

## From the Chair

**Anusha Chari**

Spring is here, and I am happy to present Issue 2 of the CSWEP *News*! This issue's *Focus* section is on cultivating the undergraduate pipeline in economics to increase diversity not only along the lines of gender and race but also increasing socioeconomic diversity in our profession. Marionette Holmes, Chair of the Economics department at Spelman College and an at-large board member of CSWEP has curated a fantastic set of articles on this topic.

Early work by Claudia Goldin on Gender and the Undergraduate Economics Major explores the timing and potential reasons why women drop out of economics at higher rates than their male counterparts. These reasons include greater intentionality on the part of male undergraduates to pursue economics as a major, point to near non-existent differences in math-ability between male and female undergraduates but do suggest greater sensitivity to getting a good grade for women deciding to continue on with economics. The articles in this issue's *Focus* provide additional perspectives and explorations of race and socioeconomic diversity, inculcating intentionality through mentoring programs and closing any gaps in technical training to address pipeline issues in undergraduate economics programs.

In the introduction, Marionette does a superb job setting the stage by issuing an urgent call for continued

efforts to promote diversity in economics. She suggests that economists “have a responsibility to ensure that the profession reflects the diversity of the society it seeks to serve.” The lack of socioeconomic diversity in economics documented in the work of Anna Stansbury suggests that the need for more diverse voices shaping the topics we study and informing policymaking has profound implications. Therefore, our profession must nurture those voices to increase inclusivity in the marketplace for ideas beginning with the undergraduate experience.

In the first article, Sarah Jacobson highlights the need for the low-cost, high-impact intentional mentoring of undergraduate women by closely examining teaching methods and mentoring programs. Sarah advocates for fostering connections between faculty and students to be the “nudge” that tips women into declaring economics as their major. Delving into the issue of race, Rebecca Sen Choudhury and Bola Olaniyan document a more significant gender gap amongst students of color with a worrisome decline in the numbers of young Black women choosing economics as a major. They underscore the importance of institutional support for fostering diversity in economics, pointing to successful practices and initiatives exemplified by HBCUs.

continues on page 2 ↓

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Focus on The Undergraduate Experience

- Focus Introduction  
by Marionette Holmes ➔ [page 3](#)
- Mentoring to Strengthen  
the Pipeline  
by Sarah Jacobson ➔ [page 5](#)
- Pipeline Problem  
Interventions  
by Rebecca Sen Choudhury  
and Bola Olaniyan ➔ [page 8](#)
- Non-Traditional Students  
by Marie T. Mora ➔ [page 12](#)
- Pathways to Research and  
Doctoral Careers by Stephen  
Lamb and Pietro Veronesi ➔ [page 14](#)

### In Memorium

- Rebecca Blank,  
Former CSWEP Chair ➔ [page 17](#)

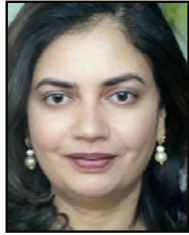
### Regular Features

- From the Chair  
by Anusha Chari ➔ [page 1](#)
- Call for Liaisons ➔ [page 17](#)
- Calls, Announcements,  
and Sessions at  
Upcoming Meetings ➔ [page 18](#)
- Board Member  
Directory ➔ [page 21](#)

Email for Free Digital Subscriptions to [CSWEP.org](http://CSWEP.org)

Forward the *CSWEP News* to colleagues  
and graduate students.

## Contributors



**Anusha Chari**, Professor of Economics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



**Marionette Holmes**, Chair and Associate Professor of Economics, Spelman College



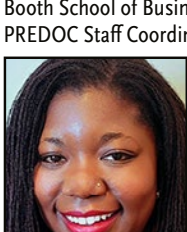
**Sarah Jacobson**, Professor of Economics, Williams College



**Stephen Lamb**, Director, Research Support, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, PREDOC Staff Coordinator



**Marie Mora**, Provost Ad Interim and Professor of Economics, Metropolitan State University of Denver



**Bola Olaniyan**, Executive Director of The Sadie Collective



**Rebecca Sen Choudhury**, Assistant Professor of Economics, Spelman College



**Pietro Veronesi**, CBOT Professor of Finance and Deputy Dean for Faculty, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, PREDOC co-founder and Strategic Committee Member

## ↑ From the Chair

In the third piece, Marie Mora outlines strategies to attract and retain non-traditional female students in economics, devising innovative methods to create community and networks to foster entry into economics. In their article, Pietro Veronesi and Stephen Lamb underscore the challenges that may beset successful pathways to research and doctoral careers. They highlight strategies to address technical skill gaps and how to overcome informational obstacles that may stand in the way of students applying and gaining admission to doctoral programs. I highly recommend reading the excellent articles in this issue of *Focus*—they give us much food for thought and much to learn.

In addition to our Focus section, this issue contains information about several upcoming calls for papers, award nominations, and professional development opportunities. Please see the calls for applications for **two** mentoring workshops for graduate students to successfully navigate an economics Ph.D. program. In September 2023, Marika Cabral and Maya Rossin-Slater, with support from CSWEP and ASHEcon, will hold a **virtual** mentoring workshop for third-year and above women & non-binary Ph.D. students in health economics and health policy. In November 2023, Celeste Carruthers, Melanie Guldi, Catherine Maclean, and Orgul Ozturk are organizing CSWEP's graduate student mentoring workshop for third and fourth-year women and non-binary students. Please circulate our call for applications for the workshop to be held **in person** a day before the Southern Economics Association Meetings in New Orleans, LA. In addition, please see information about CSWEP sessions at the Western Economic Association's 98th Annual Conference in the first week of July in San Diego, California. It is also time to submit applications for our flagship mentoring workshop, CeMENT 2024. The deadline for applications is in mid-August.

We invite nominations for CSWEP's 2023 Carolyn Shaw Bell Award. Please start thinking about nominating senior women economists who have dedicated

their efforts towards furthering the status of women in economics through their achievements, leading by example, mentoring junior faculty, and, more generally, increasing our understanding of how women can advance in our profession. The deadline is in mid-September.

Finally, some sad news about the passing of Rebecca Blank, who served as CSWEP chair between 1993–1996. This issue carries a remembrance of her life and extraordinary service to promoting the advancement of women in economics. Rest in peace, Becky Blank. Gone too soon. Your efforts will not be forgotten by CSWEP.

In addition to the opportunities detailed in this issue of the News, please check our website and [@aeacswep](https://twitter.com/aeacswep) on Twitter for up-to-date information about several upcoming events and opportunities. To sign up for our mailing list or volunteer as a mentor or CSWEP liaison, please email [info@cswep.org](mailto:info@cswep.org). As always, we invite feedback and ideas for new initiatives. ■

### CSWEP News Staff

Anusha Chari, Editor

Gina Pieters, Oversight Editor

Marionette Holmes, Co-editor

Leda Black, [Graphic Designer](#)

## Focus Introduction: The Undergraduate Experience

Marionette Holmes

In this year's **Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) annual report**, Anusha Chari, Ph.D., chair of CSWEP, and Maggie Levenstein, director of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), present data that reveal a formidable reality—the number of women represented in the economics profession has maintained momentum at some junctures but declined at others. This slow progress, coupled with other evidence of a lack of socioeconomic diversity in the field, indicate the lack of diversity in economics will continue to have a significant impact on future decision-making. However, it also underscores the lack of socioeconomic diversity in the field and the impact that lack of diversity will have on future decision-making.

These sobering statistics presented by Chari and Levenstein demonstrate that the once increased percentages of women at various points along the pipeline over recent years have now produced mixed results—thus indicating a “stalled progress” similar to the previous decade. (Lundberg and Sterns 2018) Additionally, emerging analysis reveals that we can add socioeconomic status as a category alongside gender and race to understand the lack of diversity in economics (Schultz and Stansberry 2022). It is widely understood that economics is the least socioeconomically diverse field and that Ph.D. recipients in economics, as compared to those in other fields, are more likely to have at least one parent with a graduate degree and less likely to be first-generation (Stansberry 2022). As Stansbury suggests, these realities paint a picture of what our field will look like when future economists who can intimately speak to policies on the gender-wage gap, health disparities, or poverty are not in decision making spaces.

These findings point to one juncture in the pipeline that can and should serve as a catalyst of change in the economics profession—it is the undergraduate experience. As we strive to promote diversity in the field of economics, it is with great interest that we discuss some of the key themes and strategies presented in this report. The articles contributed to this issue discuss key considerations in addressing the economics pipeline at the undergraduate level.

The first article, “Using Mentoring to Strengthen the Undergraduate Economics Pipeline,” by Sarah Jacobson, underscores the importance of intentional mentoring in preparing undergraduate women for graduate school and the profession. Jacobson emphasizes the behavioral aspects of the profession and highlights low-cost mentoring programs that can have a high impact. She believes that for future economists, matriculating through undergraduate school is not simply taking the “correct courses” to prepare a woman for graduate school. Indeed, teaching methods, lecture topics, professor and peer touch points, and, more importantly, mentoring programs are what serve as a tipping point when a woman is at the crossroad of declaring economics as a major or surmising if she will continue in the major. Jacobson discusses the complementarity of various mentoring ventures and points us to the importance of connection and intentional mentoring as opposed to discussion of technical skills. Her piece concludes with recommendations of mentoring programs for women.

