomini, C., Holt, C., & Matthews, L. (2022). Navigating the Immigrant Identity in the American Workplace: Microaggression and the Caribbean Diaspora. Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2020). I Too Am DACA: Awakened Childhood Memories. Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping, 26(3), 34–40.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2017). Transnational Parenting: The Hidden Costs of the Search for a "Better Life." In A. Burack-Weiss, et al. (Ed.), Narrative Social Work Practice: The Power and Possibility of Story. Columbia University Press.

Best-Giacomini, C. Howard, A. Ilian, H. (2016). A Racial Equity Staff Development Strategy for Public Human Service Organizations. In A. Carten (Ed.), Transforming Health and Human Services: An Antiracist Strategy. Oxford University Press.

Best-Giacomini, C. (2015). Transnational families. The SAGE Encyclopedia of Economics and Society. SAGE Publications. pp. 1617-1619.

Best, C. (April 2014). Kinship care and Transnational Parenting: The intersection of cultural values and practices. Journal of Family Social Work, 17:2, 119-135.

Best, C. (2014). Transnational parenting in the African Caribbean community. In L. Mathews (Ed.), English-speaking Caribbean Immigrants: Transnational Identities. New York: University Press of America, Inc.

Best-Cummings, C. (2009). The Long Goodbye: Challenges of Transnational Parenting. VDM Verlag Dr. Muller.

Best-Cummings, C. & Gildner, M. A. (2004). Caribbean women's migratory journey: An exploration of their decision-making process. Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Services; vol. 1, no. 2. The Haworth Press, Inc.

Carten, A. J., Rock, L., & Best-Cummings, C. (2002). Dimensions of Child Abuse and Neglect Among Native and Immigrant Caribbean Families. Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Services; vol. 2, no. 3. The Haworth Press, Inc.

In Press

Best-Giacomini, C. (2026). Holding on to Pearl: A Daughter's Journey Through Dementia, Memory and Love Velon Book Publishing.

Accepted Manuscripts

Best-Giacomini, C. (Accepted). A Nation Betrayed: When Freedom Fails the Immigration Promise. Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping.

Best-Giacomini, C. (Accepted). Ethics and the other: Anti-racism, cultural/social awareness, sensitivity, humility, and competence. In E. Congress & E. Levine (Eds.), Resolving Ethical Challenges in Social Work Practice. Springer Publishing Company.

Submitted Manuscripts

Best-Giacomini, C., Crawford, K., Cannon, M. A., Howard, A., Hasheela, M. W., Gavin, C., Claiborne, N., & McCathy, M. (Submitted July 2026). Moving the Needle on Organizational Resilience: Advancing Communication, Racial Equity, and Participatory Leadership. Human Service Organization (HSO) Journal Management, Leadership & Governance.

Best-Giacomini, C. (Submitted March 2025). The Gift of Being Seen: A Letter to My Mother. Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping.

Sponsored Research

2024–2025, National Endowment for the Humanities Fund — Connecticut's Fault Lines: Examining community experiences of COVID-19 in Hartford, Connecticut.

2024–2025, National Endowment for the Humanities Fund — Interdisciplinary Virtual Simulation to Promote Health Equity and Advocacy.