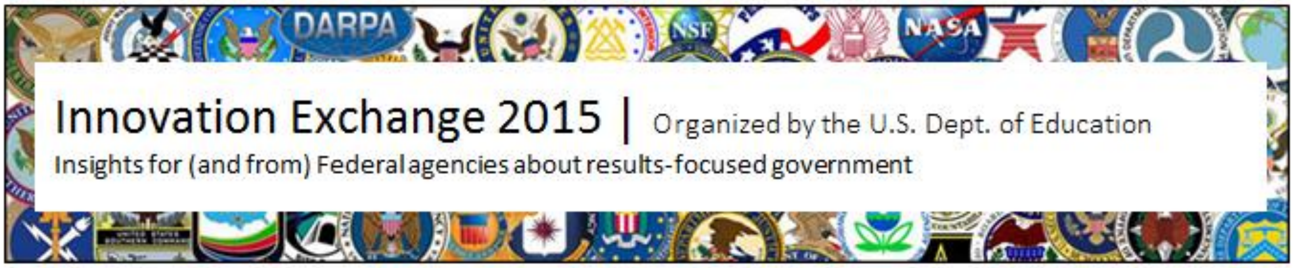

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Friday, July 10, 2015
U.S. Department of Education, Barnard Auditorium
400 Maryland Ave SW, Washington D.C.

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8:40 Overview of Innovation Exchange 2015 by **Andy Feldman**, Special Advisor for Evidence-Based Policy, U.S. Department of Education, and coordinator of Innovation Exchange 2015.

Applying behavioral insights to address important agency challenges

8:50 Harnessing insights from the behavioral sciences to achieve important policy and program outcomes: **Will Tucker**, Fellow, White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team

9:05 Using rapid experimentation informed by behavioral insights to improve communications with customers: **Jessica Barrett Simpson**, Senior Advisor for the Borrower Experience, Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education

Data-driven strategies to improve results

9:20 Using a PerformanceStat strategy (FEMAStat) to create cascading effects around data-driven change: **Carter Hewgley**, Enterprise Analytics Division Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency

9:35 Linking data across agencies to build evidence and insights about programs: **Carol Star**, Director, Program Evaluation Division, Office of Policy, Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Catalyzing innovation to better achieve the mission

9:50 Change from within: How internal innovation accelerator programs can cultivate talent, solve problems, and shift the tide of organizational norms: **Read Holman**, Program Director and Senior Advisor on Internal Entrepreneurship, HHS IDEA Lab, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

10:05 Using prize competitions to deliver innovation and turn raw ideas into real products and services: **Michael Contreras**, Managing Director and American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow, SunShot Catalyst prize challenge, Solar Energy Technologies Office U.S. Department of Energy

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10:30 Building and strengthening a culture of learning and improvement – lessons from the Department of Labor: **Seth Harris**, former Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor

Strengthening agency and practitioner capacity to use evidence

10:50 Lifting up key principles for evaluators through an agency evaluation policy – rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics: **Naomi Goldstein**, Director, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

11:05 Want evidence to be used by practitioners and decision makers? Make it accessible. Lessons from the What Works Clearinghouse: **Joy Lesnick**, Associate Commissioner, Knowledge Utilization; National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education

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11:20 Employing a tiered-evidence grant design to use and build evidence about what works – insights from the Investing in Innovation Fund (i3): **Shane Mulhern**, Director, i3, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

11:35 Using a Pay for Success approach to tackle important policy challenges: **David Wilkinson**, Director of the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation

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11:50 To make change, find partners: **Kathy Stack**, former Advisor for Evidence-Based Innovation, White House Office of Management and Budget

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Innovation Exchange 2015 is co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Performance Improvement Council (PIC), White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation.

Welcome

Dear Colleagues:

I'd like to welcome you to the U.S. Department of Education for the inaugural "Innovation Exchange." It is an event by federal agencies, for federal agencies, designed to share information about some of the most useful innovations and outcome-focused strategies being used by agencies today.

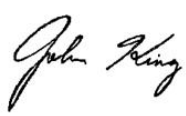
Today you're joining more than 250 federal employees from more than two dozen agencies. We hope this gathering is the start of a new tradition.

As part of this Administration's push for continuous improvement in government performance, the broader goal of today's gathering is to shine a light on specific approaches that can help our agencies better achieve their important missions, including improving program outcomes and strengthening efficiency. It is, in short, an opportunity to continue to improve the way we serve the American people.

The push for continuous improvement is an important emphasis of this Administration, including related efforts around evidence, performance and innovation. As President Obama has said, "I don't care whether the ideas are Democrat or Republican. I do care that they work. I do care that they are subject to evaluation, and we can see if we are using tax dollars in a certain way, if we're starting a certain program, I want to make sure that [people] are actually benefiting from them."

I hope you enjoy the event, learn a lot, and – the most important – that you strive to take useful ideas, adapt them to your own agencies, and turn them into action.

Best,



John B. King, Jr.
Delegated Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

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Introduction

Consider this question as a starting point for today's gathering: Which innovation highlighted today best fits with my organization – that is, my department, agency, office or program?

Let me suggest: It's the wrong question.

The goal today is not innovation for innovation's sake. Instead, it's about helping you and your agency solve important program and policy challenges.

The question I'd encourage each of us to ask ourselves as we kick off Innovation Exchange 2015 is: ***What is the most important performance challenge facing my organization?***

In other words, what problem or opportunity is important enough that if you solved it (or even made a lot of progress), you'd significantly help your agency achieve its mission?

