

Small Business and Precarious Work in the US: The Impact of COVID-19

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM ET

Purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted operations for small businesses across the United States, causing many businesses to lose revenue or close permanently. It also exacerbated challenges for workers in uncertain, unpredictable, and risky workplace environments. The Societal Experts Action Network and the Committee on Population will host a webinar on the impact of COVID-19 on small business and precarious work in the United States. The event will identify the policies and practices that make work precarious, consider the relationship between work and health, and discuss how state and local decision makers can support healthy work.

12:00–12:05
pm

Welcome and Introductions

Hedwig Lee, Duke University
Member of the Committee on Population, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

12:05–12:45
pm

Part 1: Stage Setting

Isabel Cuervo, CUNY Queens College
Jevay Grooms, Howard University
Robert Fairlie, University of California, Santa Cruz
Amanda Mehl, Boone County (IL) Health Department

12:45–1:25
pm

Part 2: Moderated Discussion

Isabel Cuervo, CUNY Queens College
Jevay Grooms, Howard University
Robert Fairlie, University of California, Santa Cruz
Amanda Mehl, Boone County (IL) Health Department

1:25–1:30 pm

Closing Reflections

Hedwig Lee, Duke University
Member of the Committee on Population, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Isabel Cuervo is currently a Senior Research Associate at The Barry Commoner Center for Health and Environment, at Queens College, City University of New York. She specializes in qualitative research methodologies, community-engaged, and participatory approaches to understand the experience of the work environment, employment and structural conditions that influence workers' health, especially of immigrant Latinx other precariously employed workers in the US. Project partners and collaborators include local grassroots community-based organizations. Dr. Cuervo is also part of the Precarious Work Research Program on Non-Standard and Precarious Employment, an international collaborative of researchers from Europe and the Americas.

Dr. Cuervo was trained in Environmental Psychology at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Her theoretical foundations encompass how personal, social, and physical contexts are integral to people's behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes. Transitioning into the environmental and occupational health fields offered her the opportunities, that she enjoys, to work in transdisciplinary teams, and translate research into trainings and other service projects. She has additional research experience in the fields of housing, urban planning, and education.

Robert Fairlie is a Professor of Economics at the University of California, Santa Cruz and a member of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). His research interests include entrepreneurship, education, racial and gender inequality, information technology, labor economics, developing countries, and immigration. He received a Ph.D. and M.A. from Northwestern University and B.A. with honors from Stanford University. He has held visiting positions at Stanford University, Yale University, UC Berkeley, and Australian National University. He has received funding for his research from the National Science Foundation, National Academies and Russell Sage Foundation as well as numerous government agencies and foundations, and have testified in front of the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Department of Treasury, and the California State Assembly. Recent awards and honors include a joint resolution from the California State Assembly, Choice Academic Title award, and the Bradford- Osbourne research award two years in a row. He is regularly interviewed by the media (e.g. NY Times, WSJ, Washington Post, NPR, PBS, CNN, CBS, NBC) to comment on economic, education, small business, inequality and policy issues.

Dr. Jevay Grooms is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and an NBER Faculty Research Fellow. Recently announced, Dr. Grooms is the Co-Director of the newly established Center for an Equitable Economy and Sustainable Society (E2S2) at Howard University. In addition, she is currently a Visiting Distinguished Faculty & Scholar at the University of Southern California in the Sol Price School of Public Policy. Dr. Grooms' serves as a principal investigator on several research grants and has been funded by several organizations, including the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Social Security Administration, and American Heart Association.

Dr. Grooms is an applied microeconomist with research areas of interest that lie at the intersection of public economics, health economics, and studies of poverty and inequality. Her overall research agenda is to study the impediments to adequate healthcare delivery and health outcomes of underserved and vulnerable populations with the keen intent to understand how poverty and the legacy of wealth inequality have contributed to health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities. In addition to her body of work on substance use and mental health, Dr. Grooms also has a body of research examining the role of tax credits on financially vulnerable households more broadly and exploring racial and ethnic differences.

In addition to research and instructing, she is committed to mentoring students and promoting and nurturing diversity in economics. Dr. Grooms is the Speaker Coordinator for the American Economic Association Summer Program at Howard University. Additionally, she is the Co-Editor of the American Society of Health Economists Newsletter. She sits on the National Economic Association Board, the American Society of Health Economists Diversity Committee, and the FAIRHealth Academic Advisory Committee. Dr. Grooms is also a co-organizer for the National Bureau of Economic Research Working

Group on Race and Stratification 2023 Meetings and the Chair for the ASHEcon Mental Health program area.

Hedwig (Hedy) Lee is professor of sociology at Duke University. Before joining the sociology faculty, she was associate professor at the University of Washington, where she also served as a faculty affiliate of the Center for Research on Demography and Ecology and the Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences. After receiving her Ph.D., she took a position as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation health and society scholar at the University of Michigan, School of Public Health. Dr. Lee is interested in the social determinants and consequences of population health and health disparities, with a particular focus on race/ethnicity, poverty, race-related stress, and the family. She has a keen interest in engaging in interdisciplinary research and has published and worked with scholars across a wide range of fields including sociology, demography, psychology, political science, public health, and medicine. Her recent work examines the impact of family member incarceration on the health and attitudes of family members, association between discrimination and mental and physical health, documenting trends in racial/ethnic health disparities, socioeconomic causes and consequences of obesity in childhood and adolescence, and using social media data for demographic and health research. She has a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Amanda Mehl is a registered nurse and has a master's degree in Public Health. Amanda earned her BA from Beloit College, her MPH from the University of Illinois Chicago and her AS in Nursing from Rock Valley College. Through the completion of intensive graduate and undergraduate studies in the areas of nursing, public health, gender studies, and linguistics as well as unique international/cultural internship experiences abroad, Amanda is academically and professionally motivated to address population health at the local level.

Amanda has worked in public health for 16 years and currently oversees the operations of the Boone County Health Department (BCHD) in Belvidere, IL as their Public Health Administrator. Over the past two and a half years, Amanda has developed her department as a "teaching health department", mentoring students from different disciplines at the undergraduate/graduate level. She co-facilitates coursework and lectures at academic institutions across the region and has worked to develop curriculum regarding local public health department functions and the basics of population health. Amanda is also leading her department through PHAB Accreditation and the merging of the County's Comprehensive Plan and Health Department's Community Health Improvement Plan. Amanda has restructured departmental operations to reflect a shift to Public Health 3.0 principles and a population health focus.

Amanda serves on several regional and state administrative boards including the Illinois Public Health Association's Executive Council and as president for the Illinois Public Health Nurse Administrators. She has presented at various conferences including the Illinois March of Dimes Perinatal Conference, the Illinois Public Health Association Conference, the Public Health 3.0 Workforce Development Forum, the 2019 NACCHO Preparedness Summit and Annual Conference, the National Public Health Improvement Training (PHIT), and the Public Health Foundation's Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice. Her presentations have been focused on training and capacity building of other health departments to assist them with Workforce Development, Emergency Preparedness, Strategic Planning, Behavioral Health, Healthy Work, and student mentorships.