

Advancing Equitable Access to Good Quality Jobs

Speaker Biographies

Ofronama Biu is a senior research associate in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where she is a member of the Building America's Workforce cross-center initiative and is affiliated with the Office of Race and Equity Research. Biu has spent the past five years in senior research roles, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore racial and gender stratification in the economy, including occupational crowding and alternative work, race and gender disparities in workplace experiences, workforce development, and wealth equity. Before joining Urban, Biu was a senior researcher at the City University of New York and the Building Movement Project. Prior to conducting research, Biu also had extensive experience in project management, partnership building, employer engagement, and direct service to youth and young adults and college students. Biu has a bachelor's degree in psychology from New York University, a master of public administration degree in public and nonprofit management and policy from New York University, and a doctorate in public and urban policy from the New School.

Patrick Carey is the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Current Employment Analysis. Mr. Carey oversees several BLS programs, including the Current Population Survey, American Time Use Survey, National Longitudinal Surveys, and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program. He is a 1990 graduate of the University of Michigan.

Nzinga Hooker is the policy director at the National Black Worker Center. Nzinga holds a B.S. in Biochemistry from Claflin University and a J.D. from the George Washington University Law School. Nzingha is committed to supporting power building and leadership development in Black communities and to use her legal experiences and skills in service of that work. Thus, all of her work is grounded in a racial equity analysis and aimed at actively contributing to the dismantling of structural racism, building worker power, and addressing income inequality. Prior to joining NBWC, she worked as a staff attorney with the National Employment Law Project, where she worked on unemployment insurance policy, helped integrate NELP's social insurance and work equity portfolios, and deepen NELP's racial equity work. Most of her work as an attorney has been in direct services and litigation. Nzingha enjoys reading, writing, talking, a variety of outdoor activities (hiking, swimming, kayaking), music, and dancing. If you've ever chatted with her on a 1 on 1, you will know that she can't keep from talking about Assata Shakur and Fred Hampton

Enrique Lopezlira is the director of the Low-Wage Work program at the UC Berkeley Labor Center. He is a labor economist, directing and conducting research on how policies affect working families, with a particular focus on how these policies impact racial and gender equity. Dr. Lopezlira previously served as senior policy advisor for economic and employment policy at UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza), one of the largest Latinx civil rights organizations in the nation. He also served as deputy director for policy and research at Western Progress, a think tank advancing progressive policies and change in the eight states of the Rocky Mountain West. He also brings experiences in advising various government agencies and testifying at the state and federal levels. He is often asked for his economic insights and analysis by English and Spanish media; he has appeared on CNN, CNN en Español, and Univision, and has been covered in Al Jazeera, Politico, and the Washington Post. Dr. Lopezlira holds a doctorate in economics from Howard University. He also holds a master's degree in international management from the Thunderbird School of Global Management, and bachelor's and master's degrees in economics from Arizona State University.

Kavya Vaghul is Co-Founder at both Translational Research Service - a research and data visualization firm focused on workers issues - and the Living Wage Institute - a new benefit corporation that helps employers build and implement living wage compensation strategies. She brings deep data and research expertise on job quality and workers issues to both the social and corporate policy ecosystems. Most recently as the Senior Director of Research at JUST Capital, Kavya led the development of their annual rankings and original research on corporate Environment, Social, and Governance performance, scaling impact on topics like wages, equity, human capital measurement, and other worker policies through innovative research products. Previously, Kavya was a Senior Research Analyst at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, where she conducted research on family economic security issues and built foundational data stories on student debt, early childhood education, and wage inequality. She has also served as a researcher for MIT's Healthy Neighborhood Study in the Greater Boston Area and a fellow with the Massachusetts State Department of Public Health. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Vox*, *The Atlantic*, and other major media outlets. Kavya holds a MCP from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a BA in Public Health Studies from The Johns Hopkins University.