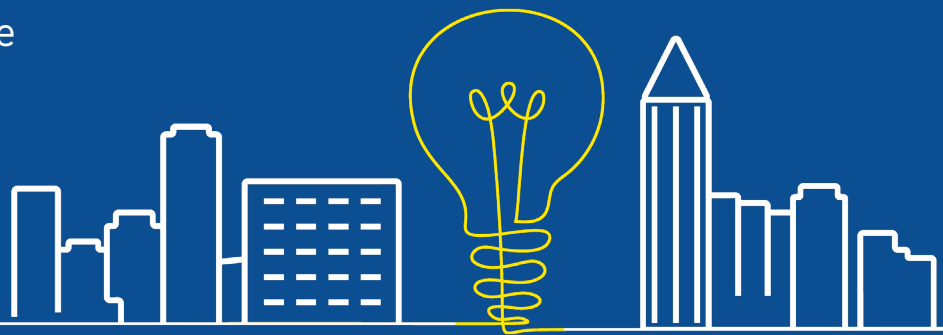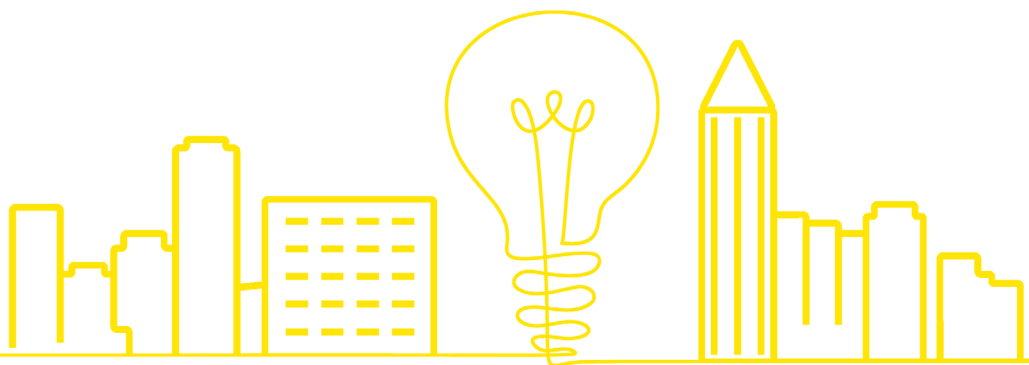# LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAB

A Forum for New York State Researchers, Practitioners, and Policymakers

Wednesday
June 9, 2021
9:00 a.m. — 3:45 p.m.

Presented by the
Rockefeller Institute
of Government

Rckefeller
Institute of Government

AGENDA

SESSION I

(Panels 1 and 2 are concurrent panels.)

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.   **Panel 1 | On-the-Ground: Local Government and the Pandemic**

The Local Response to COVID-19

Stephen J. Acquario, Executive Director and General Counsel, New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC); and

Mark F. LaVigne, Deputy Director, New York Association of Counties (NYSAC)

The Pandemic and New York City Finances: Emerging Challenges and Short-Term Responses

Rahul Pathak, Assistant Professor, Marxe School of Public and International Affairs, Baruch College, City University of New York; and

Wooserk Park, Research Assistant, Marxe School of Public and International Affairs, Baruch College, City University of New York

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.   **Panel 2 | Urban Sustainability and Environmentalism**

Philadelphia Needs a Green New Deal for Transportation

Emily Kennedy, Master of City Planning Candidate, University of Pennsylvania

The Open Source Sidewalk: Collaborating with Local Governments to Catalyze Low-Embodied Carbon Concrete Adoption

Matthew P. Adams, Assistant Professor, New Jersey Institute of Technology and Richard P. Nathan Public Policy Fellow, Rockefeller Institute of Government; and

Christopher Neidl, Cofounder, The OpenAir Collective

Moving Toward Action: Closing Loops City Projects Initiative (CLCP Initiative)

Terri Matthews, Director, Town and Gown: NYC (T+G); and

Jennifer McDonnell, Resource Recovery Program Manager, New York City Department of Environmental Protection

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Break

SESSION II

(Panels 3 and 4 are concurrent panels.)

10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. ### Panel 3 | Local Government Planning and Finances

Should Local Governments in New York State Use Strategic Planning?