If you can answer that question, you're ready to think about which innovation or strategy discussed today could be tweaked and adapted to help tackle that problem or opportunity in your agency.

To quote public management scholar Bob Behn, "Always start with purpose."

It is why agencies and offices that have a clear mission statement, set of goals, and specific targets are more likely to use innovation smartly. They know what they're doing well and where they're falling short. And they know where they're aiming.

Agencies and offices that use innovation smartly also have leaders who make it clear that the status quo is not good enough and that continually finding ways to do things better and more efficiently is expected. With that expectation, innovation becomes a valuable tool.

We are thrilled to have so many of you here today from across the Federal government to learn about a set of cutting-edge strategies that can help your agencies tackle important challenges.

Andy Feldman
Coordinator, Innovation Exchange 2015

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The Innovations

1. Harnessing insights from the behavioral sciences to achieve important policy & program outcomes

Presenter: Will Tucker, Fellow, White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team

The big picture

- Human decision making is central to most public policy interventions. Major advances have been made in research regarding how people make decisions and convert intentions into action. These new insights can be used to significantly improve policy outcomes at a lower cost.

Key features

- The Social and Behavioral Sciences Team (SBST) combines academic expertise with experience implementing pilot interventions within the federal government. The Team has a diverse scientific background, drawn from fields such as psychology, economics, and statistics, and brings experience testing program impacts in complex settings.
- In particular, working with agencies, the SBST:
    - Identifies how applications of behavioral insights can help an agency achieve its existing goals with greater success and efficiency, drawing on external research, best practices, and academic experts;
    - Identifies opportunities for rigorous, rapid pilot testing that quantifies the impact of these insights on outcomes of agency interest (e.g., increased enrollment in a program, dollars saved, etc.);
    - Provides conceptual and technical support on how best to design, implement, and analyze the pilot, including assisting with research design, regulatory clearance, and data analysis;
    - Reports on the findings and implications of these results, including scale-up potential, for both public policy and academic audiences.

An example

- The Department of Defense (DOD) wanted to help members of the Armed Forces continue contributions to their Roth Thrift Savings Plans. Due to a change in the military pay system in January 2015, nearly 140,000 members needed to re-enroll in their plans online, or else their contributions would be suspended indefinitely. SBST worked with DOD to redesign their planned communications to better serve our service members, by making the language clear and concise, charting out clear action steps for service members to take, and personalizing the emails. The results of the pilot indicated that the redesigned email led 22% more service members (3,770 individuals) to re-enroll compared to the original message, just in the first week. As a result, DOD sent a version of the redesigned email to the entire population, demonstrating the rapid scalability of insights from these types of low-cost pilots.

- See the next innovation summary (page 11), which provides another agency example.

Resources needed

- In general, the most promising projects (for rapid, low-cost innovation and testing) tend to meet the following criteria:
    1. The outcome of interest depends in part on people's actions (e.g., individuals taking up a program, making a payment, choosing among alternative insurance plans, etc.);
    2. It is possible to assign groups of people to different versions of an intervention in order to compare outcomes and learn what works best (e.g., half of program recipients receive information presented in a standard way, and half in a modified, behaviorally-informed format);
    3. The size of the program population is large enough to be statistically and policy relevant;
    4. Administrative data on the relevant outcomes is already being collected (or could be easily collected);
    5. The agency is able to share results across government.

Biggest challenge in terms of implementation

- It depends on the circumstances, but the threshold challenge is screening for the right opportunity: What is the applicable behavioral insight and is testing necessary and possible?

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- To learn more about working with SBST, contact sbst@gsa.gov.

Further reading

- *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness* (Yale University Press), by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein. 2008. The introduction is available at: http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/excerpts/thaler_nudge.pdf

- *EAST: Four Simple Ways to Apply Behavioral Insights*, by the UK Behavioral Insights Team http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/sites/default/files/BIT%20Publication%20EAST_FA_WEB.pdf

- The Behavioral Insights to Advance Self-Sufficiency (BIAS) project website at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at HHS details this agency's efforts to apply behavioral insights to specific social policy challenges: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/behavioral-interventions-to-advance-self-sufficiency

- *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux), by Daniel Kahneman, 2011.

2. Using rapid experimentation informed by behavioral insights to improve communications with customers

Presenter: Jessica Barrett Simpson, Senior Advisor for the Borrower Experience, Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education

Note: The previous presentation provided an overview of using behavioral insights. Here we focus in on a specific agency example.

The big picture

- This innovation is about moving from hunches to hard science when designing communications with program participants or customers.
- The innovation is designing new messaging based on insights from the behavioral sciences and testing the messaging using a low-cost randomized controlled trial.
- Federal Student Aid (FSA) at the U.S. Department of Education recently did this in an effort to help those with student loans, with the payoff being improved messaging and increased awareness of repayment options.

More details

- FSA had a challenge: It wanted to find new ways to help students who were struggling to pay their student loans. In one example, it wanted to encourage more borrowers to consider *income-driven repayment options* that base a monthly loan payment on a borrower's income. Income-driven repayment can be very helpful to borrowers, but the take-up rate was low.
- FSA decided to create an email campaign to reach out to borrowers about their loan repayment options, particularly income-driven repayment. But how would they know if their emails were effective? Working with the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team, they ran an experiment and put it to the test. They randomly a group of student loan borrowers to receive the message and another group to not receive it. They then compared the take-up rates of income-driven repayment plans for these two groups over time.
- This methodology was used for additional email campaigns targeting different groups of borrowers with messaging to improve their awareness of their options.

