

Cash Assistance for Children: Research Roundup and Policy Future

Speaker Biographies

Jacob Bastian is a nonresident senior fellow at Brookings and assistant professor of economics at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Prior to joining Rutgers, he completed a two-year postdoc at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy and a Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Michigan. Bastian's research focuses on how public policy can reduce poverty, increase economic opportunity, and affect social attitudes, while also identifying unintended consequences. Much of his research examines how the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit affects the wellbeing of lower-income families. Bastian served as a senior economist in the Council of Economic Advisers in the White House from 2023 to 2024, where he focused on child poverty, childcare, and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Sam Gill is the president and CEO of the Doris Duke Foundation (DDF), a New York-headquartered, national philanthropic organization that operates five national grantmaking programs—in the performing arts, the environment, medical research, child and family well-being, and mutual understanding between communities—as well as Duke Farms and Shangri La, two centers that serve the public directly. Prior to joining DDF, Gill was senior vice president and chief program officer at the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, where he oversaw more than \$100 million in annual grantmaking across the foundation's programs, in addition to managing Knight's research and assessment portfolio and its grants administration function.

Tracy Gruber was named Executive Director of the Utah Department of Human Services in January 2021 and became the first Executive Director of the Utah Department of Health and Human Services on July 1, 2022, following her unanimous confirmation by the Senate in February 2021. Prior to her appointment by Governor Spencer J. Cox, she served as Director of the Office of Child Care at the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and as Senior Advisor for Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative. In 2024, Gruber was named by Utah Business as one of its "Most Influential Women of Utah". In 2017, recognized as "Government Official of the Year" by the Community Action Partnership of Utah for her work championing programs and policies to achieve measurable, preventive, positive outcomes that end cycles of intergenerational reliance on government services. She and her husband live in Salt Lake City where they enjoy skiing, hiking, mountain biking and camping amidst the majesty of Utah's natural spaces.

Doug Holtz-Eakin is president of the American Action Forum and has a distinguished record as a researcher and policy adviser. Since 2001, he has served in a variety of important policy positions. In 2001 and 2002 he was Chief Economist of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. He was the 6th Director of the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office from 2003 to 2005. During 2007 and 2008 he was Director of Domestic and Economic Policy for the John McCain presidential campaign.

Pamela Herd is the Carol Kakalec Kohn Professor of Social Policy in the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Her research focuses on inequality and how it intersects with health, aging, and policy. She is also an expert in survey research and biodemographic methods. Much of her recent research focuses on administrative burden, or the bureaucratic obstacles that people encounter when trying to access government benefits, services, and rights. She is especially focused on studying interventions that can reduce this burden in public programs. She has a book published by the Russell Sage Foundation: *Administrative Burden. Policymaking by other Means*, which has received numerous awards.

Her writing has been published in venues including the New York Times, the Washington Post, Vox, Bloomberg News, and Slate.

Hilary Hoynes is Chancellor's Professor of Economics and Public Policy where she also directs the Berkeley Opportunity Lab. She is an economist who works on poverty, inequality, and the social safety net. Her current research examines how access to the social safety net in early life affects children's later life health and human capital outcomes. Professor Hoynes is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Art and Sciences, the National Academy of Social Insurance, and a Fellow of the Society of Labor Economists. She has served as Co-Editor of the American Economic Review and the American Economic Journal: Economic Policy. She has held positions on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on National Statistics and California Governor Gavin Newsom's Council of Economic Advisors. Previously, she served as Vice President of the American Economic Association and she served on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Building an Agenda to Reduce the Number of Children in Poverty by Half in 10 Years, the State of California Task Force on Lifting Children and Families out of Poverty and the Federal Commission on Evidence-Based Policy Making. She is a recipient of the Holland Medal for lifetime contributions to public finance and the Carolyn Shaw Bell Award for contributions to women in Economics. Dr. Hoynes received her PhD in Economics from Stanford University in 1992 and her undergraduate degree in Economics and Mathematics from Colby College in 1983.