Kevin M. Bronner, Public Service Professor, Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany

Budgetary Impacts of Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) on Local Governments

Robert Bifulco, Associate Dean, Chair, and Professor, Public Administration and International Relations Department, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University; and

Minchin Lewis, Adjunct Professor, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

Does New York City Assess Commercial Properties Equitably?

Pooya Ghorbani, Economist, New York City Independent Budgeting Office

10:15 a.m - 11:15 a.m. ### Panel 4 | Environmental and Ecological Policy Challenges for the States

The Causal Effects of Hurricanes on Local Government Finance: Evidence from Florida Counties: Exploring the Current Assessment Method and an Alternative

Can Chen, Associate Professor, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University

Evaluation of the New York State Pollinator Plan Using Three Evidence-Based Policymaking Frameworks

Kaitlin Stack Whitney, Assistant Professor, Science, Technology, and Society Department, Rochester Institute of Technology

Transforming the Regional Foodshed: Current and Ongoing Research into Food System Governance and Socioecological Systems Challenges, During and After COVID-19

April M Roggio, Director, Sayre Policy Research, LLC and Research Associate, Center for Policy Research, Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany

11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.   Intersession for Lunch

SESSION III

12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.   **Panel 5 | Serving Vulernable Communities in Times of Crisis and Need**

Maxwell Lab: SNAP and Families in Need

Michelle Kincaid, Senior Associate, Maxwell X Lab, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

What Drives Staffing Levels for Substance-Use Disorder Services in New York State?

Luke J. Nasta, CEO, Camelot Counseling Centers and Richard P. Nathan Public Policy Fellow, Rockefeller Institute of Government; and

Patricia Strach, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration and Policy, University at Albany, and Fellow, Rockefeller Institute of Government

Opioid Treatment Deserts in New York City

Shawn Hill, Instructional Technologist, Digital Scholarship and Pedagogy, Fordham University

Applying the Multiple Streams Framework to the Urban Policy Process

Alice Sardell, Professor, Urban Studies Department, Queen College, City University of New York; and

Michael K. Gusmano, Professor, Health Behavior, Society, and Policy Department, School of Public Health, Rutgers University

1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.   Break

SESSION IV

2:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.   Panel 6 | Education Leadership, Advocacy, and Change

COVID-19: A Cross-Sectional Study Analyzing Healthcare Students' Perceptions of Life During the Pandemic

Laura A. Geer, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, School of Public Health, Brooklyn; and

Rachel Radigan, Senior Staff Assistant, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, School of Public Health, Brooklyn

The Role of Local Government in Federal-State Partnerships for Higher Education

Rebecca S. Natow, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy, Hofstra University and Richard P. Nathan Public Policy Fellow, Rockefeller Institute of Government

What We Can Learn About School Leadership and Special Education Representation from the New York City Teacher Survey

Renee S. Parmar, Professor, Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership, St. John's University, and Richard P. Nathan Public Policy Fellow, Rockefeller Institute of Government

Statewide Advocacy for Legislative Change for a Profession

Deborah Napolitano, Assistant Professor, Applied Behavior Analysis, Daemen College and Consultant, Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing, St. John Fischer College; and

Julia Donnaruma, Senior Advisor, Government and Regulatory Practice, Manatt, Phelps, & Phillips, LLP

Hidden Transcripts: How Local Officials Perceive State School Consolidation and Municipal Restructuring Efforts

Casey Jakubowski, Chair, Liberal Arts and General Studies Department, Hudson Valley Community College and Founder of CTJ Solutions, LLC

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

PANEL 1. On-the-Ground: Local Government and the Pandemic

Stephen J. Acquario

Stephen J. Acquario is executive director and general counsel of the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC). In this capacity since 2005, Acquario works closely with the board of directors to present a single voice for New York's 57 counties and the City of New York. He oversees the association's coherent, cohesive, and successful legal and legislative strategy. He graduated from Albany Law School and holds a bachelor's degree in Labor Relations from SUNY Potsdam.

Mark F. LaVigne

Mark F. LaVigne is the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) deputy director. He works with the association's board and staff to support NYSAC's mission to represent, advocate for, and serve New York's county officials. Previously, LaVigne worked at the Center for Technology of Government, the New York State Assembly, and was a congressional aid and newspaper reporter early in his career. He has a PhD in communication from the University at Albany and holds a bachelor's degree in English from LeMoyne College.

