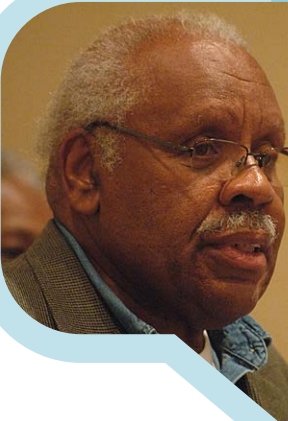


ANNUAL REPORT
2021



VOICES FROM THE REGION

ENGAGING ELECTED OFFICIALS
AND COMMUNITY LEADERS
ACROSS SOUTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA.



University of
Pittsburgh
Institute of Politics

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Letter from the **Director**



Dear Friends of the IOP:

The past year has been filled with exciting developments in our regional policy work and our student programming. Whether in person or through the efficiency of virtual meetings, we have had the pleasure of working with elected officials and civic leaders on important topics like K-12 education, workforce development, municipal resiliency, and criminal justice reform.

Overcoming polarization by seeking common ground is integral to the IOP's regional policy work. It is through our appreciation of disparate belief systems, respect for individuals, acknowledgement of competing interests, and commitment to working across our differences that the IOP and our partners come together to build and sustain strategic collaborations to tackle some of our region's toughest challenges.

Our model is based on a deep sense of obligation to providing a nonpartisan forum and we demonstrate that commitment annually in a multitude of ways. Over the course of 2021, we garnered input from over 150 local government officials in southwestern PA on issues related to municipal finance and resiliency. The IOP efforts in education included significant input from leadership from both political parties from the Pennsylvania House and Senate Education Committees, and we continue to strategize with the PA Senate Committee on Labor and Industry on critical opportunities to provide our youth with increased access to economic opportunity. As we address racial disparities in the Allegheny County criminal justice system, we have engaged all levels of the system and receive guidance from our community progress panel representing experts, advocates, and those who have lived experiences offering critical perspectives that inform our work.

As we build the next generation of leadership among the Pitt student body, we want to develop programming with this same sensibility. It is important to take students out of their comfort zones and challenge them to engage with new ideas and people who have differing world views. This year we launched a new program called **All Angles**. This program offers students the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of contemporary public policy subject matter and examine it through the values and strategies that inform a variety of perspectives along today's political spectrum. It accentuates and models the requisite skills needed for shaping civil discourse — a sustaining force in a civil society — and it will tackle issues that students themselves identify as priorities. We are honored to report that the University has since adopted this program and offers it to all students, including those who attend our regional campuses.

The Institute is also proud to announce the Cherna Fellowship, an experiential learning program focusing on human services policy that will be developed in partnership with the Pitt Graduate School of Social Work. This program honors the many years of service and the legacy of Marc Cherna, IOP Board of Fellows member and the former Director of the Allegheny Department of Human Services.

In acknowledgement of the many chronic and emerging regional issues, such as infrastructure, affordable housing, and disparate access to economic opportunity, we plan to add new regional policy priorities over the next year and look forward to engaging all of you in these endeavors. And, of course, we want to thank our supporters for offering the IOP the ability to provide the necessary staying power to affect long term change.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha Balbier". The script is fluid and cursive.

Samantha Balbier
Director, Institute of Politics
Director, Elsie Hillman Civic Forum

Legislators and K-12 Education Leaders Establish Priorities for Advancing Student-centered Learning in Times of Crisis

In July 2021, the [Institute of Politics Education Policy Committee](#) wrapped up a 15-month project addressing flexibility and resiliency in K-12 education with the release of the report [Learning from Crisis: Policies and practices that support flexibility in providing equitable learning opportunities for all students](#). The project was designed to examine school districts' responses to the pandemic and offer suggestions for policy changes at the district, state, and/or federal levels that would enable K-12 education to respond more effectively to future crises.

As a result of the committee's process, the recommendations were designed through the lens of equity — no changes should exacerbate existing inequities and should help close gaps between and within districts. Also, the report uses the concept of student-centered learning as a frame for recommendations, recognizing that student-centered learning represents, in the committee's view, the best opportunity for increasing flexibility and equity in K-12 education.

Short-term recommendations spanned four categories and included issues such as increasing access to technology, meeting the needs of the whole child, providing support for innovative practices in student-centered learning, and enabling school districts to continue successful innovations in flexibility. Long-term recommendations addressed

systemic issues that prevent districts from moving forward with embedded personalized learning practices.

For a full description of recommendations, visit pages 31- 40 in the report.

Input from PA House and Senate Members

Interviews took place in June 2021.

Scott Martin

Chair, PA Senate Education Committee

Lindsey Williams*

Democratic Chair, PA Senate Education Committee

Curtis Sonney

Chair, PA House Education Committee

Mark Longietti

Democratic Chair, House Education Committee

Ed Gainey*

Mayor, City of Pittsburgh and former member, PA House of Representatives

Valerie Gaydos*

Member, PA House Education Committee

Summer Lee

Member, PA House of Representatives

Dan Miller**

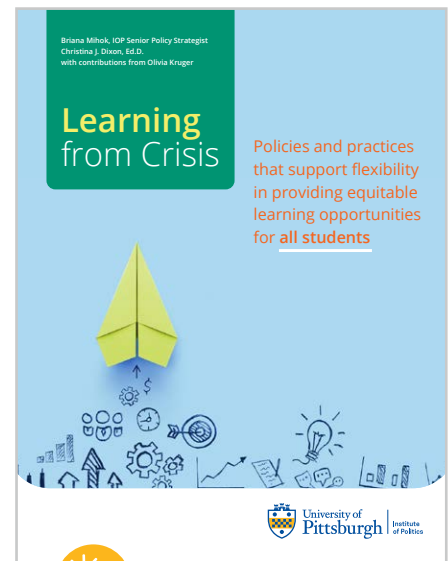
Democratic Caucus Chair, PA House of Representatives

Jake Wheatley*

Former member, PA House of Representatives

* IOP Education Policy Committee member

† IOP Board of Fellows member



At the conclusion of the project but prior to the report's release, Institute staff interviewed eight legislators from the House and Senate Education Committees, including the majority and minority chairs.

Institute staff continued conversations around this report throughout the remainder of 2021, participating in a number of events and briefings sponsored by national groups like KnowledgeWorks and local partners like Remake Learning and the Consortium for Public Education. A legislative briefing on the report's recommendations occurred in May 2022. ■

Education and Workforce Practitioners Collaborate to Strengthen PA's Dual Enrollment, Pre-apprenticeship Programs

Throughout 2021, the IOP followed up on the efforts of the [Workforce Development Policy Committee](#) and the recommendations made in the 2020 report, [Prepared for the Future](#), a report examining the status of dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeships in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Task Force on Equity in Dual Enrollment and Pre-apprenticeship Programs was created as a means to provide this follow-up and effect statewide improvements in equity in dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeship programming through the engagement of statewide leaders and on-the-ground practitioners. The goal of the task force was to develop specific, actionable state-level recommendations that would increase access to and equity in dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeship programs in the Commonwealth.

For a complete list of task force members, please see Appendix A.



The work of the task force, chaired by Dr. Stanley Thompson, Senior Program Director, Education, The Heinz Endowments and Executive Director, Pittsburgh Readiness Institute, and Pennsylvania Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington), began officially in June 2021. Throughout the remainder of 2021, the task force met monthly to review the landscape of dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeships in Pennsylvania and consider best practices from other states. The process was facilitated by consultant Alex Perry of the national group College in High School Alliance, who provided insight on potential state actions in the following six categories, as listed in the CHSA's 2019 [Unlocking Potential](#) report:

- Equity Goal and Public Reporting
- Program Integrity and Credit Transfer
- Finance
- Course Access and Availability
- Instructor Capacity
- Navigational Supports

Key themes that emerged from the group's discussion and analysis include:

- How to ensure that counselors, parents, and students receive information that will help them make informed recommendations and decisions
- The need for statewide data to measure and evaluate current programming to support the design of future policy
- Recognition that dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeships are part of a larger menu of college and career readiness programming and should be used as such to meet the individual needs of students and communities

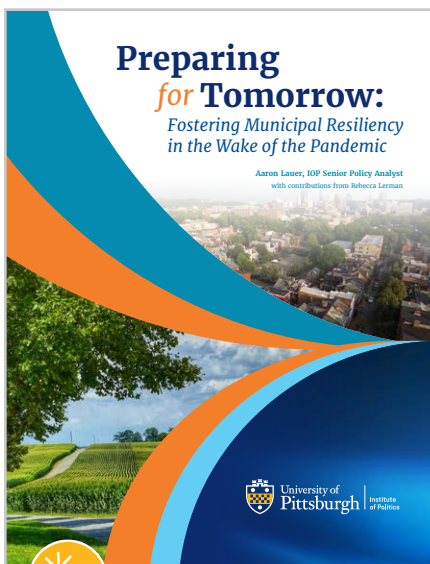
The committee's final report will be released in the fall of 2022 and will contain policy recommendations as well as highlights of best practices in the region. Recommendations will be designed to assist the Commonwealth in taking the first steps towards establishing a set of dual enrollment policies for Pennsylvania. Pre-apprenticeship recommendations will focus on strengthening the current system and creating flexibility and support for the creation of new programs and the expansion of existing programs. ■



VOICES FROM THE REGION

Local Government Leaders Address Short- and Long-term Impacts of the Pandemic

Over 150 elected and administrative officials offered input to the IOP research on municipal resiliency.