In “The Pipeline Problem for Undergraduate Women of Color and Initiatives Proposed to Address It,” Rebecca Sen Choudhury and Bola Olaniyan highlight the even wider gender gap between male and female

economists of color and the importance of institutional support for diverse populations. Sen Choudhury and Olaniyan further note the disturbing downward trend of Black female undergraduates, a forecast of future trends of Black female economists, and the importance of leveraging the undergraduate years to reverse these trajectories. The authors suggest that an institutional culture supporting diverse populations (and strategies executed from this culture) are inherently imbedded in the mission of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. This implies that the profession should engage in a further examination of their routine practices and initiatives. They highlight Spelman College's economics department, of which I serve as chair, as a model for attracting and retaining women of color in economics.

Similar to the first article, Sen Choudhury and Olaniyan show the complementary nature of programs in the academy and outside of the academy in solidifying students' interest in economics and strengthening their peer and mentoring networks. The authors present anecdotal evidence a Alfred P. Sloan supported initiative at Spelman<sup>1</sup> which yields similar findings from causal studies supported by Undergraduate Women in Economics (UWE)

<sup>1</sup> This initiative is discussed more in the Sen Choudhury and Olaniyan piece.

continues on page 4 ↓

initiative—specifically that women role models increase the likelihood of a woman entering into the profession. The authors also expound on the opportunities and impact of the Sadie Collective, an initiative with a mission to increase the number of women of color in economics and other quantitative social science fields.

Marie Mora’s article, “Attracting and Retaining Women Non-Traditional Students in Economics,” presents strategies for promoting diversity among non-traditional students. Mora elaborates on her experiences working with undergraduate students from a public urban institution comprised of a population that is more socioeconomically diverse as compared to the populations of the undergraduate institutions from which the average economics doctoral student hails.

The author translates her experiences into proven strategies that attract and retain non-traditional women as students who enter and thrive in the field of economics. Mora points us to the fact that the “business as usual” methods of supplying information and developing networks that influence field entry may not be effective for these students. She further demonstrates that higher female participation rates in male-dominated fields can be achieved through the creation of community and reinforced electronic contact with students.

The final piece “Pathways to Research and Doctoral Careers” highlights the challenges of navigating the pathway from undergraduate to Ph.D. programs and the importance of research experience and adequate math preparation. The authors, Stephen Lamb and Pietro Versoni, offer advice on how to fill knowledge and skill gaps and address informational barriers that can prevent students from entering top Ph.D. programs.

The pathway from undergraduate to a Ph.D. can be a complicated one and may be filled with both hidden and obvious obstacles. For example, if a student decides to become an economist during junior year and then switches her major from political science to economics,

or graduates with a degree in political science, or does not go to an institution where research experience in economics was available, the odds of being immediately accepted into and succeeding in an economics doctoral program may be low. Adequate math preparation and research experience are requirements for most programs. Fortunately, Lamb and Versoni provide information on obtaining the additional knowledge and skills needed for entering a doctoral program. The authors explicitly “call out” the informational barriers that can exist during the undergraduate experience and offer a correction to the informational asymmetries where top economics BA programs may provide relatively more comprehensive advising due to insider knowledge. With the rise of predoctoral participation listed on the resume of students entering Ph.D. programs, the article expounds on information presented in our previous newsletter by Olga Shurchkov by pointing us to an exhaustive list of every predoc experience in the U.S.

This issue highlights the need for continued efforts to promote diversity in economics along the dimension of gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The strategies presented serve as a guide for individuals, institutions, and organizations seeking to increase the representation of all women in the field. As economics professionals, we have a responsibility to ensure that the profession reflects the diversity of the society it seeks to serve. Fortunately, we can all agree that we must continue to work towards a more equitable and inclusive economics profession for the betterment of all.

### References

- Lundberg and Sterns (2018) “Women in Economics: Stalled Progress,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33 (1): 3–22
- Schultz and Stansbury (2022) “Socioeconomic Diversity of Economics PhDs,” Peterson Institute for International Economics Working Paper
- Stansbury (2022) “Economics needs more Socioeconomic Diversity,” *Harvard Business Review*, June 10, 2022.

### Links in this article

- I. Annual report:  
<https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=18271>

# Using Mentoring to Strengthen the Undergraduate Economics Pipeline

Sarah Jacobson

We all need mentorship to help us set and achieve ambitious goals and navigate the challenges we encounter in our professional lives (Montgomery et al., 2014; Ginther et al., 2020; Montgomery, 2021). Undergraduate students who could make their way to an economics Ph.D. find a natural locus for mentoring in and around their economics classes. However, a great deal of mentoring occurs informally and on the basis of personal connections. Indeed, my impression from talking to my own students is that students' preferred source of advice is friend networks—and most students' friend networks are made up largely of people who look like themselves. As a result, people with identities underrepresented in economics—whether they are women, racial minorities, sexual and gender minorities, or any other minoritized group, and particularly those with intersectional identities—by default receive less mentoring in undergraduate economics. If we want a richer diversity in the students who enter economics Ph.D. programs, we need to systematize and strengthen mentoring offered to undergraduate students to ensure everyone has access to the same advice and support (Bayer et al., 2020).

Mentoring at the undergraduate level can happen in many ways, including in a student's home department by faculty or through localized mentoring programs and through programs that connect students to outside mentors. These channels are likely complements, rather than substitutes, for each other, as they provide access to different kinds of information and types of support. Many of them require few resources, if any, but can make a huge difference in the persistence of minoritized students.

## What is Mentoring?

How can we mentor women and others from underrepresented identities to help them stand on equal footing with their peers? First, listen; mentoring is not about presuming there is some deficit in the mentee and telling them how to fix themselves, but about learning a mentee's goals, interests, and wishes, as well as the obstacles they face, and helping them navigate paths to fulfilling futures (Montgomery, 2017).

Second, we must be aware of and fight our implicit biases; too many students from minoritized demographics are passively or actively steered away from economics Ph.D.s because professors assume they are not interested in or capable of completing one. Ask open-ended questions ("What are you interested in?") rather than proffering options ("Do you plan to work in business after graduation?"). Maintain a growth mindset rather than judging a struggling student as incapable of success (Canning et al., 2019).

Third, many things that are obvious to you may not be obvious to your students. For example, many students don't know that an economics Ph.D. is usually fully funded (with a stipend), or that Ph.D.s in economics (unlike many other fields) have an admirable rate of finding satisfying and well-paying jobs (Kamal et al., 2023). Many students don't know about the hierarchy of economics Ph.D. programs or what makes for a strong applicant. Many can't picture what a Ph.D. program really looks like, or what kinds of jobs an economics Ph.D. qualifies you for. Ask questions, listen, and fill in the gaps. And be encouraging—if a student has curiosity and persistence and is interested in the

---

*... a great deal of mentoring occurs informally and on the basis of personal connections.*

---

continues on page 6 ↓

topics economics is so well suited to answer, make sure they know that if they choose to pursue an economics Ph.D., they have the capacity to succeed in it! Even students who seem highly capable may suffer from imposter syndrome, especially minoritized people and especially women—it can make all the difference in the world for someone to say out loud and explicitly, “You can do this!”

## Mentoring Within the Curriculum

Mentoring by faculty can occur in relation to a course or in academic or research advising, and costs nothing—it just requires that faculty members change how we interact with our students. Instructors must recognize that only part of our role is to convey information; we also have a crucial opportunity to fill in mentoring gaps while we interact with our students. We are authority figures and what we say has a bigger impact than we may realize. Many of your colleagues with Ph.D.s pursued that degree because at some point, some professor said to them, “Hey, you should think about going to grad school!”

The size of your class may determine what kind of mentoring you can offer individual students. In a small class, you likely have a great deal of interaction with individual students in person and electronically; taking the extra minute to truly hear and see your student when they ask for help on a problem set can make all the difference. In a larger class, encouraging emails, even if programmatically sent out—for example, to the students with the top 20% of exam grades—can be surprisingly effective. Similarly, if you are an academic or research advisor, between the focused conversations on those subjects, you can easily find moments to slip in a little of what I call “guerilla mentoring.”

## Mentoring Within the Department

Idiosyncratic professor-to-student mentoring can be very meaningful, but students can fall between the cracks. Departmental mentoring programs can provide

broader support, often by leveraging not only faculty but students, and, in some cases, staff. These can take many forms, but I’ll describe a few examples.

First, mentoring can be built around coursework. At Williams College, we used funds from the Undergraduate Women in Economics (UWE, Avilova and Goldin, 2018) initiative to jumpstart a tutoring lab we call the Economic Resource Center. This drop-in center is staffed by paid student tutors who are trained to tutor for our core courses. It is open every weeknight, and is extremely popular. This required some funding to continue after UWE ended, but Williams eventually folded it into the College’s academic support services.

Second, extracurricular mentoring opportunities can be set up between current students and alumni, professionals, or faculty. Alumni can be brought back to serve on panels, in person or virtually, to provide advice and guidance about future paths. In particular, to encourage minoritized students to enter the economics Ph.D. pipeline, organize panels about economics Ph.D. programs, research assistant jobs, and professional development and mentorship opportunities such as the American Economic Association (which I will return to shortly). Panels are particularly effective if they feature role models who share minoritized identities. For example, at Williams, we have had virtual panels with diverse alumni as well as others interested in diversifying the economics profession. As another example, we used funds from UWE to pay for small “coffee chats,” each featuring one professor and a handful of randomly-chosen students who identify as women, intended to not just provide mentoring at the moment but also create a culture that encourages women students to seek mentorship from faculty.

Third, peer mentoring programs can be extremely effective, both for the early career students who receive guidance and for the more advanced students who grow into the responsibility of supporting their peers.