Rahul Pathak

Rahul Pathak is an assistant professor at the Marxe School of Public and International Affairs at the Baruch College, City University of New York. His research focuses on issues related to public finance, budgeting, and international development.

Wooserk Park

Wooserk Park is a research assistant at the Marxe School of Public and International Affairs at the Baruch College, City University of New York. His primary research interests are public finance and urban economics.

PANEL 2. Urban Sustainability and Environmentalism

Emily Kennedy

Emily Kennedy is a recent graduate of the city and regional planning master's program in the Weitzman School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania (MCP '21). She has worked as a community organizer for a climate change campaign, completed a Fulbright research grant studying access to water in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and worked as an analyst at Cefeidas Group, a Buenos Aires-based international advisory firm. After nearly three years in Argentina, Kennedy moved to Dublin, Ireland, where she confirmed her commitment to city planning and transportation equity. Kennedy is the recipient of the Women's Transportation Seminar Philadelphia Chapter Carmen E. Turner Graduate Scholarship Award, and was part of the winning team for the 2020 ITS America Emerging Leaders Program Global Challenge. She received her BA in global studies with minors in Spanish, Latin American studies, and political science from Providence College.

Matthew P. Adams

Matthew P. Adams is an assistant professor in the John A. Reif, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, New Jersey. He is a fellow of the American Concrete Institute, where he is currently secretary of Committee 555 on Recycled Materials in Concrete. He is a member of ASTM International Committees on Concrete and Concrete Aggregates, and Cement. His main research focus is on the use of recycled concrete aggregates in new concrete, developing new understanding of cement based rapid repair materials, and improving concrete durability. His research has been funded by agencies such as the US Department of Transportation, New Jersey Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and ACI Foundation. As part of his Richard P. Nathan Public Policy fellowship, Adams is analyzing municipal incentives that can advance the use of sustainable and durable concrete materials in construction.

Christopher Neidl

Chris Neidl is the cofounder of OpenAir, a global volunteer collective launched in 2019 to advance carbon dioxide removal (CDR) through collaborative, member-driven R&D and advocacy missions. In this capacity, he leads and contributes to multiple state-level campaigns, including the New York and New Jersey Low Embodied Carbon Concrete Leadership Act (LECCLA). He brings to this role 15 years of career experience in the renewable energy sector, spanning diverse research, activist, and project management roles in both urban and "off-grid" contexts throughout North America, South Asia, and East Africa. Currently based in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, he is an upstate New York native and long-time Brooklyn resident.

Terri Matthews

Terri Matthews is director of Town+Gown, an open platform citywide university-community collaboration program, based at the New York City Department of Design and Construction that brings academics and practitioners together to create knowledge in the built environment. A graduate of Boston College, Boston College Law School, and New York University Wagner Graduate School for Public Service, and currently a graduate student at New York University Tandon School of Engineering, Matthews has worked in both the public and private sectors. In addition to her public finance law experience at several national bond firms, Matthews' governmental experience at New York City spans both the legislative and executive branches. Her areas of focus have included public budgeting, public finance, performance measurement, public procurement, and built environment public policy. She is admitted to practice in Massachusetts and New York.

Jennifer McDonnell

Jennifer McDonnell is a resource recovery professional with over 15 years in the fields of solid waste, recycling, and biosolids management. She brings a breadth and depth of experience to the field of resource recovery, having worked in the consumer products and grocery industries prior to specializing in organic and mineral residuals and biosolids (R&B). Her commitment to resource recovery was nurtured as the green mission specialist for Whole Foods Market Northeast and solidified at Casella Organics. There she built expertise in composting, land application, codigestion, and product marketing. Currently, as the resource recovery program manager for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, she is part of the Office of Energy, a group leading a renewed effort to increase the beneficial use of biosolids, realize GHG reductions, harness renewable energy sources, and transform wastewater treatment to resource recovery. She has a dual BA from Brown University in human biology and organizational behavior, is a certified recycling professional (Rutgers University), a sustainable resource management professional (SRMP), and a 2014 graduate of the Water Environment Federation's Water Leadership Institute.