Key features

- Key features include:
    - Desire to beyond hunches and look to hard science for messaging.
    - Willingness (and authority) to test out different messages in a pilot study (an experiment) in order to learn what works.
    - To make it a *low-cost* experiment, it helps if all of the data used to determine whether the messaging is effective or not are already being collected by the agency or its contractors.

Resources needed

- Low-cost experimentation requires few financial resources, but requires stakeholder support. Start small, demonstrate results, and support will grow.

Biggest challenge in implementing this innovation

- Coordinating stakeholders and overcoming concerns about the ethics of control groups.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- You can contact David Yokum of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team at david.yokum@gsa.gov.

Further reading

- *A Promising Pilot to Help Student Borrowers*, Maya Shankar and Ajita Talwalker Menon, http://www.ed.gov/blog/2014/08/a-promising-pilot-to-help-student-borrowers/

- *Test, Learn, Adapt: Developing Public Policy with Randomized Controlled Trials*, by the UK Behavioral Insights Team http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/sites/default/files/TLA-1906126.pdf

3. Using a PerformanceStat strategy (FEMAStat) to create cascading effects around data-driven change

Presenter: Carter Hewgley, Enterprise Analytics Division Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The big picture

- A “stat” initiative, also called “Performance Stat,” is a leadership strategy that is being used in a growing number of cities, states and federal departments. It involves ongoing, regular (say, every month) data-driven meetings with operating agencies or around specific department goals to review progress, problem solve, and decide on next steps to be reported on in the next meeting. Examples include CitiStat in Baltimore, LouieStat in Louisville, HUDStat at HUD, and FDA-TRACK at the FDA. FEMA was one of the first federal agencies to adapt the “stat” approach to the federal level, with FEMAStat.

More details

- FEMAStat helps the Agency’s leadership evaluate performance against objectives, identify barriers to success, decide on actions to eliminate those barriers, and hold individuals accountable for implementation. FEMA holds an ongoing series of strategically-focused meetings with directorates, regions, and offices. During these meetings, principal members of the FEMA leadership team, including the Deputy Administrator, discuss, question, and debate FEMA’s performance preparing for, protecting against, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating all hazards facing the Nation.

Some key variations / design choices with a “stat” approach

- Some PerformanceStat initiatives focus on an entire department (FEMAStat, HUDStat), but operating agencies within a department could also run a stat process. In fact, in some cases when the broader agency launches a stat initiative, the operating departments will do so too in order to be prepared for the broader meetings – a cascading effect of a culture of data and results.

- At the department level, one can design a PerformanceStat approach so that meetings focuses on specific *operating agencies* or you can focus meetings around *specific department goals that cross operating agencies.* In fact, some stat initiatives do both. For example, LouieStat in Louisville, KY has some meetings focused on city agencies and some focused on cross-agency goals, such as reducing vacant and abandoned properties.

Resources needed

- An analytical team (or staff member, for smaller settings) that can prepare leadership for the stat meetings, work with the participants involved in the meeting to prepare, and recap the to-dos afterward.

- Leadership commitment to, and engagement in, the process.

Keys to successful implementation

- Moving past concerns that the stat initiative would be a "gotcha" exercise like in the TV show The Wire: While accountability is an important part of the initiative, it does not have to be a belligerent or "gotcha" process. Having staff experience the process over time helped ease concerns.

- Data access: You need the ability to access data from different offices within your agency and sometimes be able to link individual-level data that come from different offices.

- Commitment from all levels of the organization: Leadership is of course critical (their convening power and signaling that this process is important) but over time getting the commitment of all those involved is important too. To do this, the stat initiative has to show that it's valuable to participants (agency officials). Valuable can mean, for example, that it facilitates action / progress or unlocks new insights.

- Producing results: To be sustainable, it has to show that it produces results, such as saving money or impacting customers or saving time. For new stat initiatives, make sure to start by focusing on issues that can yield tangible results.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- A great place to start is to attend a stat meeting at another agency to see it in action. You can contact FEMA or HUD to see if there are upcoming opportunities to do so.

- The Performance Improvement Council (PIC) at GSA can help you consider and plan for a PerformanceStat approach. (Data driven reviews are required under the GPRA Modernization Act, so this can be an opportunity to build on, depending on your situation.) The director of the PIC is Kate Josephs: kate.josephs@pic.gov

Further reading

- Robert Behn of the Harvard Kennedy School has useful resources on PerformanceStat, including two free reports and a new in-depth book:

  - *What all Mayors [or Federal Agency execs] Would like to Know about Baltimore's CitiStat Performance Strategy* *http://web.pdx.edu/~stipakb/download/PerfMeasures/CitiStatPerformanceStrategy.pdf*

  - *The Seven Big Errors of PerformanceStat* *http://www.hks.harvard.edu/thebehnreport/Behn,%207PerformanceStatErrors.pdf*

  - *The PerformanceStat Potential: A Leadership Strategy for Producing Results* (Brookings Institution Press) http://www.brookings.edu/research/books/2014/the-performancestat-potential

4. Linking data across agencies to build evidence and insights about programs

Presenter: Carol Star, Director, Program Evaluation Division, Office of Policy, Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The big picture

Agencies typically produce a lot of individual-level data from programs, called "administrative data" or – to use a popular term – "big data." The power and usefulness of these data can be greatly increased when data from agencies that have overlapping goals, such as health and housing, are linked. When those data are high quality (accurate enough to be useful) they can be used to answer important questions of interest to a wider audience and that look beyond each agency's individual reach. That is what HUD and HHS did. HUD had data on individuals' housing choices and tenant characteristics and HHS had data on those individuals' health. The two agencies agreed to link their data to better understand the health of the population receiving federal housing assistance and to explore ways to measure changes in health and other impacts through the matched data.

