

Signe-Mary McKernan

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Education

PhD, Economics, Brown University (Committee: M. Pitt, R. Moffitt, R. Friedberg)

MA, Economics, Brown University

BA, Mathematical Economics and Scandinavian Literature, UC Berkeley

Professional Experience

1999–present	Urban Institute, Vice President, Family and Financial Well-Being Division (2024–present), Vice President, Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population (2017–2024), Director, Wealth and Financial Well-Being (formerly Opportunity and Ownership Initiative (2008–present) Senior Fellow (2011–17), Senior Research Associate (2002–10), Research Associate (1999–2001)
2004–2006	Georgetown Public Policy Institute, Georgetown University, Adjunct professor
2003	Georgetown University, Visiting Associate Professor of Public Policy
1996–1999	Federal Trade Commission, Economist
1991–1994	Brown University, Research Assistant and Teaching Assistant
1992–1993	Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economist
1992–1993	World Bank, Intern

Selected Research Impact

Thousands of low-income Michigan households can feed their children with SNAP benefits that would once would have been denied to them. Building on a policy change driven by Urban research, Michigan state passed a law that removed asset limits for SNAP benefits altogether ([SB 0035](#)). Act No. 53 was approved by the Governor July 11, 2023 and filed with the Secretary of State July 12, 2023.

- In 2019, Michigan relaxed safety net program asset tests, opening the door to helping residents access mainstream banking services and build emergency savings. The [policy](#) lifted and aligned asset limits across state food, cash, and emergency assistance programs to \$15,000, excluded the value of vehicles from the asset test, and simplified the process of verifying the asset test.
- The director of Michigan’s Department Health and Human Services shared that Urban’s brief, “[The Unintended Consequences of SNAP Asset Limits](#),” was helpful in making the case for the policy. He used it to brief legislators and cited it at the press conference announcing the new policy.

[15 million Americans](#) had medical debt erased from their credit records. Urban Institute’s [Debt in America: An Interactive Map](#) provides widely cited evidence on medical debt, and played an important role in Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion’s [joint decision](#) to change reporting of medical collection debt. As a result,

Urban data on debt was cited across North Carolina as state legislators voted to pass [Medicaid expansion](#) in the state.

[District of Columbia Council unanimously approved a bill establishing baby bonds](#). Citing Urban Institute

research and based on Brown McKernan testimony. DC approved the Child Wealth Building Act in 2021.

District of Columbia passed a [consumer debt protection](#) measure supported by DC AG's office citing Urban Institute's [Debt in America: An Interactive Map](#).

Cincinnati, OH Financial Freedom blueprint was shaped by Urban's [Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard](#). The project informed \$2.1 million in new investments, to include a children savings account, guaranteed basic income pilot, and a campaign to erase medical debt for thousands of residents.

North Carolina introduced bipartisan bill [HB 1039](#) to address medical debt to reduce burdensome medical debt and protect patients. "Medical Debt De-Weaponizing Act" is sponsored by State Rep. Ed Goodwin and requires hospitals to offer screening of patients for charity care, mandates free coverage for patients at 200% of the federal poverty level and prevents hospitals from foreclosing on patients' homes or garnishing their wages. This bill was introduced following a local investigation by WGTV that used data from Urban's [Credit Health during COVID-19 Pandemic](#) and [Debt in America](#). The North Carolina Department of State Treasurer [tweeted](#) about the [Debt in America feature's update](#) on the difference in medical debt between white communities and communities of color.

Citing [Debt in America](#) and related publications, and leveraging ARPA funds, many municipalities and philanthropies have removed the burden of medical debt from low-income residents.

- Cities include: Toledo, Pittsburgh, Harris County (Houston), TX; Cleveland, OH; Milwaukee County, WI; Muskegon County, MI; Miami-Dade County, FL; St. Paul, MN, etc.
- In addition to local governments, foundations and community actors such as Regions Bank has leveraged Urban data to target their commitments and abolish debt for vulnerable residents.

In a response to COVID-19 health crisis, several City and County of San Francisco departments moved to [reduce the burden of fines and fees on residents](#), citing Urban's [factsheet on financially insecure families in San Francisco](#). The response was coordinated by the Financial Justice Project, founded by Treasurer Jose Cisneros.

New York City Council voted 1/23/2020 to ban cashless businesses. Councilman Rafael Espinal Jr., chair of the Committee on Consumer Affairs and Business Licensing, cited [Unbanked and Underbanked in New York City](#) in his [remarks to the committee](#), specifically the finding that 12% (360,000) of NYC residents did not have bank accounts in 2013. Espinal also highlighted the geographical distribution of unbanked and underbanked residents in NYC examined in our brief.

United Teletch Financial Credit Union in New Jersey launched a prize-linked savings program, "[U-WIN](#)" citing Urban Institute research on emergency savings. In a [local news article](#), president and CEO Leo Ardine noted that "[research from the Urban Institute](#) shows that families with as little as \$250 to \$749 in savings are less likely to be evicted, miss a housing or utility payment or receive public benefits after a job loss, health issue, or large income drop."

Texas lawmakers repealed legislation in 2019 that revoked professional licenses for student loan delinquencies based on [Young Invincibles'](#) presentation of Urban Institute evidence from [Debt in America](#).

Senators Coons and Brown cited, [The Unintended Consequences of SNAP Asset Limits](#) in their [one-pager](#) introducing the [ASSET Act](#), a bill that would prohibit states from applying asset limits on TANF, SNAP, and LIHEAP and would raise asset limits on SSI.

SafetyNet financial product firm launched based on Urban Institute evidence. The, president of [SafetyNet](#), read a [CNN article](#) based on Urban Institute research stating that one in three Americans had debt in collections, took the article to the board and made a case to launch SafetyNet, which develops new financial products, including a private unemployment insurance product and an employer-based matched emergency savings program.

Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA) introduced the “Wealth Gap Resolution” (H.Res. 159) which expresses a sense of the House of Representatives that eliminating inequalities in wealth, especially the widening racial gap is a vital “national economic security priorities” and that “Congress has a responsibility to implement thoughtful, proven and pragmatic policy strategies to eliminate the wealth gap and the racial wealth gap.” The bill gathered over 50 cosponsors, including members from the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. The resolution and a one-pager circulated by Waters’ office cites specific research findings from the Urban Institute and several of our research partners, including data from our [“Nine Charts about Wealth Inequality in America”](#) feature on household wealth over the past 50 years. (March 2015)

Selected Project Experience

Principal Investigator, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Support Debt of Debt in America and Youth Financial Well-Being \$334,900, 2024-2025 224.4948: GA-2025-X18967 \$144,900; GA-2024-X15177 \$190,000. Updated [Debt in America: An Interactive Map](#) presenting stakeholders with data about key debt metrics by county and state. Published relevant and timely research incorporating youth voices. Convene national and local stakeholders to develop program and policy solutions that can help young people build assets and create wealth to promote financial stability and resilience.

Co-Principal Investigator, Accelerating Wealth Equity through Data and Evidence, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, \$400,000, 2024-2026. Help city and community leaders answer key questions around trends in their residents’ financial health and identify short- and long-term policy responses that can stabilize residents today and accelerate wealth equity. Add key components to Urban Institute’s [“Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard”](#) and continue outreach and engagement.

Co-Principal Investigator, Department of Health and Human Services, Understanding Financial Literacy Interventions in Employment-Related Contexts for Low-Income Individuals. Contract No. HHSP233201500077I, Order Number:75P00119F37008 and 75ACF121C00065 **\$432,039, 2019-2024.** MEF Associates and its subcontractor, the Urban Institute conducted this study to better understand financial capability interventions delivered within employment and training (E&T) programs that serve adults with low incomes. Financial capability interventions can improve economic outcomes for households with low incomes by building families’ financial skills and knowledge and expanding their access to financial resources. E&T programs provide opportunities to deliver these interventions, but there is currently little evidence on how effective E&T programs are in this role. This study built more systematic evidence for policymakers and practitioners about the extent, forms, and practices of incorporating financial capability interventions in E&T programs serving low-income adults; to identify research gaps; and to set up a basis for future research and evaluation in this area.

Co-Principal Investigator, Russell Sage Foundation, Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Financial Well-Being Disparities and the Effectiveness of State Initiatives to Protect Vulnerable Communities, Grant 2011-29561, \$149,601, 2021-2023. Using unique credit record data, answer 2 research questions: 1) How have disparities in financial well-being changed in the wake of the pandemic? 2) To what extent have state policies protected vulnerable communities during the pandemic or exacerbated pre-COVID inequities?

Co-Principal Investigator, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Southern Partnership to Reduce Debt for families and youth \$758,528 2019-2023 209.0172: GA-2023-X11766 \$70,000; GA-2022-X9963 \$66,760; GA-2021-B7606 \$221,768; GA-2020-B4407 \$225,000; GA-2019-B0284 \$175,000. Conceptualized, developed, and updated online data tools such as [Debt in America: An Interactive Map](#) and [Credit Health during the COVID 19 Panedemic](#) presenting stakeholders with data about key credit metrics by county and state. Published relevant and timely research. National partner to the Southern Partnership to Reduce Debt providing technical assistance to local grantees.

Co-Principal Investigator, Financial Health of Cities, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, \$493,000, 2020-2023. Help city leaders answer key questions around trends in their residents' financial health and identify short- and long-term policy responses that can stabilize residents today and accelerate an inclusive recovery moving forward. Estimated savings at the local level and created Urban Institute's "[Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard](#)."

Co-Principal Investigator, Lowell's European Consumer Research Laboratory, Financial Health of Consumers in the United Kingdom, \$725,000, 2020-2022. The new bi-annual Financial Vulnerability Index provides UK policymakers a clear picture of how households are dealing with the economic effects of Brexit and the pandemic, how financial vulnerability has changed over the past three years, and where resources could be targeted to improve financial health. Research briefs and reports describe index findings and analyze financial vulnerability drivers in the UK.

Co-Principal Investigator, Experian, The Intersection of Alternative Financial Services, Mainstream Credit Use, and Place, in-kind donation and \$50,000 program support, 2019-2020.

Co-Principal Investigator FINRA Investor Education Foundation. Employer-Sponsored Lending: Landscape and Evaluation. \$100,000, 2019-2020.

Co-Principal Investigator Feeding America, Effective Practices for Treating the Causes of Hunger. \$100,000, 2019.

Co-Principal Investigator, Department of Health and Human Services, Assets for Independence Randomized Evaluation, Contract HHSP23320095654WC, \$2 million 2011-2016 and Follow-Up, Contract HHSP233201500064I, \$3.1 million, 2015-2020. Study participant recruitment and random control trial evaluation of the DHHS/ACF-funded Assets for Independence program, a federally supported individual development account grant program that incorporates financial capability. This evaluation includes baseline, 12-month and 36-month follow-up surveys and reports of low-income participants in two sites. Disseminating findings with products tailored to specific audiences. Led a team of 10 researchers, inside and outside Urban Institute.

Principal Investigator, Hans Morris, Consumer Segmentation: Diving Deeper into Household Financial Situations, \$50,000, 2018-2019.

Senior Advisor, FINRA Investor Education Foundation, Delinquent Debt Decisions and Their Consequences Over Time, \$173,000, 2017-2019.

Co-Principal Investigator, Ford Foundation and Annie E. Casey Foundation funding for the Opportunity and Ownership Initiative, \$2.9 million total, 2008-2018. Large cross-center project to gain a better understanding of wealth inequality and the asset building of low and moderate income Americans and to evaluate the current and potential policies that affect both.

Co-Principal Investigator, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, Financial Capability Research, \$650,000, 2015-2017.

Principal Investigator, FINRA Investor Education Foundation, Grant No. 2015-09-008, Health Insurance, Financial Knowledge, and the Risk of Medical Debt, \$155,000, 2015-2017.

Co-Investigator and proposal lead, US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services, Order AG3198D140074, Contract: AG3198C140018, Asset Limits and SNAP, \$492,500, 2015-2016.

Co-Principal Investigator, New York City Office of Financial Empowerment, Financial Services Study, \$169,000, 2014-2015.

Co-Principal Investigator, Midland Credit Consumer Credit Research Institute, Local Conditions and Debt in Collections, \$315,000, 2013-2015.

Principal Investigator, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Contract GS23F8198H HUDCCHI01027CHIT0001, Case Studies of Title Insurance and Settlement Charges in Five Cities, \$349,519, 2009-2011.

Principal Investigator, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Housing Authority Mortgage Loan Closing Cost Studies, \$1.1 million, 2008-2013.

