

Opportunities in Crisis: Findings from Year Two of Research on Equitable Rental Housing and Eviction Prevention in the United States

Speaker Biographies

Mary K. Cunningham is vice president for metropolitan housing and communities policy at the Urban Institute, where researchers and policy experts work to diagnose problems and identify solutions on issues including homelessness and access to affordable housing, fair housing and discrimination, community and economic development, land use and zoning, racial segregation, and housing and climate change. She has studied housing and homelessness for more than 20 years and has led several evaluations of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's homelessness and assisted-housing programs, including those related to permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention, and housing choice vouchers. From 2005 to 2008, Cunningham launched and directed the Homelessness Research Institute, the research and education arm of the National Alliance to End Homelessness. She also cochaired a research council on homelessness composed of nationally recognized academics and policy researchers. She has authored numerous reports, including *A Research Agenda for Ending Homelessness* and *Homelessness Counts*. She started her career as a caseworker for families with housing vouchers at Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (now Metro Housing|Boston) and has an MPP from Georgetown University.

Alexa Eisenberg is a Detroit-based housing activist-scholar and a postdoctoral research fellow with Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan. Their current work studies the implementation and impact of COVID-eviction response measures in Detroit. Eisenberg co-created Detroit's first comprehensive, publicly accessible, real-time eviction court process data set. This data is housed on the Eviction Machine (www.evictionmachine.org), an online platform that provides interactive data tools and resources for renters, organizers, and housing advocates to better understand and resist eviction injustice. Eisenberg holds a PhD in public health from the University of Michigan and a master's degree from the University of Miami.

Samantha Fu is a policy associate in the Research to Action Lab at the Urban Institute, where she helps inform policy change at the local, state, and federal levels by conducting research, helping leaders and decisionmakers access insights from research, and providing technical assistance to public and nonprofit organizations. Currently, her work focuses on housing, economic, and environmental justice. Samantha joined Urban from the California Policy Lab, where she conducted data-driven research in policy areas ranging from labor and employment to higher education and the social safety net. Before that, she worked in economic consulting at Cornerstone Research, on the analytics team for the 2016 Clinton campaign, and as a Data Science for Social Good Fellow at the University of Chicago's Center for Data Science and Public Policy. She holds a master of public administration degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a bachelor's degree from McGill University.

Solomon Greene leads the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Policy Development and Research, which informs policy development and implementation to improve life in American communities through conducting, supporting, and sharing research, surveys, demonstrations, program evaluations, and best practices. Greene has dedicated his career to improving people's lives and strengthening communities through evidence-based and community-driven housing and urban development policies. Prior to joining HUD, Greene held leadership positions in research institutions, affordable housing and community development organizations, local and federal governments, and philanthropy. For over seven years, he was a senior fellow at the Urban Institute, where he led research on fair and affordable housing, land use, technology and inclusive growth and recovery in cities. Before joining the Urban Institute, Greene served a senior adviser at HUD, where he helped develop policies to reduce segregation and expand neighborhood choice and he served as HUD's principal adviser on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Greene has also served as a senior program officer at the Open Society Foundations, an adjunct professor at NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, a law fellow at NYU Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, a litigation associate at Munger, Tolles & Olson, and a law clerk on the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He served on the board of directors for the National Housing Law Project, the American Bar Association COVID-19 Task Force Committee on Evictions, and the advisory board for Up for Growth. Greene received his BA from Stanford University, his MCP from the University of California, Berkeley, and his JD from Yale Law School. He grew up in Ulster County, New York and currently lives in Washington DC.

Makada Henry-Nickie is currently the Research Lead on the Housing team at the JP Morgan Chase Institute. Her career and research have focused on expanding equitable access to responsible credit and promoting policies that advance inclusive economic opportunities for disadvantaged families and low-income communities. Before joining the Institute, Henry-Nickie was a fellow with Brookings Institution's Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative, where she led research on financial inclusion, algorithmic bias, housing policy, and consumer regulatory policy. She was previously a senior analyst at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau where she led on critical financial inclusion issues such as mortgage redlining. Henry-Nickie holds a B.A. in Economics from Hunter College-CUNY and Ph.D. and Master's degrees in Economics from Howard University.

Ray Kong is the legal director of Lawyers for Equal Justice. Ray graduated from Kamehameha Schools before moving to the continental United States for college. He obtained his B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science from Brown University, and his J.D. from Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco. Kong was a trial lawyer in the Bay Area for 15 years before returning to Hawai'i to become the Bishop Museum's General Counsel in late 2017. At the museum, in addition to handling its legal matters, Kong developed relationships with the kalo farmers in Waipi'o Valley and Native Hawaiian 'ohana dealing with repatriation issues.

Elizabeth Kneebone is Assistant Vice President of Community Development Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. In this role, she manages the Community Development research team and shapes and contributes to its research portfolio, with a focus on examining barriers to economic opportunity and promising practices to promote a strong, healthy, sustainable economy. Before joining the San Francisco Fed, Kneebone served as the research director for the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley, where her research focused on the ways in which the built environment, housing, and land use policies shape access to economic opportunity for low-income people and communities of color. Prior to the Turner Center, Kneebone was a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, where she led the program's research examining the changing geography of U.S. poverty and its causes and consequences and co-authored the book *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America*. Kneebone also

previously worked as a research project manager at the Community Development Financial Institution IFF (formerly the Illinois Facilities Fund), where she researched changing neighborhood and community demographics and identified gaps in public and nonprofit services and capacity. Kneebone holds a Master's in Public Policy from the University of Chicago, and a bachelor's degree in history from Indiana University.

Zach Neumann is the co-founder and CEO of the Community Economic Defense Project (formerly the COVID-19 Eviction Defense Project). Launched as a community organizing project in 2020, CEDP grew rapidly to respond to housing insecurity and displacement in Colorado. To date, the organization has paid out nearly \$100M in rental assistance and has provided service to over 25,000 people facing eviction. Outside of CEDP, Neumann is a non-resident fellow at the Urban Institute and a Lecturer at the University of Colorado.

Katherine O'Regan is Professor of Public Policy and Planning at New York University Wagner. She also serves as Faculty Director of the Master of Science in Public Policy Program and Faculty Director of the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. Her primary research interests are at the intersection of poverty and space –residential and racial segregation, areas of concentrated disadvantage and the role of housing in shaping neighborhoods. She has written extensively on a variety of affordable housing topics, with recent work focused on outcomes and reforms to the housing choice voucher program, fair housing aspects of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program, and eviction practices in New York. She spent April, 2014-January, 2017 in the Obama Administration, serving as the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. O'Regan holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California at Berkeley and taught at the Yale School of Management prior to joining the Wagner faculty. She teaches courses in microeconomics, housing and community development, and program evaluation, and has received teaching awards from Berkeley, Yale, and NYU.

Rebecca Yae is a senior research analyst at the National Low Income Housing Coalition, where she assesses the implementation and effectiveness of state and local emergency rental assistance programs. Yae has worked on issues related to housing, governance, racial equity, and community health using qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Past work ranges from supporting social movements in Brazil in advancing a national legal framework for self-managed housing and collective property to supporting communities in identifying and addressing significant health needs and evaluating health-related initiatives. Yae holds a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Michigan and a BA in public health from the University of California, Berkeley.