The pandemic has highlighted many of the structural challenges that local governments face in delivering robust municipal services. The statewide closure of nonessential businesses in 2020 sent economic shockwaves throughout southwestern Pennsylvania, especially among our region's most vulnerable communities. Across Pennsylvania and our region, people, businesses, and communities are facing significant financial stresses and, in many cases, long-term economic impacts.

At the request of regional stakeholders and local government organizations, the Institute of Politics, convened its [Fiscal Policy and Governance Committee](#). This initiative was co-chaired by Fred Thieman, former president of the Buhl Foundation and a former U.S. Attorney, and Allegheny County Manager Willy McKain. The committee examined local and national research and solicited input from regional municipal leaders to better understand the challenges faced by local governments with the loss of critical municipal revenues.

To integrate the perspectives of regional municipal leaders into this initiative, the Institute of Politics received input from over 150 elected and administrative municipal officials from all ten counties of southwestern Pennsylvania through a series of focus groups and a regional survey that took place in spring 2021. The input from municipal leaders primarily focused on understanding the impact of the pandemic, identifying plans for municipal investment, and seeking input on the committee's identified strategies for improving municipal resiliency.

Many municipalities have seen significant decreases in their revenue from earned income taxes and other revenue streams resulting in projected losses to state and local governments of \$300 billion nationally through 2022. Although many of the revenue losses are likely one-time disruptions, in some cases revenue streams may face longer term impacts resulting from fundamental regional economic changes in digital commerce, remote work, and in-person dining. Not only will these trends impact employment opportunities within related sectors, but they will also impact municipal revenue streams that are dependent on commercial real estate prices and daily commuters, such as property taxes, local services taxes, liquid fuels taxes, and parking taxes and fees.

Most southwestern Pennsylvania municipalities saw minimal changes in their earned income tax revenues during 2020. Approximately, 60% of municipalities in the region saw between a 2.5% gain to 5.0% loss in earned income tax revenue. Although most municipalities in the region saw minimal losses in earned income tax revenues, some municipalities did face significant revenue losses in 2020. Within the region, 14 local governments saw earned income tax reductions of more than 20%. A large concentration of the significantly impacted municipalities were in Washington and Greene counties, which may reflect larger economic conditions beyond the pandemic, such as the recent slowdown in natural gas development in the region.

Although many municipalities have faced revenue shortfalls, a silver lining to the pandemic has been municipal investments in technology to streamline work processes and increase the online delivery of municipal services and communication with residents. One municipal manager said that without the pandemic, the technology investments that their community made in creating a paperless office, providing remote work capacities for employees, and offering online options for municipal services and payments would have taken another 10 years to implement. Local government leaders also stressed how the pandemic caused them to make greater investments in their websites, newsletters, social media, and reimagine their governing board meetings through the creation of hybrid or online options for resident participation.

During the pandemic, the federal government has provided support for state and local governments through multiple pandemic relief bills. In March 2021, Congress passed an additional \$130 billion in pandemic relief funding for state and local governments. Municipal leaders view the pandemic relief as an important opportunity to strengthen and provide long term benefits for their communities. One local government official expressed the need for coordinating American Rescue Plan funding, stating that “We need to figure out how to use those dollars to draw long-term economic gain for the region, instead of pocketing it in individual municipal coffers.” Municipal leaders expressed a strong interest in using the funding to offset lost revenues and make infrastructure investments in water, sewer, stormwater, and broadband.

The Fiscal Policy & Governance Committee’s recommendations are structured to provide short-term solutions to help municipalities weather the pandemic, but also offer methods to address long-term structural challenges that local governments face. The committee sets out its recommendations in four key areas:

- Increasing municipal revenue flexibility
- Improving local government financial capacity and transparency
- Promoting basic government administration and budgeting standards
- Improving supports for intergovernmental cooperation ■



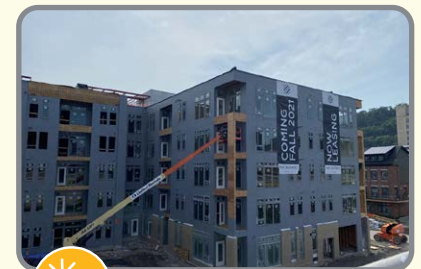
Review the report’s recommendations in their entirety.

In the News

The Institute of Politics was selected to present on municipal resiliency at the inaugural symposium of the Pennsylvania Local Government Commission in October 2021. The committee’s work has been highlighted in news coverage by WESA’s The Confluence and the Butler Eagle.



2021 Local Government Symposium



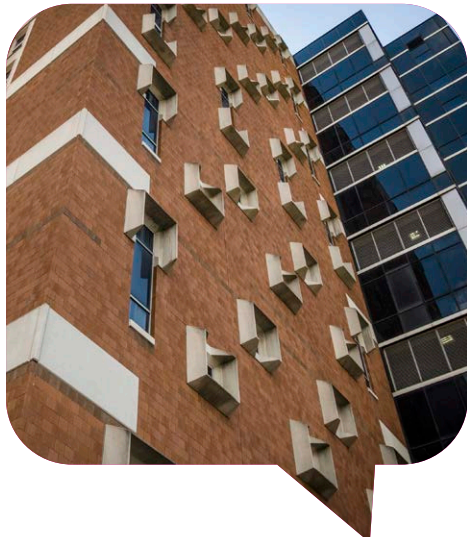
Affordable Housing Is Largely ‘Out Of Reach’ For Low-Income Pennsylvanians



Butler Proves Resilient

VOICES from the System and the Community Foster Equity in Allegheny County's Criminal Justice System

Over the last seven years, the IOP and Allegheny County have partnered to advance a series of criminal justice reform initiatives and create a culture of improvement to foster a more equitable and cost-effective system, without compromising public safety.



These efforts have led to county and community collaborations that have provided representation to defendants during preliminary arraignments, improved time to case disposition, and the creation of more robust crisis services. Despite these successes, racial disparities remain a seemingly intractable challenge for the Allegheny County criminal justice system and for jurisdictions across the country. Although making up only 13.1 percent of the population of Allegheny County,¹ Black people represent 67 percent of the Allegheny County Jail population.²

Recognizing this issue, the members of the IOP's Criminal Justice Progress Panel requested that the next phase of the IOP's criminal justice efforts focus on understanding the key drivers of racial disparities in the Allegheny County criminal justice system and the necessary policy and practice changes to address them. With the assistance and input of community and system leaders, the IOP developed a research proposal called "Creating a Pathway to Reduce Racial Disparities in the Allegheny County Criminal Justice System." The initiative calls for a quantitative and qualitative examination of key decision-making points within the county's criminal justice system. Through the creation of a selection advisory committee that included professional stakeholders from within the system, respected community leaders, advocates, and academics with expertise in such directly relevant fields as criminology, law, social work, and psychiatry, a research partnership was

Criminal Justice Progress Panel Members

** denotes chair*

† denotes new member

Alfred Blumstein

J. Erik Jonsson University Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, Emeritus, Carnegie Mellon University

Kenya Boswell

Senior Vice President, Community Affairs, Highmark Health

Quintin Bullock

President, Community College of Allegheny County

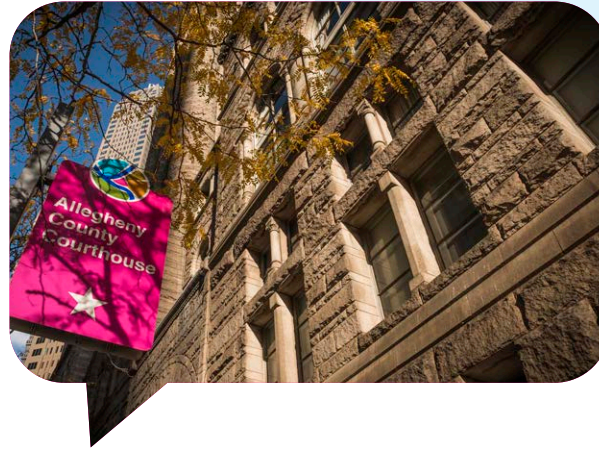
Leon Ford[†]

Survivor and Activist, Leon Ford Speaks

developed between the IOP, the RAND Corporation, and RTI International.

The research partnership seeks to examine racial disparities in the county's criminal justice system in a study that is grounded on the principles of evidence-based data, community engagement, diversity and cultural competence, and the development of actionable policy and practice recommendations. RAND and RTI researchers are currently analyzing five key junctures within the system: stops, arrests, pretrial, sentencing, and probation and parole.

