

**Clear and Credible Information from Social and Behavioral Science To Improve Societal Outcomes: Current Approaches and Future Directions**

**A Seminar of the Roundtable on the Communication and Use of Social and Behavioral Science**

**January 21, 2016**

**Seminar Speakers**

**Robert Boruch** is the University Trustee Chair Professor of Education and Statistics, chair of quantitative methods at the Graduate School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Boruch's work focuses on research methods and evidence for determining the severity and scope of social and educational problems, implementing programs and policies, and estimating the effects and the effectiveness of interventions. He contributes to work on randomized trials in education and training, welfare reform, health services, housing, and crime and justice, with a particular interest in the assessment or improvement of programs sponsored by federal government agencies in the U.S. and in other countries and by private foundations. He has also studied the ethics of balancing public interest in access to data for research and the public interest in privacy of individuals and confidentiality of the information they provide. Before coming to the University of Pennsylvania in 1989, Dr. Boruch was a member of Northwestern University's faculty. He has served on the Board of Trustees for the W. T. Grant Foundation and the Board of Advisors for the National Science Foundation's Education and Human Resources Division. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the American Institutes for Research. He has served on numerous federal advisory committees. Dr. Boruch is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Academy for Experimental Criminology, the American Educational Research Association, and the American Statistical Association. The Campbell Collaboration has named an award in his honor for individuals who contribute to the use of better evidence in policy. Dr. Boruch earned his Ph.D. in psychology from Iowa State University.

**Richard Laine** has held a range of leadership positions in education that have given him the opportunity to bring about systemic change in the states in which he has worked. He currently is the Director of Education at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices where he leads a team that provides support for the nation's governors on education issues

ranging from early education to K-12 to postsecondary, including efforts around college and career-training ready standards. Previously he led The Wallace Foundation's \$300 million national education leadership initiative, managed the Illinois Business Roundtable's education efforts and served as the Associate Superintendent for Policy, Planning and Resource Management at the Illinois State Board of Education. He has presented and published on numerous topics in education, especially in the areas of education leadership, standards and the question of whether and how money matters in education. Laine received an M.B.A. from the Graduate School of Business, an M.P.P. from the Graduate School of Public Policy Studies and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education Policy, all from the University of Chicago. Prior to moving to D.C., Laine completed five years of service on his school district's board of education where he successfully led the negotiation of a new teacher contract and helped lead the team that negotiated a new performance pay system for the district's administrators.

**Shawna Mercer** is chief of the Community Guide Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where she oversees the conduct of systematic reviews of population-based public health interventions. In this role, she supported the independent Community Preventive Services Task Force, and facilitated dissemination and implementation of Task Force recommendations. Dr. Mercer previously served as a senior health scientist in CDC's Office of the Chief Science Officer, where she led initiatives to bridge gaps between research, practice and policy, and developed CDC processes and systems to ensure CDC's compliance with Office of Management and Budget requirements for scientific information. Dr. Mercer earlier served as a health scientist and deputy director of CDC's Office of Science and Extramural Research, where she co-developed and oversaw a \$12M extramural research grant funding program, explored study design options for effectiveness and translation research, and led a research and evaluation program aimed at strengthening the rigor of participatory research and assessing its value and benefits for bridging research and practice. She started her CDC work in the Office on Smoking and Health, providing technical assistance to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and supporting state efforts to implement best practices for tobacco control following the Master Settlement Agreement. Before joining CDC, Dr. Mercer conducted research at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and the University of Toronto, exploring knowledge, attitudes, behavior and decision making surrounding breast, cervical, colorectal, and prostate cancer screening and genetic screening for cancer, as well as assessing physician and patient education and support for cancer and AIDS. She previously served as the evaluation coordinator for the Ontario Breast Screening Program—one of the first population-based cancer screening programs in the world. Dr. Mercer has a master's degree in health behavior and a doctorate in epidemiology.

**Erika Poethig** is an Institute fellow and director of urban policy initiatives at the Urban Institute. She leads the Policy Advisory Group (PAG), which assembles in-house experts to help local leaders draw insights from research and navigate policy challenges facing urban America in the 21st century. She also leads partnerships to develop new programs and strategies, translate research into policy and practice, and align philanthropic investments and federal policy. Before joining Urban, Ms. Poethig was acting assistant secretary for the office of policy development and research at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, where she was responsible for research, policy, market analysis, and program development assistance. During her tenure in the Obama administration, she also served as deputy assistant secretary for policy development and was a leading architect of the White House Council for Strong Cities and Strong Communities. At the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, she was associate director for housing. She was also assistant commissioner for policy, resource, and program development at the City of Chicago's Department of Housing. In the late 1990s, she developed Mayor Richard M. Daley's campaign to combat predatory lending, prevent foreclosures, and stabilize communities. Ms. Poethig was a Phi Beta Kappa from the College of Wooster, was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Vienna, and has an MA with honors in public policy from the University of Chicago.

**Vivian Tseng** is vice president at the William T. Grant Foundation. She leads the Foundation's grantmaking and spearheads its initiatives to connect research, policy, and practice. In 2009, she launched the Foundation's focus on the use of research evidence in policy and practice, inspiring a national network of partnerships between school districts and researchers. Dr. Tseng has a deep interest in mentoring young researchers and is committed to strengthening the career pipeline for scholars of color. Under her leadership, the William T. Grant Scholars Program has broadened its diversity and deepened its support for early-career professionals. Prior to joining the Foundation, Dr. Tseng was an assistant professor in psychology and Asian American studies at California State University, Northridge. Her research on culture, immigration, and child development was published in *Child Development*, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and the *Handbooks of Parenting*, *Asian American Psychology*, and *21st Century Education*, among other outlets. Conceptual papers on youth's social settings and promoting social change appeared in the *American Journal of Community Psychology*. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Forum for Youth Investment; is the Associate Editor, North America for the international journal, *Evidence and Policy*; and chairs the Society for Research on Child Development's Asian Caucus. In 2013, she was a faculty consultant for the Aspen Institute's Senior Congressional Educational Staff Workshop on the Education Sciences Reform Act. Dr. Tseng received a doctorate from New York University and a bachelor of arts from the University of California, Los Angeles.

**Gary VanLandingham** directs the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, which helps state and local governments advance evidence-based policymaking by equipping them with tools that identify and compare the long-term return on investment they could achieve through alternative program choices. Governments have used Results First to eliminate ineffective programs and target funds to interventions that have a proven record of achieving strong outcomes for citizens. Before joining Pew in 2011, he served for seven years as Director of the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, the Florida Legislature's evaluation and oversight arm. He has over 30 years of experience in policy analysis and program evaluation at the state and local government levels. He has served as staff chair of the National Conference of State Legislatures, chair of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society and president of the Southeast Evaluation Association, and the North Florida Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. VanLandingham has published on evidence-based policymaking, performance evaluation and management, and government transparency. He holds a Ph.D. in public administration and policy from Florida State University.