More details

- An important goal of the project is to learn if publicly assisted housing could be used as a platform for health improvements. The project linked HUD's administrative data on assisted households with sample household records from the National Health Interview Survey and National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) (conducted by the Centers for Disease Control within HHS) to better understand the health conditions and health care access and utilization among this population. The results will allow HHS, HUD, other Federal users, and eventually non-government researchers to complete independent projects for statistical and research purposes.

- Until now it has not been possible to reliably estimate the prevalence of specific health conditions or health care utilization among the nearly 5 million households receiving HUD assistance despite knowing that this population suffers from a wide array of preventable and treatable health problems. Instead of contracting to conduct its own health survey that would cost millions of dollars, the project enabled HUD to use existing HHS data to better understand the health conditions and health care utilization among this population.

Success factors

- Perseverance was important: it wasn't a straight path and there were setbacks. For example, it has taken hard work, determination, creativity, and flexibility to perfect the match. What started with an attempt to match data based on address has improved with the use of SSNs. Trust among the various staff members working across agencies was also important, especially with sharing of personally identifiable data and with the need to iteratively work out the kinks. Collaboration over a period of years also helped strengthen those relationships. And finally, management support and resources were important.

Key features

- Identifying high-quality data sets in your agency and at other agencies that, when linked, could produce useful policy relevant information quicker, better, and at lower cost than otherwise might be possible through targeted single-study study survey research.

- Forming a data sharing agreement (an MOU) with the partner agencies.

- Conducting the research (in house or with outside researcher) and using the findings to improve performance.

Resources needed

- Staff with expertise on data issues.

Biggest challenge of implementation

- Time and resources.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- Data experts within your own agency are a useful place to start. Also, the Evidence Team at OMB (evidence@omb.eop.gov) can help connect you with experts within the federal government, including agencies that have done linked data projects.

Further reading

- "Building Evidence with Administrative Data," in Analytical Perspectives, President's Budget of the United States, FY 2016. https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2016/assets/ap_7_evidence.pdf

- More information about NCHS data linkage program: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/data_linkage_activities.htm

5. Building and strengthening a culture of learning and improvement: Insights from the Department of Labor

Presenter: Seth Harris, former Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor

The big picture

Over the last six years, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has made significant progress in institutionalizing a culture of evidence and learning. Leadership commitment was a key factor. In addition, DOL also used a three-pronged approach: 1) establishing a chief evaluation officer role (and office); 2) creating a set aside for evaluation; and 3) requiring each operating agency to create learning agendas that identified key unanswered questions that rigorous program evaluation or other analysis could help answer. Those factors, and other supporting elements, are discussed next.

Key features of DOL's approach

- **Commitment from leadership.** The commitment of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to build a culture of evidence and learning has been critical. That includes their support for the role of the Chief Evaluation Officer (CEO) as an "honest broker" about evidence issues; the requirement from leadership that operating agencies create learning agendas; and top leadership's inclusion of the CEO in key policy and management discussions (e.g., agency performance reviews) so that the CEO is knowledgeable about leadership's priorities.

- **0.5% set aside for program evaluation.** The DOL Secretary can set aside up to 0.5% of appropriated funds from across the Department for evaluation. Once set aside, these funds get transferred to the Chief Evaluation Officer's budget. Many of the agencies also have separate evaluation funds, so this (up to) half percent supplements those funds.

- **Learning agendas.** Learning agenda are an important planning tool at DOL Each operating agency within the Department (there are 17) is required to create a five-year learning agenda, which gets updated every year. The learning agendas highlight priority questions and/or priority studies that the agencies would like to have done. They may also convey themes for their upcoming evaluation efforts or analysis that might be needed. They draw on a range of learning tools, including rigorous impact evaluation (i.e., randomized controlled trials or well designed quasi-experiments), basic analysis or research, and performance analysis (looking at factors that are associated with outcomes). Learning agendas are a catalyst for setting priorities for studies and for conceptualizing studies that need to be done. Evaluations that Congress has required of agencies are also included. Importantly, the learning agendas create demand from operating agencies for the services of the Chief Evaluation Officer (CEO) and her staff, discussed next.

- **Chief Evaluation Officer (and office).** The role of the CEO is to coordinate, encourage and build the capacity and understanding around evaluation throughout the department. As noted above, the CEO's budget includes the set-aside funds for evaluation, which she can then allocate to advance agencies' learning agendas. The CEO role is not designed to direct or centrally control all evaluation at DOL, but rather to encourage good evaluation. By early 2014 there were 50 studies underway and 40 more being planned. The CEO is a political appointee but is also an experienced researcher and evaluator.

- **Building strong relationships with operating agencies around relevance of evaluation.** The CEO and her office have worked to create strong and productive relationships with the operating agencies—

particularly in terms of showing that evaluation can be useful to those agencies—in at least two ways. First, they have framed their office's work around a spirit of customer service, rather than emphasizing requirements (although learning agenda's are required). Second, the focus of the CEO, just like the learning agendas, is primarily on learning and performance improvement, not an "up or down" verdict on particular programs.[1] That has helped agencies to reduce their skittishness about evaluation and to see the CEO's office as useful to them.