Since their work began in early 2021, RAND and RTI researchers have integrated quantitative data gathered from the county, courts, and local police departments with input and experiences from system and community stakeholders to better understand how racial disparities arise. Through the research process, the voices and experiences of system and community stakeholders will help inform how researchers interpret the data, provide new avenues for statistical analysis, and point toward future interviewees. Similarly, the data will help to guide which stakeholders to engage and shape the discussions with them to develop a more complete understanding of



the drivers of racial disparities within the system. Researchers will interview system leadership and staff, as well as formerly incarcerated people and family members, community leaders and activists, and victims of crime. By examining the entire criminal justice continuum, the IOP hopes to understand where disparities arise, their impact on downstream decision-making, and actionable solutions to address them.

A critical goal of this initiative is to arrive at actional policy and procedural recommendations. This requires candid and regular exchanges between the RAND and RTI researchers, community members, the Criminal Justice Progress Panel, the newly created Interdepartmental Working Group, and the county Steering Committee.

Much as the Progress Panel provides an opportunity for engagement and transparency with community leaders, the Interdepartmental Working Group includes leadership from within the county's criminal justice system to provide critical input on preliminary research findings and periodic updates to system stakeholders about the research process. These two committees review research developments and preliminary findings from a community and system perspective during quarterly meetings. Membership from both groups have also been engaged to serve as facilitators for follow up interviews with system and community stakeholders. In partnership with RAND and RTI, the IOP plans to release a final report outlying the research findings and recommendations in spring 2023. ■

¹ "First Look at the 2020 Decennial Census: Pittsburgh Region," University of Pittsburgh Center for Social and Urban Research, <https://ucsur.pitt.edu/perspectives.php?b=20210821103378>.

² Allegheny County, "Allegheny County Jail Population Management: Interactive Dashboards."

Anna Hollis[†]

Executive Director, Amachi Pittsburgh

Mark Nordenberg[†]

Chair, Institute of Politics, Chancellor Emeritus
University of Pittsburgh

Matt Smith

President, Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce

Frederick Thieman[†]

Former President, The Buhl Foundation
Former U.S. Attorney, Western District of Pennsylvania

Taili Thompson[†]

Director of Violence Prevention, Operation Better Block

Michael Yonas[†]

Vice President of Research, Public Health, and Learning,
The Pittsburgh Foundation



2021 Elected Officials Retreat

Building Regional Competitiveness and Economic Opportunities in Southwestern Pennsylvania

The challenges ahead for Southwestern Pennsylvania are many — some familiar, others emerging and evolving as the Covid-19 pandemic continues.

The Institute of Politics 24th Annual Elected Officials Retreat mixed the familiar and the new. The highly regarded, long-running symposium took place virtually for the first time — its 2020 edition canceled amidst the pandemic. Shifting to an online, video-meeting format, Institute leaders convened elected officials, public agency leaders and nonprofit and business decision-makers on November 18, 2021.

Institute Director **Samantha Balbier** said attendance was one of the highest ever. More than 200 participants gathered for discussions on the theme of Building Regional Competitiveness and Economic Opportunities in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

“The level of participation that we have here today does not happen overnight,” she said, noting the Institute’s long history of building trust and collaboration. “We do this because we know that innovation is created through the exchange of diverse ideas, and progress is achieved by striving toward common ground.”



Fostering Opportunity for All: Envisioning a Robust Regional Economy

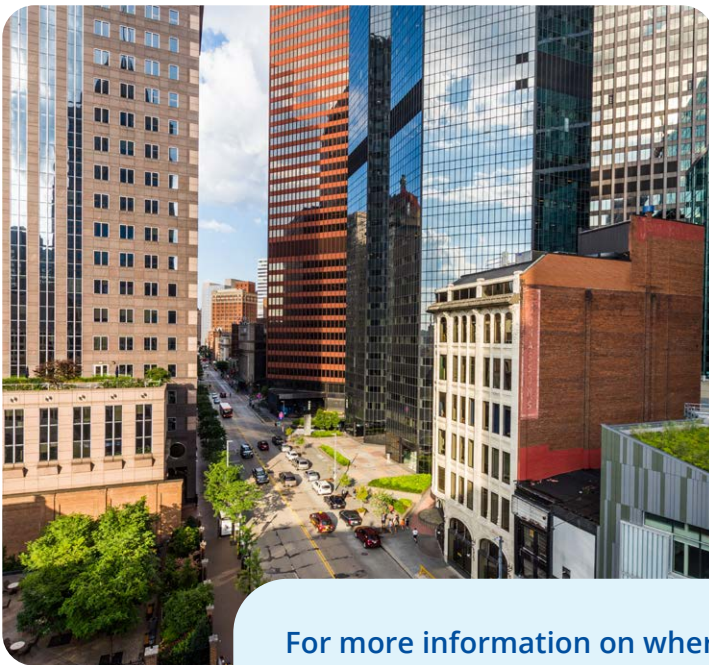
Alan Berube, senior fellow and deputy director, Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution

Alan Berube presented findings from The Brookings Institution's annual "Metro Monitor," which measures progress categories including growth, prosperity, and inclusion in U.S. metro areas. Within those categories are 15 indicators, such as average annual wage, standard of living and racial gap in employment.

Overall progress in the Pittsburgh metro region lagged, and the region also registered negative progress in indicators such as racial gaps in relative poverty and employment rates.

Despite being a slower-growing economy than most, the Pittsburgh region showed higher progress in average annual wage, productivity and standard of living. Yet the story shows the need for creating a regional economy that fosters opportunities for all residents and communities, Berube said. Specifically, Berube pointed out that Southwestern Pennsylvania:

- Demonstrates a strong starting position but lagging growth
- Maintains nagging gender and racial disparities in innovation jobs
- Shows wide geographic disparities in innovation job access
- Lags behind peers in regional access to broadband
- Is challenged by a highly fragmented system of local government



For more information on where the Pittsburgh metropolitan region stands in comparison to other cities, visit the [Brookings 2021 Metro Monitor](#).

"This isn't a new topic, I know, but it is one that I think has gained focus and urgency as we emerge from the pandemic," Berube said.

Key to realizing maximum benefits and inclusiveness, Berube said, are:

- Conveners, who work on problem definition, goal setting, and aligning organizations around those goals using research and consensus-building.
- Connectors, who are the intermediaries acting on priorities set by conveners, connecting firms to service providers.
- Implementers, who intervene in regional systems by providing services and know-how in one or more market pillars.

Regional Voices of Southwestern Pennsylvania on Economic Opportunity Panel discussion

Moderator:

- **Jen Giovannitti**, president and trustee, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

Panelists:

- **Secretary Dennis Davin**, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- **Senator Gene Yaw**, member, Pennsylvania Senate; Chair, Pennsylvania Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee; vice chair, Pennsylvania Senate Judiciary Committee; chair, Board of Directors, Center for Rural Pennsylvania
- **Mark Anthony Thomas**, president, Pittsburgh Regional Alliance

Gene Yaw launched the panel discussion by saying that said Pennsylvania is already well-positioned to develop its economy because of its strength in the energy sector.

He said a critical need is the state and the region getting this messaging out.

“I sometimes get the feeling that Pennsylvania does not recognize where we stand on the world stage as far as energy. We have probably the most diverse energy portfolio of any state in the United States.”

— *Senator Gene Yaw*

Mark Anthony Thomas said the region’s assets, including health care, life sciences, the creative economy, robotics, AI and manufacturing infrastructure, need to be broadly known outside the region.

Broadband access is vital, said Dennis Davin, and its importance only became starker in the pandemic.

“We have places in Pennsylvania — and not just the Northern Tier — where people are taking their kids to the nearby McDonald’s so they can do their homework. That can’t happen.”

Davin praised the region’s foundations, noting the \$100 million grant to the University of Pittsburgh from the Richard King Mellon Foundation designed to support a new biomanufacturing facility called BioForge.

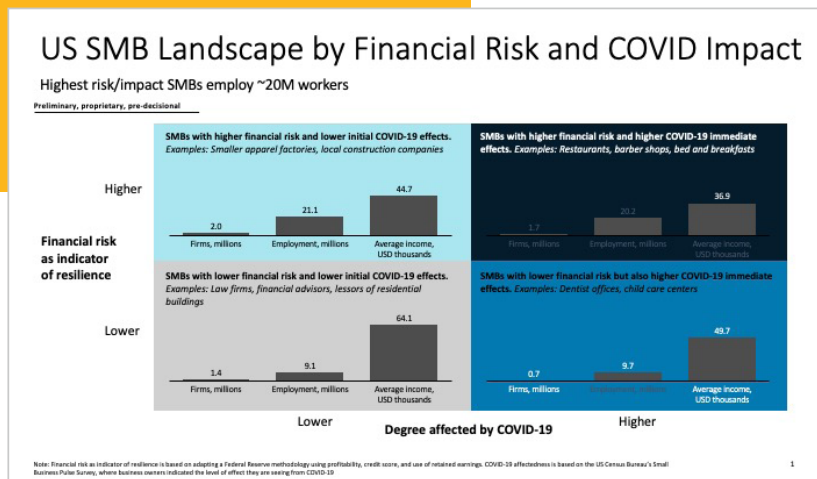
Building an Inclusive Post-pandemic Economy

Mike Kerlin, partner, McKinsey & Company

The impact of the pandemic on jobs and the workforce has created several new challenges — including hiring and retaining workers — and continued to highlight pre-pandemic problems such as racial disparities in income and job opportunities.