PANEL 3. Local Government Planning and Finances

Kevin M. Bronner

Kevin M. Bronner is a public service professor at the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany. His teaching and research interest is in the field of public finance. He has taught courses in governmental accounting, financial management, microeconomics, and strategic planning. He has conducted numerous studies concerning local governments in New York State. He is a member of the Government Finance Officers Association in Chicago and the New York State Government Finance Officers Association in Albany, New York. He is also a member of the American Society of Public Administration and he is a member of the National Collegiate Leadership Society. He has conducted accounting training for the staff of the Office of the New York State Comptroller and has participated in proceedings before the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). He has presented numerous papers and studies at various conferences in Albany, New York, Washington, DC, New York City, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Boston.

Robert Bifulco

Robert Bifulco is the associate dean, chair, and professor for the Public Administration and International Relations Department at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. He is also a senior research associate in the Center for Policy Research (CPR) and Education Finance and Accountability Program (EFAP) at the Maxwell School. His research focuses on the evaluation of educational policies and programs. He received his PhD and MPA in public administration from Syracuse University.

Minchin Lewis

Minchin Lewis is an adjunct professor at Syracuse University's Maxwell School. He served as the elected city auditor in Syracuse, New York for nine years. He has developed financial management systems for the affordable housing industry. He earned his master's degree in public administration at the Maxwell School and a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Notre Dame. He is a certified government financial manager.

Pooya Ghorbani

Pooya Ghorbani is an economist at the New York City Independent Budget Office, where he researches topics related to personal income and commercial property tax, analyzes fiscal policy proposals, and contributes to the forecasts of the city's economy and tax revenue. More broadly, his research is concerned with urban economics and public finance. His published and ongoing work focuses on how economic, natural, and public health shocks may impact local economic development and municipal finances, and how public policy should respond to both the short- and long-term impacts of such shocks. He has received both his master's and PhD in public and urban policy from The New School, New York.

PANEL 4. Environmental and Ecological Environmental Challenges for the States

Can Chen

Can Chen is an associate professor in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. He teaches graduate courses in public budgeting, public finance, and public financial management. His main research interests are state and local infrastructure finance, disaster finance, and fiscal transparency.
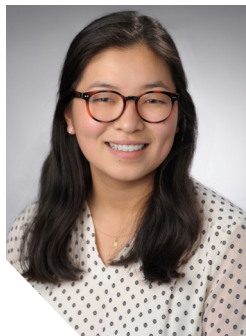
Kaitlin Stack Whitney

Kaitlin Stack Whitney is an assistant professor in the Science, Technology and Society Department at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She holds a PhD in zoology and STS from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She previously worked as a staff biologist for the US Environmental Protection Agency, serving in both the Office of Pesticide Programs and Office of International and Tribal Affairs.

April M. Roggio

April M. Roggio coordinates a multiuniversity and cross disciplinary research team charged with the task of better understanding the challenges of rebuilding local foodsheds in an era of climate uncertainty, economic upheaval and social unrest. She earned a master's in public policy and a PhD in public administration from the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany, focused on the intersection of judgment and decision sciences and system dynamics modelling. She is a mother, activist, scholar, and is co-owner of the now-shuttered Medusa General Store, shelved but waiting to help usher in a more food-secure, carbon-neutral, and prosperous world.

PANEL 5. Serving Vulnerable Communities in Times of Crisis and Need

Michelle Kincaid

Michelle Kincaid is a senior associate in the Maxwell X Lab. She is involved in the development, implementation, and analysis of projects across the Lab's portfolio. She is also lead mentor and supervisor for the Lab's team of student research assistants. Previous to joining the X Lab, she worked with a number of nonprofits in the Syracuse area, including the Gifford Foundation, CNY Fair Housing, and A Tiny Home for Good. Her work used surveys and data analysis to evaluate programming and advance fundraising strategies. Her development experience also extends overseas with NGOs in Peru and Chile. She earned her BA in international relations and citizenship and civic engagement with a minor in policy studies at Syracuse University in 2018.

Luke J. Nasta

Luke J. Nasta is a chief executive officer and educator with extensive experience in the nonprofit substance-abuse rehabilitation arena. He has been chief executive officer of Camelot Counseling Centers, the largest drug treatment program on Staten Island, since 1976. In 1987, he earned a bachelor of science degree in community and human services at SUNY Empire State College. In 1991, he made the dean's list while earning a master of science degree in public administration at Metropolitan College. Since 1990, he has been the public policy officer for the Coalition for Community Services, a lobbying group for drug treatment providers in the New York City region. Nasta was a former member of the New York State Governor's Advisory Council on Substance Abuse and Alcoholism and the New York City Bureau of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner's Advisory Group. In 2001, he received the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner's Award for 25 years of Outstanding Service. He is the author of many chemical dependency articles which are published regularly in the *Staten Island Advance* and has been featured in numerous media outlets, including New York One and Al Jazeera America. As part of his Richard P. Nathan Public Policy fellowship, Nasta will explore disparities and inconsistencies in compensation of substance abuse treatment professionals.

