

Increasing Access to Homeownership: How America Can Increase Housing Affordability and Close the Wealth Gap

Speaker Biographies

Monique King-Viehland is the director of state and local housing policy at the Urban Institute. She leads efforts to catalyze Urban's vast housing policy expertise into actionable strategies for, and with, state and local housing leaders. Her portfolio extends across Urban, encompassing housing policy areas from homelessness and affordable housing to zoning reform, homeownership, and housing finance. King-Viehland previously served as executive director of the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), where she oversaw 580 employees and a \$600 million budget. The first woman and African American to take the helm of the 40-year-old agency, King-Viehland led the agency through significant transformation, including the merger of the Community Development Commission and housing authority into one unified agency. She enhanced LACDA's efforts to fight the homelessness and affordability crises, including helping secure a 10-fold increase in the number of funded affordable and supportive units and increasing project-based rental voucher commitments by more than 100 percent while providing housing and housing assistance to hundreds of thousands annually. In 2019, she was recognized as an LA power woman by Bisnow. King-Viehland has 20 years of experience in housing, community, and economic development. She is a member of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness and a member of the policy advisory committee for the California Roadmap HOME 2030 initiative. She graduated with honors from Smith College and has a master's degree in public policy from Carnegie Mellon University.

Mike Loftin is a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute and the chief executive officer of Homewise Inc., a nonprofit social enterprise that promotes sustainable homeownership in a way that improves the long-term financial well-being of families with modest incomes. Loftin led the creation and implementation of Homewise's comprehensive business model that seamlessly integrates all the steps of the home purchasing process. Homewise is New Mexico's sixth-biggest mortgage lender and covers all of its operating expenses from earned revenue. In addition to his role at Homewise, Loftin drafted and led the campaign to pass Santa Fe's inclusionary zoning law, which has been used as the model for similar ordinances adopted by other municipalities. Before Homewise, Loftin was a community organizer in Chicago, and his achievements included founding the Resurrection Project, a preeminent Chicago community development organization serving several Mexican American neighborhoods; organizing an antidisplacement campaign during his tenure with the affordable housing organization Voice of the People in Uptown; and leading the Metropolitan Tenants Organization in the passage of Chicago's tenant bill of rights. Loftin currently serves on the board of Excellent Schools New Mexico, and he previously served on the University of New Mexico Anderson School of Management Foundation Board and was a governor-appointed board member of the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority. Loftin holds a bachelor's degree in history from Northwestern University.

Lisa Mensah is president and chief executive officer of Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), the nation's leading network of community development financial institutions (CDFIs). Under her leadership, OFN helps CDFIs leverage public funding and private investment to bring affordable, responsible capital to rural, urban, and Native communities underserved by mainstream finance. Since joining OFN in 2017, Mensah has attracted new visibility and investment to the CDFI field through programs like the Grow with Google Small Business Fund and OFN's Finance Justice Fund, a \$1 billion socially responsible investment for which Twitter was the first investor. Widely considered an expert on access to capital in low-wealth communities, Mensah frequently testifies before Congress. And recently, *Forbes* and *Morning Joe* recognized her as one of five women safeguarding America's small businesses. Before OFN, Mensah served as under secretary of agriculture for rural development in the Obama administration. Other career achievements include being the founding executive director of the Financial Security program at the Aspen Institute, managing the country's largest philanthropic grant and loan portfolio of investments in rural America at the Ford Foundation, and serving as a commercial banker at Citibank. She serves on multiple boards and advisory committees and holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard university and a master's degree from the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

Noel Andrés Poyo is the US Department of the Treasury's deputy assistant secretary for community and economic development. He most recently served for 14 years as executive director of the National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB), a nonprofit membership organization serving as the hub of a network of more than 120 community and economic development organizations that serve geographically and ethnically diverse Latino communities. Beginning in 2015, he also served as chief executive officer of Escalera Community Investments, NALCAB's subsidiary asset-management company that controls social investment funds designed to capitalize affordable housing projects and small businesses. Poyo's 22-year career has focused on integrating immigrants and people with low incomes into the mainstream financial services and real estate sectors of our economy and on improving the livability and economic resilience of low-income neighborhoods and affordable housing communities. He has played diverse roles in the implementation of community development projects valued at more than \$1 billion. From 2015 to 2017, Poyo served as 1 of 15 members of the Community Advisory Council for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. He has extensive experience advising the executive leadership of some of the nation's largest banks and numerous nonprofit lenders and social investors. Poyo is a graduate of Yale University.

Sarah Rosen Wartell is the third president of the Urban Institute since it was founded in 1968. During her tenure, Urban celebrated a milestone anniversary by moving into a state-of-the-art research and convening facility and launched its Next50, a strategy to advance upward mobility, equity, and shared prosperity by bringing the power of knowledge to help changemakers accelerate solutions. Under Wartell's leadership, Urban aims to leverage cutting-edge technology and data science, understand and confront structural racism, and deliver timely, relevant, and actionable research to communities, capitals, board rooms, and wherever innovators are pursuing bold ideas. Previously, Wartell was deputy assistant to the president for economic policy and deputy director of the National Economic Council. She also worked in various roles at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. After government service, Wartell was the founding chief operating officer and then executive vice president of the Center for American Progress. Her work focused on the economy and housing markets, and she directed the Mortgage Finance Working Group and the Doing What Works government performance program. Before her tenure in government, she practiced law with the Washington, DC, firm Arnold & Porter. Wartell currently serves on the boards of Enterprise Community Partners and the Georgetown Day School, Bank of America's National Community Advisory Council, and the Sadie Collective's Advisory Board. She previously served on the boards of the Low-Income Investment Fund, the Center for Urban Science and Progress at New York University, and the



Corporation for Enterprise Development (now known as Prosperity Now). Her areas of expertise include community development, consumer finance, asset building, and housing finance. Wartell has a bachelor's degree with honors in urban affairs from the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs. She has a law degree from Yale Law School.