During the pandemic, 56 million jobs were made vulnerable in the U.S., said Mike Kerlin. Childcare challenges and fear of Covid-19 made workers reluctant or unable to join the workforce, and less personal spending affected some businesses’ viability.

Kerlin presented statistics showing financial risk and initial or immediate Covid-19 risk to small and mid-sized businesses.



“The most vulnerable jobs were in the lowest paying, least education required sectors of the economy,” Kerlin said.

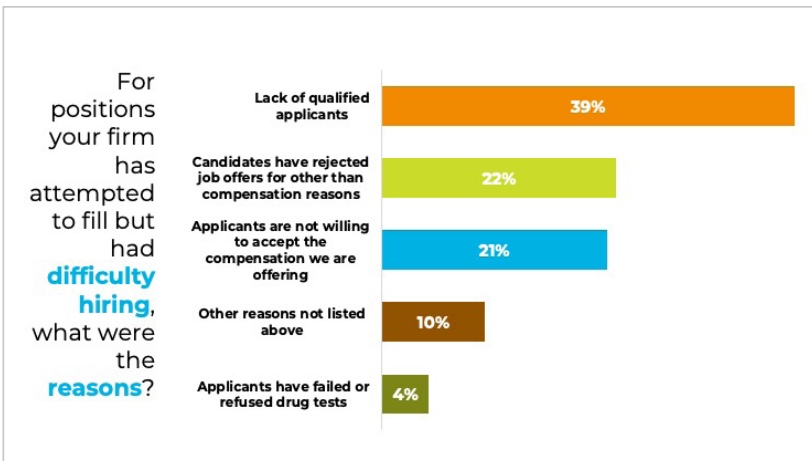
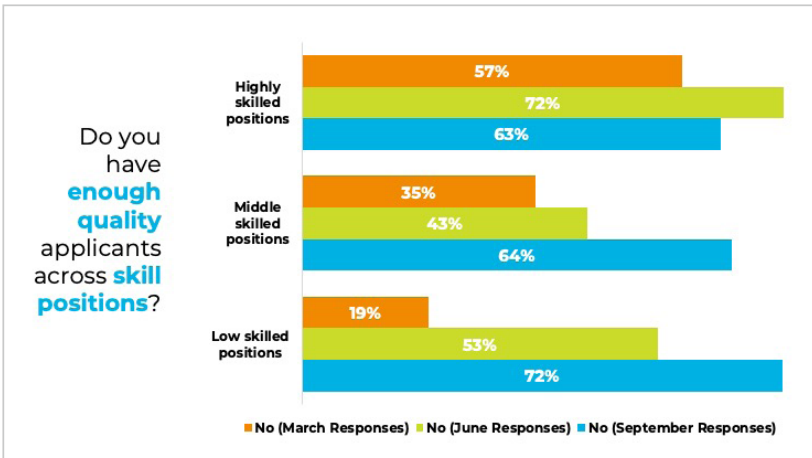
However, he said that many economists believe that shifts in the workforce offer opportunities to create compelling new jobs through better pay, benefits, and advancement opportunities.

The Post-pandemic Southwestern Pennsylvania Economy

Vera Krekanova, chief strategist and research officer, Allegheny Conference on Community Development

Vera Krekanova discussed big-picture comparisons between the region and the U.S. and survey data on what businesses and workers see as barriers to hiring and employment.

“The overwhelming consensus among regional employers across sectors and sizes is the talent issue is the top driver or, in this case, top deterrent of their economic success,” she said.



Top reasons cited by businesses for not filling positions:

- Lack of qualified applicants, 39%.
- Candidates rejecting offers for other than compensation reasons, 22%.
- Applicants not willing to accept the compensation we are offering, 21%.

Top reasons cited by the nearly one-quarter of worker respondents looking to leave their jobs:

- Feeling overworked, underappreciated, burned out, 48%.
- Bad culture and relationships, toxic work environment, 18%.
- Unsatisfactory benefits and pay, 15%.

In Pennsylvania, the unemployment rate continues to trend above the national average, said Krekanova.

“The question has been — ‘why?’ The more interesting question for me is ‘why still?’” said Krekanova.

On the Ground Models of Economic Opportunity

Moderator:

- **Carissa Schively Slotterback**, dean, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs

Panelists:

- **AJ Calhoun**, senior manager, data and evaluation, Leading on Opportunity
- **Brandon Dennison**, CEO, Coalfield Development

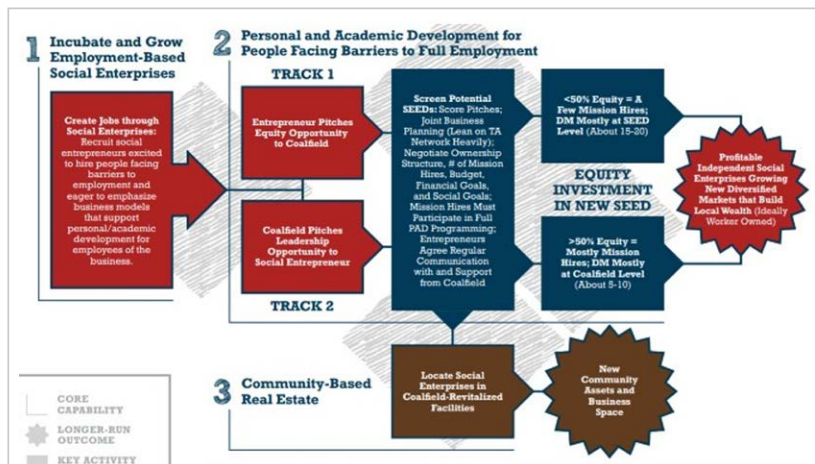
AJ Calhoun and Brandon Dennison shared practical strategies they employed to help nurture and create economic opportunity in both urban and rural areas.

In the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region of North Carolina, Leading on Opportunity continues to address uneven access to economic mobility across the region after convening 20 community leaders to study the underlying issues.

After two years of study, the Opportunity Task Force Report defined more than 20 strategies and more than 90 specific recommendations in areas including child and family stability, early care and education and college and career readiness.

The efforts led to funding and building affordable housing units through private and public money. The group will next focus on college and career readiness.

In southern West Virginia, Dennison follows a social entrepreneurship model to build economic opportunity.



It's "blending the efficiency of the for-profit sector with the compassion of the nonprofit sector," Dennison said.

His organization, Coalfield Development, has started more than 50 new businesses in such areas as recycling, reuse and sustainable agriculture. These businesses provide workers with on-the-job training and development opportunities.

"It creates hope in a real and tangible way," he said.

20 community leaders across sectors spent nearly 2 years strategizing solutions

The result was the Opportunity Task Force Report

- If Charlotte aims to lead the nation on economic mobility, we need to take action on 3 key determinates and 2 cross-cutting factors
- Under each of these 5 areas the task force further identified of 20+ strategies and 90+ recommendations
- Leading on Opportunity was formed in 2017 to convert the ethos of this report into true systemic change

Visit www.leadingonopportunity.org to read the report and learn more about the strategies.



Leading on Opportunity

Regional Voices of Southwestern Pennsylvania on Workforce and Education

Moderator:

- **Stan Thompson**, senior program director, education, The Heinz Endowments; executive director, Pittsburgh Readiness Institute

Panelists:

- **Camera Bartolotta**, member, Pennsylvania Senate; chair, Pennsylvania Senate Labor and Industry Committee
- **Quintin Bullock**, president, Community College of Allegheny County
- **Lindsey Williams**, member, Pennsylvania Senate; Democratic Chair, Pennsylvania Senate Education Committee

Issues surrounding education landed at the forefront of pandemic challenges. The Institute of Politics investigated the issues in K-12 education in its recent publication “Learning from Crisis,” from its education policy committee, led by Stan Thompson.

The report used “the disruption caused by Covid-19 to consider over-arching policies and practices that support flexible high-performing learning environments that have the potential to improve learning outcomes and equity in education,” said Thompson.

Senator Williams noted that the pandemic exacerbated existing inequities among K-12 schools.

“Some schools were up and ready with virtual learning within days; other schools took weeks,” she said. “Some students didn’t have immediate access to laptops or tablet devices or even broadband needed to connect them to their schools and struggled to keep up with coursework.”

Senator Bartolotta said that while most individuals lost their jobs through no fault of their own, many had difficulty rejoining the workforce due to childcare challenges or working in particularly vulnerable industries. However, she also said that extended unemployment benefits played a part in people reevaluating their participation in the workforce.

Bartolotta, along with Thompson, leads the IOP’s task force on equity and dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeship programming. The task force plans to release a report with recommendations in 2022. The focus areas are equity goals and public reporting, finance, program integrity and credit transfer, course access and availability, and instructor capacity and navigational supports.

President Bullock emphasized the importance of the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) as key to helping to train job seekers.

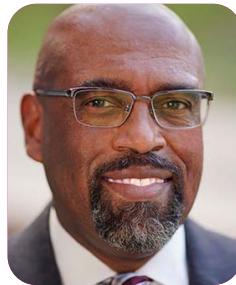
The work includes forecasting the hard and essential skills employers will need and redesigning curricula to meet those demands.



