

Strengthening Social Security for Older Adults, People with Disabilities, and Their Families

Speaker Biographies

Manasi Deshpande, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of economics at the University of Chicago Kenneth C. Griffin Department of Economics and a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. Her research interests include the optimal design of social safety net programs, their interaction with labor markets, and their effects on consumption, health, and well-being. She has received the Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship, NSF CAREER award, and William T. Grant Scholarship. Her dissertation on the long-term effects of disability programs received the 2015 APPAM Dissertation Award, the 2015 Upjohn Institute Dissertation Award, and the 2016 NASI John Heinz Dissertation Award. She holds a Ph.D. in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was previously a postdoctoral fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Becker-Friedman Institute.

Richard W. Johnson, Ph.D., is a senior fellow in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where he directs the Program on Retirement Policy. His research focuses on older Americans' retirement outlook, employment at older ages, long-term services and supports for older adults with disabilities, and state and local pensions. Recent studies have examined job loss at older ages, occupational change after age 50, and employment prospects for African Americans and Latinos over age 50. He has also written extensively about retirement preparedness, including the retirement outlook for Millennials, financial and health risks people face as they approach retirement, the affordability of long-term services and supports, and the potential impact of various Social Security reform proposals on future retirement income. Johnson received his bachelor's degree from Princeton University and his doctoral degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Kilolo Kijakazi, Ph.D., is the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration (SSA). Prior to her appointment as Acting Commissioner under the Social Security Act, Kijakazi served as the Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy at SSA from January 2021- July 2021. During her time as Deputy Commissioner, Kijakazi advised the Commissioner on policy issues and was responsible for planning and managing the development of program policy, policy research and evaluation, and statistical programs to inform programs administered by SSA. These programs include Retirement and Survivors Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Supplemental Security Income. From 2014 - 2021, Kijakazi served as an Institute fellow at the Urban Institute where she developed collaborative partnerships to expand and strengthen Urban's rigorous research agenda, effectively communicate findings to diverse audiences, and recruit and retain a diverse research staff at all levels. Kijakazi also conducted research in the areas of economic security, structural racism, and the racial wealth gap. Kijakazi holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the State University of New York, Binghamton, a Master of Social Work degree from Howard University, and a PhD in public policy from the George Washington University.

Nicole Maestas, Ph.D. is a Professor of Health Care Policy (Economics) at Harvard Medical School and a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), where she directs the NBER's Retirement and Disability Research Center. Her research investigates work capacity and employment among older individuals and people with disabilities, working conditions in the American labor force, social insurance programs such as SSDI, SSI, Medicaid and Medicare, and the causes and consequences of

the opioid epidemic. Maestas has published widely in the leading journals of economics, policy and medicine. She received her M.P.P. in Public Policy and Ph.D. in Economics from UC Berkeley.

Alicia H. Munnell, Ph.D., is the Peter F. Drucker Professor of Management Sciences at Boston College's Carroll School of Management. She also serves as the director of the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Before joining Boston College in 1997, Munnell was a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers (1995-1997) and assistant secretary of the Treasury for economic policy (1993-1995). Previously, she spent 20 years at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (1973-1993), where she became senior vice president and director of research in 1984. She has published many articles, authored numerous books, and edited several volumes on tax policy, Social Security, public and private pensions, and productivity. Munnell was co-founder and first president of the National Academy of Social Insurance and is currently a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Institute of Medicine, and the Pension Research Council at Wharton. She is a member of the board of The Century Foundation, the National Bureau of Economic Research, and the Pension Rights Center. In 2007, she was awarded the International INA Prize for Insurance Sciences by the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei in Rome. In 2009, she received the Robert M. Ball Award for Outstanding Achievements in Social Insurance from the National Academy of Social Insurance. In 2015, she chaired the U.S. Social Security Advisory Board's Technical Panel on Assumptions and Methods. Munnell earned her B.A. from Wellesley College, an M.A. from Boston University, and her Ph.D. from Harvard University.

Jack Smalligan is a senior policy fellow in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute. Previously, he was deputy associate director at the Office of Management and Budget. As director of the Education, Income Maintenance, and Labor Division, Smalligan was responsible for oversight and analysis of programs in the US Departments of Education and Labor, the Social Security Administration, and low-income assistance programs in the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children and Families, US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, and the US Treasury (earned income tax credit). Over 27 years, Smalligan served five administrations, working extensively on Social Security issues for four of them. In 2020, Jack Smalligan served as a member of the Social Security Administration Agency Review Team for the Biden-Harris Transition Team.

Sarah Rosen Wartell, in 2012, became the third president of the Urban Institute since its founding in 1968. A nonprofit research organization of more than 650 staff members, Urban provides data and evidence to accelerate solutions and advance upward mobility and equity. Urban is a trusted source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decisionmaking, create inclusive economic growth, and improve the well-being of families and communities. Urban has delivered facts that inspire solutions, and this remains our charge today. Before joining Urban, Wartell was the founding chief operating officer and then executive vice president of the Center for American Progress, where her work focused on the economy and housing markets. She also served as deputy assistant to the president for economic policy and deputy director of the White House National Economic Council. At the US Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1993 to 1998, Wartell advised the federal housing commissioner on housing finance, mortgage markets, and consumer protection. She was later a consultant to the bipartisan Millennial Housing Commission. Before her government service, Wartell practiced law with the Washington, DC, firm Arnold & Porter. Wartell serves on the boards of Enterprise Community Partners and Georgetown Day School. She is also a member of the executive board of the National Academy of Public Administration's Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships, the Sadie Collective's Advisory Council, Bank of America's National Community Advisory Council, and the Evidence and Equity Collaborative. Her areas of expertise include community development, consumer finance, asset building, and housing finance. Wartell has an AB with honors in urban affairs from the Princeton School of Public and



International Affairs, a JD from Yale Law School, and an honorary doctorate of public service from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.