



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Introducing Our New 2023-2024 Chapter Leaders and Fellows

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Pamela Metz

The Scholars Strategy Network is proud to introduce the researchers who are stepping up this year to lead SSN chapters in building a nationwide culture where research informs policy at every level. These new chapter leaders come from a variety of disciplines, institutions, and methodological traditions - but they share the common goal of advancing evidence-based policy and strengthening democracy in the states. This year, we welcome ten new chapter leaders and over a dozen new chapter fellows. Read more about their work and meet the new leaders below.

Florida

AMANDA D. CLARK

Florida International University



Clark's research focuses on social movements, election administration, and the U.S. policy process. She has examined the framing strategies of social movements including Black Lives Matter, the nonprofit community in Flint, MI in response to the water crisis and a national coalition in the anti-human trafficking field. After serving at the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office in 2020, where she ran early voting, she has begun to focus her research on election administration and the role that public affairs academics play in supporting this essential public service.

Kentucky

NICHOLAS D. HARTLEP

Berea College



Nicholas D. Hartlep is the Robert Charles Billings Endowed Chair in Education at Berea College where he Chairs the Department of Education Studies. Hartlep's research focuses on the model minority stereotype of Asian/Americans, urban education (and teaching for transformation), and the impact neoliberalism has on public education (and society). Much of his recent work has examined how neoliberal capitalism has come to dominate higher education in the United States. He serves as the lead editor of the book series Urban Education Studies with Information Age Publishing. Hartlep is a former elementary school teacher.

ANNA RACHEL HERRINGTON

University of Kentucky



Herrington's research focuses on global environmental history with a focus on land and resource dispossession of the Canadian Mi'kmaq and the Scottish tenant farmers in the Highland Clearances. Overarching themes in Herrington's writing include commons system enclosures and the genocidal consequences of settler colonialism. She has served as a SSN chapter fellow and is a founding member of the Environmental History Working Group, Pteris Scholars Circle, and the Environmental Humanities Initiative at the University of Kentucky.

Los Angeles

HAJAR YAZDIHA

University of Southern California



Yazdiha's research examines the mechanisms underlying the politics of inclusion and exclusion as they shape intergroup boundaries, ethno-racial identities, and political culture. Her research projects have explored questions about dynamics of belonging, identity, and resistance through a range of cases including Muslim diasporas, immigrant rights movements, Black-Brown coalitions, community policing, and right-wing groups.

Maryland-Washington D.C.

NORA GORDON

Georgetown University



Gordon's research focuses on American education policy, with an emphasis on equity and the federal role in elementary and secondary education. She has studied the distributional impacts of Title I, fiscal rules governing federal education grants, state school finance reforms, school desegregation, and school district consolidation. Gordon has testified before Senate and House committees on implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act. She has served on the Institute of Education Sciences Expert Panel on the Study of the Title I Formula and DC's state Title I Committee of Practitioners, and currently serves on the Professional Advisory Board of the National Center for Learning Disabilities.

JAIME ALISON LEE

University of Baltimore



Lee's work examines barriers faced by low-income people within contemporary legal systems, analyzes how systems meant to benefit the poor are frequently subverted or distorted, and proposes ways to combat such subversion.

ELIZABETH RIGBY

The George Washington University



Rigby's work examines the politics of inequality and redistribution: identifying conditions shaping the public's policy preferences, examining the policymaking process that shapes health, education, and welfare policies, and assessing the consequences of these policy choices on the level of inequality in our society. Rigby has worked at the intersection of politics, inequality, and public policy in a range of roles and organizations including: Senate Finance Committee, Project Vote Smart, Citizens for Missouri's Children, the National Center for Children and Families, and St. Louis Public Schools.

New Jersey-Philadelphia

ANDREA HETLING

Rutgers University



Hetling's research agenda focuses on the implementation and efficacy of U.S. social welfare policies. She is particularly interested in the impact of programs and policy on the economic well-being of vulnerable populations. Her projects focus on families and women living in poverty and on survivors of intimate partner violence. Hetling works with a number of civic organizations, sharing her research and expertise and supporting their efforts to improve social service programs. She is a Research Academy member of the National Association of Welfare and Research Statistics and a Research Affiliate of the National Poverty Center.

New Orleans

AIDAN SMITH

Tulane University



Smith's research focuses on gender and politics, ranging from the executive branch to grassroots activist work. As an interdisciplinary feminist scholar, her work explores perceptions of appropriate masculine and feminine leadership in American contexts. Overarching themes in Smith's writings include the deployment of motherhood, fatherhood, and heterosexuality for political gain. She conducts both quantitative and qualitative analysis of cultural materials to consider larger arguments within popular discourse, from campaign commercials to social media engagements. She is involved in several organizations in the New Orleans community.

Sacramento

TONYA LINDSEY

California Research Bureau



Lindsey's research focuses on an array of policy areas relevant to California's decision makers: gender equity, employment, demographics, race and corrections, media, and any policy areas where requests come in. She has methodological expertise using qualitative and quantitative methods to answer many different kinds of research questions. Lindsey's writings include subgroups, aging, and health; subgroups, aging, and economic indicators; women on corporate boards; the gender pay gap across contexts such as media; LGBTQ veterans; unlawful detainer; race in California prisons for men; and media ownership.

New 2023-24 Chapter Fellows

Each chapter is also supported by chapter fellows — emerging scholars and advocates — who are crucial to the success of our chapters program. We are pleased to announce to following new chapter fellows joining our leadership teams this year:

Sarah Connelly - Alabama
Sierra Coye - Colorado
Marilyn Brach - Connecticut
Jacob Russell - Maine
Kirsten Petroska - Maine
Carson Jones - Maryland-Washington D.C.
Karina Morales - Nebraska
Brook Weinman - Nevada
Alma Lopez - Nevada (media fellow)
Shriya Thakkar - New Orleans
Deepti Panuganti - New York City
Aanahita Ervin - North Carolina
Rebecca Franklin - San Diego
Samuel Smith - San Diego

Appreciation for our Departing Leaders and Fellows

We want to thank all of our chapter leaders and fellows who are stepping down this year. We look forward to working with these scholars as active members in years to come:

Former Chapter Leaders

Bridgett A. King - Alabama
Natasha Warikoo - Boston
David Kimball - Confluence
Mary Painter - Confluence
Eladio Bobadilla - Kentucky
Jodi Benenson - Nebraska
Julia Sass Rubin - New Jersey-Philadelphia
Anna Mitchell Mahoney - New Orleans
Sarah Verbiest - North Carolina
Bernadette Austin - Sacramento
Bridget Trogden - South Carolina
Paru R. Shah - Wisconsin

Former Chapter Fellows

Eric Spencer - Boston
Peter Kurtz-Glovas - Central Pennsylvania
Brendon Holloway - Colorado
Mekaila Carey - Connecticut
Kaylee Appleton - Florida
Omar Bird - Hawaii
Austin Zinkle - Kentucky
Joshua Mangin - Maine
Paul Fink - Maine
Matthew Pajunen - Nebraska

Dante Miller - Nevada
Victoria Fix - New York City
Stacey Livingstone - San Diego
Kevan Malone - San Diego
Rebecca Townsley - Tennessee