Stan Thompson



Camera Bartolotta



Quintin Bullock



Lindsey Williams

The Geography of Regional Economic Development



Patrick Gallagher, chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh

Introduction by Mark A. Nordenberg, chair, Institute of Politics; director, Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law and Public Policy; chancellor emeritus, University of Pittsburgh

Pitt Chancellor Patrick Gallagher closed the retreat with a discussion of the region's challenges as it strives to be a leader in workforce development, technological innovation and industrial capacity.

He emphasized that "competition is now global, and that's not going to change."

Gallagher said that the U.S. has traditionally dominated research and development, which has affected the national approach. For example, long-standing assumptions include:

- Top talent in the world would come to the U.S.
- U.S. companies would do most of their research and innovation within the United States.
- Other countries are only effective if they steal U.S. technology or the U.S. licenses it to them.

"These assumptions are no longer valid," Gallagher said.

But "while the competition may be global," Gallagher said, "the conditions that a company needs are in fact very local. Regions are trying to play a key role in assembling the assets, whether that's talent or key facilities."

Regional strategy also must consider equity and inclusion and create livable communities and more opportunities in a sustainable way. One of the most challenging issues is the workforce, Gallagher said.

"Access to workers, having great locations for workers to live and work, is absolutely driving business decisions," he said.

But regional players are not getting clarity on national policy as they compete for global talent, he said.

"The U.S. response right now is unformed, in my view, and it's quite inconsistent," Gallagher said. "We see incentives and restrictions that do not consistently go across categories. One interesting example: The number of student visas issued to foreign students ... has nothing to do with the number of work visas we issue for them to stay in-country. And yet we worry about the flow from education to work."

The education market itself is being disrupted. The number of U.S. high school students seeking college degrees had its largest two-year decline in at least 50 years, Gallagher said. Among the students who do go to college, first-time enrollment in community college is down 21%. Conversely, flagship universities across the country, such as the University of Pittsburgh, have seen unprecedented demand.

"States, which have the largest responsibility for job training and education programs, are going to have to really think strategically long-term," Gallagher said.

"And this is happening at a time when we're focused more on short-term, hot-button or wedge issues in education."

Mark A. Nordenberg closed the retreat, saying, "The quote from Henry Ford printed on the front cover of today's program states, 'If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.'"

Said Nordenberg: "It may not be quite that simple. But if this region became known for its commitment to that concept of moving forward together, almost certainly many good things would follow."



All Angles – a partnership with the University of Pittsburgh Office of the Chancellor

Based on the Institute’s long history of working across the political spectrum to create innovative and collegial approaches to policy development, the Institute of Politics responded to a request made by the University of Pittsburgh Office of the Chancellor to assist in the development of a students-only speaker and discussion series designed to showcase civil discourse and highlight the importance of understanding topical information from a variety of political perspectives — essential skills in today’s highly polarized society.

The IOP created All Angles with input from over 1,400 students. All Angles was launched in the Spring 2022 term and offers divergent perspectives on a variety of issues prioritized by these students: democracy, race, economic opportunity, climate change, and foreign relations. Students from all of Pitt’s campuses are encouraged to attend.

LEARN MORE: iop.pitt.edu/all-angles



Bringing Communities Together in Times of Crisis and Beyond: 2021 Coleman Award winners Lisa Scales and Dr. John Wilds

On December 9, 2021, in a virtual ceremony the Institute of Politics awarded Lisa Scales, president and CEO of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, and Dr. John Wilds, former vice chancellor for community relations for the University of Pittsburgh, the Coleman Award for Excellence in Community Service.

As he welcomed guests to the event and acknowledged the legacy of the IOP's founding director, Morton "Moe" Coleman, for whom the award is named, Chancellor Emeritus and IOP Chair Mark Nordenberg acknowledged Moe's consummate humility, noting that the founding director of the IOP always felt honored to be named in the same sentence with the awardees who followed him over the years.

The event featured another look at the history of the Coleman Award video, produced last year for the Institute's first-ever virtual award ceremony, and provided attendees with the opportunity to hear directly from the awardees themselves. Lisa expressed appreciation and gratitude for the many individuals with whom she has had the opportunity to interact throughout the course of the pandemic, including clients who shared with her just how important the Food Bank's services are to their families.

While Lisa and John's qualifications for the Coleman Award are evident to anyone who has known them, the nominations for both included highlights of their service to the region that are less public-facing. For example, both Lisa and John extend their service to the region beyond their day-to-day work, in part through their involvement on boards and committees for other nonprofit and community organizations, a practice that John has continued in his retirement.

"I think John's service to this region is unique in that Pitt's structure had to grow to accommodate his far reach and influence in creating a culture of service and partnership. His legacy stretches across our teaching, research, and service missions of the University of Pittsburgh despite being embedded in a role that reports up through the Chancellor's Office."

—Jamilah Ducar, director of community engagement, University of Pittsburgh



See the tribute video to Lisa Scales



See the tribute video to John Wilds

The Coleman Award for Excellence in Community Service has recognized community leaders in the southwestern Pennsylvania region for over 15 years. Since 2006, 29 people, including Dr. Coleman, have received the award, which honors those who build bridges among diverse communities, mentor others, give freely and unselfishly of their time, work to improve the lives of others, and have a positive impact on the region in general.

“More than anything, leaders like John and Lisa provide us with a sense of stability and connectedness in an ever-changing and tumultuous world.

—Samantha Balbier, director, Institute of Politics and Elsie Hillman Civic Forum, University of Pittsburgh

Past Coleman Award Honorees

2006

Moe Coleman, director emeritus,
Institute of Politics

2007

Maxwell King, executive director, Fred
Rogers Center, Saint Vincent College

2008

Marc Cherna, director, Allegheny
County Department of Human Services

Jim Rohr, president and CEO, PNC
Financial Services Group

2009

Karen Wolk Feinstein, president and
CEO, Jewish Healthcare Foundation

David J. Malone, president and CEO,
Gateway Financial Services

2010

David E. Epperson, dean emeritus
and professor emeritus, University of
Pittsburgh School of Social Work

2011

Helen S. Faison, pioneering teacher,
principal, and superintendent,
Pittsburgh Public Schools, and
community leader in education

2012

Henry S. Beukema, executive director,
McCune Foundation

Morgan K. O'Brien, president and CEO,
Peoples Natural Gas

2013

Philip B. Hallen, president emeritus,
Falk Foundation

Linda McKenna Boxx, chairman,
Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation

2014

Edie Shapira, chair, board of directors,
The Pittsburgh Foundation

Rick Stafford, distinguished service
professor of public policy, Carnegie
Mellon University

2015

Bill Isler, former president and CEO,
The Fred Rogers Center ; former chair,
Pittsburgh Board of Educatio

Charles Queenan, chairman emeritus,
K&L Gates LLP

2016

Linda Lane, former superintendent,
Pittsburgh Public Schools

Bill Strickland, president and CEO,
Manchester Bidwell Corporation

2017

Terry Miller, director, Institute of
Politics, University of Pittsburgh

Laurie Mulvey, former director of
service demonstrations, Office of Child
Development, University of Pittsburgh

Tracy Soska, assistant professor and
director of COSA, School of Social Work,
University of Pittsburgh

2018

Laura Ellsworth, partner-in-charge of
global community service initiatives,
Jones Day

Saleem Ghubril, executive director,
The Pittsburgh Promise

Aradhna Oliphant, president and CEO,
Leadership Pittsburgh, Inc.

2019

Fredrick W. Thieman, Henry Buhl, Jr.
Chair for Civic Leadership, The Buhl
Foundation

2020

Larry Swanson, executive director,
ACTION Housing

Linda Dickerson, CEO, The Dickerson
Group

2021

Lisa A. Scales, president & CEO, Greater
Pittsburgh Community Food Bank

John M. Wilds, former vice chancellor
for community relations, University of
Pittsburgh

Congratulations to
the 2022 Coleman
Award winners!

**Karen Farmer White
and John R. McGinley Jr.**

VOICES FROM THE REGION

Engaging Diverse Leaders around Critical Issues: The IOP Board of Fellows

Prior to and during the meeting, attendees identified the following issues as priorities for the region:

- Race and Gender Equity (Health, Education, Economy)
- Political Polarization
- Municipal Financial Solvency
- Infrastructure
- Broadband Access
- Regional Economic Planning and Visioning
- Suburbanization of Poverty
- Accessible Affordable Housing
- Rural Economic Decline
- Access to Living Wage Jobs
- Worker Shortage & Dislocation
- Regional Population Decline
- Access to Quality Affordable K-12 and Higher Education
- Uncompetitive Regulations and Taxes
- Climate Change

The Institute of Politics welcomed six new members at its annual meeting, held on Thursday, September 30, 2021.



