

# How Employer Practices and Worker Power Shape Labor Market Outcomes

## Speaker Biographies

**Beth Cobert** is the chief operating officer of the Markle Foundation and the chief executive officer of Skillful, a Markle Foundation initiative. Cobert helps lead Markle's Rework America Alliance, a new national collaboration formed in response to the COVID-19 crisis to enable unemployed workers to move into better jobs with greater economic dignity and mobility, particularly for people of color and people with little formal education after high school. In these roles, Cobert employs her extensive experience in talent management and partnership development, as well as her acumen for harnessing the constructive potential of new technologies. Before joining Markle/Skillful, Cobert honed her leadership skills as acting director of the Office of Personnel Management under President Obama. Before that, Cobert served as the deputy director for management at the Office of Management and Budget. She began her career at McKinsey & Company, where she became a senior partner and worked with clients across a range of sectors, including financial services, health care, real estate, telecommunications, and philanthropy. She is a member of the board of directors of CBRE Group Inc. and the Princeton University Board of Trustees. She received a bachelor's degree in economics from Princeton University and a master's degree in business administration from Stanford University.

**Ritse Erumi** is a public interest technologist and strategist working at the intersection of technology, economic opportunity, and equity. As a tech fellow at the Ford Foundation, she leads work focused on advancing more inclusive economies through equitable innovation, multistakeholder collaboration, business engagement, and tech policy. Before Ford, Erumi served as an adviser to civil society groups, governments, businesses, and development agencies on models for digital innovation and systemic change. She holds a master's degree in management and systems from the University of Manchester, where she is also a doctoral candidate exploring the economic implications of emerging technologies, particularly among marginalized and underserved communities.

**Elisabeth Jacobs** is acting executive director of WorkRise, a \$20 million research-to-action initiative focused on jobs, workers, and mobility, hosted by the Urban Institute. With WorkRise's Leadership Board and its philanthropic and institutional partners, Jacobs leads and directs strategic planning efforts, development of the initiative's research priorities and agenda, grantmaking and other key research investment activities, institutional partnerships, fundraising, and stakeholder cultivation and engagement. She is also a senior fellow in Urban's Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population, focusing on issues related to family economic security and economic mobility. Her previous roles include founding senior director at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, fellow at the Brookings Institution, and senior policy adviser positions with the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the US Joint Economic Committee. Jacobs is a nationally recognized expert on family income and earnings instability, low-wage employment and job quality, and intergenerational mobility and opportunity and is a go-to source for media and policymakers looking for clear, relevant explanations of how research can inform policy. Jacobs is an elected member of the National Academy for Social Insurance and a founding member of the American Enterprise Institute–Brookings Paid Family Leave Working Group. Jacobs holds a bachelor's degree from Yale University, where she served on the

board of trustees for the Dwight Hall Center for Public Service and Social Justice, and a doctoral degree from Harvard University, where she was a fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy.

**Lorelei Salas** was appointed commissioner of the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection in May 2016. Under her leadership, the agency targets its efforts toward industries in which predatory practices are prevalent and regularly uses data to inform its strategic enforcement of consumer and worker protection laws. Previously, as the director of legal services at Catholic Migration Services, Salas supervised the immigration, housing, and employment legal services programs designed to help immigrants and refugees access justice. She also worked at Make the Road New York, directing litigation in immigration, housing, and employment law. In 2009, Salas was nominated by President Obama as the wage and hour administrator at the US Department of Labor. Before this, she worked at the New York State Attorney General's Office in the Litigation and Labor Bureaus, investigating businesses for violations of state and federal labor laws and representing the Department of Health in litigation. She earned her law degree from Benjamin N. Cardozo Law School and is admitted to practice law in New York state and in federal courts. Salas is also a proud City University of New York graduate, obtaining her associate's degree from La Guardia Community College and her bachelor's degree from Hunter College.

**Palak Shah** is the social innovations director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), the nation's leading organization working for the power, respect, and dignity of the 2.5 million nannies, housekeepers, and caregivers in the US. She is also the founding director of NDWA Labs, the innovation arm of the domestic worker movement. Shah is a leader in the movement for workers' rights in the new economy, a thought leader on the future of work, and a social entrepreneur. Her groundbreaking work at NDWA wrestles with the ways in which technology can be harnessed to benefit workers, placing them at the center of innovation and change. Shah currently serves on the advisory council for the Institute for the Cooperative Digital Economy, as well as the Institute for the Future's Equitable Futures Lab. She previously served as a two-year Beck visiting social innovator at the Harvard Kennedy School and a job quality fellow with the Aspen Institute.

**David Weil** is dean and professor at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. Before joining the Heller School, President Obama appointed him administrator of the Wage and Hour division of the US Department of Labor, and he was the first Senate-confirmed head of that agency in a decade. Weil is an internationally recognized expert in employment and labor market policy, regulation, transparency policy, and the impacts of industry restructuring on employment and work outcomes and business performance. He has advised government agencies at the state and federal levels and international organizations on employment, labor, and workplace policies. He cofounded and codirects the Transparency Policy Project at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He is the author of more than 125 articles and 5 books, including *The Fissured Workplace* (Harvard University Press). He has received many awards, including the Frances Perkins Intelligence and Courage Award in 2019. Weil received his bachelor's degree at Cornell University and master's and doctoral degrees in public policy at Harvard University.