---

*... you can easily find moments to slip in a little of what I call “guerilla mentoring.”*

---

continues on page 7 **↓**

At Williams, we have implemented peer mentoring through student-driven initiatives, including one-time events like a “Women of Color Pre-Registration Advice Dinner” and ongoing events like a “Peer Mentoring Families” program that matched students into groups for the course of a semester. That these were student initiated shows that our students can teach us a great deal about what they actually need from mentorship and how to those needs can best be served.

## Mentoring Outside the Institution

Finally, mentoring programs outside your institution can provide invaluable additional support. Several outstanding programs help undergraduate students from minoritized identities feel stronger and more resilient through their connections. Some outstanding programs are:

- The American Economic Association Summer Program (<https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/AEASP>) is a two-month training program for students or graduates from minoritized identities who may want to pursue economics Ph.D.s, and has in recent years been coupled with a mentoring program called Inclusive Peer Onsite Distance (IPOD) that keeps students engaged in mentoring groups with a senior scholar for up to three years.
- The Becker Friedman Institute at University of Chicago has a summer program called the Expanding Diversity in Economics Summer Institute (<https://bf.uchicago.edu/ede/>), a three-week summer workshop focused on skill-building, exploration of economics, and networking.
- Research in Color (<https://www.researchincolor.org/>) matches each mentee with a professional economist as a mentor for an eight-month long mentoring program shaped around the writing of a research paper that could serve as a writing sample for an application to an economics Ph.D. program.

These and similar programs provide funding to eligible students, and most are available for either current undergraduate students or students who have completed their undergraduate degrees.

## Conclusion

Making mentoring broadly accessible is about building a web of support that ensures everyone can reach for the same goals and make the same contributions, acknowledging that some demographics face barriers in seeking these ends. Many of the best ways to ensure mentoring is available to all of your undergraduate students take little or no resources but simply require thoughtfulness and attention to the needs of individual students. When we succeed, we are rewarded with the joy of seeing our students thrive and, if we are lucky, we get to welcome them into the economics profession to help advance our field further.

## References

- Avilova, T., Goldin, C., 2018. What Can UWE Do for Economics? *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series* No. 24189.
- Bayer, A., Hoover, G.A., Washington, E., 2020. How You Can Work to Increase the Presence and Improve the Experience of Black, Latinx, and Native American People in the Economics Profession. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 34, 193–219.
- Canning, E.A., Muenks, K., Green, D.J., Murphy, M.C., 2019. STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation in their classes. *Science Advances* 5, eaau4734.
- Ginther, D.K., Currie, J.M., Blau, F.D., Croson, R.T.A., 2020. Can Mentoring Help Female Assistant Professors in Economics? An Evaluation by Randomized Trial. *AEA Papers and Proceedings* 110, 205–209.
- Kamal, K., Jebaraj, M., Kali, R., 2023. *Survey of the Labor Market for New Ph.D. Hires in Economics 2023–2024*.
- Montgomery, B., 2017. From deficits to possibilities: Mentoring lessons from plants on cultivating individual growth through environmental assessment and optimization.
- Montgomery, B.L., 2021. *Lessons from plants*. Harvard University Press.
- Montgomery, B.L., Dodson, J.E., Johnson, S.M., 2014. Guiding the Way: Mentoring Graduate Students and Junior Faculty for Sustainable Academic Careers. *SAGE Open* 4, 2158244014558043.

---

*At Williams, we have implemented peer mentoring through student-driven initiatives . . . students can teach us a great deal about what they actually need . . .*

---

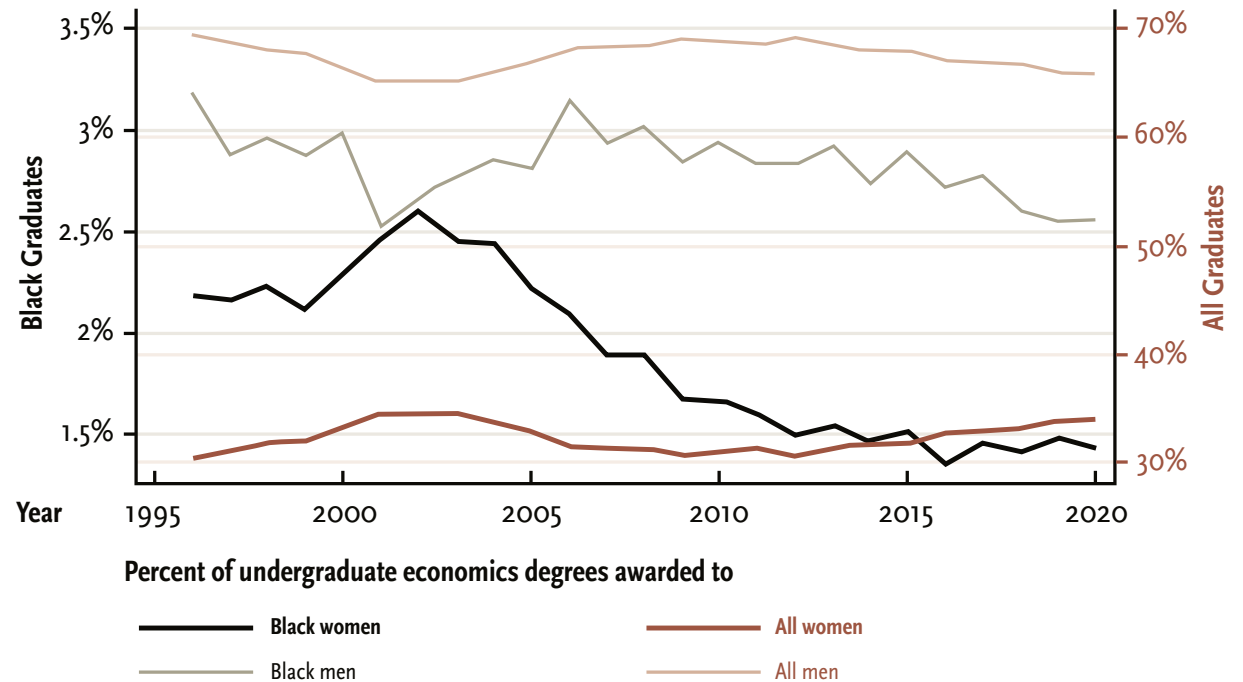
# The Pipeline Problem for Undergraduate Women of Color and Interventions Proposed to Address it

Rebecca Sen Choudhury and  
Bola Olaniyan

The severe underrepresentation of women and minorities in the economics profession has been a long-standing concern. Existing at the intersection of gender and minority representation, the situation looks even grimmer for women of color. While the lack of diversity percolates through all stages of the “pipeline,” it begins with a substantial lack of representation of minority women at the undergraduate level. In 2020, 34.1 percent of all undergraduate economics degrees were awarded to women with black women being the recipients of only 1.4 percent of the degrees conferred (see figure). The male-female gender gap remains a persistent concern in the field. However, it is also disturbing to see that for black women, the numbers have declined consistently since 2003, going from 2.5 percent to 1.4 percent whereas for all women they have increased in the last decade. This further raises the question of whether the initiatives being taken to improve diversity within the profession adequately reflect the experiences, concerns, and needs of women of color. Consequently, this is where consciously building the pipeline becomes especially important.

Interventions proposed to address systemic barriers that affect minority students’ decision of choosing economics as a field of study speak to several different areas of action. Evidence from randomized controlled trials (RCTs) have shown that dissemination of information through outreach by faculty and departments regarding the breadth of the field and the potential career paths open to economics majors can be effective in offsetting knowledge gaps, student misperceptions and attracting more minority women into the major (Bayer et al. 2019; Bedard et al. 2021). Research has

## Undergraduate Economics Degrees Awarded



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

also highlighted aspects of mentoring such as the “role model effect” and “bridge mentoring programs” that are critical to the success of minority women in the field (Bayer and Rouse, 2016). More recent work has further discussed the need to create opportunities for “proactive” faculty mentoring (Bayer et al. 2020a). For instance, faculty members showing support for a mentee’s decision to major in the field by bringing them

continues on page 9 ↓



into one's own research network and encouraging them to pursue research related to race and other aspects of their identity can go a long way in diversifying the field and profession. Use of instructional content and presentation methods in introductory level courses in a way that minority women find interesting and relevant on a broader scale, has also been considered as pivotal to changing their perception of the discipline and increasing their interest to major in economics (Bayer et al. 2020b).

While there is much discussion over the details of why the lack of representation and what the best path forward is, we will instead focus on initiatives undertaken by Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Given that HBCUs are uniquely positioned within the higher education landscape in creating initiatives, policies, and practices specifically tailored to meet the needs of people of color, they deserve a closer look! In this article we provide both academic and industry initiatives and interventions at HBCUs that work together to not only increase the number of minority women in economics, but also provide a space to find hands-on training and thrive in the field.

### **The Differential Impact of Economics Departments at HBCUs—A Combination of Experiential Education and Supportive Environments**

Despite various challenges and constraints, economics departments at HBCUs have been consistently successful in producing black undergraduate degree holders in the field. This year at the ASSA meetings, Chantal D. Smith and Omari Swinton's presentation on "HBCUs and Economics Departments" highlighted the similar successes of some economics departments at HBCUs, which include: participation in some pooling of resources (consortiums or state education systems); implementation of innovative curriculum, student-led (and faculty supported) economics clubs; partnerships with external economic research institutions and

organizations; and faculty mentoring that tends to serve as the primary strength for these departments (Smith and Swinton, 2022). More broadly, tremendous support for students at these institutions via strong alumni network, strategically designed summer academic programs and facilitation of student research experiences is considered among the vital factors that form the "secret sauce" of HBCUs in improving black student outcomes at the undergraduate level when compared to other institutions (Price and Visceiza, 2022).