Principal Investigator, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, award number R01HD057189, The Social Safety Net, Poverty, and Material Hardship, \$843,670 total, 2008-2013. Co-led this study of the effectiveness of means-tested programs (TANF, SNAP, Medicaid/SCHIP) in improving the material hardship (e.g., food insecurity, unmet medical need) of low-income families with children. Used a quasi-experimental design that relies on variation in programs and policies over time and required quantifying state-level TANF, SNAP, Earned Income Tax Credit, and minimum wage policies over a 20-year period.

Co-Principal Investigator, FINRA Investor Education Foundation, Student Loan Debt Brief, \$60,000, 2013.

Co-Principal Investigator, Russell Sage Foundation, Wealth Loss During the Great Recession, \$95,000, 2011-2012. Used the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) from 1983 through 2010 and synthetic cohorts to construct pseudo-panel data based on the repeated cross-sections to document change in family net worth by family characteristics.

Co-Principal Investigator, Mott Foundation, Prepaid Pilot/MyAccountCard Evaluation, \$200,000, 2011-2012. Random control trial evaluation of prepaid card features.

Principal Investigator, US Treasury Department, Blanket Purchase Order Agreement, Research on Financial Behaviors, \$1.9 million, 2009-2011.

Co-Principal Investigator, Department of Health and Human Services, GS23F8198H, HHSP233200800482G, Evaluation Design for the Assets for Independence Program, \$346,492, 2008-2010. Conducted a literature synthesis of individual development account programs (IDAs) and related asset building programs and evaluations. Formulated 12 evaluation design options for the next AFI evaluation and led a technical work group meeting with 30 experts and stakeholders to vet the design options. Wrote an evaluation design options report, which presents a series of research questions that can be addressed in the next phase AFI evaluation and describes evaluation methods that can be used to answer these research questions. Based on our recommendations, the recommendations of the technical work group, and input from the Department of Health and Human Services, the fourth and final report in the project presents the evaluation design for the Next Phase Evaluation of the Assets for Independence Program.

Co-Principal Investigator, US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, contract 59-5000-7-0113, Food Insufficiency: The Role of Food Stamp Program Participation, Duration, and Policies, \$185,000, 2007-2009.

Co-Principal Investigator, US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service 43-3AEM-4-80085, How are State Food Stamp and TANF Policy Choices Affecting Food Stamp Participation/Design & Creation of a State-Level FSP Rules Database, \$199,999, 2005-2007.

Principal Investigator, Department of Health and Human Services, GS23F8198H, HHSP233200400131U, Poor Finances: Assets and Low Income Households, \$326,405, 2004-2007. Led a comprehensive literature synthesis to assess the nascent state of knowledge and policy development, develop conceptual frameworks, assess strengths and weaknesses of data sources, and chart directions for future research. The synthesis was so successful, it was published as the book “Asset Building and Low-Income Families.”

Principal Investigator, The World Bank Group, Gender and Transfer Study, \$97,864, 2002-2003.

Co-Principal Investigator, US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Grant 43-3AEM-1-80070, Employment Factors Influencing Food Stamp Program Participation among the Working Poor, \$149,996, 2001-2003.

Publications

Testimony

K. Steven Brown and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. 2021. “[Baby Bonds Provide an Opportunity to Close the Large Racial Wealth Gap](#).” Testimony for the Committee on Business and Economic Development, Council of the District of Columbia. Washington, DC. May 25.

McKernan, Signe-Mary, and Caroline Ratcliffe. 2013. “[Closing the Wealth Gap: Empowering Minority-Owned Businesses to Reach Their Full Potential for Growth and Job Creation](#).” Testimony for roundtable panel hearing before the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Washington, DC, September 18.

Books

McKernan, Signe-Mary, and Michael Sherraden, eds. 2008. *Asset Building and Low-Income Families*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Journal Articles

Andre, Jennifer, Breno Braga, Kassandra Martinchek, and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. 2024. “[The Effects of the State Utility Shutoff Moratoria on Credit Delinquencies during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).” Special edition on inequality in consumer finance. *Journal of Economics and Business*. 129.

Zhong, Mingli, Breno Braga, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Mark Hayward, Elizabeth Millward, and Christopher Trepel. 2024. “[Impacts of COVID-19-Era Economic Policies on Consumer Debt in the United Kingdom](#).” Special edition on inequality in consumer finance. *Journal of Economics and Business*. 129.

McKernan, Signe-Mary, Caroline Ratcliffe, and Breno Braga. 2021. “[The Effect of the US Safety Net on Material Hardship Over the Past Quarter Century](#).” *Journal of Public Economics*. 197.

Braga, Breno, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Caroline Ratcliffe, Brett Theodos, John Chalekian, and Christopher Trepel. 2019. “[Local Conditions and Debt in Collections](#).” *Journal of Consumer Affairs*.

Mills, Gregory; **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Caroline Ratcliffe, Sara Edelstein, Michael Pergamit, and Breno Braga. 2019. “[First-Year Impacts on Savings and Economic Well-Being from the Assets for Independence Program Randomized Evaluation](#).” Special Issue *Journal of Consumer Affairs*.

Ratcliffe, Caroline, William J. Congdon, and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. 2017. “[Prepaid Cards at Tax Time and Beyond: Findings from the MyAccountCard Pilot](#).” *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 52 (2): 286–316.

Feinberg, Robert, Daniel Kuehn, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Doug Wissoker, and Sisi Zhang. 2015. “[Explaining Variation in Title Charges: A Study of Five Metropolitan Real Estate Markets](#).” *Review of Industrial Organization* 46 (2): 145–67.

Ratcliffe, Caroline, and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. 2015. “[Who is Most Worried about Student-Loan Debt?](#)” *Communities and Banking* 26 (1): 29–31.

McKernan, Signe-Mary, Caroline Ratcliffe, Margaret Simms, and Sisi Zhang. 2014. “[Do Racial Disparities in Private Transfers Help Explain the Racial Wealth Gap? New Evidence from Longitudinal Data](#).” *Demography* 51 (3): 949–74.

McKernan, Signe-Mary, Caroline Ratcliffe, Eugene Steuerle, and Sisi Zhang. 2014. “[Disparities in Wealth Accumulation and Loss from the Great Recession and Beyond](#).” *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings* 104 (5): 240–44.