- **Connecting performance and evaluation efforts.** Performance and evaluation efforts can sometimes be siloed within Departments. DOL has been able to build bridges between these analytical approaches (and between staffs in each area). In particular, the CEO also sits in all quarterly performance reviews with agencies run by the Deputy Secretary. In most meetings, there is often some discussion of evaluations underway. The CEO also provides input and assistance about existing or proposed performance measures, including identifying ways to add outcome measures or build more knowledge about whether an agency's (or program's) performance measures are correlated with impacts. That, in turn, can lead to updates to the agency's learning agenda.

- **Departmental evaluation policy statement.** The statement (http://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/EvaluationPolicy.htm), posted on DOL's website in 2014, presents the principles that guide DOL's planning, conduct, and use of program evaluations. It emphasizes a commitment to conducting rigorous, relevant evaluations and to using evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice. The statement also addresses the topics of rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations.

Evidence of culture change at DOL

- An increasing number agency staff are coming to the CEO's office for help on analytic issues and evaluations. (In fact, that office has expanded its staff in order to meet the demand.) The fact that agency staff are initiating these conversations, rather than the CEO's office having to always do so, is a sign of progress.

- Several agencies within DOL now include their learning agendas in their operating plans (which describe agencies' performance goals for the year), even though that is not required. That suggests that agencies see the agendas as useful.

- By 2013, DOL had the highest score among cabinet agencies in terms of the use of performance information — and the only cabinet agency to see a statistically significant increase on this measure between 2007 and 2013.

Further reading

- "Managing for Social Change: Improving Labor Department Performance in a Partisan Era" by Seth D. Harris, in West Virginia Law Review, Vol. 17, 2015. http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2598764

[1] For example, particularly for agency leaders who have limited experience with evaluation, the CEO may emphasize a "differential treatment" (aka planned variation) approach that test whether some approaches within a program is more effective than others, rather than a treatment/no treatment design.

6. Change from within: How internal innovation accelerator programs can cultivate talent, solve problems, and shift the tide of organizational norms

Presenter: Read Holman, Program Director and Senior Advisor on Internal Entrepreneurship, HHS IDEA Lab, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The big picture

- Agencies employees are an important – and often untapped – source of innovation, including ideas to improve program effectiveness and efficiency. HHS is a leader in supporting and encouraging employee innovation through the HHS IDEA Lab. It is designed to help remove barriers that HHS employees face in developing new ways of making working in government, including helping employees to formulate, test, measure and possibly scale their ideas. Two main initiatives within the Lab (and the focus of today's presentation) are the HHS Ignite Accelerator and the HHS Ventures Fund.

More specifics

- HHS Ignite Accelerator is an internal program providing selected teams with air-cover, methodological coaching and technical guidance within a startup framework for the testing of new products, services, and processes that could dramatically improve the way an office carries out its mission.

- The HHS Ventures Fund provides growth-stage funding and support to HHS employees with proven concepts for how to dramatically improve their office, agency, or the Department's ability to carry out its mission.

Example projects

- A Team from the CDC had been struggling to receive internal support within their division to test the concept of a Health Game Jam, an open challenge for people to build games to help address public health-related issues. They applied and were accepted into the first Round of the HHS Ignite Accelerator. The air-cover that comes with being able to say "It's an HHS Ignite project", along with the coaching and other resources given to them, gave them the space to test their idea. Dan Baden, the project lead from the CDC, explained: "The HHS Idea Lab was a welcome source of support for our efforts. We had been working to introduce the idea that games can be effective tools for advancing public health for years with minimal success. After receiving funding from HHS, the CDC Health Game Jam 2013 came to life."

- A team from the Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) within HHS worked with a team from the Department of Education to test and ultimately launch a system that shared student loan-repayment data (for a program for nurses that helps them pay back their loans), thus automating what was previously a manual process. While the idea for this project had had general support for years, it was never a priority (as the status quo seemed sufficient) and thus never got off the ground. The team was selected into the Ignite Accelerator which suddenly made the effort a priority. With this air-cover, the team was able to test their concept in a meaningful way, thus building the case for full implementation to occur after their time in Ignite. Since the full launch of the system, HRSA has seen a 75% reduction in time devoted to the overall process.

Biggest challenge of implementation

- Truly innovative projects are disruptive by definition. As a result, some of the improvement projects we support to can feel (or be) threatening to people's jobs or may imply that people aren't doing their jobs as well as they could. So, it's critical to involve those employees in the conversation and make sure they feel that they can still meaningfully contribute their time and skills to the organization even in the midst of change.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- You can contact Read Holman at HHS.

Further reading

- The IDEA Lab blog: http://www.hhs.gov/idealab/blog/
- Wikipedia page on Intrapreneurship : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intrapreneurship
- Wikipedia page on seed accelerators: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seed_accelerator

7. Using prize competitions to deliver innovation and turn raw ideas into real products and services

Presenter: Michael Contreras, Managing Director and American Assoc. for the Advancement of Science Fellow, SunShot Catalyst prize challenge, Solar Energy Technologies Office, U.S. Department of Energy

The big picture

- SunShot Catalyst is an *open innovation program* – that is, an initiative that solicits ideas from inside as well as outside of government – that aims to catalyze the rapid creation and development of products and solutions that address near-term challenges in the U.S. solar marketplace. Through a series of *prize challenges*, SunShot Catalyst makes it faster and easier for American innovators to launch cutting-edge solar companies, while tackling time-sensitive market challenges. First launched in 2014, it is currently in its 2nd cycle. The initiative has reduced typical software prototyping time by 50% while awarding prize incentives that are much lower than standard small business innovation grants.

