

2017-2019 Scholars Strategy Network Postdoctoral Fellows

AUGUST 30, 2017

SSN is proud to introduce its inaugural cohort of Postdoctoral Fellows. Each of these Fellows are based at a university in one of the SSN chapters. For the next two years, they will help academics insert research, evidence, and scholarly perspectives into state and national policy debates. The program focuses on building relationships between researchers and policymakers, civic leaders, and journalists to inform and improve the policymaking process.



Sayil Camacho, Tennessee SSN

Sayil received her PhD from the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She studies workplace climate and immigrant populations, exploring the relationship between academic labor and migrant identity. Her interests include the work experiences of undocumented young adults and the effects of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals federal program. During her time as a graduate student, Sayil conceptualized and implemented research studies to support campaigns and processes for policy reform. She is committed to strengthening universities through research, practice, partnership, and inclusion. Sayil will be based at Vanderbilt University.



Natalie Hengstebeck, Research Triangle SSN

Natalie received her PhD from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her research focuses on how policies, systems, and circumstances shape the well-being of individuals, families, and communities, both by design and unintended “side effects.” In her work, Natalie emphasizes using research to identify and find ways to increase known positive outcomes of policy, instead of simply working to avoid or minimize undesirable outcomes. Most recently, she examined the impact of raising children on the wellbeing of adults across 15 countries. As a first-generation university graduate, Natalie recognizes the need to make research accessible and views public scholarship as a way to increase public support for science and build connections between academics, policymakers, and the public. Natalie will be based at Duke University.



Daniel Lanford, Georgia SSN

Daniel received his PhD from the Department of Sociology at Florida State University. His scholarly interests include health care reform, state politics, and health policy. His research focuses on the relationship between public sentiments and social policy outcomes, specifically the link between attitudes towards race and state Medicaid generosity. Daniel is motivated by the belief that policy has a profound influence on people’s lives,

and is committed to making research matter in public debates. A native Georgian, Daniel is excited to work with the Georgia SSN as the chapter looks to grow throughout the state and work with policymakers on both sides of the aisle on issues ranging from public health to education to election administration. Daniel will be based at Georgia State University.



Fernando Tormos-Aponte, Confluence SSN

Fernando received his PhD from the Department of Political Science at Purdue University. He studies social movements and social policy. His research centers on how social movements sustain mobilization and enhance their political influence. Fernando hopes to bridge gaps between scholarly policy analysis and on the ground policymaking, and to strengthen the Confluence SSN chapter by helping scholars disseminate their findings in clear, plain language. Originally from Puerto Rico, Fernando has done fieldwork in Latin America, the United States, and Europe. Fernando will be based at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

In future years, pending funding and a demonstrated record of success, SSN will look to expand the postdoctoral fellowship to more states, drawing researchers, policymakers, civic leaders and journalists into closer collaborations across the United States.

More information on the 2017-2019 program's objectives and application process is archived [here](#).