McKernan, Signe-Mary, Caroline Ratcliffe, and Daniel Kuehn. 2013. “[Prohibitions, Price Caps, and](#)

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Book Chapters

- Kijakazi, Kilolo, and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. 2021. “After Half a Century, the Racial Wealth Gap Remains Wide—Suggesting Bold Responses are Warranted.” In [The Future of Building Wealth](#), edited by Ray Boshara and Ida Rademacher, 45–52. St. Louis, MO: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and Washington, DC: Aspen Institute
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Multimedia

- Braga, Breno, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Samantha Atherton, and Cassandra Martinchek. "[Debt in America: An Interactive Map](#)." Washington, DC: Urban Institute, updated November 20, 2025.
- Zhong, Mingli, Aaron R. Williams, Miranda Santillo, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Oriya Cohen, Isabella Remor, Catherine Harvey, and Courtney Jones. "[Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard](#)." Washington, DC: Urban Institute, November 12, 2025.
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- Martinchek, Cassandra, Alex Carther, Braga, Breno, Caleb Quakenbush, and **Signe-Mary McKernan**. "[Credit Health during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#)." Washington, DC: Urban Institute, March 8, 2022
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Policy Briefs, Fact Sheets, and Chart Books

- Brown, Madeline, Signe-Mary McKernan, Samantha Atherton, and Miranda Santillo. 2024. "[What do We Know About Baby Bonds? A Condensed Literature Review](#)." Policy Brief. In *Using Wealth and Income Policies to Forge a New Social Contract: Giving People Something to Live For*. University of Michigan, School of Social Work, Center on Assets, Education, and Inclusion.
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- Quakenbush, Caleb, Heather Hahn, **Signe-Mary McKernan**, Susan Sarver. 2020. “[Starting a Small-Dollar Loan Program for Your Employees.](#)” Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
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Other Publications

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- McKernan, Signe-Mary**, and Jessica Compton. 2010. "Developing a Research Agenda on Small-Dollar Credit and Financial Empowerment." Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- McKernan, Signe-Mary**, and Caroline Ratcliffe. 2008. "New Income and Poverty Statistics and the Social Safety Net Q&A." Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- McKernan, Signe-Mary**, and Caroline Ratcliffe. 2006. "The Intersection Between Welfare Policy Changes and Poverty Trends." *5 Questions for the Experts*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Teaching Experience

Econometrics–Quantitative Methods II. Taught Masters students at Georgetown Public Policy Institute as a visiting associate professor. Overall student evaluation score 4.75 out of 5.0, spring 2003.

Microeconomic Theory. Instructed PhD students at Brown University as a teaching assistant, fall 1992.

Introductory Economics. Instructed BA students at Brown University as a teaching assistant, fall 1991, spring 1992.

Roundtables and Conferences Organized

- Early Wealth-Building Learning Community*, Urban Institute, October 2023, June 2024.
- The Future of Work and Financial Security*, Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS), Department of Health and Human Services, May 2018.
- The Future of Work and Family Financial Security*, Urban Institute, April 2018.
- Small-Dollar Credit: A Research Discussion with State Regulators*, Urban Institute, October 2014.
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- Wealth in America: How Can Congress Support Mobility?* Capitol Hill, Rayburn Rayburn House Office Building, July 2014.
- Small-Dollar Credit: A Research Discussion with Banks*, Urban Institute, January 2014.
- Wealth-Building Policies After the Recession*, Urban Institute, October 2013.
- Wealth Building Track*, Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management, November 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016.
- Developing a Research Agenda on Small-Dollar Credit and Financial Empowerment*, US Department of the Treasury, March 2010.
- Evaluation Design for the Assets for Independence Program*, Urban Institute, March 2009.
- Opportunity and Ownership Over the Life Cycle*, Ford Foundation, May 2008.
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- Building Assets through Small Business, Microenterprise, and IDAs*, Urban Institute, October 2004.

Expert Panels, Presentations, and Webinars

Government Presentations

- Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, [Crossing the Credit Barrier Conference](#), October 2025.
- US Department of Health and Human Services Briefings, March 2002, July 2002, October 2005, May 2015, May 2016, March 2024.
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). *Auto Lending Market Data Virtual Event*. December 2022
- Arkansas Treasurer Office. [Medical Debt in Arkansas](#), a [webinar](#), June 14, 2022.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York, [Debt: When it Helps, When it Hurts, What it Could Do to Build Household Wealth](#), June 9, 2022.

US Department of the Treasury, Racial Wealth Divide Roundtable, February 8, 2022.

District of Columbia Council Testimony “[Closing the District’s Wealth Gap](#)” Hearing, May 25, 2021.

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City of Columbus City Council [Financial Empowerment Roadmap](#) Webinar, November 17, 2020.

National Conference of State Legislators, July 29, 2020.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York, December 2019.

Columbus, Ohio CityStart. October 30-31, 2019.

Oakland, California. Finance Forward. January 11, 2018.

Columbia, South Carolina. Finance Forward. June 2, 2017.

Federal Reserve Board, Race and Wealth Convening, October 2015.

US Senate Testimony “[Closing the Racial Wealth Gap](#)” Hearing, September 2013.

Financial Literacy and Education Commission, May 2013.

Capitol Hill Visitors Center, June 2011.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau briefed Elizabeth Warren, December 2010.

US Department of the Treasury, October 2010.

US Department of the Treasury, Moderator, March 2010.

US Department of Housing and Urban Development, October 2009.

Senate Democratic Policy Committee Briefing on Asset Building, June 2008.

Senate Finance Committee Staff Briefing on Welfare Reform in Rural Areas, June 2000.

Federal Trade Commission Briefing for Director, Bureau of Economics, June 1998.

Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice Economics Seminar, September 1997.

Federal Trade Commission Seminar for Attorneys, August 1997.

Professional Conference Presentations

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Meeting November. Presentations 2000, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2021; Chair 2024, 2025.

Northern California College Promise Coalition. August 2025.

Financial Independence: Using Wealth and Income Policies to Forge a New Social Contract. September 2024.

American Council on Consumer Interests Conference, May 2020

MetroLab Network 2018 Annual Summit, October 2018

Society of Government Economists Annual Conference, May 2017

Assets Learning Conference, September 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2016.

Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency, US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, June 2016.