Ms. Jennifer Giovannitti



Dr. Paul Hennigan

Photo by: John Altdorfer



Dr. Valerie Kinloch



Representative Dan Miller



Dr. Carissa Slotterback



Senator Lindsey Williams

2021 Board of Fellows Membership

Albert “Chip” Abramovic

Commissioner, Venango County

Camera Bartolotta

Member, PA Senate

Debra Bogen

Director, Allegheny County Health Department

Kenyon Bonner

Vice Provost and Dean of Students, University of Pittsburgh

Kenya Boswell

Senior Vice President, Highmark Health

Diana Bucco

President, The Buhl Foundation

William Carter

Professor, School of Law, University of Pittsburgh

Marc Cherna

Former Director, Department of Human Services, Allegheny County

G. Reynolds Clark

Former Chief of Staff to the Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh

Jake Corman

Former President Pro Tempore, PA Senate

Jay Costa

Democratic Leader, PA Senate

Austin Davis

Lieutenant Governor-elect, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mike Doyle

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives

George Dunbar

Member, PA House of Representatives

Laura Ellsworth

Partner-in-Charge, Global Community Service Initiatives, Jones Day

Grant Ervin

Former Chief Resilience Officer and Assistant Director, Department of City Planning, Office of Mayor William Peduto

Elizabeth Farmer

Dean, School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh

Rich Fitzgerald

County Executive, Allegheny County

Dan Frankel

Member, PA House of Representatives

Paul Hennigan

Former President, Point Park University

Ami Gatts

President, Washington Greene County Job Training Agency

Jennifer Giovannitti

President, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

Caren Glotfelty

Former Executive Director, Allegheny County Parks Foundation

Tyler Gourley

Vice President, Hillman Family Foundations

Debra Gross

Council Member, City of Pittsburgh

Sherene Hess

Commissioner, Indiana County

Valerie Kinloch

Renee and Richard Goldman Dean, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh

Kathy Lachenauer

Executive Director, The Fine Foundation

Dan Miller

Member, PA House of Representatives

Morgan O’Brien

Former President & CEO, Peoples Natural Gas

Aradhna Oliphant

Former President & CEO, Leadership Pittsburgh, Inc.

Leslie Osche

Commissioner, Butler County

A. Samuel Reiman

President, Richard King Mellon Foundation

Lisa Schroeder

President and CEO, The Pittsburgh Foundation

Carissa Slotterback

Dean, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh

Jem Spectar

President, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown

Richard Taylor

CEO, Imbue Technology Solutions, Inc.

Stanley Thompson

Senior Program Director, Education, and Executive Director, Pittsburgh Readiness Institute, The Heinz Endowments

Kim Ward

Member, PA Senate

Jake Wheatley

Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Ed Gainey, City of Pittsburgh

Lindsey Williams

Member, PA Senate

Linda Yankoski

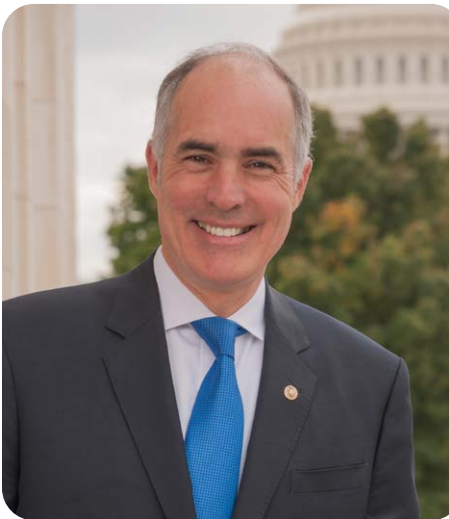
President & CEO, Holy Family Institute



The Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law & Public Policy

Thornburgh Family Lecture Series on Disability Law and Policy – Disability Policy: Beyond the Pandemic with Senator Bob Casey

By Mikaela Chandler, Institute of Politics Policy Intern, Fall 2021



On September 13, 2021, Senator Bob Casey delivered the Thornburgh Family Lecture, speaking about key issues in disability policy that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Too often, disability policy in Washington DC has been ignored, ... [and] people with disabilities have been segregated or marginalized in our country.”

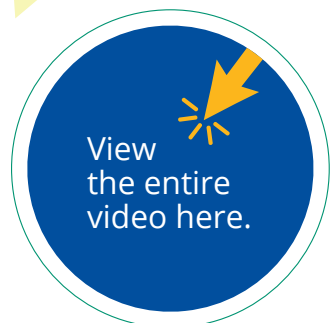
– U.S. Senator Bob Casey

In his remarks, Senator Casey focused on three topics: home and community-based services, lessons learned from the pandemic, and the need to provide economic self-sufficiency in the context of disability rights. The pandemic highlighted the lack of capacity in the home care service industry in the United States, and many were left without needed assistance. Casey acknowledged the short-term investment provided through the American Rescue Plan but emphasized the need to focus on long-term investments like those proposed in the Better Care Better Jobs act, legislation that he introduced in the Senate in late June 2021.

If passed, the Better Care Better Jobs Act will amend the Social Security Act to “expand access to home and community-based services (HCBS) under Medicaid”.

Casey highlighted some key lessons learned from the pandemic and how to create a path of empowerment of people with disabilities. This includes creating opportunities for economic growth and mobility as we enter the post-pandemic workforce. Casey also identified where policy could improve and how leaders in policy conversations can better assist those with disabilities. Questions that emerged through the discussion session that followed, which was moderated by Mark Nordenberg, addressed telehealth accessibility issues, transportation expansions, needs in special education, and the details of the RISE Act that Senator Casey introduced to the Senate this summer.

The RISE Act intends to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to “provide students with disabilities and their families with access to critical information needed to select the right college and succeed once enrolled.”



Preserving Democracy: Bridging the Divide Between Rural and Urban America

*A conversation with
Claude Worthington Benedum
President Jen Giovannitti*

On April 15, 2021, Chancellor Emeritus Nordenberg interviewed Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation President Jen Giovannitti. Citing a recent Brookings Institute series on myths pertaining to the urban-rural divide, Nordenberg introduced the session with the following quote:

“The narrative of “two Americas,” politically and economically divided into “thriving” urban places that went for Biden and “hurting” rural places that went for Donald Trump, destined by geography to a bleak future of polarization and discontent... is misguided at best and harmful to the extent that it disguises the real problems and their potential solutions.”

Giovannitti, who has lived in places as varied as Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and small-town West Virginia, credited this residence in both rural and urban places with enhancing her dedication to building community in any area, and referenced the Benedum Foundation’s unique commitment to place-based funding in southwestern Pennsylvania and in northern West Virginia.



“In a small town in a state like West Virginia, community is palpable. You can’t go to the grocery store or the gas station without seeing someone you know. At Little League games, you know every kid and every parent. There is a real sense that you matter.”

— Jen Giovannitti

Nordenberg noted that, in recent years, family-sustaining career choices for rural residents have become more limited, and that job seekers who want a variety of options often do have to move. However, with the growth of telework, there is an opportunity for new businesses and new professionals to call rural places home. Nordenberg and Giovannitti also discussed the issue of “resource bias,” a phenomenon where resources are concentrated in areas of high population, meaning that rural areas are often shut out of their share of per capita philanthropic dollars. Federal intervention is necessary to help expand high speed internet to allow for more remote work and provide resources that would allow rural areas to “catch up” to more urban areas of the country.

With the advent of the federal infrastructure proposal, Giovannitti expressed an interest in seeing growth in green energy jobs, particularly solar and wind installations and technology related to electric vehicles, for West Virginia. These jobs have the potential to be family-sustaining careers that would fit with the state’s maker legacy. She also noted that there’s an opportunity to use funding to cap abandoned oil and gas wells, which would provide employment for people already working in that industry while mitigating or eliminating the environmental hazards posed by the wells.

Looking ahead, Nordenberg asked Giovannitti to describe how to overcome those who continue to foster division in this country. Giovannitti responded that it is essential to “focus on the things that we have in common rather than the things that drive us apart.” She continued, “We all have a responsibility to not make assumptions, to not perpetuate the stereotypes of rural communities. The more that people recreate and take weekend trips, and really meet people, [the more they begin to] understand the kindness and humor and beauty of other places, whether that’s ... Ho Chi Minh City or a small town like Elkins, West Virginia.”

At the close of the event, Giovannitti articulated a two-fold mission: helping to bring capital to disinvested places and giving individuals and communities more agency in their own lives.



Preserving Democracy: Time for Truth about Pennsylvania's 2020 Presidential Election with Committee of Seventy President and CEO David Thornburgh

By Mikaela Chandler, Institute of Politics Policy Intern, Fall 2021

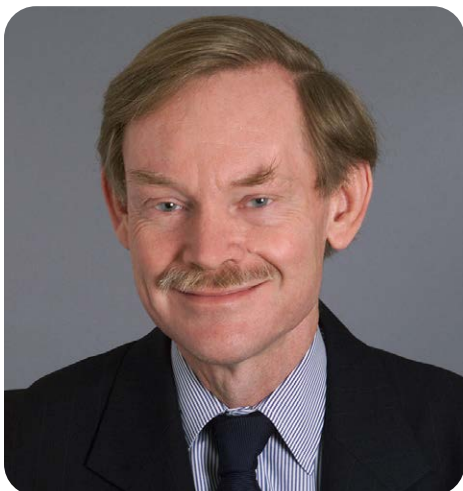


"Time for Truth" began with a note from Chancellor Mark Nordenberg commemorating the late Governor Dick Thornburgh, who passed away on December 31, 2020, and offer sympathies to David Thornburgh and his family on behalf of the Institute and The Dick Thornburgh Forum. Mr. Thornburgh discussed the issues

surrounding the 2020 election which has been relentlessly attacked as fraudulent by various groups. He provided a comprehensive overview of the Election Reform Act of 2019, the emergence of mail in voting, and how mail in voting was implemented in the 2020 election during the COVID 19 pandemic. Mr. Thornburgh also identified how partisan polarization impacted the American public's perception of election processes in both the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections. Political rhetoric over the previous decade created a charged context that sowed distrust especially in absentee voting leading to serious litigation over the last year. Mr. Thornburgh spoke on the necessary next steps in election reform and how to combat misinformation going forward. He covered concerns surrounding physical threats against elected officials.