Background on prize competitions

- In 2011, President Obama signed into the law the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, which granted all federal agencies broad authority to conduct prize competitions to spur innovation, solve tough problems, and advance their core missions. Since then, more than 425 prize competitions have been implemented by Federal agencies, with more than $120 million awarded in prizes and 150,000 solvers through the website Challenge.gov. We focus on one such prize competition today.

More specifics

- The SunShot Catalyst program consists of four steps with non-cash assistance worth up to $500,000 and cash prizes totaling $500,000.

		Winners	Awards	Timeline for 2015 contest
Step 1	Ideation	Up to 5	$1,000 cash per winner	May 14 – June 30
Step 2	Business Innovation	Up to 20	$25,000 in services per winner	June 16 – Aug. 14
Step 3	Prototype	Up to 20 finalists	All finalists advance to Incubation	Sept. 11 – Nov. 3
Step 4	Incubation	Up to 5	Up to $100,000 per winner	Prizes announced mid-Dec.

  - The **ideation** contest focuses on generating and aggregating pressing U.S. solar market needs and problem statements that can be solved through automation, algorithms, data, and software, especially by leveraging available data assets, tools, capabilities and resources. Anyone can participate by submitting problem statements online or by voting on submissions from others.

  - The **business innovation** contest is designed to help teams form and explore business solutions to the most compelling problems identified during ideation. Anyone can participate by submitting a business plan package online, including a five-minute video describing the proposed business plan. Up to 20 winners are given the opportunity to move to the next stage.

- The **prototype** phase is designed to help business plan contest winners rapidly develop minimum viable products (MVPs). During the contest, teams are provided with $25,000 worth of support from a DOE-provided software developer over a 60-day period. Each team formulates their requirements and scope of work for one MPV, working closely with the software developer.

- The **Incubation** contest is designed to help teams with MVPs start their businesses and accelerate offering new products and services in the solar marketplace. To win cash awards, teams will participate in a DOE-hosted Demo Day to showcase their MVPs, market entry execution strategy, and six-month growth plan. During Demo Day, teams are evaluated by judges and the top five winning teams receive up to $100,000 in cash prizes. So far, the five teams that won the May 2015 Demo Day event have raised three times as much private money as the prizes awarded.

Key factors

- Community engagement is key to a successful crowdsourcing campaign. The initiative reached over five million people using social media, resulting in 11% of active members in the Catalyst community. The community has over 5,000 active members who proposed over 150 problem statements that resulted in 17 backed teams in the first cohort. Five teams are currently in the incubation phase of the program.

- Moving at the pace of startup entrepreneurs is challenging for large organizations. Prize authority enabled DOE to review submissions from prototyping phase contestants (after their Demo Day pitches) and award prizes within a week.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- To learn more about prizes and challenges being implemented in the federal government, contact Jenn Gustetic, Assistant Director for Open Innovation at the White House Office of Science and Technology at Jennifer_L_Gustetic@ostp.eop.gov.

Further reading

- The SunShot Catalyst website: catalyst.energy.gov.

- "SunShot Catalyst: New Prize Challenge Aims to Accelerate Solar Solutions," by Michael Contreras, Department of Energy, SunShot blog http://energy.gov/eere/articles/sunshot-catalyst-new-prize-challenge-aims-accelerate-solar-solutions

- "21st-Century Public Servants: Using Prizes and Challenges to Spur Innovation," by Jenn Gustetic, White House Open Innovation Initiative blog https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/04/17/21st-century-public-servants-using-prizes-and-challenges-spur-innovation

- Prizes and Challenges webpage, Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/sicp/initiatives/prizes-challenges

8. Lifting up key principles for evaluators through an agency evaluation policy – rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics

Presenter: Naomi Goldstein, Director, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The big picture

- An evaluation policy statement presents key principles that govern an agency's or department's planning, conduct, and use of program evaluations. Today a handful of agencies have evaluation policies, including the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within HHS (click here), the Department of Labor (click here), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (click here). An agency evaluation policy can be valuable for many reasons, including helping ensure that the evidence (e.g., program evaluations) produced by the agency is seen as credible and independent.

More details

- ACF established an evaluation policy in late 2012 to confirm and bolster five principles: rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations. For example, to promote transparency, the policy states that ACF will release results regardless of findings, on a timely basis. And to promote independence, it states that the authority to approve and release reports rests with the evaluation office.

Resources needed

- Time and effort are needed to develop the evaluation policy, although other agencies can use existing policies as starting points, making the process easier. Buy-in from leadership is also important.

Biggest challenge in terms of implementation

- Finding the time and attention to step back and think about guiding principles.

Further reading

- Agencies' evaluation policies themselves, three of which are linked above.