To further this discussion, we would like to highlight some features of undergraduate economics programs at three HBCUs—Howard University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical (A&T) State University and Spelman College—that have been particularly successful in improving the undergraduate pipeline in one or both ways: (i) through their efforts of attracting students into the major in substantial numbers over the years (ii) by building an environment that prepares some of these students for advanced studies in the field (Minority Report, 2023). With regards to (i) Howard has specifically focused on outreach related activities that address information gaps about the broader application of economics to help students make more informed career choices. On the other hand, to appeal to varied interests of students, NC (A&T) State University and Spelman have taken the approach of a more robust curriculum that offers several undergraduate concentrations (e.g., business, law). Spelman has also relied on the "role model effect" facilitated by a "Distinguished Speaker Series" with women economists of color sharing their professional career goals and journey in economics. To fulfill (ii), interventions at these institutions have primarily targeted the acquisition of "technical training" (mathematical and data analysis skills) required to be successful in economics Ph.D. programs. In fact, lack of mathematical ability has been cited as potential explanation for the decline in economics degrees conferred

---

*... faculty members showing support for a mentee's decision to major in the field by bringing them into one's own research network and encouraging them to pursue research related to race and other aspects of their identity can go a long way in diversifying the field and profession.*

---

to Black women (Sharpe et al. 2018). To enhance students' math preparedness, Spelman in particular, has taken some noteworthy initiatives. The department has partnered with an established six-week "Summer Bridge Program" for incoming first-year students that provides them with the mathematical foundation needed to withstand the quantitative rigor of an economics degree program. Moreover, the department also offers a BS degree with a more quantitative curriculum to specifically prepare students interested in graduate school. All three HBCUs facilitate various year-round and summer research experiences for their students both in-house and through several formal partnerships with external networks, some of which even lead to students co-authoring on peer-reviewed publications.

So, there has been a much-needed proliferation in recent years of a range of remedial interventions that are being explored at different institutions. Given the multiple drivers of under-representation, it is perhaps difficult to argue whether some deserve priority over others. Also, since these interventions are relatively new, the overall impact is yet to be seen but the interest in economics graduate programs as measured by applications to graduate programs, Research Assistant positions at the Fed and applications to graduate preparation programs such as PREDOC or the AEA Summer program have increased over the years.

However, a particular area which we believe has not been explored much and where HBCUs can make a big difference is that of "individual centered mentoring and advising" (a concept discussed in Montgomery et al. 2014; Montgomery et al. 2018b). Faculty at PWIs and other less diverse institutions, no matter how well disposed, more than often do not have the first-hand experience or the knowledge of the struggles and needs of minority women to be able to provide them with the right kind of support early on in the profession. What women of color need is much more than "generic advice" (Lisa D. Cook~ CSWEP Newsletter, 2019)—they

need to be heard and understood! They require the type of mentoring that focuses on offering specific advice and insights based on personal bonding and rapport with faculty, instills within them a sense of belonging and has long lasting impacts on their confidence and self-esteem. Such mentoring can not only help them recognize their specific skills and abilities but also use those traits effectively to achieve their goals and aspirations. Together with their unwavering mission and organically developed initiatives, HBCUs are in the best position to implement such mentoring strategies that help target root causes of the pipeline problem and bring about structural changes within the system.

### **Creating a "Pathway for Successful Careers" in Economics—The Value of the Sadie Collective**

On the industry side we have seen evidence of sectors looking to diversify their workforce and in need of those who have studied economics and have the technical skills/training to excel in their roles. The Sadie Collective stepped into the picture in 2019 in response to the very same issues outlined at the start of this article. At The Sadie Collective, our initiatives exist to work in tandem with specialized programs such as those at Spelman, but also in tandem with young Black women and youth that may not have traditional access to them.

The Sadie Collective is committed to centering Black women in the study of economics<sup>1</sup> by creating signature programming accessible at different stages of learning and professional life. This mission is in direct response to the shocking statistic that Black women make up only .05% of doctoral degrees in economics. Here are the few ways the Collective are working to inspire curiosity in the study of economics and help those that commit, find a path to professional success.

<sup>1</sup> The Sadie Collective also centers those in disciplines such as public policy, data science, and finance.

---

*Together with their unwavering mission and organically developed initiatives, HBCUs are in the best position to implement such mentoring strategies that help target root causes of the pipeline problem and bring about structural changes within the system.*

---

continues on page 11 ↓

**Annual Conference**

The Sadie T.M. Alexander Conference in Economics and Related Fields (SACE) started as a way to bring young Black women economists together and has since bloomed into incorporating programming that fosters retention in the field. We have reached over 1000+ in 5 years. Our annual research reception, presented in partnership with Brookings Institution has highlighted the research of over 15 Black and brown women in front of audiences that they may not normally have access to. Typically, a two-day affair, the conference features 20+ speakers, workshops, and a career fair with an average of 20 organizations recruiting for roles from entry level to specialized experience. Conference goers get the unique opportunity to be in an intimate setting in a renown think tank to discuss and reflect on the various ideas and experiences that are shared. SACE has also committed time and space to provide mentorship and celebration of our membership

**Exploring Career Pathways in Economics and Related Fields Conference**

In 2020, The Sadie Collective embarked on a multi-year partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (FRBC) to present a one-day seminar that has two main goals. The first is to connect undergraduates and high schoolers in the Chicago area with the work that FRBC does, and second, to provide a space for networking and hands-on learning. This particular partnership is a highlight of ours as we have connected Sadie Collective members to internships at FRBC through this conference, some of which have become Research Assistants. The Exploring Career Pathways in Economics and Related Fields conference and our partnership with FRBC has provided a direct pipeline from academics to the profession.

**High School Engagement**

In 2021, The Sadie Collective won a grant from the Goldman Sachs One Million Black Women initiative

to work specifically on high school outreach with both dedicated and integrated programming. We decided to expand our reach to high schoolers knowing that introducing the concepts of economics before undergraduate will increase the probability of women entering the field during their freshmen and sophomore year, in time for adequate mathematical and coding course work completion. In our pilot year we made deep connections with a high school in Virginia and Chicago. Direct feedback from our high school attendees have extended their gratitude for showing the intersections of economics and other topics they care about. One student wrote: “Previously I had never seen how impactful economics really is, Environmental/Green economics provides us with the knowledge of long-term shifts in weather and greenhouse gases to someday lessen the impact of climate change and racial economics enables the black community with the tools to break down systemic racism.” This early exposure to make these connections is crucial to strengthening the pipeline for not only an academic focus, but a career path.

**Way forward**

We know there is no one way forward to address the “pipeline problem” in the economics field. We do know that each interaction that these initiatives reach, whether through an institution or through an external program, that progress is made towards increasing minority women in the spaces that need their perspectives and skills. We work diligently to refine and innovate until the profession reflects our reality.

**References**

- Bayer, A., & Rouse, C. E. (2016). “Diversity in the economics profession: A new attack on an old problem.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 30(4), 221-42.
- Bayer, A., Bhanot, S. P., & Lozano, F. (2019). “Does simple information provision lead to more diverse classrooms? Evidence from a field experiment on undergraduate economics.” In *AEA Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 109, pp. 110-14)
- Bayer, A., Bhanot, S. P., Bronchetti, E. T., & O’Connell, S. A. (2020a). “Diagnosing the learning environment for diverse students in introductory economics: An analysis of relevance, belonging, and growth mindsets.” In *AEA Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 110, pp. 294-98).
- Bayer, A., Bruich, G., Chetty, R., & Housiaux, A. (2020b). “Expanding and diversifying the pool of undergraduates who study economics: Insights from a new introductory course at Harvard.” *The Journal of Economic Education*, (Vol. 51, pp.364-379).
- Bedard, K., Dodd, J., & Lundberg, S. (2021). “Can positive feedback encourage female and minority undergraduates into economics?” In *AEA Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 111, pp. 128-32).
- Cook, D.L. (2019). “Mentoring undergraduate women who are students of color. Best Practices in Mentoring Underrepresented Minority Women in Economics: An Introduction.” *CSWEP News*, (Issue.1,pp. 8-9)
- Hill, D., Johnson, A. W., Smith, C., Tribble, R (2023). “Undergraduate economics at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.” *The Minority Report* (Issue. 15,pp. 9-11)
- Montgomery, B.L., Dodson, J.E., & Johnson S.M. (2014). “Guiding the way: Mentoring graduate students and junior faculty for sustainable academic careers.” *SAGE Open*, 4, doi:10.1177/215824401455804.
- Montgomery, B.L. (2018b). “From deficits to possibilities: Mentoring lessons from plants on cultivating individual growth through environmental assessment and optimization” *Public Philosophy Journal*, 1, doi:10.25335/M5/PPJ.1.1.
- Price, N.G., & Visceiza, A (2022) “What can historically black colleges and universities teach about improving higher education outcomes for black students?” Working Paper.
- Smith, D.C., and Swinton, H. O. (2023) “HBCUs and economics departments.” Working Paper.