American Experience Distinguished Lecture Series: A conversation with Robert Zoellick, author and former president of the World Bank



The American Experience Lecture series provides thoughtful insights into the practices and operation of our nation's government. In early April 2021, as part of this series, Robert B. Zoellick joined Mark Nordenberg for a chat about Zoellick's new book *America in the World: A History of U.S. Diplomacy and Foreign Policy*. Zoellick has built a distinguished career, one that includes service as: Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary and Counselor in the State Department; Ambassador and U.S. Trade Representative; Counselor to the Secretary of the Treasury; Deputy Chief of Staff at the White House; and President of the World Bank. Currently, he is a Senior Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School, where he contributes to its "Applied History" project.

Zoellick wrote *America in the World* to "encourage others to think in terms of history when solving issues in foreign policy." In his presentation, he emphasized that many issues we see today in both foreign and domestic policy have also risen at different points throughout U.S. history. Furthermore, he outlined his "five traditions in American Diplomacy" that he has drawn from history. Those traditions include: the importance of North America, trade transnationalism and technology, alliances in American policy, the importance of congressional and public support, and America's purpose.





2021 Winners

Anna Marie Clark

Anna Marie Clark is a University of Pittsburgh student in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program. Anna Marie's life mission is to empower children and adults with disabilities to recognize their strengths and inherent value.



Her passion for assisting individuals affected by disability began at the age of 4 as a lifelong volunteer for Joni and Friends. As a teenager, she became involved with the mission of Uniquely the Same participating in live stream broadcasts reaching hundreds of individuals to create authentic relationships and demystify disability. Anna Marie

spearheaded the creation of videos serving as a resource to provide strategies to support transition to employment for people with disabilities.

Anna Marie was selected for the 2021 Occupational Therapy Student Award of Recognition for her service for people with unique challenges with her primary contribution listed as "Servant leader advancing occupational therapy for all." This year, she has been selected as one of two students as a LEND (Leadership Development for Neurodevelopmental and Related Disorders) trainee. LEND is a collaboration between the University of Pittsburgh and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC to educate a new generation of leaders in the field of disabilities and in forging partnerships to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.

Alison Mahoney

Alison Mahoney is a University of Pittsburgh PhD student in Theatre and Performance Studies. She researches intersections of performance and disability. Alison's interests developed out of her professional experience as a theatre-maker, teaching artist, and arts administrator in New York City where her work emphasized accessibility for disabled artists and audiences.



Prior to pursuing graduate study, Alison was the founding Artistic Director of Bluelaces Theater Company, which creates original theatre for young audiences with sensory and developmental disabilities. The sensory theatre productions she directed for Bluelaces established spaces that neurodiverse audiences could explore on their own terms, running around the space or interacting with performers as they wished. Rather than retroactively adapting a theatre production to make it accessible, as in the sensory-friendly productions now offered on Broadway and at regional theatres across the country, sensory theatre productions

are designed with neurodiverse audiences in mind from the beginning. As Artistic Director, she prioritized the casting of disabled performers and designers, ensuring that disabled audiences would see themselves reflected onstage.

As a graduate student, Alison writes about these theatre practices in the hopes of encouraging other practitioners to adopt similarly accessible approaches. This past summer, Alison presented papers about sensory theatre created for neurodiverse audiences during the Covid-19 pandemic at conferences hosted by the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR).

As a Humanities Engage Immersive Fellow, Alison worked with CO/LAB Theater Group, an organization in New York whose mission is to "provide individuals with developmental disabilities a creative and social outlet through theater arts." Together with disabled self-advocates who participate in CO/LAB's programming, she helped the organization's administrative staff put systems in place to ensure a responsive and participant-centered approach to accessibility.

Alison continues to bring this advocacy and expansive notion of access culture to her teaching, writing, and theatre work.

Dick Thornburgh Prize for Legal Service

In 2021, the Dick Thornburgh Prize for Legal Service was awarded to Brianna Bell. Bell received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 2021 and a Bachelor of Arts, English and Religious Studies degree from Franklin & Marshall College in 2011.



Brianna Bell

In law school, Bell held positions relating to her passion for child advocacy including internships with the juvenile division of the Allegheny Public Defender's Office, the Children's Law Center in DC and KidsVoice. She was a member of the University of Pittsburgh Law Review and a senior editor at JURIST.

In fall 2021, Bell began an Equal Justice Works Fellowship at KidsVoice to advocate for special education students whose education was disrupted by the pandemic.

More information on Bell's project can be found [here](#).

The Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law & Public Policy is proud to announce Yemi Olaiya as a 2021 recipient of the Dick Thornburgh Prize for Legal Service award.



Yemi Olaiya

Ms. Olaiya is a 2021 University of Pittsburgh Law School graduate and received a B.A. degree from Allegheny College in Political Science and Spanish in 2017.

In law school, Yemi worked as a Certified Legal Intern at the University of Pittsburgh Elder Law Clinic, Allegheny County Office of the Public Defender, and as a Legal Intern at the Allegheny County District Court. She was President of the Black Law Students Association, a member of the Curriculum Committee, a Marshall Brennan Constitutional Law Fellow, and the Treasurer of the Student Bar Association.

Yemi continues her passion to represent low-income individuals as an assistant public defender.

Thornburgh Forum Summer Fellowship

Yamini Yepuri, a Psychology student at the University of Pittsburgh Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences, is the 2021 recipient of this year's Dick Thornburgh Summer Fellowship.



Yamini Yepuri

Yepuri produced a video on Dick Thornburgh's contribution to the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) titled "The Efficacy of Empathy in Legislation: Dick Thornburgh's Contribution to the Enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)."

Her work can be viewed on the [Dick Thornburgh Forum's YouTube channel](#).

Prize for Government Service

The Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law and Public Policy presents the J. Evans Rose, Jr. Prize for Government Service each year to a graduating Pitt Law School student whose goal is to pursue a career in government service, whether at the local, county, state, federal or international level. The 2021 award recipient is Gabriella D. Reber.



Gabriella D. Reber

Reber is a 2021 University of Pittsburgh graduate and holds both a Juris Doctorate and a Master of Public Administration degree with a public policy concentration. She is also a dedicated public servant and has proudly been selected to serve as a law clerk for the Board of Immigration Appeals.

Engaging and Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

2021 was an exciting year for the IOP and its student programming. In addition to the full complement of student programming and paid civic engagement placement opportunities offered by the IOP's Elsie Hillman Civic Forum, the IOP added two student programs this year — **All Angles** and **The Cherna Fellowship**.

The Cherna Fellowship

In May 2021, the community came together to celebrate the accomplished career of Marc Cherna, Director of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS). For 25 years, Cherna provided extraordinary leadership of the department, developing increasingly effective ways to deliver essential services to our most vulnerable neighbors. The excellence of his efforts has been shaped by both innovation and determination, and he has earned many special forms of recognition for his achievements.



The most important products of his efforts, though, are the countless lives that were saved and improved through the work of the DHS team as it dealt with such seemingly intractable challenges as homelessness, child abuse, substance use disorders, and mental illness. However, Marc's impact was even more substantial because his innovative approaches also served as a model, inspiring work in other communities across the nation.

During his tenure as director of DHS, Marc was actively engaged with the University of Pittsburgh, serving on the IOP Board of Fellows and the School of Social Work's Board of Visitors. In response, the Marc Cherna Fellowship Fund is being created to advance a dual purpose. First, it will stand as a lasting tribute to Marc for his exceptional leadership. Second, it serves as a perpetual investment in the critical work yet to be done in areas that have been central to his career.

The fund will support students from the School of Social Work undertaking internships through the Institute of Politics that focus on innovative policies in the areas of children, youth, and families. "Cherna Fellows" will be chosen by representatives from the Institute of Politics and the School of Social Work, with preference given to graduate students working within Allegheny County and to students with lived experiences within the human services system. The program will launch in the spring of 2023.



Elsie Hillman Civic Forum: Long-term Programs

The Elsie Hillman Civic Forum partners with a range of nonprofit organization and elected officials from throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. In each academic year, the "Elsie Forum" implements four long-term student programs.

Institute of Politics Internship and Seminar

Students interested in local, state, and federal politics work with an elected official's district office for a semester. They also learn about the historical, economic, social, and political factors that contribute to the policy decisions made in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Elsie Hillman Honors Scholars Program

Students eager to make social impact join community partners to develop and implement an academic yearlong projects that address issues the students care about while advancing the mission of the organization.

