



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Announcing Leadership Change at the Scholars Strategy Network

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Theda Skocpol

Avi Green

Today, the Scholars Strategy Network is excited to announce three additions to our leadership team.

Two distinguished researchers will join SSN's Board of Directors: [Hahrie Han](#), Professor of Political Science and the inaugural Director of the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University; and [Jamila Michener](#), Assistant Professor of Government at Cornell University and co-leader of Finger Lakes SSN.

The Board of Directors sets SSN's strategic direction, advancing our mission to ensure that research is used wherever policy decisions are made—from city halls to state legislatures to Washington. This announcement underscores SSN's commitment to empowering scholars in the project of strengthening democracy.

Han is an expert in civic engagement, political organizing, and democratic leadership development. She studies the way people become motivated to get involved in politics, looking particularly at the organizing practices democratic institutions can use to engage people.

"SSN's mission to bridge the divide between research and practice is at the center of my own work. I have been a member since 2012, and I am proud to join its board of directors," said Han. "In my own research, I have seen how membership organizations can grow, transform institutions, and make a difference across the nation. I am proud to be part of SSN's work doing so."

Michener is an expert in the dynamics of equity in American politics, particularly the political precursors to and consequences of poverty and racial inequality. Her research aims to identify and examine the conditions under which economically and racially disadvantaged groups engage in the political process.

"SSN's mission reflects the very reason why I entered academia in the first place. Like many wide-eyed graduate students, I hoped that my training and education would give me the tools to effect change in the world. But the leap from that hope to reality became increasingly daunting as I progressed through academia," commented Michener. "SSN helped to bridge the gap, enhancing the prospects for my research to make a positive difference and bringing my work beyond academia in generative, productive and meaningful

ways. That is why I value SSN as much as I do."

In addition to Han and Michener, we're excited to share an announcement on the senior staff side as well. [Paola Maynard-Moll](#) has served SSN with distinction since 2014. This month she will transition into a new role as Managing Director. In this capacity, she will oversee the SSN staff's work with chapters, members, policymakers, civic leaders, and journalists.

"When I worked in a state legislature, I'd often think, 'someone must have thought about how to address this policy challenge.' I didn't have the time or know where to find the best research to answer the policy questions before us," recalled Maynard-Moll. "For the past five years, it has been my privilege to work with our members and chapters. I am honored and excited to expand my role in SSN's continued efforts to close the gap between research and policy."

Please join us in celebrating these three exemplary leaders. This transition will enable SSN to better support researchers in the mission of improving public policy and strengthening democracy in the United States.

Meet the New Leaders

PAOLA MAYNARD-MOLL

Executive Director



Read Pao's feature in the [Boston Business Journal](#).

JAMILA CELESTINE MICHENER

Cornell University



Read Jamila's brief, [How Medicaid Programs Run by the U.S. States Influence Citizen Participation](#).

Listen to Jamila's podcast episode, [Groundbreakers, Part 1](#).

HAHRIE HAN

Johns Hopkins University



Read Hahrie's brief, [How Civic Organizations Can Develop Effective Leaders, Attract Members, and Enhance American Democracy](#).

Listen to Hahrie's podcast episode, [Groundbreakers, Part 2](#).

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