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9. Want evidence to be used by practitioners and decision makers? Make it accessible. Lessons from the What Works Clearinghouse

Presenter: Joy Lesnick, Associate Commissioner, Knowledge Utilization; National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education

The big picture

- A "what works" clearinghouse is a repository that synthesizes research findings in ways that make them useful to practitioners and decision-makers. Moreover, as Federal innovation funds and other programs provide financial incentives for using and building evidence, these repositories provide useful tools for understanding which interventions are ready for replication or adaptation. We focus here on one of the most well-known clearinghouses, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), housed at the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Science (IES).

More specifics

- The goal of the WWC is to be a resource for informed education decision making. To do that, it identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the *effectiveness* of a given practice, program, or policy and provides summary information and free reports on the website. It currently has over 700 reports summarizing the available evidence on policies, programs, and practices, and more than 10,500 reviewed studies in its online searchable database.

What are other examples of clearinghouses?

- Examples include the Department of Justice's CrimeSolutions.gov, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidenced-based Programs and Practices, and the Department of Labor's Clearinghouse of Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR).

Resources needed

- The work of the WWC is conducted under a set of contracts held by several leading firms with expertise in education and research methodology, and managed by IES on behalf of the Department of Education. The WWC investment is currently funded at about $9 million per year.

Biggest challenge in terms of implementation

- If your agency's policy area does not have a lot of existing rigorous evidence about what works, then the summaries your clearinghouse produces will not result in many interventions with evidence from existing studies. This was the case with the WWC early on (it launched in 2002 and the first reports were published in 2005). There were a *very* large number of education research studies, but not nearly as many rigorous studies. The WWC's standards served as a signal to the field that this type of evidence (well-executed studies of the *effectiveness* of programs) was important. Over time, more effectiveness studies have been conducted in education. At the same time, the WWC has been able to review more studies (both new ones and existing ones) and the number of WWC summaries and reviewed studies has grown to nearly 11,000.

- Even if a clearinghouse has a lot of useful information, that doesn't mean that it will be a well-known resource among practitioners. Increasing awareness and usage of the WWC has been an important goal for the Department. The WWC has active Twitter (@WhatWorksED) and Facebook (/whatworksclearinghouse) accounts; has developed short videos for how to use WWC products and search tools; offers and archives webinars for expanded audiences including journalists, preservice teacher and principal faculty, and grant applicants; and has a new line of infographics explaining how the WWC works. Most importantly, the WWC relies on intermediaries, such as the Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), to help build awareness and use of the information in the WWC.

Further reading

- The best way to learn about clearinghouses is to explore existing ones, including the WWC. You can find the WWC online at whatworks.ed.gov, and your feedback, questions, and critique are always welcome through the "contact us" link on the website.

Appendix: A What Works Clearinghouse infographic is on the next page.

WHAT IS THE WWC?

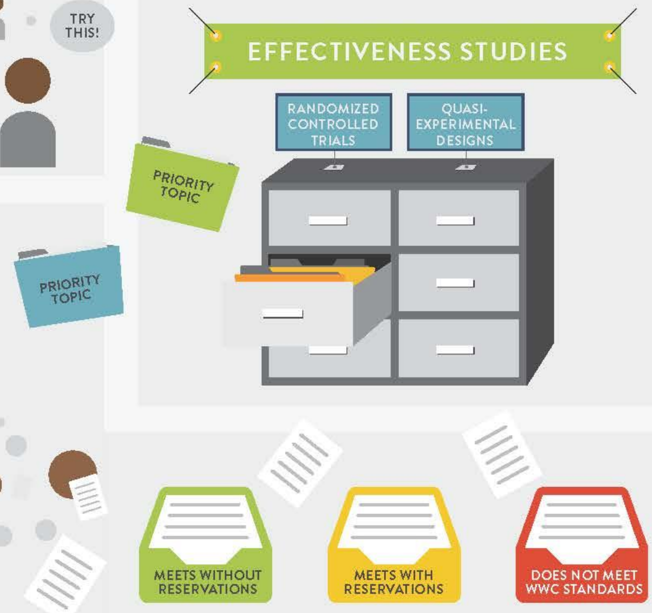
A TRUSTED SOURCE ABOUT WHAT WORKS IN EDUCATION

WHY

The work of the WWC helps teachers, administrators, and policymakers make evidence-based decisions.

WHAT

The WWC reviews **evidence** of effectiveness of programs, policies, or practices by using a consistent and transparent set of standards. The WWC doesn't rank, evaluate, or endorse interventions.



WHO

Hundreds of trained and certified **reviewers** rate whether studies meet **standards** and then **summarize** results that do meet standards.

HOW

The WWC creates products that present findings on what works in education, including:

INTERVENTION REPORTS

SINGLE STUDY REVIEWS

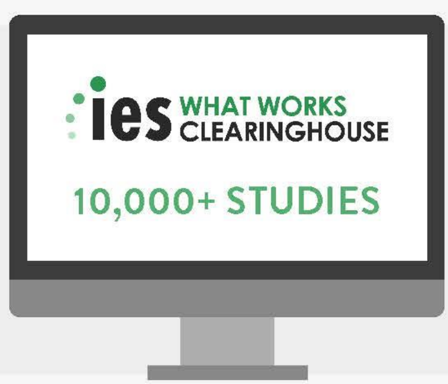
QUICK REVIEWS

PRACTICE GUIDES

WHERE

Summaries of the available research interventions are available at

whatworks.ed.gov



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10. Employing a tiered-evidence grant design to use and build evidence about what works – insights from the Investing in Innovation Fund (i3)

Presenter: Shane Mulhern, Director, i3, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

The big picture

- A significant amount of federal dollars flows to states, localities and nonprofits in the form of grants. Therefore, if you want to make government more outcome and evidence focused, you need to make grants more outcome and evidence focused. An important strategy for doing that that has developed over the last decade is tiered-evidence discretionary grants, also known as innovation funds. This type of grant design focuses resources on practices with the strongest evidence, but still allows for new innovation. A leading example is the Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) at the Department of Education.

