

Delivering on the Evidence Act: How Agencies Can Engage Stakeholders in the Learning Agenda Process

Speaker Biographies

Bernice Butler is the deputy director of network learning and collaboration at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. In this role, she leads the development of the center's network engagement strategy, facilitates trainings, and designs state network convenings to share learnings and best practices on expanding economic opportunity, reducing inequities, and fighting poverty across the State Priorities Partnership. Earlier in her career, Butler held positions as a White House Strong Cities, Strong Communities fellow and as a partnerships manager at the Institute for Educational Leadership. Butler holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Georgia State University and a master of public administration from the University of Georgia. Butler is a 2017 graduate of the New Leaders Council DC and a 2019–20 New Leaders Council DC Executive Board member, serving as alumni cochair.

Keith Fudge is a senior policy program manager in the Research to Action Lab at the Urban Institute. He manages a body of work focused on increasing mobility from poverty. He also manages technical assistance projects for Urban's Pay for Success Initiative. Previously, he managed Urban's Evidence-Based Policymaking Collaborative, a partnership between experts from four research organizations that provided insight into strategies for applying rigorous evidence to the policymaking process, particularly at the federal level. Fudge also worked in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research, where he supported research and communications efforts, including editing *HUD at 50: Creating Pathways to Opportunity* and editing and writing for *Evidence Matters*. He was a founding staffer and senior project manager for the White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities. Fudge has a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Michigan and a master of public policy from the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

Demetra Smith Nightingale is an Institute fellow at the Urban Institute, where her research focuses on social, economic, and labor policy issues. She was the chief evaluation officer at the US Department of Labor from 2011 to 2016, where she developed one of the premier evaluation units in the federal government. Before that, Nightingale was at the Urban Institute for three decades, conducting research and evaluations on employment, labor, welfare, and other social and economic policies and programs, and at Johns Hopkins University for seven years, where she taught graduate courses in social policy and program evaluation. She is also a professorial lecturer at the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration at the George Washington University, teaching graduate courses in program evaluation, integrating evaluation, and performance management in the context of evidence-based policymaking. Nightingale is the author or coauthor of five books and numerous articles, including *Repairing the US Social Safety Net* (with Martha Burt) and *Reshaping the American Workforce in a Changing Economy* (with Harry Holzer). She is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and serves on many task forces and advisory panels. She received her doctoral degree in public policy from the George Washington University.

Nicole Patton Terry is the Olive & Manuel Bordas professor of education in the School of Teacher Education, associate director of the Florida Center for Reading Research, and deputy director of the Regional Education Lab Southeast at Florida State University. She currently serves as an associate editor for the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* and a board member for the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading. A former special education teacher, Terry's research and scholarship focus on young children with and without disabilities who struggle to acquire language and literacy skills, particularly children of color and children living in poverty. Terry directs the Village, a division within the Florida Center for Reading Research responsible for creating and maintaining partnerships with diverse community stakeholders. Taking a collective impact approach, the Village strives to promote reading achievement, school readiness, and school success among vulnerable children and youth. Terry completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in communication sciences and disorders, with an emphasis on learning disabilities, at Northwestern University.

Vivian Tseng is senior vice president, program, at the William T. Grant Foundation. Tseng leads the foundation's grantmaking programs and its initiatives to connect research, policy, and practice to improve child and youth outcomes. In 2009, she launched the foundation's initiative on using research evidence in policy and practice, which has generated over 50 funded studies and informed the grantmaking programs of private and public funders across the country. She has been instrumental in the growing field of research-practice partnerships, including by supporting the creation of field-defining resources and the National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships. Under her leadership, the foundation has strengthened its internal diversity, equity, and inclusion work; increased its grantmaking and capacity support to underrepresented researchers; and developed a program to support stronger mentoring relationships for graduate students of color. Tseng regularly writes and speaks to international and domestic audiences on evidence-informed policy and practice. Her studies of racial, cultural, and immigration influences on child development have been published in *Child Development*, and her research on improving social settings and promoting social change have appeared in the *American Journal of Community Psychology*. She received her doctoral degree from New York University and her bachelor's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. She serves on the boards of the Forum for Youth Investment, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, and Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees. She was previously on the psychology and Asian American studies faculty at California State University, Northridge.

Mary Ellen Wiggins is the director of policy and research at the Forum for Youth Investment. Before joining the forum in May 2019, she worked at the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), playing key roles on their evidence, performance, and community solutions teams. Toward the end of her tenure there, she led the development and launch of the President's Management Agenda and helped cocreate the Government Effectiveness Advanced Research Center. Before that, she supported place-based approaches as deputy director for the White House Community Solutions Task Force, launched and managed implementation of performance partnership pilots for disconnected youth, and led OMB's strategy to support federal pay for success policy. She also managed operations for the \$32.5 million Partnership Fund for Program Integrity Innovation, which funded pilot projects on modernizing how states share foster care records, strengthening state and local juvenile justice program effectiveness, and producing replicable tools to help states and localities integrate health and human services systems. Through these combined efforts, she played a critical role in helping grow government capacity and consensus to work across silos of authority, funding, evidence, and expertise to enable on-the-ground improvements in the lives of disadvantaged youth and families. Wiggins has a master of public administration from the University of Georgia and a bachelor's degree in urban studies from Wellesley College.

Maria Woolverton is the director of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation's (OPRE's) Division of Family Strengthening, which focuses on strengthening relationships within families, supporting fatherhood, nurturing children through their families, reducing teen pregnancy, and supporting youth in their transition to adulthood. Before leading this division, she was a senior social science research analyst and team leader for child welfare research in OPRE. In this role, she oversaw a diverse portfolio of research and evaluation projects focused on child welfare and foster care, including the Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect and evaluations of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and the Permanency Innovations Initiative. Woolverton also managed the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey, a nationally representative, descriptive study of children and families served in Head Start, and helped develop and field the first American Indian/Alaska Native Family and Child Experiences Survey. Before joining OPRE in 2004, Woolverton was a senior research associate at the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development. Her work there focused on evaluating and improving systems for meeting the health and mental health care needs of children in the child welfare system and children with special health care needs and disabilities. Woolverton holds a bachelor's degree from Loyola University and did doctoral work in psychology at Stanford University.