Patricia Strach

Patricia Strach is a fellow at the Rockefeller Institute of Government and principal investigator on the Institute's Stories from Sullivan project, which examines how opioid use affects local communities and what local communities are doing to address it. Strach is a professor in the Departments of Political Science and Public Administration and Policy at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany. Her research examines public policy and mass politics. She is the author of *Hiding Politics in Plain Sight: Cause Marketing, Corporate Influence, and Breast Cancer Policymaking* (Oxford 2016), *All in the Family: The Private Roots of American Public Policy* (Stanford 2007), and articles appearing in *Political Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Policy History*, *Polity*, and *American Politics Research*. In 2008-10, she was a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research at Harvard University. Strach received her doctorate in political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2004.

Shawn Hill

Shawn Hill is Fordham University's instructional technologist for digital scholarship and pedagogy. In this role, he works with faculty across Fordham's many schools and departments to encourage the use of innovative digital technology in the classroom. He is also one of the cofounders of The Greater Harlem Coalition, a Harlem and East Harlem collective of over 100 community organizations who have come together to address the oversaturation of addiction programs in our community and to fight systems of racism that repeatedly locate addiction programs in communities of color.

Alice Sardell

Alice Sardell is a professor in the Urban Studies Department at Queens College-CUNY and affiliated faculty at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. She is a political scientist whose research is on US health politics and policy, particularly as it affects low-income and medically-underserved populations. She was a recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Investigator Award in Health Policy Research, a research award given annually to 10 scholars across the US. She is the author of *The U.S. Experiment in Social Medicine: The Community Health Center Program, 1965-1986* (1988), *Insuring Children's Health: Contentious Politics and Public Policy* (2014), and numerous book chapters and journal articles on US health and welfare policy, including work on health policy in New York State.

Michael K. Gusmano

Michael K. Gusmano is a professor in the School of Public Health's Department of Health Behavior, Society, and Policy and Administration at Rutgers University. He is also a research scholar at the Hastings Center and a visiting fellow at the Rockefeller Institute of Government. He serves as the international editor of the *Journal of Aging and Social Policy* and associate editor for *Health Economics, Policy and Law* and is on the board of editors of the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* and the editorial committee of *The Hastings Center Report*.

PANEL 6. Education Leadership, Advocacy, and Change

Laura A. Geer

Laura A. Geer is associate professor and chair of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at SUNY Downstate School of Public Health. For nearly 15 years, she has been responsible for the design, conduct, and management of studies concerning health impacts of occupational and environmental exposures to various chemicals and air pollutants in the environment. Much of Geer's research has focused on assessing prenatal exposure to consumer product chemicals, including metals and endocrine disruptors, in the understudied communities of recent immigrants in Brooklyn.

Rachel Radigan

Rachel Radigan graduated with her master's degree from SUNY Downstate's School of Public Health with a concentration in epidemiology in 2019. She now works as a senior staff assistant in the school, providing support to faculty for online distance learning. She will be starting medical school this coming August.

Rebecca Natow

Rebecca Natow is an assistant professor of educational leadership and policy at Hofstra University and a 2020-21 Richard P. Nathan Public Policy Fellow at the Rockefeller Institute of Government. Dr. Natow's areas of specialization are federal and state higher education policy, higher education law, performance-based funding for higher education, research use in policymaking, qualitative research, and technology use in postsecondary teaching. She received her EdD, EdM, and MA in higher and postsecondary education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a JD from Georgetown University Law Center. Her dissertation, entitled *Making Policy in the United States Department of Education: The Political Process of Federal Rulemaking for Higher Education*, received the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the Politics of Education Association. Currently, Natow is writing a book (in contract with Teachers College Press) about the federal government and higher education.