Marketing and Public Policy Conference, June 2015.

Collections and Credit Risk Conference keynote address, NCCR, Source Media, June 2015.

[Federal Reserve Community Development Research Conference on Economic Mobility](#), April 2015.

3rd and 4th Annual Consumer Research Symposium, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, October 2013 and [2014](#).

Population Association of America Annual Meeting, April 1995, May 2003, March 2006, May 2012, and May 2014.

Allied Social Science Association Annual Meeting, January 2014.

“Small Dollar Credit” Conference, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, July 2013.

Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference, US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Federal Reserve Community Affairs Research Conference, April 2011.

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and University of Texas at Dallas “Consumer Decisionmaking: Insights from Behavioral Economics,” April 2010.

Ten Years After: Evaluating the Long-Term Effects of Welfare Reform on Children, Families, Welfare, and Work, University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, April 2007.

Closing the Wealth Gap: Policies for Building Assets among Low-Income Households, Federal Reserve Research Forum, September 2006.

Joint Econometric Society and American Economic Association Meeting, January 2000, 2002, and 2006.

Food Assistance Research Conference, US Department of Agriculture, February 2003.

Financial Management Association International Annual Conference, October 2001.

America's Workforce Network Research Conference, June 2001.

American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI) Annual Conference, April 2001.

Marketing and Public Policy Conference, June 2000.

Rural Dimensions of Welfare Reform Conference, May 2000.

Academic Presentations

Nonprofit & Government Career Panel, Brown University, February 2024.

Carroll Round [Keynote Speaker](#), Georgetown University, April 2023.

Payday Lending Roundtable, Columbia Law School, September 2011.

Household Finance Group Meeting, NBER, October 2010.

Institute for Research on Poverty Summer Research Workshop, University of Wisconsin, June 2006.

Labor Studies Workshop, George Washington University, May 2002.

Guest Lecture on Micro-Credit, Johns Hopkins University SAIS, October 2000 and 2001.

Guest Lecture on Micro-Credit, American University, February 2000 and January 2001.

Guest Lecture on Micro-Credit, College of William and Mary, April 2000.

Department of Economics Seminar, University of Michigan, March 1996.

Population Studies and Training Center, Brown University, June 1995.

Center for Comparative Study of Development and World Hunger, Brown University, April 1995.

Other Presentations

Urban Institute and Aspen Institute Financial Security Program Event "[How Can Trump Accounts Build Wealth for Low- and Moderate- Income Households?](#)" December 4, 2025.

Urban Institute Board Meeting "Helping Policy Makers Increase Affordability" November 19, 2025.

Urban Institute Event "[Financial Well-Being and Wealth among Young Adults](#)", September 30, 2025.

Urban Institute Event "[Identifying Solutions to Address Wealth Inequities](#)" August 26, 2024.

Urban Institute Event "[Private Data, Public Impact: Unlocking Insights to Advance Financial Well-Being.](#)" March 28, 2024.

Urban Institute Event "[Climate Change and Household Financial Well-Being: Understanding Risk and Building Resilience.](#)" September 29, 2023.

Urban Institute Webinar "[Launching Urban's Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard: Leveraging Local Data to Improve Financial Well-Being.](#)" November 9, 2022.

Urban Institute Webinar "[Baby Bonds in Context: A Systems Approach to Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.](#)" August 3, 2022

Arkansas Asset Funders Network "[We're Still Hurting! From the ER to the Courtroom: How Medical Bills and Court Costs Trap People in Debt Cycles.](#)" January 27, 2022.

AARP "Wealth and Financial Health: Disparities and Solutions." July 8, 2021.

Bloomberg "[Power of Difference Part 2: Black Wealth Transfer.](#)" May 11, 2021.

Southern Partnership to Reduce Debt, Annie E. Casey Foundation, September 2017.

Leadership Now Web Briefing "Coronavirus, The Economy, and Washington's Policy Response." April 9, 2020.

Urban Institute "[Thriving Residents, Thriving Cities: Propelling Inclusive Growth through Resident Financial Health.](#)" November 7, 2019.

New America, "[The Emerging Millennial Wealth Gap.](#)" October 29, 2019.

World Bank Group CGAP. July 18, 2019.

International Monetary Fund and Center for Global Development. May 21, 2019.

Journal of Consumer Affairs and Financial Literacy and Education Consortium Research Symposium. May 19, 2019.

Credit Builder's Alliance March Webinar. March 21, 2019.

National Press Club panel, "Child Development Accounts: Building Assets from Birth." March 20, 2019.

Southern Partnership to Reduce Debt webinar, Annie E. Casey Foundation, January 25, 2018
San Francisco, California. Saverlife Launch. June 20, 2017.
CFED webinar "[Building Savings for Success: Early Impacts from the Assets for Independence Program Randomized Evaluation.](#)" December, 7, 2016.
Cities for Financial Empowerment Coalition, September 2016.
FINRA Foundation National Financial Capability Study (NFCS) Release, July 2016.
"[Rethinking the Future: The Opportunities of Longevity,](#)" Urban Institute, June 2016.
Urban Institute Opportunity and Ownership seminar, June 2009, October 2011, October 2014, March 2016, May 2015, May 2016.
Low-Income Working Families seminar, Urban Institute, May 2016.
Global South Think Tank Leaders, May 2016.
Race, Ethnicity, and Poverty (REAP) Centers Summit, June 2015.
Ford Foundation, May 2014.
[Housing Finance Policy Center Launch](#), Urban Institute, October 2013.
Aaron Price Fellows, June 2013.
Indonesian Think Tank Leaders, June 2013.
Russell Sage Foundation, December 2012.
Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, November 2012.
Assets@21, New America Foundation, May 2012.
Board of Trustees Meeting, Urban Institute, November 2011.
CFED and NeighborWorks America's Individual Development Accounts Update Webinar, November 2011.
Summer Academy, Urban Institute, June 2011.
Opportunity and Ownership and Race and Ethnicity seminar, Urban Institute, May 2011.
Behavioral Economics and Consumer Finance Meeting, Russell Sage Foundation, December 2010.
New America Foundation, November 2009.
Poverty Group seminar, Urban Institute, September 2009.
Roundtable on Racial and Ethnic Disparities, Urban Institute, Moderator, December 2008.
Director of Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, November 2008.
Urban Institute 40th Anniversary Roundtable on the Subprime crisis, July 2008.
"Helping Families Build Assets." *Decision Points '08*, Urban Institute, July 2008.
Opportunity and Ownership Over the Life Cycle, Ford Foundation, May 2008.
Delegation from Russia on Low-Income Housing, May 2008.
Labor, Human Services, and Population Center, Urban Institute, May 2008.
CFED, February 2008.
Urban Institute, July 2004, October 2004, December 2004, and May 2006.
World Bank, July 2004.
Rural-Urban Research Roundtable, Brookings Institution, February 2001.