# Attracting and Retaining Women Non-Traditional Students in Economics

Marie T. Mora

Many times we hear about strengthening pipelines as a means to diversify the economics profession with respect to women and other traditionally underrepresented groups in economics. Recent attention has started shifting toward pathways into the profession with the realization that many of today's college students are not in the traditional age range of 18 to 22, nor do they necessarily attend a residential campus. And even if they start college at 18, they do not necessarily start at a four-year institution. Given that socioeconomic backgrounds among Ph.D. economists are less representative than those in the average Ph.D. field (Schultz and Stansbury 2022), non-traditional students, including adult learners, first-generation college students, working students, part-time students, and those who might primarily be enrolled in online classes, in my view represent relatively under-tapped populations to increase diversity and inclusion in the economics profession.

## Reconsider Schedule and Format of Networking Meetings/Events

We know from the literature and evidence that mentoring and networking are key to attracting and retaining women in economics and that student organizations at many colleges and universities, such as Women in Economics organizations, serve as excellent recruiting and networking tools for women. They also serve to foment peer mentoring opportunities. However, traditionally structured student organizations might not be optimal at public urban colleges and universities (including my current institution of Metropolitan State University of Denver) that have large numbers of non-traditional students with external time demands, such as working

off-campus, children, or other family or household obligations. Well-structured plans for meetings and networking activities scheduled long in advance will help these non-traditional students feel like they belong to a community. Meeting times can be set up on a rotating basis to include evening and weekend hours, with advance notice. Moreover, encouraging student parents to bring their children and other family members to events should increase their participation and sense of belonging.

## Integrate Podcasts and Webinars with Women Economists into Virtual and Hybrid Meetings

Student organizations that only meet in person during weekdays might inadvertently exclude numerous students who work or primarily take online classes. While there are many benefits from having in-person meetings, hosting at least some of the meetings in a virtual (or hybrid) format should increase access and participation from those who cannot be physically present on campus for any reason. To keep students engaged, some of the virtual/hybrid meetings could involve discussing podcasts and webinars that feature women economists, including the [Women in Economics Podcast Series](#) from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, the Fed's various *Women in Economics Symposiums*, CSWEP's career development webinars and videos, Sadie Collective events, and others. This would serve the additional purpose to help attract and retain non-traditional women students in economics. Evidence has been presented over the years suggesting that exposing students to women economists can be effective to attract them into the field (e.g., Ray 1995; Johnson

---

*Well-structured plans for meetings and networking activities scheduled long in advance will help these non-traditional students feel like they belong to a community.*

---

continues on page 13 ↓

2019; Porter and Serra, 2020). In my experience, non-traditional students are not different in this regard.

### **Use Digital Platforms and Social Media for Women Economists to Expand Student Networks**

Moreover, many live conferences and events such as the *Women in Economics Symposiums* are now held in a hybrid format, meaning that in-person, virtual, and hybrid watch parties can be organized to engage broader audiences in real time. Such opportunities made possible by recent technological advances can create a powerful sense of belonging among diverse non-traditional students, as they realize they can be part of larger and supportive regional and national networks even if they are the only “one” in their academic departments or programs. Beronda Montgomery (2018), for example, points to the use of social media and digital platforms to build and sustain diverse networks in STEM fields.

### **Create a Sense of Belonging for Women in Online Economics Classes**

When considering online students, it is likely that many of the strategies found to increase the sense of belonging within in-person economics classes will work in online classes too. Such strategies include sending students messages that encourage them to take additional economics courses or major in economics as well as offering to write letters of recommendation (e.g., see Bayer, Bhanot and Lozano 2019; Cook 2019). I should note these are strategies I have found to be helpful over the years with my own students, although I have not taught on-line. These types of individualized interactions with faculty members also reassures online students they are being seen by, and matter to, their instructors, despite the modality of the course. In addition, the increased sense of belonging among non-traditional college students might go a long way toward reversing the relatively small presence of first-generation college students and low socioeconomic diversity among Ph.D. economists observed by Schultz and Stansbury (2022).

### **Reach Out to Students Who Stop Out**

Another possibility in terms of pathways would be for Departments of Economics to keep track of women (and other) majors who “stopped out” of college—a tendency that increased during COVID-19 (and not only in economics). Maintaining contact with students who leave the institution is a way for them to continue to feel connected and increase their likelihood of reenrolling. There are numerous examples in the higher education industry. For example, a recent post by *Anthology* notes that “... employing aligned messages across a range of mediums will improve overall responsiveness—we see great results when a text message precedes a phone call and when a phone call is followed by an email... That said, the trusty telephone should remain at the core of your outreach strategy.” According to their data, “...students are three times more likely to reenroll if you can engage them via phone” (Smith 2022).

### **Consider a Holistic Approach to Cultivate Diversity and Inclusion in Economics**

To take a more holistic approach that extends beyond the notion of a pipeline, moreover, it is worth considering an ecosystem framework as described by Montgomery (e.g., 2019), recognizing that the lack of diversity in economics reflects structural problems with the pipeline itself. Mentors and others in leadership positions have the responsibility to fix the systemic problems in the profession rather than trying to advise women and other traditionally underrepresented groups how to navigate the broken system. While the points discussed above can play a role in helping women navigate the current system, we need to consider how such strategies can intentionally be deployed as part of a broader approach to cultivate an inclusive ecosystem to attract and retain non-traditional women students in the economics profession.

### **References**

- Bayer, Amanda, Syon P. Bhanot and Fernando Lozano. 2019. “Does Simple Information Provision Lead to More Diverse Classrooms? Evidence from a Field Experiment on Undergraduate Economics.” *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings* 109: 110–14.
- Cook Lisa D. 2019. “Mentoring Undergraduate Women Who Are Students of Color.” *CSWEP News*, Issue 1, pp. 8–10. <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=9317>
- Johnson, India. 2019. “You Belong Here: Promoting a Sense of Belonging among Underrepresented Minority Women in Economics.” *CSWEP News*, Issue 1, pp. 6–7. <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=9317>
- Montgomery, Beronda L. 2019. “Mentoring as Environmental Stewardship.” *CSWEP News*, Issue 1, pp. 10–11. <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=9317>
- Montgomery, Beronda L. 2018. “Building and Sustaining Diverse Functioning Networks Using Social Media and Digital Platforms to Improve Diversity and Inclusivity.” *Frontiers in Digital Humanities*.
- Porter, Catherine, and Danila Serra. 2020. “Gender Differences in the Choice of Major: The Importance of Female Role Models.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 12(3): 226–54.
- Ray, Margaret A. 1995. “Student Perceptions of Gender in the Economics Profession: An Empirical Case Study.” *Feminist Teacher* 9(2): 84–88.
- Schultz, Robert, and Anna Stansbury. 2022. “Socioeconomic Diversity of Economics PhDs.” Peterson Institute for International Economics Working Paper #22–4, Washington, DC, March 2022. <https://www.piie.com/sites/default/files/documents/wp22-4.pdf>
- Smith, Jason. 2022. “Stopping Student Stop out: The Latest Data and How to Address It.” *Anthology*, November 29, 2022. <https://www.anthology.com/blog/stopping-student-stop-out-the-latest-data-and-how-to-address-it>.

### **Links in this article**

- I. Women in Economics Podcast: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/timely-topics/women-in-economics>

## Pathways to Research and Doctoral Careers

Stephen Lamb and  
Pietro Veronesi

### Pre-docs: A Challenge and an Opportunity

Last year, over 500 college graduates were hired as pre-doctoral research assistants (pre-docs or RAs) in the United States. Pre-docs are full-time, post-baccalaureate research assistantships at universities and other research institutions. Data from several Ph.D. programs suggest that nearly 50% of applicants to economics programs have had pre-doc experience, and the proportion is even higher for admitted students. This trend poses a challenge and an opportunity to any of us advising undergraduates interested in research. The challenge is that any lack of diversity in pre-doc programs will feed into Ph.D. programs, making the issue of under-representation possibly worse going forward. The opportunity is to exploit this trend, remove frictions that may keep talented students away from these programs, and expand the talent pool by engaging, preparing, informing, and mentoring students from all backgrounds. Diversity in pre-doc programs will then feed into the Ph.D. pipeline and eventually faculty. The pre-doc path provides some benefits that other pathways to the doctorate lack:

- Pre-docs are typically two-year salaried jobs. For students unsure about an academic career, this is an easier and more affordable commitment than a six-year Ph.D. program.
- In Ph.D. applications, pre-docs have a similar credentialing factor to master's degrees, without the cost of tuition, lowering financial barriers to pipeline entry.
- Pre-docs typically take additional courses, like Real Analysis, at their institutions, thereby increasing their human capital for a successful application to Ph.D. programs.

- Working alongside faculty at research-intensive institutions, pre-docs are able not only to learn about a research career, but also to receive recommendation letters from well-known researchers, an asset for Ph.D. applications (Posselt 2018).

Exposure to information about pre-docs and preparation for research careers in general has been, and in part still is, asymmetrical, with undergraduates enrolled in top institutions better informed than others. Pre-doc programs are tools to expand access to research careers to all talented undergraduates, promoting excellence in research by expanding the talent pool. In order to realize that opportunity, it is our hope that faculty across the profession will advise their students about the benefits of such opportunities.

### Pathways to REsearch and DOctoral Careers (PREDOC)

Research careers have a hidden curriculum, particularly in economics. Too often, students cultivate an interest in research late in their undergraduate studies, only to learn that they need a mathematics background independent of the economics major, as well as research assistant (RA) experience (and concomitant letters of reference), to be competitive for Ph.D. admissions (Sharpe 2017). Sometimes such extra-major experience is out of reach because their undergraduate institution does not offer these resources. Other times, the elective coursework that may inspire interest in research comes too late to start the necessary sequence of math classes, find an RAship, or attempt a degree thesis. Faced with the challenge of needing further qualifications after graduation, students have had to turn to expensive master's degrees, or leave the academic pathway altogether.

continues on page 15 ↓

---

*Pre-docs are full-time, post-baccalaureate research assistantships at universities and other research institutions.*

---

Students face barriers of information, education, credentialing, and financial resources. The PREDOC Consortium, a consortium of universities and research institutions created in summer 2020, is working to use the dramatic rise of pre-doctoral opportunities to combat these frictions.

