**How Can Local Governments Support Employee Ownership?**

**Speaker Biographies**

**Ryan Cagle** is the Industrial Business Account Manager at BOC Network where he supports industrial and manufacturing businesses in Queens and Brooklyn, NYC. His role encompasses direct business support, community engagement, and advocacy. Before joining BOC Network, Ryan worked in communications and outreach for Business Improvement Districts in Brooklyn, Queens, and his hometown of Atlanta, GA. Ryan holds a master’s in urban placemaking from Pratt Institute and a bachelor’s in marketing from Georgia State University. When not advocating for quality, accessible jobs, you can find him and his family searching for a shady place to picnic in Prospect Park.

**Micaela Skoknic** is the Industrial Programs Manager at Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) where she manages innovative programs for small manufacturing businesses, including cooperative development assistance. She interfaces with city and state agencies to provide capital access to local businesses, leads program strategy and implementation, and manages coalition-building projects to strengthen NYC’s industrial policy and improve the resiliency of NYC’s working waterfront neighborhoods. Her work on the Equitable Industrial Development program has focused on business development and communications, with the vision that transitioning industrial firms to a worker-cooperative model can further accelerate wealth and ownership redistribution. Micaela is also an environmental and public law attorney trained in Chile, and she holds an M.S in Historic Preservation from the Pratt Institute. Her research focuses on the shaping of urban life and culture by politics and economics, with a special interest on the evolution and preservation of industrial waterfront neighborhoods. Finally, Micaela is a cultural organizer and steward of 8 Ball Community, a collective and community space based in New York City that champions DIY forms of production and association in the arts.

**Quincy Ely-Cate** is the Director of Industrial Business Development at the Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network where he leads a team focused on providing resources and technical assistance to industrial and manufacturing businesses in NYC to access capital and economic development incentives as part of NYC Small Business Service’s Industrial Business Service Providers initiative. Quincy forms part of multiple efforts to catalyze cooperative worker-ownership opportunities within the local industrial and manufacturing sectors. Quincy’s career has been centered on growing and supporting small businesses and catalyzing inclusive economic and community development. He is a certified personal financial counselor and holds an MBA from the University of Massachusetts Isenberg School of Management.

**Melissa Hoover** is the founding Executive Director of the Democracy at Work Institute, the think-and-do-tank that expands worker cooperatives as a strategy to address economic and racial inequality. A leader in the worker ownership movement for over fifteen years, Melissa helped start and grow the United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives, the national grassroots membership organization for worker-owned businesses. She was a cooperative business developer for many years with the Arizmendi Association of Cooperatives in Oakland, doing business and capital planning for two startups, training cooperative members, and serving as CFO in the first year of each startup's operations. She serves as a strategic advisor to foundations, investors, nonprofits, local governments and other organizations that want to incorporate worker ownership into their economic development and community wealth-building programs.

**Brett Theodos** is a senior fellow and director of the Community Economic Development Hub at the Urban Institute. His work focuses on economic and community development, neighborhood change, affordable homeownership, consumer finance, and program evaluation and learning. His research includes evaluations of the Economic Development Administration, New Markets Tax Credit, Small Business Administration loan and investment programs, Opportunity Zones, and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Choice Neighborhoods, Community Development Block Grant, and Section 108 programs. He is studying how capital flows (or fails to flow) into communities, including the role of mission finance actors like community development financial institutions. He leads projects researching how entrepreneurs can access capital. Theodos has conducted studies of neighborhood change and geographic mobility. He is evaluating several place-based initiatives. He’s led studies of affordable homeownership supports, including shared equity models like community land trusts. In the financial capability space, he’s led studies of financial coaching, financial curriculum, and rules of thumb for decisionmaking. He’s explored the geography of debt. Theodos is working to grow nonprofit capacity in performance measurement. He directs Measure4Change, which provides technical assistance and facilitates a community of practice for nonprofits and has led randomized controlled trial evaluations of youth workforce and education preparedness programs.

**Jessica Shakesprere** is a research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Shakesprere conducts quantitative and qualitative research and provides technical assistance, focusing on housing as a platform for service delivery, community development, and worker protections.