Selected Media Citations

Reshma Kapadia, "[Why Consumers May Keep Spending Despite Affordability Angst.](#)" Barron's, December 3, 2025.
Cecelia Smith-Scoenwalder, "[New Data Shows America's Growing Affordability Problem.](#)" US News & World Report, October 28, 2025.
Andrea Flores, "[Wealth Gap Between White Families and Latino Families Surpasses \\$1 Million.](#)" Los Angeles Times, April 30, 2024.
Herb Weisbau, the ConsumerMan, "[Why You Really Need an Emergency Savings Fund and How to Start One,](#)" Consumers' Checkbook, January 31, 2024.
Alessandra Malito, "[Why it's so hard for Black Americans to save for retirement - and how the pandemic escalated the racial wealth gap.](#)" Market Watch, February 2, 2023.
Carey L. Biron. "[Can 'baby bonds' reduce the U.S. racial wealth gap?](#)" Thomas Reuters Foundation, January 11, 2023.
Amy DiPierro, "[Debt collection lawsuits compound COVID woes for some Bay Area residents.](#)" Local News Matters, August 20, 2021.

- Olivia Rockeman and Catarina Saraiva, "[Millennials Are Running Out of Time to Build Wealth.](#)" Bloomberg, June 3, 2021.
- Georgina Gonzalez, "['Very Hard to Get By': How The Pandemic Has Affected 'Unbanked' New Yorkers.](#)" NBC 4 New York, March 26, 2021.
- Gabriel Cortes, "[Credit scores rise across the board during Covid, but racial disparities remain.](#)" *Grow*, March 5, 2021.
- Herb Weisbaum, "[Why You Really Need an Emergency Fund and How to Start One.](#)" *Consumers' Checkbook*, February 2, 2021.
- Jeff Ostrowski, "[Survey: Fewer than 4 in 10 Americans could pay a surprise \\$1,000 bill from savings.](#)" *Bankrate*, January 11, 2021.
- Herb Weisbaum, "Why You Really Need an Emergency Fund and How to Start One." *Consumers' Checkbook*, February 2, 2021.
- Lauren Aratani, "[Why the Covid-19 financial crisis will leave lasting scars on Gen Z.](#)" *The Guardian*, July 6, 2020.
- Sean Pyles, "[Millennial Money: A Q&A to Build Your Financial Resilience.](#)" *Associated Press via NerdWallet*. April 14, 2020.
- Rainesford Stauffer, "[Millennials were just starting to feel economically stable. Now we're being hit with another recession.](#)" *Vox*, April 8, 2020.
- Susannah Snider, "[Economic Inequality: What It Is and How It Impacts You.](#)" *U.S. News*, March 21, 2019.
- Tom Krisher, "[NY Fed: Auto loan delinquencies at highest point since 2010.](#)" *Associated Press*, February 12, 2019.
- Tracy Jan, "[13 million people in poverty are disconnected from the social safety net. Most of them are white.](#)" *The Washington Post*, February 4, 2019.
- Alex Vuocolo, "[The numbers behind Delaware's consumer debt.](#)" *Delaware Business Times*, January 29, 2019.
- Kelly Anne Smith, "['You can make it work': How low-income earners can overcome their circumstances and set financial goals.](#)" *Bankrate*, January 25, 2019.
- Dave Nyczepir, "[Auto Loan Delinquencies Higher in Southern States.](#)" *Route Fifty*, December 18, 2018.
- Tanvi Misra, "[Mapping the Subprime Car Loan Crisis.](#)" *CityLab*, December 12, 2018.
- Annie Nova and John W. Schoen, "[Auto debt in America — mapped.](#)" *CNBC*, December 12, 2018.
- Andrew Keshner, "[As Americans vote in the midterms, who will remember Trump's 'forgotten people'?](#)" *MarketWatch*, November 6, 2018.
- Derek Robertson, "[Who's Winning the Democrats' Wonk Primary?](#)" *Politico*, November 1, 2018.
- "[Medicaid Expansion Reduces Unapid Debt.](#)" *Center for Retirement Research at Boston College*, September 27, 2018.
- Gretchen Frazee, "[The numbers you need to know about the retirement crisis.](#)" *PBS*, June 13, 2018.
- Dino Flammia, "[Analysis Shows the Burden of Student Loan Debt in New Jersey.](#)" *New Jersey 101.5*, May 3, 2018.
- Jeff Stein, "[How 12 experts would end inequality if they ran America.](#)" *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2018.
- Mike Maciag, "[Think Income Inequality is Bad? Retirement Inequality May Be Worse.](#)" *Governing*, March 2018.
- Aimee Picchi, "[The United States of Indebted America.](#)" *CBS MoneyWatch*, December 14, 2017.
- Tanvi Misra, "[One Nation, Under the Weight of Crushing Debt.](#)" *Citylab*, December 8, 2017.
- Liz Weston, "[Why Do Millions of People Rent to Own Goods?](#)" *Seattle Times*, November 9, 2017.
- Quentin Fottrell, "[These 6 Charts Explain Why Some Americans Have Gotten Much Richer than Others.](#)" *MarketWatch*, November 1, 2017.
- "[These Nine Charts Explain Wealth Inequality in America \(And What To Do About It\).](#)" *Greater Greater Washington*, October 27, 2017.
- Liz Weston, "[Why Would Anyone Rent-to-Own?](#)" *Nerdwallet*, October 26, 2017.
- Mark Miller, "[How to Close the Race-Based Chasm in U.S. Retirement Wealth.](#)" *US News and World Report*, October 12, 2017.