1. **Informational Frictions.** Time is a major constraint for students, particularly those who are financially constrained. It is hard for them to spend time to find existing opportunities. Through a major outreach effort, PREDOC has convinced all US hiring institutions to post their pre-doc job ads on PREDOC's website (<https://predoc.org/opportunities>). We then actively advertise such positions through our large network of undergraduates, including Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and other similar institutions, reducing the search costs for these positions. We also hold dozens of information sessions at these schools.<sup>1</sup> In 2021/22, over 516 pre-docs were advertised on PREDOC.org, and as of the time of this writing, PREDOC.org has had over 270,000 visits (over 120,000 unique visitors) since launch in October 2020. A survey of pre-doc applicants shows that PREDOC.org has quickly become the main information hub for pre-doc opportunities.

As a one-stop information hub, the PREDOC website also contains a wealth of information about graduate studies, educational materials, and career paths, in addition to celebrating the wide array of research questions tackled in the quantitative social sciences. The website makes visible the invisible curriculum for research careers, as it dispels myths about what research in fields like economics and business is, and shows how research aligns with students' broader interests.

2. **Educational and Credentialing Frictions.** PREDOC's summer course, which is free and pays students a stipend, provides students with both the technical skills necessary for research, and motivation to consider a research career in the first place (Bayer et al. 2020). Inspiring lecturers focus on pressing topics like wealth inequality, climate change, discrimination, and so on, topics that undergraduates do not always connect with economics and business. For instance, this summer, students received lectures from Greg Bruich (Harvard, main instructor), Raj Chetty (Harvard), Ellora Derenoncourt (Princeton), John Friedman (Brown), Nathaniel Hendren (Harvard), Frances Moore (Davis), and Winnie van Dijk (Harvard). Students report that these lectures were "mind blowing," and that they had no idea that economics research could be so inspiring. PREDOC received over 1,700 applications, showing the strong appetite for such courses. The cohort was 47.5% female, 35% male, and 17.5% non-binary, with 47.5% URM students. 32.5% were Pell Grant recipients (indicating high financial need), and 62.5% self-reported as first-generation.
3. **RA Funding Program.** Exposure to innovation spurs new innovation (Bell et al. 2019), and undergraduate research in particular is strongly linked to developing research identity and enrollment in graduate school (Hathaway, Nagda, and Gregerman 2002; Maton et al. 2016). PREDOC is exploiting the tools many faculty developed during the COVID lockdown to manage RAs remotely, to facilitate the matching of researchers with students who may not have research opportunities at their own schools. Researchers are typically at research-intensive institutions, and provide essential undergraduate research experiences, as well as letters of reference that add an important dimension to applications of students who are not studying at R-1 universities. PREDOC also advertises

---

*Students face barriers of information, education, credentialing, and financial resources.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Email [info@predoc.org](mailto:info@predoc.org) to request an information session at your school, or to volunteer as a speaker at one of our sessions (virtual or in-person).

part-time RA opportunities broadly (<https://predoc.org/ra-opportunities>), using a resume book of students who have participated in PREDOC Education initiatives to encourage PIs to continue the development of these promising students.

4. **Faculty Mentoring Resources.** Because PREDOC focuses on both the supply and demand side of the pathway to research careers, our Faculty Mentoring Resources (<https://predoc.org/for-faculty>) ensure that those recruiting pre-docs have access to best practices in hiring and mentoring, including de-biasing strategies. PREDOC hosts multiple events annually, including Best Practices in Diverse Hiring and Mentoring Across Difference, to ensure PIs have the tools they need as hiring managers and supervisors to recruit, hire, support, and empower their pre-docs and foster an inclusive climate.

### Potential Concerns about Pre-doc Programs

There are some concerns that come with pre-doc programs that students may raise:

1. **Time to degree.** Some worry that pre-doc programs may increase the time to degree, as it adds two years of work before the Ph.D.. There is evidence that this worry may be exaggerated. Students have always come to the Ph.D. through different paths, such as master's programs, industry work, or straight from undergraduate. Pre-docs provide another path. One reassuring statistic is that the median years between earning a bachelor's degree and Ph.D. in Economics has remained stable as pre-docs have become more popular.<sup>2</sup>
2. **Exploitation from faculty.** Some have voiced concern that pre-docs risk being exploited as "cheap labor" by faculty, with the threat of not writing strong letters of recommendation. Such situations must indeed be dealt with at the school level by running

best practices programs for the faculty and instituting retaliation-free grievance processes for pre-docs. Following best practices and building a welcoming environment where pre-docs can flourish is in the interest of hiring institutions, as the increasing competition for the best pre-docs will steer the best pre-docs to gravitate toward more welcoming programs.

### Conclusions

As the quantitative social sciences are asking more ambitious questions with bigger data, pre-doc programs and the support they give to research faculty are here to stay. Without decisive intervention to remove informational, educational, credentialing, and financial frictions, pre-doc programs may make a bad situation worse in terms of diversity in the Ph.D. pipeline. However, if we advise our students effectively and live up to the promise of pre-doc opportunities, such programs may in fact be powerful tools to bring under-represented groups into the Ph.D. pipeline. It is difficult to overstate the excitement students express when we run information sessions showing them that they can make a living answering questions they are passionate about. With so many options before them, undergraduates rely on the advice of faculty they trust. With the help of faculty advisors across the profession, we can help students take advantage of this new pre-doctoral pathway, and one day welcome them as colleagues.

### References

- Bayer, Amanda, Gregory Bruich, Raj Chetty, and Andrew Hoxiaux. 2020. "Expanding and Diversifying the Pool of Undergraduates Who Study Economics: Insights from a New Introductory Course at Harvard." *Journal of Economic Education* 51 (3–4): 364–79.
- Bell, Alex, Raj Chetty, Xavier Jaravel, Neviana Petkova, and John van Reenen. 2019. "Do Tax Cuts Produce More Einsteins? The Impacts of Financial Incentives vs. Exposure to Innovation on the Supply of Inventors." NBER Working Paper 25493.
- Hathaway, Russel S., Biren A. Nagda, and Sandra R. Gregerman. 2002. "The Relationship of Undergraduate Research Participation to Graduate and Professional Education Pursuit: An Empirical Study." *Journal of College Student Development* 43 (5): 614–31.
- Maton, Kenneth I., Tiffany S. Beason, Surbhi Godsay, Mariano R. Sto. Domingo, TaShara C. Bailey, Shuyan Sun, and Freeman A. Hrabowski III. 2016. "Outcomes and Processes in the Meyerhoff Scholars Program: STEM PhD Completion, Sense of Community, Perceived Program Benefit, Science Identity, and Research Self-Efficacy." *CBE - Life Sciences Education* 15 (3).
- Posselt, Julie R. 2018. "Trust Networks: A New Perspective on Pedigree and the Ambiguities of Admissions." *The Review of Higher Education* 41 (4): 497–521.
- Sharpe, Rhonda Vonshay. 2017. "We've Built the Pipeline: What's the Problem and What's Next?" *CSWEP News* 2017 (2): 10–11.

<sup>2</sup> NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates, Table 1-12: <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf23300/data-tables#group1>



## In Memoriam Rebecca Blank, Former Chair of CSWEP

On February 17, 2023, Rebecca Blank, Chancellor Emerita of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, former Acting Secretary of the Department of Commerce, former Dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, and Distinguished Fellow of the American Economic Association passed away after a battle with cancer. Rebecca “Becky” Blank was one of the most accomplished and influential economists of her generation. Her research focused on labor supply, unemployment, the role of gender and race in labor markets, the economics of poverty, and welfare reform. She authored several books and close to 100 articles.

Prior to all of these significant, national leadership accomplishments, Rebecca “Becky” Blank was a member from 1990–1996 and chair from 1993–1996 of the Committee for the Status of Women in the Economics Profession. As the leader of CSWEP, Becky was instrumental in creating the CSWEP Annual Survey to gather accurate data on women’s progress in the profession. The survey continues to this day. Becky’s commitment to furthering women in the economics profession lasted throughout her career, including making time as Chancellor to share career insights with the Women in Economics organization at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Becky Blank was a smart, pragmatic, and inspirational leader who blazed a trail for women in the economics profession and increased opportunities for those of us that have followed. ■



### Join the CSWEP Liaison Network!

Three cheers for the 150+ economists who have agreed to serve as CSWEP Liaisons! We are already seeing the positive effects of your hard work with increased demand for CSWEP paper sessions, fellowships and other opportunities. Thank you! Dissemination of information—including notice of mentoring events, new editions of the CSWEP News and reporting requests for our Annual Survey and Questionnaire—is an important charge of CSWEP. For this key task, we need your help. Visit [CSWEP.org](https://www.cswep.org) to see the list of current liaisons and departments for whom we’d like to identify a liaison. We are also seeking liaisons from outside the academy. To indicate your willingness to serve, send an e-mail with your contact information to [info@cswep.org](mailto:info@cswep.org).

### What is CSWEP?

CSWEP (the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession) is a standing committee of the American Economic Association charged with serving professional women economists in academia, government agencies and elsewhere by promoting their careers and monitoring their progress.

