



2021 National Poverty Research Center Topical Panel

Youth Employment: Connecting Research and Policy

January 14, 2021

Speaker Bios



***Katherine Magnuson, Director, Institute for Research on Poverty;
Professor, School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin–Madison***

Katherine Magnuson is a Vilas Achievement Professor of Social Work and the Director of the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She was elected into the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare in 2018. Her research focuses on the well-being and development of economically disadvantaged children and their families. She examines how disparities in socioeconomic status affect children’s development and how these effects may be altered by policies and programs, especially early childhood education programs.



Cheri Hoffman, Director, Division of Children and Youth Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Cheri Hoffman is the Director of the Children and Youth Policy (CYP) Division. The CYP Division develops and reviews policy initiatives focused on the well-being of children and youth, including those in early childhood settings, the child welfare system, and youth programs. Cheri serves as the Chair for the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, a collaboration of over 20 federal agencies working to improve youth outcomes, which operates www.youth.gov as a one-stop shop for information about young people ages 10-24. Recent examples of CYP research projects supporting policy development include exploring a core components approach to understanding what works in youth prevention programs, understanding the costs of child care, supporting systems-level trauma-informed initiatives, and examining the relationship between substance use, the opioid crisis, and child welfare.



Louisa Treskon, Research Associate, MDRC

Louisa Treskon serves primarily as an implementation and cost researcher for MDRC's evaluations of programs serving populations with barriers to employment, particularly young adults who are not working or in school. Among her primary responsibilities are designing implementation research projects and data-collection instruments, managing project teams, and designing cost analyses. Her current work includes evaluations of Annie E. Casey's Learn and Earn to Achieve Potential (LEAP), the Procedural Justice-Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) project, and the Strengthening the Link into College and Careers project. Past projects include the PACE Center for Girls, the Children's Institute, Inc., and YouthBuild. Before working at MDRC, Treskon worked in program development for several nonprofit organizations serving low-income populations.



Mary Collins, Chair of Social Welfare Policy & Professor, Boston University

Mary Collins is the chair of the Department of Social Welfare Policy at Boston University and an internationally recognized expert on child welfare. She is currently a subject extern examiner for the MSW program at University College Dublin in Ireland and serves as the international editorial advisor for the British Journal of Social Work and on the editorial board of the Journal of Policy Practice and Research. Collins is the author of *Macro Perspectives on Youths Aging Out of Foster Care* (NASW Press, 2015). At the Boston University School of Social Work, Collins previously served as associate dean for academic affairs, director of the dual degree program in social work and theology, co-coordinator of the specialization in children, youth and families, and director of the doctoral program.



Jennifer Geiger, Assistant Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago

Jennifer Geiger is an Assistant Professor at the Jane Addams School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Geiger has over ten years of practice experience promoting resilience and well-being for children and families involved in the child welfare system and those who are in need as well as experience in program evaluation and training. Her current research focuses on child welfare and child well-being, youth aging out of foster care, child maltreatment prevention, foster family functioning and satisfaction, and empathy.



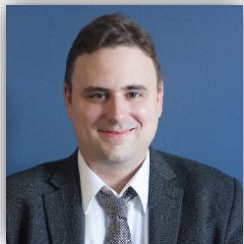
Nathanael Okpych, Assistant Professor, University of Connecticut

Nathanael Okpych is an Assistant Professor at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. Okpych's work focuses on improving outcomes of and services for adolescents and young adults transitioning out of foster care. He is especially interested in increasing rates of college entry and completion among foster care youth, and he draws on his several years of practice experience in schools, communities, and colleges to inform his work.



Mathew Uretsky, Assistant Professor, Portland State University

Mathew Uretsky is an Assistant Professor at the School of Social Work at Portland State University School. His research examines the risk and protective factors that affect the academic and behavioral development of children and youth, with a focus on family and school dynamics. Uretsky's recent research has focused on using advanced quantitative methods with large-scale multi-system linked administrative data to examine inter-system and cross-level influences on the academic and behavioral development of emerging adults.



Kyle Albert, Assistant Research Professor, George Washington University

Kyle Albert is an Assistant Research Professor at the George Washington Institute of Public Policy at George Washington University. He is a sociologist who uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to study emerging alternatives to college degrees, such as professional certifications and certificates, and how those credentials contribute to inequality in organizations and labor markets. His research draws on sociological theory in the sociology of work and professions to explore the motivations of actors in the credentialing marketplace and the causes of the rapid expansion of non-degree credentialing in the United States in recent years, giving special attention to the effects of credentials for disadvantaged and older workers. Previously, Kyle was a Sloan Postdoctoral Fellow on Aging and Work at Harvard University.



Maisha Meminger, Manpower Analyst, U.S. Department of Labor

Maisha Meminger has over 20 years of professional experience in the youth development field. Currently, Ms. Meminger serves as a Manpower Analyst for the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration's Division of Youth Services. She is charged with assisting policy development, program implementation, and grant management concentrating on connecting Opportunity Youth, ages 14-24, to educational and employment opportunities. She provides

technical assistance to states, locals and grantees on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and works collaboratively with outside agencies and private sectors to improve service delivery for youth. She also works as an Adjunct Professor in the field of social science and research.



Shimaine Quimbley, Young Adults Consultant Program, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Shimaine Quimbley is currently the Regional Impact Liaison for Georgia EmpowerMENT, an initiative founded by former and current foster youth in Georgia who work with community leaders to change the foster care system. She is an active member of the Policy Council and Elevated Minds and has served as a Regional Coordinator. In 2017, she was given the opportunity to sit on the Foster Youth in Action's Leaders United

Board. Quimbley was also the recipient of the 2017 Nancy Cannon-O'Connell Outstanding Youth Leadership award, the Georgia Conference 2017 Outstanding Youth Award, Foster Club 2018 Outstanding Youth Award, and received a Shining Star Award from the Multi-Agency Alliance for Children in 2019. Quimbley is currently a senior at Albany State University majoring in sociology, where she participates in Foster Through College.



Jennifer Burnszynski, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Jennifer Burnszynski is the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Services Policy in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She leads a team of highly skilled and committed analysts who apply research evidence, policy analysis, and critical thinking to increase the effectiveness of human services policies and programs and improve

the well-being of the most vulnerable Americans. She provides executive leadership and coordination of HHS's human services policy development, analysis, research, and coordination on poverty and economic mobility, early childhood education, child welfare, fatherhood, family strengthening, positive youth development, and related issues. Previously, she was the first Director of Program Innovation in the HHS Office of Child Support Enforcement and served as the Senior Advisor to the OCSE Commissioner.