

## **Speaker Presentations**

### **Brief Descriptions**

#### **Erika Poethig, Urban Institute**

Addressing contemporary social, demographic, environmental, and economic challenges requires comprehensive, multidisciplinary responses that cut across policy domains and engage a range of stakeholders and levels of government. The Policy Advisory Group at the Urban Institute is committed to better understanding decision-makers' needs and challenges, helping create solutions, and aggregating learnings to support the successful communication and dissemination of research findings. The team's approach, called the cycle of evidence transmission, stems from a fundamental belief that there is a virtuous exchange between research, policy and practice: quality research should inform and improve policy and practice and that the needs of policymakers and practitioners should inform and improve social science research. Achieving these aims requires extra attention by researchers to understanding the decisions that need to be made and the decision-making process. This presentation will use the team's How Housing Matters portfolio as a lens to explore how to successfully translate social and behavioral science research into policy and practice.

#### **Richard Laine, National Governors Association**

The National Governors Association Education Division helps governors build an effective integrated education pipeline aimed at preparing far more students for success in the workforce and in their communities. This presentation will describe the theory of action that guides the approach to assisting governors and staff with this mission, and the challenges and opportunities related to the use and communication of research.

#### **Shawna Mercer, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

This presentation will introduce participants to the Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide)—a pre-eminent source of evidence-based recommendations about effective population-based public health programs, services, and policies. The recommendations housed in The Community Guide are made by the nonfederal, independent, statutorily-mandated Community Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) on the basis of systematic reviews of all available evidence. The presentation will discuss the extensive methods and processes The Community Guide has developed to enhance its usefulness to, and use by the wide range of policy makers and other decision makers in public health, social and behavioral sciences, education, and other sectors with which public health works collaboratively to achieve its aims. The presentation will conclude by identifying the ongoing challenges and tradeoffs The Community Guide faces in trying to adequately address users' needs and preferences.

#### **Boruch, University of Pennsylvania**

The challenges to generating dependable social science research and getting dependable evidence used have fine pedigrees. Graunt's 17<sup>th</sup> Century statistical tract aimed to foster the idea of "good, certain and easy government" in England. In the Arab world of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, Ibn Khaldun took a shot at this in this *Muqaddimah*. Boruch builds on ideas of these regrettably dead colleagues, and on more recent experience. His presentation poses blunt questions that are fundamental, invite options for answering the questions, may inform the way one thinks about the challenges, can help build understanding and how one might act in the face of noise and undependable information sources.

### **Gary VanLandingham, Pew Charitable Trusts**

The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative works with state and local governments to advance evidence-based policymaking in criminal justice, education, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse, and prevention. Results First provides these partner governments with cutting-edge tools, including a 'clearinghouse of clearinghouses' and a benefit-cost analysis model based on the work of the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, to enable their staff to assess current social programs and identify alternative investments that are predicted to achieve better outcomes. The project also helps communicate these results to decision-makers and build support for evidence-based policymaking. To date, participating governments have used the approach to target over \$140 million to evidence-based interventions that will generate strong returns from the investment of taxpayer dollars.

### **Vivian Tseng, William T. Grant Foundation**

Too often the road connecting research with policy and practice is described as a one-way street. The problem is one of moving research to practice, or research to policy. In this presentation, I argue for the need to pave two-way streets. Research should certainly inform policy and practice, but so too should policy and practice influence which research questions are valued and pursued. Shifting to a two-way street approach has the potential to yield more relevant research, greater researcher-policymaker engagement, and stronger capacity-building efforts.