Elaine Maag is a senior fellow in the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center at the Urban Institute and a codirector of Innovations in Cash Assistance for Children. She is an expert on the taxation of low- and middle-income families. Her work examines the interactions between tax and transfer programs, the impact of cash supports, how well taxes support families, and the administration of tax and transfer programs. Maag has testified before state and federal congressional committees and advised congressional staff members and administration officials on the taxation of families with children and on higher education and work incentives in the tax code. Maag codirected the creation of the Net Income Change Calculator, a tool that allows users to understand the trade-offs between tax and transfer benefits and changes in earnings or marital status. Before joining Urban, Maag worked at the Internal Revenue Service and at the Government Accountability Office as a presidential management fellow. She was the inaugural senior tax policy adviser in the Equity Hub of the US Treasury Department. Maag holds an MS in public policy analysis from the University of Rochester. Maag serves on the editorial board of the National Tax Journal and is a member of the Code for America Tax Benefits Advisory Committee, the National Academy for Social Insurance, and Humanity Forward's bipartisan Advisory Board.

Wes Moore is the 63rd Governor of Maryland. He is the first Black governor in the state's 246-year history and just the third African American elected governor in the history of the United States. Moore's life and career have been defined by service. Before entering elected office, he was the CEO of the Robin Hood Foundation, built and ran a small business that helped underserved students navigate college, and led soldiers in combat in Afghanistan as a Captain in the U.S. Army. In 2010, Moore wrote "The Other Wes Moore," a story about the fragile nature of opportunity in America, which became a New York Times bestseller. He went on to write other best-selling books that reflect on issues of race, equity, and opportunity. Moore is a graduate of Valley Forge Military Academy and College, Johns Hopkins University, and Wolfson College, Oxford, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar. Moore and his wife Dawn have two children: Mia and James.

Catherine Rampell, Catherine Rampell is an anchor at MSNBC, where she co-hosts "The Weekend: Primetime" (6-9pm Sat/Sun). She will soon join The Bulwark as economics editor. She focuses on economics, politics, public policy, and immigration, with a special emphasis on data-driven journalism. She is also a contributor to the public radio show Marketplace. She currently serves on advisory boards for the

Journal of Economic Perspectives and for the American Family Survey at BYU. Previously, Catherine wrote an internationally syndicated op-ed column for The Washington Post, and was a special correspondent at the PBS NewsHour. Before that, she worked for The New York Times as an economics reporter and editor; columnist for the NYT's Sunday Magazine; and theater critic for the Times's arts section. Before joining MSNBC, Catherine was a longtime economics and politics commentator on CNN, and has also appeared on HBO (Real Time With Bill Maher), MTV, CBS, Comedy Central, and other outlets. Catherine received the 2021 Online Journalism Award for Commentary, the 2010 Weidenbaum Center Award for Evidence-Based Journalism, and is a seven-time Gerald Loeb Award finalist. She grew up in Florida and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Princeton.

Sarah Rosen Wartell is the third president of the Urban Institute since its founding in 1968. 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 is a former board member of Georgetown Day School. She is also a member of the steering committee for the 10-year Roadmap for Public Housing Sustainability, executive board of the National Academy of Public Administration's Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships, and Bank of America's National Community Advisory Council. 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.

Cecilia E. Rouse is the president of the Brookings Institution. From 2021 to 2023, she was the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, becoming the first Black American to hold the role in the CEA's 75-year history. She previously served as dean of Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs and has held leadership positions on numerous boards and editorial journals. Rouse is the University's Katzman-Ernst Professor in Economics and Education and a professor of economics and public affairs, where she has served on the faculty since 1992. A labor economist with a focus on the economics of education, Rouse is the founding director of the Princeton Education Research Section and a member of the American Philosophical Society and the National Academy of Education. Her government service included three tours at the White House: as CEA Chair, as a CEA member from 2009 to 2011, and as Special Assistant to the President at the National Economic Council from 1998 to 1999. Rouse earned both her doctoral degree in economics and her bachelor's degree from Harvard University.

Jane Waldfogel is the Compton Foundation Centennial Professor for the Prevention of Children's and Youth Problems at Columbia University School of Social Work. She is also a Visiting Professor at the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics. Waldfogel has written extensively on the impact of public policies on child and family well-being. Her most recent book is *Child Benefits: A Smart Investment for America's Future* (Russell Sage, 2025).