Renee S. Parmar

Rene S. Parmar is a professor of measurement and evaluation at St. John's University, New York. She has over 30 years' experience working with students with disabilities in the areas of educational assessment, mathematics education, inclusive education, and family engagement. She conducts research and mentors doctoral students in a variety of areas of school leadership and special education practices. Parmar has published and presented her research in numerous national and international venues. Her current projects, as part of her Richard P. Nathan Public Policy fellowship, focuses on school leadership for inclusive education and school engagement of diverse and immigrant families of students with special learning needs.

Deborah Napolitano

Deborah Napolitano is an assistant professor in applied behavior analysis (ABA) at Daemen College, as well as a consultant to the Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing at St. John Fisher College. She obtained her PhD in developmental and child psychology from the University of Kansas in 2000. She is widely published in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and behavior analysis. She continues to practice clinically, particularly in the areas of assessment and treatment of severe challenging behavior, as well as in the applications of behavior analysis in child welfare. Napolitano actively advocates for the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with self-advocates and their families. She is a statewide and national leader in the field of ABA, serving multiples roles on the New York State Association for Behavior Analysis, including previously as president and currently as the chair of the Legislative Committee. She is also the secretary for the Severe Challenging Behavior Special Interest Group of the International Association on the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) and also currently serves as a board member for the Behavior Analysis Leadership Council.
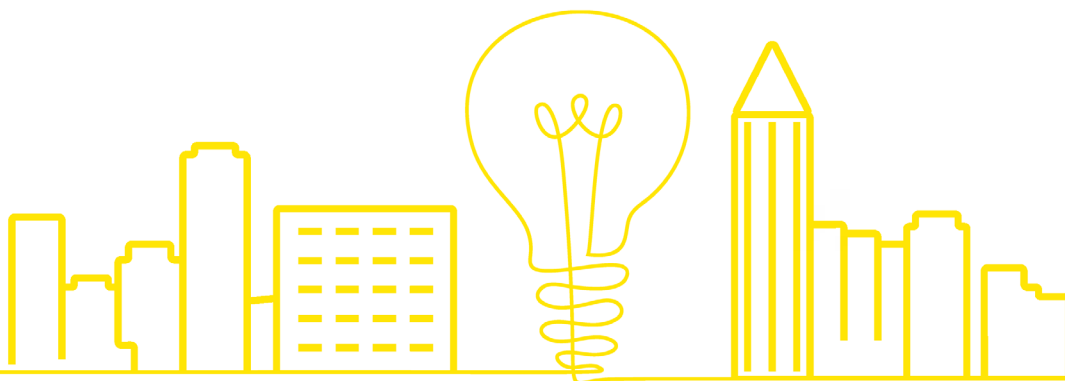
Julia Donnaruma

Julia Donnaruma is a senior advisor in the government and regulatory practice in Manatt, Phelps & Phillips' Albany office. She has over 13 years of experience working with government entities across New York State, providing analysis and advice on state legislative issues and proposals. Her professional focus has been on policy and budgetary issues pertaining to public health, transportation, and the environment. Prior to joining Manatt, she served as a legislative representative for the Office of the Mayor, City of New York, and before that, she served as the director of governmental affairs at the Healthcare Association for New York State. She began her career as an analyst for the New York State Assembly.

Casey Jakubowski

Casey Jakubowski is a 20-year veteran of education and improvement specialist who focuses on team dynamics and conflict management. He holds a PhD in education policy and leadership from the University at Albany, focused on local education reform in rural areas. He is the author of two books on rural education by Edumatch Publishing— *Thinking About Teaching* and *A Cog In the Machine*. He is the founder of CTJ Solutions, LLC and has written and presented on rural education and civic engagement.
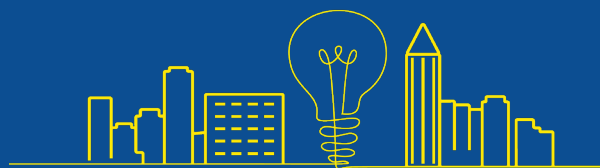
ABOUT THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE

Created in 1981, the Rockefeller Institute of Government is a public policy think tank providing cutting-edge, evidence-based policy. Our mission is to improve the capacities of communities, state and local governments, and the federal system to work toward genuine solutions to the nation's problems. Through rigorous, objective, and accessible analysis and outreach, the Institute gives citizens and governments facts and tools relevant to public decisions.

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