CSWEP activities endeavor to raise the awareness among men and women of the challenges that are unique to women’s careers and can be addressed with a wide variety of actions, from inclusive searches to formal and informal mentoring activities. CSWEP freely disseminates information on how the profession works as well as advice to junior economists. We intend this information to be of value to all economists, male or female, minority or not.

#### Annually, CSWEP

- Organizes mentoring workshops, paper presentations sessions at the annual AEA Meetings, and professional development sessions at the annual meetings of the four regional economics associations (the Eastern, Mid-Western, Southern and Western);
- Conducts a survey and compiles a report on the gender composition of faculty and students in academic economics departments in the United States;
- Publishes four editions of the *CSWEP News*, containing a feature section written by senior economists that highlights career advice or other topics of interest to the economics profession; and
- Awards the Carolyn Shaw Bell Award, given to a person for their outstanding work to promote the careers of women economists as well as the Elaine Bennett Research Prize, given biennially to a young woman economist for fundamental contributions to academic economics.

Our business meeting is held during the annual AEA Meetings and is open to all economists. It is a time for us to confer awards and celebrate recipients, present the Annual Report on Women in the Economics Profession and to hear your input on CSWEP’s activities. The CSWEP Board meets three times yearly and we encourage you to attend our business meeting or contact a Board Member directly to convey your ideas for furthering CSWEP’s mission.

Visit [cswep.org](https://www.cswep.org) for more information.

# Calls, Announcements, and Sessions at Upcoming Meetings

## Summary

### Call for Applications

1. Successfully Navigating Your Economics Ph.D.: A Mentoring Workshop for 3rd and 4th Year Women/Non-Binary Economics Ph.D. Students.  
**Deadline: 28 July 2023**
2. Successfully Navigating Your Ph.D.: A Mentoring Workshop for 3rd+ Year Women & Non-Binary Ph.D. Students in Health Economics & Health Policy.  
**Deadline: 1 June 2023**
3. CeMENT Mentoring Workshops for Junior Faculty.  
**Deadline: 15 August 2023**

### Call for Nominations

CSWEP Carolyn Shaw Bell Award.  
**Deadline: 15 September 2023**

### CSWEP Sessions at Upcoming Meetings

Western Economic Association 98th Annual Conference, 2 July–6 July 2023

## Call for Applications Mentoring Workshop

### Successfully Navigating Your Economics Ph.D.

#### A Mentoring Workshop for 3rd and 4th Year Women/Non-Binary Economics Ph.D. Students

**Friday, November 17, 2023**  
**10:30am–5:00pm CT,**  
**followed by an optional networking reception.**

*New Orleans, LA*

**DEADLINE: Friday, July 28, 2023**

Organizers: Celeste Carruthers, Melanie Guldi, Catherine Maclean, and Orgul Ozturk

The 2023 Annual Meeting of the Southern Economic Association (SEA) will take place from Saturday, November 18th through Monday, November 20th in New Orleans, Louisiana. The mentoring workshop will take place the day before the main SEA meeting (Friday, November 17th) and will be held in-person. Workshop mentees are not required to attend the SEA.

#### Purpose

In most economics Ph.D. programs, students will have completed their coursework and chosen their fields by the completion of their second year. Then, students face the daunting and exciting task of conducting their own independent research, sometimes for the

first time in their lives. Students can feel overwhelmed and lost at this juncture in their studies, and may not always have access to support and resources that can help them navigate graduate school successfully and make the most out of their Ph.D. experience.

Women and non-binary students, who are substantially under-represented in economics education and the profession and face a variety of systemic barriers, may be at a particular disadvantage, and may lack women/non-binary peers, role models, or mentors in their own departments and networks. The goal of this workshop is to begin to address this need.

The material in this call and used in the workshop is based on the work of Professor Maya Rossin-Slater (National Science Foundation Grant SES-1752203).

#### History and Details

The workshop will be modeled after the first workshops of this kind, the first of which was held at Stanford University in September 2019 for students from California (organized by Professor Maya Rossin-Slater) and the second which was held virtually in November 2020 (organized by Professors Maya Rossin-Slater and Jennifer Doleac). The workshop is also inspired by the CeMENT workshop for women assistant professors in economics, which is hosted by the Committee for the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) and the American Economic Association (AEA).

**All 3rd- and 4th-year women/non-binary economics Ph.D. students are encouraged to apply.**

**Students from under-represented minority backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Student participants will be organized into small groups based on shared research interests, and each group will be matched with two mentors. Mentors will be women/non-binary economists in early stages of their careers—assistant and associate professors in economics and other departments, as well as those employed outside academia (e.g., research think tanks, government positions, industry). The workshop will focus on a variety of issues, including generating research ideas, finding advisors, collaboration and co-authorship, finding opportunities to present research and get feedback, networking, and work-life balance.

The workshop will be held in-person in New Orleans, Louisiana prior to the 93rd SEA Conference (November 18–20). It will include panels and Q&A sessions, as well as small-group activities and informal discussions, and will be followed by a networking reception for participants. Student participants will also receive feedback on their research proposals from the mentors. Student participants and mentors are not required to attend the SEA conference.

continues on page 19 ↓

**To Apply**

Please use [this form](#)<sup>1</sup> to apply AND submit your CV and a one-page research proposal via email to [info@cswep.org](mailto:info@cswep.org) by Friday, July 28, 2023.

**\*\*Please write “SEA Mentoring Workshop” in the subject line.\*\***

At the top of the research proposal, please clearly state which of the following fields are most closely related to your research idea. You can specify **two to three fields**.

Labor Economics

Education Economics

Public Finance

Crime Economics

Health Economics

Development Economics

Macroeconomics

International Trade

Microeconomic Theory

Finance

Behavioral Economics

Econometrics

Industrial Organization

Political Economy

Other (Please specify)

The research proposal should outline at least one research idea that you are planning to pursue. You may include more than one research idea. The purpose of the research proposal is to allocate mentees and mentors into groups based on common research interests.

<sup>1</sup> <https://forms.gle/FneK65XA2bSEB4QN8>

**Admission to Workshop**

The workshop will be able to accommodate **approximately 35 mentees** this year. If demand for the workshop exceeds this number, slots will be randomly allocated among all applicants who meet the workshop eligibility criteria.

Applicants will be notified about their admission status in August 2023.

**Funding for the Workshop**

With support from the Alfred P Sloan Foundation, each mentee will receive \$750 for travel and hotel.

**Acknowledgements**

We thank the Alfred P Sloan Foundation and CSWEP for support. We are grateful to Professor Rossin-Slater for permitting us to use workshop material and for her contributions to the CSWEP mentoring programs.

## Call for Applications Mentoring Workshop

### Successfully Navigating Your Ph.D.

#### A Mentoring Workshop for 3rd+ Year Women & Non-Binary Ph.D. Students in Health Economics and Health Policy

**Friday, September 29, 2023**

*On Zoom*

**DEADLINE: Thursday, June 1, 2023**

Organizers: Marika Cabral and Maya Rossin-Slater, *with Support from AEA-CSWEP and ASHEcon*

**Purpose**

In most economics and economics-adjacent Ph.D. programs, students will have completed their coursework and

chosen their fields by the completion of their second year. Then, students face the daunting and exciting task of conducting their own independent research, sometimes for the first time in their lives. Students can feel overwhelmed and lost at this juncture in their studies, and may not always have access to support and resources that can help them navigate graduate school successfully and make the most out of their Ph.D. experience.

Women and non-binary students, who are substantially under-represented in the profession and face a variety of systemic barriers (Goldin, 2013; Bayer & Rouse, 2016; Hengel, 2017; Mengel et al., 2017; Sarsons, 2017; Wu, 2017; Bayer & Wilcox, 2019; Lundberg & Stearns, 2019; Lundberg, 2020; Doleac, Hengel & Pancotti, 2021; Dupas et al., 2021), may be at a particular disadvantage, and may lack women/non-binary peers, role models, or mentors in their own departments and networks. They may therefore miss out on valuable “hidden curriculum” information and feel unsupported.

In health economics and health policy fields, a successful research career is often dependent on access to restricted administrative data sets (e.g., insurance claims data), ability to raise grant funding, interdisciplinary collaborations, and ability to publish in interdisciplinary outlets. Thus, the challenges faced by under-represented groups in the profession are compounded because these benefits and skills tend to be disseminated through networks and the “hidden curriculum”. The goal of this workshop is to begin to lower these barriers.

**Details**

This workshop series began in 2019, as a pilot for California-based women Economics Ph.D. students, and was organized by Maya Rossin-Slater and hosted at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Since then, workshops of this type have been occurring on an annual basis, with variants that target all fields in Economics and those that specifically focus on health economics and health policy (the latter being co-organized by Marika Cabral and Maya Rossin-Slater). The workshop is also inspired by the successful CeMENT workshop for female assistant professors in economics, which is hosted by the Committee for the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) and the American Economic Association (AEA).

**Women/non-binary Ph.D. students who will be in their 3rd or higher year of the Ph.D. in fall 2023 in health economics or health policy are eligible to participate (no restrictions on geographic location). Students from under-represented minority (URM) backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Student participants will be organized into small groups based on shared research interests, and each group will be matched with 1-2 mentors. Mentors will be women/non-binary health economists in early stages of their careers—assistant professors in economics and health policy departments, as well as those employed outside academia (e.g., research think tanks, government positions, industry). The workshop will focus on a variety of issues, including generating research ideas, finding advisors, accessing data,

continues on page 20 ↓

collaboration and co-authorship, finding opportunities to present research and get feedback, grant writing, networking, mental health, and work-life balance. The workshop, which will be held virtually on Friday, September 29, 2023, will include panels, small group sessions, informal discussions, and other activities.