- Ben White, "[First Look: Racial/Ethnic Wealth Disparities Persist](#)," *Politico*, October 10, 2017.
- Tracy Jan, "[Here's Why the Wealth Gap is Widening Between White Families and Everyone Else](#)," *The Washington Post*, October 5, 2017.
- Ann Carrns, "[What to Do if You Have Medical Debt](#)," *New York Times*, March 10, 2017.
- Aimee Picchi, "[These Americans Suffer from the Most Overdue Medical Debt](#)," *CBS Money Watch*, March 1, 2017.
- Susannah Snider, "[How a Little Bit of Savings Goes a Long Way](#)," *US News and World Report*, January 5, 2017.
- Oscar Perry Abello, "[Mapping a Neighborhood's Financial Health](#)," *Next City*, July 15, 2016.
- Wendi C. Thomas, "[Fix the Pay Gap between Black Women and Everyone Else](#)," *The Undefeated*, May 27, 2016.
- Quentin Fottrell, "[Most Americans are One Paycheck Away from the Street](#)," *MarketWatch*, January 6, 2016.
- Nicole Akoukou Thompson, "[Hispanics Increasingly Entering US Workforce But Wages Remain Stagnant](#)," *Latin Post*, November 9, 2015
- Jeff Olivet, "[Homelessness Is a Symptom of Racism](#)," *Huffington Post*, October 29, 2015
- Quentin Fottrell, "[5 Reasons Americans are Not Saving Money](#)," *MarketWatch*, October 10, 2015.
- Kerri Miller, "[Loan Debt Burden Greatest Among Students of Color](#)," *MPR News*, September 8, 2015.
- Darren Waggoner, "[New Debt in Collections Research Previewed at NCCR](#)," *Collections&CreditRisk*, June 2, 2015.
- Quentin Fottrell, "[10 Things the Middle Class Won't Tell You](#)," *MarketWatch*, April 22, 2015.
- Tanvi Misra, "[Instead of the Income Gap We Should Be Talking About the Wealth Gap](#)," *CityLab*, February 19, 2015.
- Quentin Fottrell, "[African Americans Carry More Student Debt Than Whites](#)," *MarketWatch*, February 19, 2015.
- Jonnelle Marte, "[The racial wealth gap we hardly talk about: What happens in retirement](#)," *Washington Post*, February 18, 2015.
- Jillian Berman, "[College Debt is Crippling Black Graduates' Ability to Gain Wealth](#)," *Huffington Post*, February 18, 2015.
- Danny Vinik, "[The Alarming Retirement Crisis Facing Minorities in America](#)," *New Republic*, February 18, 2015.
- Tami Luhby, "[Whites have 12 times the wealth of blacks](#)," *CNN Money*, February 18, 2015.
- Danielle Kurtzleben, "[America's yawning racial wealth gap, explained in 9 charts](#)," *Vox*, February 18, 2015.
- Aaron Morrison, "[Black, White Wealth Gap: Income Disparity In US Has Worsened, New Economic Study Finds](#)," *International Business Times*, February 18, 2015.
- Aimee Picchi, "[The corrosive impact of America's growing wealth gap](#)," *CBS MoneyWatch*, February 18, 2015.
- [Quentin Fottrell](#), "[Prepare for the Largest Wealth Transfer in History](#)," *MarketWatch*, January 13, 2015.
- [Quentin Fottrell](#), "[Most Americans are One Paycheck Away from the Street](#)," *MarketWatch*, January 7, 2015.
- Jeanna Smialek, "[Lean Retirement Faces US Generation X as Wealth Trails](#)," *Bloomberg*, June 9, 2014.
- Ben Brody, "[Housing Recovery Masks Dangers for Young](#)," *CUNY on the Economy*, April 10, 2014.
- Niraj Chokshi, "[Payday Loans Suck Up Billions in Fees in States Where They're Unregulated](#)," *Washington Post*, September 11, 2013.
- Dan Balz, "[The March on Washington's Unfinished Agenda](#)," *Washington Post*, August 24, 2013. (picked up by many other sources, including *Buffalo News*, *Peninsula Qatar*, and *El Paso Times*)
- "[The Racial Wealth Divide](#)," Signe-Mary McKernan interviewed by Dan Roddricks, WYPR, *Midday with Dan Roddricks*, July 30, 2013.
- Josh Boak, "[The Biggest Racial Problem No One Talks About](#)," *The Fiscal Times*, July 23, 2013.
- Mia Taylor, "[Why Your Kids Won't Own a Bigger House Than You](#)," *Main Street*, July 21, 2013.
- Terrell Brown, "[Study: 30-somethings worse off than their parents' generation](#)," *CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley*, June 23, 2013.
- Viewpoint with Jim Handy*, interview with Signe-Mary McKernan, *NBC Washington News4 Today*, May 5, 2013.