Ambassadors for Civic Engagement Fellowship

A team of graduate students take the academic year to work with one regional community organization that addresses public policy and/or supports programming that engages the community with which they work.

IOP Policy and Elsie Civic Engagement Internship

Three students worked with the IOP policy team on its core regional policy work with its eight policy committees, and one student worked with the Elsie Forum on student programming and outreach.



Voices in Government: Institute of Politics Internship and Seminar

Elected officials needed capacity more than any other year in 2020 and 2021. The IOP and Elsie Forum provided them with quality interns who conducted research and wrote briefs on pressing policy issues, and with the transportation barriers lifted, the IOP interns were able to go farther than Pittsburgh than they ever have before.

“ The IOP Internship opened some unforeseen doors for me while others were closing amid the pandemic. The Councilman and his chief of staff’s visions for a greater Pittsburgh align with my own hopes for moving our City forward. While I might not stay in Pittsburgh forever, I can say that I’ve worked to make a difference while I was here, and that is thanks to my internship placement. What was only supposed to last one semester is about to turn into a year’s worth of research and local intervention.

Justin Fekete, Fall '20 Intern with Pittsburgh City Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle

“ The experience of working with an elected official was overall extremely valuable to me. I felt that I became more versed with the issues that matter in the region, and the leaders making the important decisions for us.

Madelyn Todaro, Fall '20 Intern with the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce

“ I learned so much more about Politics, especially Western Pennsylvania Politics. Not originally being from the area, this knowledge of the city and region made me feel more connected to the area.

Luke Gorman, Spring '21 Intern with Pittsburgh City Councilman Corey O'Connor

IOP Policy Interns

Mikaela Chandler: A student at Pitt’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Mikaela worked with the IOP on criminal justice and community issues.

Wendeline Frederic: A student at Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health, Wendeline worked on issues related to housing, human services, and broadband access.

Rachel Romac: A psychology major in Pitt’s Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, Rachel worked on issues related to education and workforce development.

The Ann M. Dykstra Scholar Intern Award



Rachel Romac

In recognition of the late Dr. Ann M. Dykstra’s role in creating and implementing the IOP Internship and Seminar program, the Ann M. Dykstra Scholar Intern Award was created. Dr. Dykstra not only created the program, but she also served as the program’s instructor for over 15 years. Each semester, the IOP recognizes one intern who exhibits exceptional dedication and effort with both their placement office as well as in the seminar. The finalists are selected by the program instructors, Nello Giorgetti and Dennis McManus, and they use the students’ end-of-term evaluation by their placement supervisor as well as their performance during seminar to make the

selection. The Fall 2020 award went to Andrew Barber, who served in the office of State Representative Pam Snyder, and the Spring 2021 award went to Rachel Romac, who served in the office of U.S. Representative Conor Lamb.

2021 Internship and Seminar Placements

Jay Costa

PA State Senator, District 43

Austin Davis

PA State Representative, District 35

Dan Frankel

PA State Representative, District 23

Ed Gaaney

PA State Representative, District 24

Sara Innamorato

PA State Representative, District 21

Pam Iovino

PA State Senator, District 37

Josh Kail

PA State Representative, District 15

Bruce Kraus

Pittsburgh City Councilman, District 3

Anita Kulik

PA State Representative, District 45

Jenn Beer

Vice President, Government Relations,
Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce

Conor Lamb

U.S. Representative, PA-District 17

Daniel Lavelle

City Councilman, District 6

Rob Matzie

PA State Representative, District 16

Dan Miller

PA State Representative, District 42

Corey O'Connor

City Councilman, District 5

Guy Reschenthaler

U.S. Representative, PA-District 14

Pam Snyder

PA State Representative, District 50

Erika Strassburger

Pittsburgh City Councilperson, District 8

Bobby Wilson

Pittsburgh City Councilman, District 1

Voices from the Community: Mission-driven Mentorship and Leadership in Practice

In addition to elected officials, the Elsie Hillman Civic Forum is grateful to partner with organizations working to improve the quality of life in the Southwestern PA region in a variety of ways. The Elsie Hillman Honors Scholars Program and the Ambassadors for Civic Engagement (ACE) Fellowship connect dedicated student leaders with organizations that align with the students' passions and want to contribute to the mission of that organization.

2020-21 Honors Scholars

This year's scholars completed the program unlike any cohort did before: 100 percent online. And each of them did a phenomenal job working with their partners to produce projects of value: from an evaluation of COVID planning to providing an asset map of LGBTQ+ resources, these Scholars have proven themselves to be flexible, creative leaders, and many of them continued their work with their community partners after the program ended.



Avery Bazell
True T Pittsburgh



Charles Echard
Department of Mobility
and Infrastructure, City
of Pittsburgh



Amy Filip
Center for Victims



Kayla Henderson
Consortium for
Public Education



Jasmin Perrier
Steel Smiling



Tyler Viljaste
Commission on Human
Relations, City of Pittsburgh

**OVER 160
STUDENTS APPLIED
TO ELSIE FORUM'S
LONG-TERM
PROGRAMS IN
20-21**

**50
STUDENTS
PARTICIPATED**

2020-21 ACE Fellowship

Two ACE Fellows, Desiree Bodziony and Alice Ngamije, utilized their skills as a doctoral occupational therapy student and a master's level international development student, respectively, to build, organize and develop content for a new website for the [National Center on Family Support](#) at the University of Pittsburgh. The ACE Team had the phenomenal opportunity to be mentored throughout the project by Heather Tomko, the Center's Outreach Coordinator and long-time advocate for people with disabilities and their family members.



Desiree Bodziony



Alice Ngamije

Elsie Hillman Civic Forum: Short-term Programs

The forum also offers two short-term program opportunities as follows.

Never a Spectator

On March 11, 2021, students had an experience like no other when Emmai Alaquiva, a two-time Emmy winner gave an inspiring keynote presentation talking about his journey as an activist and how students can become activists in their own right through these five steps:

- 1: **Knowledge of Self:** Gather what we know and what we don't know
- 2: **Establish your Attributes:** What can we add to conversations for others to engage
- 3: **Discover the Possibility:** if you are consistent at what you do, people will respect you
- 4: **Allyship + Advocacy:** How can we add on to voices
- 5: **Activate Your Actions:** You have to take risks



“ Advocacy isn't about replacing voices. It's about adding onto them.

— Emmai Alaquiva

Legislator for a Day

In light of the pandemic, the Elsie Hillman Civic Forum's annual trip to Harrisburg was reimagined as a career panel discussion with four high-level staff members working in the PA state capitol or district office of an elected official. Madison Ricker, a senior at Pitt studying political science and English writing who also served as an intern at Representative Gainey's district office through the Institute of Politics Elsie Forum, moderated the discussion among the following panelists:

- Andrea Fields, executive director, PA Legislative Black Caucus
- Ericka Fricke, ED, Health Committee
- Elizabeth Rosenthal, executive director, Consumer Affairs Committee
- Megan Scott, Director of Constituent Services, district office of PA Senator Camera Bartolotta

Over 60 students, alumni, and other members of the Pitt community logged on to hear panelists detail career pathways for and day-to-day responsibilities of a variety of positions in support of state-level elected officials





THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

THE 25TH ANNUAL

Institute of Politics Elected Officials Retreat

Thursday, December 8

Noon – 8 pm

2022 Coleman Award Dinner at 6:30 pm

Friday, December 9

8 am – 1:30 pm

Sheraton Station Square | Pittsburgh



University of
Pittsburgh
Institute of Politics

Appendix A

Pennsylvania Task Force on Equity in Dual Enrollment and Pre-apprenticeship Programs

The Honorable Camera Bartolotta

Majority Chair, Labor and Industry Committee
Senate of Pennsylvania

Ms. Jamie Baxter

Education Policy Director
Allies for Children

Dr. Quintin Bullock

President
Community College of Allegheny County

Ms. Lisa Campbell

Dean of Workforce Development
Butler County Community College

Mr. Michael Dotts

Higher Education Specialist
PA Department of Education

Ms. Ami Gatts

President
Washington-Greene County Job Training Agency

Dr. Michael Giazzoni

Director, College in High School program
University of Pittsburgh

Dr. John Goberish

Dean - Workforce Development and Continuing
Education
Community College of Beaver County

Dr. Gabriella Gonzalez

Program Officer
Richard King Mellon Foundation

Dr. Vera Krekanova

Chief Research Officer
Allegheny Conference on Community Development

Dr. Jeffrey Mallory

Executive Vice President and COO
Saint Vincent College

Dr. Esohe Osai

Assistant Professor of Practice,
School of Education, University of Pittsburgh,
and Program Director, Justice Scholars Institute

Dr. Stanley Thompson*

Senior Program Director,
Education and Executive Director,
Pittsburgh Readiness Institute
The Heinz Endowments

Mr. John Tkach

Executive Director
Keystone Development Partnership

Dr. Jason Watkins

Assistant Director/Principal
A.W. Beattie Career Center

The Honorable Lindsey Williams

Democratic Chair, Education Committee
Senate of Pennsylvania

Sister Linda Yankoski

Chief Executive Officer
Holy Family Institute

**committee co-chair*



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& Community Outreach*

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Susan Hernishin, SJH Design
Graphic Design



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