### To Apply

Please use [this form](#)<sup>2</sup> to apply AND please send your CV and 1-page research proposal to [info@csweb.org](mailto:info@csweb.org).

The research proposal should outline at least one research idea that you are planning to pursue, and include details about the research question, setting, data, and empirical design.

**Applications are due June 1, 2023.**

### Admission to Workshop

We hope to be able to accommodate as many students as we can with this workshop. Our slots are limited by the number of mentor volunteers that we have. If demand for the workshop exceeds supply of slots, then slots will be randomly allocated among all applicants who meet the workshop eligibility criteria.

Applicants will be notified about their admission status in early summer 2023.

## Call for Applications Mentoring Workshops

### CeMENT Mentoring Workshops for Junior Faculty

**DEADLINE: 15 August 2023**

CSWEP will be hosting two CeMENT Workshops for junior faculty following in 2024: one for junior faculty in Ph.D. granting institutions and one for junior faculty in non-Ph.D. granting

institutions. Each workshop mentors women and non-binary junior faculty in tenure-track positions in economics departments or at other institutions with similar research, teaching, and service expectations.

More details are forthcoming, but the workshops will consist of a two-and-a-half-day program. Participants will be arranged into small groups and assigned to mentors based on their research area. Group members and mentors discuss and offer feedback on the participants' research. In addition, the workshops include sessions on topics such as: publishing, managing service, effective and efficient teaching, developing a tenure case, and networking. We are excited about the opportunity to continue CSWEP's tradition of mentoring female junior faculty. We hope you will apply and look forward to seeing you at one of our workshops.

The application portal will open on July 1, 2023, and close August 15, 2023. You will be informed of your acceptance by the end of October 2023. Our expectation is that, as was the case in past years, the number of qualified applicants will far exceed capacity of the workshops (which is approximately 40 junior participants per program). In this case, we will exercise a slight preference for women earlier in their tenure clock. Then, workshop acceptance is determined by random selection. Those who were randomized out last year will receive priority in the next year as we no longer have an evaluation component to the workshop. For more information and application details please visit: <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/csweb/programs/cement-mentoring-workshops>

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Call for Nominations CSWEP Carolyn Shaw Bell Award

**DEADLINE: 15 September 2023**

The annual Carolyn Shaw Bell Award is given to an individual who has furthered the status of women in the economics profession, through example, achievements, increasing our understanding of how women can advance in the economics profession, or mentoring others. Nominations should include a nomination letter, updated CV and three or more supporting letters, with preferably at least two letters from mentees. Nomination letters should be focused on examples of how the nominee has fulfilled the criterion of advancing the position of women in economics, rather than strictly on academic achievements.

A CSWEP-appointed committee reviews nominations and the prize will be awarded at the January 2024 AEA Meetings in San Antonio, Texas. The Award Committee automatically retains and considers applications for a period of three years, and previous nominators are encouraged to update nomination packages if appropriate. Nominations will open in May and are due September 15, 2023. Send nominations for this award to Rebekah Loftis, CSWEP Committee Coordinator, at [info@csweb.org](mailto:info@csweb.org).

For more information and a list of past recipients of the Bell Award, visit: <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/csweb/awards/bell>

## CSWEP Sessions at Western Economic Association 98th Annual Meeting

**2 July–6 July 2023**

*Marriot Marquis San Diego  
Marina, San Diego, California*

### Gender, Labor Markets and Retirement

Session Chair: Sheena Murray,  
University of Tennessee Chattanooga  
Organizer: Francisca Antman,  
University of Colorado Boulder

### *CV Signaling and Career Success in Economics*

Sheena Murray, University of Tennessee  
Chattanooga

### *The Impact of Pension Plan Shift on Household Risk Exposure*

Yingtong Xie, Carleton College

*Gender Wage Gaps in Online Marketplaces*  
Ini Umosen, University of California,  
Berkeley

### *Paid Family Leave and Innovation: Women Inventors on U.S. Patents*

Kyoungah Noy, University of Albany  
Suny

*Discussants:* Sheena Murray, University  
of Tennessee Chattanooga, Yingtong  
Xie, Carleton College, Ini Umosen,  
University of California, Berkeley, and  
Kyoungah Noy, University of Albany  
Suny.

### Disparities in Health, Education, and Housing

Session Chair: Briana Ballis, University  
of California, Merced

Organizer: Francisca Antman,  
University of Colorado Boulder

continues on page 21 ↓

## ↑ Calls, Announcements, Sessions

### *Does Poor Infant Health Widen Racial Disparities in Childhood and Adulthood?*

Briana Ballis, University of California, Merced

### *More Dads at Home, More Girls in Math-Intensive Studies? Evidence from a Parental Leave Reform*

Noemi Peter, University of Groningen

### *States of Opportunity for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care*

Alexa Prettyman, University of California, Los Angeles

### *Spillover Effects of ADU Development*

Idil Tanrisever, University of California, Irvine

*Discussants:* Briana Ballis, University of California, Merced, Noemi Peter, University of Groningen, Alexa Prettyman, University of California, Los Angeles, and Idil Tanrisever, University of California, Irvine.

# Directory of CSWEP Board Members

## **Anusha Chari, Chair**

Professor of Economics,  
Department of Economics  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Gardner Hall 306B  
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, NC  
27599

[Anusha\\_Chari@kenan-flagler.unc.edu](mailto:Anusha_Chari@kenan-flagler.unc.edu)

## **Kasey Buckles, Assoc. Chair & Dir. of Mentoring**

Professor of Economics, Research Associate,  
NBER, Research Fellow, IZA,  
University of Notre Dame  
3052 Jenkins Nanovic Halls  
Notre Dame, IN 46556

[kbuckles@nd.edu](mailto:kbuckles@nd.edu)

## **Margaret Levenstein, Assoc. Chair & Survey Director**

Research Professor  
Institute for Social Research Director, ICPSR  
University of Michigan  
330 Packard Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1248 (734) 615-8400

[maggiel@umich.edu](mailto:maggiel@umich.edu)

## **Misty Heggeness, Associate Chair of Outreach and Partnerships**

Associate Professor and Associate Research  
Scientist, Institute for Policy and Social Research  
University of Kansas  
Regn 370K Edwards  
12600 Quivira Road Overland Park, KS 66213

[misty.heggeness@ku.edu](mailto:misty.heggeness@ku.edu)

## **Gina Pieters, Oversight Editor**

Assistant Instructional Professor  
Kenneth C. Griffin Department of Economics  
University of Chicago  
1126 East 59th Street Chicago, IL 60637

[gcpeters@uchicago.edu](mailto:gcpeters@uchicago.edu)

## **Yana Rodgers, Eastern Representative**

Professor in the Department of Labor Studies  
and Employment Relations  
Rutgers University  
94 Rockefeller Road  
Piscataway, NJ 08854

[Yana.rodgers@rutgers.edu](mailto:Yana.rodgers@rutgers.edu)

## **Shahina Amin, Midwest Representative**

Lawrence Jepson Professor of  
International Economics  
Department of Economics  
University of Northern Iowa  
1227 West 27th

Street Cedar Falls, IA 50614

[shahina.amin@uni.edu](mailto:shahina.amin@uni.edu)

## **Orgul Ozturk, Southern Representative**

Department Chair and Professor  
Department of Economics  
University of South Carolina  
Darla Moore School of Business  
Room 4521

[odozturk@moore.sc.edu](mailto:odozturk@moore.sc.edu)

## **Francisca Antman, Western Representative**

Associate Professor  
University of Colorado  
Campus Box 256  
Boulder, CO 80309

[Francisca.Antman@Colorado.edu](mailto:Francisca.Antman@Colorado.edu)

## **Stephanie Aaronson, DC Representative**

Senior Associate Director  
Federal Reserve Board  
20th Street and Constitution Avenue N.W.,  
Washington, DC 20551

[stephanie.r.aaronson@frb.gov](mailto:stephanie.r.aaronson@frb.gov)

## **Ina Ganguli, At-Large**

Associate Professor  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
304 Crotty Hall  
413-545-6230

[iganguli@econs.umass.edu](mailto:iganguli@econs.umass.edu)

## **Anna Paulson, At-Large**

Executive Vice President and Director of  
Research  
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago  
230 South LaSalle Street  
Chicago, IL 60604

[Anna.paulson@chi.frb.org](mailto:Anna.paulson@chi.frb.org)

## **Marionette Holmes, At-Large**

Associate Professor and Chair of Economics  
350 Spelman Lane  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314

[MHolmes@spelman.edu](mailto:MHolmes@spelman.edu)

## **Rohan Williamson, At-Large**

Vice Provost for Education and  
Professor of Finance  
Georgetown University,  
McDonough School of Business  
Washington, DC 20057

[Rohan.williamson@georgetown.edu](mailto:Rohan.williamson@georgetown.edu)

## **Jessica Holmes, Ex-Officio, CeMENT Director**

Professor of Economics  
Middlebury College  
303 College Street  
Middlebury, VT 05753

[jholmes@middlebury.edu](mailto:jholmes@middlebury.edu)

## **Lori Beaman, Ex-Officio, CeMENT Director**

Professor, Department of Economics  
Northwestern University  
2211 Campus Drive, Rm 3377  
Evanston, Illinois 60208

[l-beaman@northwestern.edu](mailto:l-beaman@northwestern.edu)