- Jillian Berman, "[Racial Wealth Gap Exacerbated By Great Recession: Study](#)," *Huffington Post*, April 29, 2013.
- Derek Thompson, "[The Unluckiest Generation: What Will Become of Millennials?](#)" *The Atlantic*, April 26, 2013.
- James Poulos, "[Millennials, Hipsters, And Life After Financial Melancholy](#)," *Forbes*, March 26, 2013.
- Ricky Camilleri, "[Are Millennials Doomed?](#)" *Huffington Post*, March 28, 2013.
- Annie Lowrey, "[Do Millennials Stand a Chance in the Real World?](#)" *New York Times Magazine*, March 26, 2013.
- "[Narrowing the Wealth Gap](#)," Signe-Mary McKernan interviewed by Josh Rushing, Al Jazeera, *The Stream* (TV and online), March 26, 2013.
- Signe-Mary McKernan and Caroline Ratcliffe, "[How the Young Get Left Out of the Wealth Puzzle](#)," *City Lab*, March 19, 2013.
- Annie Lowrey, "[Younger Generations Lag Parents in Wealth-Building](#)," *New York Times*, March 14, 2013.
- Ann Carrns, "[Despite Promise, Federal Tax-Refund Debit Cards a No Go](#)," *New York Times*, *Bucks: Making the Most of Your Money*, January 8, 2013.
- Roya Wolverson, "Rental Nation," *Time*, September 24, 2012.
- Eric Kroh, "Marketing, Timing May Have Reduced Participation in Debit Card Refund Program," *Tax Notes*, September 6, 2012.
- Kim Dixon, "[U.S. tax refund card program flawed: Report](#)," *Reuters*, September 5, 2012.
- Anna Gorman, "[Caught in the cycle of poverty](#)," *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 2012.
- Jim Dwyer, "[Holding a Spot for Stigma in the City's Food Stamp Lines](#)," *New York Times*, January 5, 2012.
- Azure Gilman, "[Does Fingerprinting Food Stamp Recipients Save Money?](#)" *Freakonomics*, October 13, 2011.
- Kate Taylor, "[Fingerprinting Those Seeking Food Stamps Is Denounced](#)," *New York Times*, October 12, 2011.
- "Today's economic landscape demands unreasonable levels of financial literacy," Signe-Mary McKernan interviewed by Christopher Farrell, Minnesota Public Radio, June 13, 2011.
- Rachel Black and Reid Cramer, "[Opinion: Can We Afford to Ignore Rising Child Poverty?](#)" *AOLNews.com*, October 18, 2010.
- Stephen Crawford and Shawn Fremstad, "[A Better Way to Measure Poverty](#)," *Reuters*, *The Great Debate*, September 17, 2010.
- Petula Dvorak, "[In the District, We're Still Struggling to Overcome the Racial Divide](#)," *Washington Post*, August 30, 2010.
- Rhonda Tsoi-A-Fatt, "[Opinion: Addressing Childhood Poverty Would Greatly Improve Adult Outcomes for Black Children](#)," *BET.com*, July 15, 2010.
- Randy Dotinga, "Babies Born Poor Often Remain Poor: Supports for low-income families could improve outcomes, study suggests," *Bloomberg Business*, July 8, 2010.
- Ezra Klein, "[Think tank: The cost of war that comes after the fighting stops; the 55% recession; and mobility in America](#)," *Wonkblog*, July 6, 2010.
- Justin Lahart, "[Children Born Poor Are Far More Likely to be Dogged by Poverty](#)," *Washington Post*, June 30, 2010.
- Jonnelle Marte, "[Homeownership for Everyone?](#)" *Wall Street Journal*, April 1, 2010.

Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

- Urban Institute President's Award for Outstanding Communications, 2014, 2017.
- Advisor to the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on how to set up a first-rate research unit, 2010-2011.
- Urban Institute President's Award for Outstanding Policy Research Publication, 2010.
- Most-Read Urban Institute Research Published in 2010: "[Childhood Poverty Persistence: Facts and Consequences](#)" (by Ratcliffe and McKernan).
- Federal Trade Commission Award for Outstanding Contribution, 1997.
- Watson Institute Dissertation Fellowship, academic year 1995-1996.
- Abramson Award for exceptional dissertation, fall 1994.
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Demography Traineeship, academic years

1993–1994 and 1994–1995.

Mellon Foundation dissertation travel grant for field research in Bangladesh, fall 1994.

Center for the Comparative Study of Development travel grant for field research in Nepal, 1994.

Professional Associations

[Research Fellow at IZA](#), Institute of Labor Economics, 2024-present.

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management., American Economic Association, Population Association of America, Assistant Editor, *Demography*, 1994–1995.

Service

Advisory Committees and Panels

Commonwealth Benefits for the Future Advisory Council, 2024-2025

Urban Institute Operations Committee, 2023-present.

Urban Institute Research and Program Committee, 2024-present.

Kijakazi Fellowship (NASI and Policy Academies) advisor and mentor, 2021-present.

Urban Institute Chair Step 4 Research and Policy Promotion Committee, 2021-2025.

Urban Institute Grants and Contracts Vice President Interview Panel, 2025.

Urban Institute Health Policy Division Vice President Interview Panel, 2024-2025.

Urban Institute Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, 2020-2024.

Urban Institute Housing and Communities Division Vice President Interview Panel, 2024.

Urban Institute Gorham Award Committee, 2024, 2025.

Urban Institute Presidents Management Award Committee, 2020, 2021, 2022 (Chair), 2023, 2024

Urban Institute Strategic Planning Modernize Research Structure Working Group Co-Lead, 2023-2024

Urban Institute Financial Planning and Analysis Vice President Interview Panel, 2023.

Urban Institute Talent Development Director Interview Panel, 2023.

US Financial Health Pulse Advisory Council, 2019-2022.

SafetyNet Horizon 3 Innovation Center Independent Advisory Board Member, 2019-2022.

Urban Institute Vice President Onboarding Training: Federal Business Development, 2022

Urban Institute Research to Action Policy Center Vice President Hiring Committee, 2021.

Urban Institute Ambassador, 2021.

Urban Institute Mentor, 2021.

Urban Institute Justice Policy Center Vice President Hiring Committee, 2021.

Urban Institute Performance Management and Accountability Governance, 2019-2021.

Urban Institute Operational Areas of Improvement, 2019-2021.

Aspen Institute Debt Advisory Group, 2017-2021.

Center for Responsible Lending Research Advisory Council, 2013–2017.

Annie E. Casey Foundation Wealth Building Advisory Group, 2007–2019.

Urban Institute Customer Relationship Management System Steering Committee, 2016.

Urban Institute Development Hiring Committee, 2016.

Urban Institute Operation Excellence Public Space Committee, 2015-2016.

Urban Institute Labor, Human Services, & Population Communications Committee, 2013–2017.

Population Association of America 2014 Program Committee, 2013–2014.

International Advisory Board on regulating high-cost credit, 2011–2014.

Urban Institute Labor, Human Services, & Population Hiring Committee, 2013–2014.

Urban Institute Communications Hiring Committee, 2012–2013.

Urban Institute Housing Finance Committee, 2012.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Research Unit Advisor, 2010–2011.

Annie E. Casey Foundation Disparate Impact of Foreclosure on Communities of Color, 2010–2011.

Federal Reserve Community Affairs Research Conference Advisory Committee, 2011.

Urban Institute, Labor, Human Services, and Population Center, Job Expectations Committee, 2009–2011.

Urban Institute, Metropolitan Center Housing Economist Committee, 2010–2011.

Urban Institute Retirement Plan Advisory Panel, 2008.

Federal Reserve Research Forum “Closing the Wealth Gap: Policies for Building Assets among Low-Income Households” 2006 Advisory Committee.

Journal Reviewer or Referee

American Economic Review, Applied Economic Perspectives & Policy, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Child Development, Demography, Housing Policy Debate, Review of Black Political Economy, Southern Economic Journal, Brookings Institution, Federal Reserve Research Forum, MDRC, National Science Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Russell Sage Foundation, US Department of Agriculture.