More specifics

- Tiered-evidence grant programs consider the evidence supporting a practice's efficacy when determining which practices to fund. They also use staged funding, with more money awarded to practices with stronger evidence. In particular, programs are prioritized into categories. For example, a tiered-evidence grant program with three tiers, such as i3, might look like this:

Scale-up grants fund expansion or replication of *practices for which there is already strong evidence*. These grants receive the most funding, including in some cases support for program evaluations.

Validation grants fund *promising practices for which there is currently only moderate evidence*. These grants receive more limited funding and support for program evaluations.

Development grants fund *high-potential and relatively untested practices*. These receive the least funding, and support for program evaluations.

Goal: Grantees with practices shown to be effective move up tiers over time

Examples of Federal tiered-evidence grant programs

- The **Investing in Innovation Fund** (i3) at the Department of Education invests in high-impact, potentially transformative education interventions, ranging from new ideas with significant potential to those with strong evidence of effectiveness that are ready to be scaled. i3 has a budget of $112 million and has three tiers: scale-up grants of up to $20 million; validation grants of up to $12 million; and development grants of up to $3 million.

- **Development Innovation Ventures** (DIV) at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is designed to find, test and scale ideas that could radically improve global prosperity. It has three tiers:

scale-up grants of up to $15 million; validation grants of up to $1.5 million; and development grants of up to $150,000. http://www.usaid.gov/div

- The **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program** (Home Visiting) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) uses trained professionals to provide support to vulnerable parents in order to improve health and development outcomes for at-risk children. (http://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/homevisiting/) HHS also has the **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program** that provides funds to test innovative approaches and strategies to teen pregnancy prevention. Both programs have a similar two-tiered structure: Roughly speaking, both programs require about 75% of funds to be spent on the replication of evidence-based program models which have been shown to be effective through rigorous evaluation, while about 25% can be used to test innovative approaches. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-health-topics/reproductive-health/teen-pregnancy/tpp-program.html

- The **Social Innovation Fund** at the Corporation for National and Community Service fosters private and public collaborations that identify, evaluate, and expand promising nonprofits to address economic opportunity, youth development, and health. The SIF has a more complicated design. It selects intermediaries (large nonprofits) that fund community organizations (sub-grantees). The intermediaries are expected to fund program models with at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness and also support further rigorous evaluation of those models. In order for each program model to reach moderate or strong evidence of impact by the end of the three to five year sub-grant period, a series of successive evaluations is sometimes needed to build their evidence base during their grant period. http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund

Resources needed

- Compared to traditional grant programs, tiered-evidence programs typically require (1) a higher number of staff or contract support with expertise in research and evaluation and (2) sufficient funding to complete the evidence reviews (to synthesize existing research in order to disseminate it to potential applicants) and validation of the evidence claims made by applicants; and (3) Technical assistance to grantees to help them develop and implement strong evaluations. Moreover, some tiered-evidence programs require a longer period to plan the competition and complete the selection process.

Where to get input or assistance with this innovation

- The OMB Evidence Team can connect you with help and also provide you with a seven page primer on the topic. Email: evidence@omb.eop.gov

Further reading

- "Building the Connection between Policy and Evidence: The Obama evidence-based initiatives" By Ron Haskins and Jon Baron. National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2011/9/07%20evidence%20based%20policy%20haskins/0907_evidence_based_policy_haskins.pdf

11. Using a Pay for Success approach to tackle important policy challenges

Presenter: David Wilkinson, Director of the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation
David_E_Wilkinson@who.eop.gov

The big picture

- Pay for Success (PFS), also called Social Impact Bonds, offers an innovative way for the government to partner with philanthropic and private investors to fund proven and promising practices and to significantly enhance the return on taxpayer investments. Under this model, investors provide the up-front capital for social services with a strong evidence base that, when successful, achieve measurable outcomes that improve the lives of families and individuals and reduce their need for future services. Government pays when these measurable results are achieved. The PFS model is particularly well-suited to cost-effective interventions that produce government savings, since those savings can be used to pay for results.

More specifics

- PFS-finance strategies require partnership between multiple stakeholders to fully and successfully implement an outcomes-based contracting approach. Partners typically include:
    - An outcomes "payor," generally a government entity or other payor for success;
    - Service provider(s), which deliver the intervention intended to achieve the outcomes;
    - Investor(s), which cover the up-front cost of implementing the intervention for the anticipated outcome; and
    - An independent evaluator, which determines, through a rigorous evaluation, whether the intervention achieved the outcome(s) sought.
    - Other parties: Most PFS projects to date have included a Project Coordinator, an entity that serves as the intermediary between the contracting parties. Some PFS projects include a third-party validator to certify the findings of the evaluator.
- The benefits of a typical PFS approach include:
    - Government can expand services (typically preventive efforts) without needing to draw on limited budgets and it only pays if specified results are achieved.
    - Service providers can benefit from new funding sources as well as the rigorous research involved that can help them identify what works.
    - Investors can pursue a double bottom line, creating positive social impact and earning a return if outcomes are achieved; and

- People in need can benefit from the additional services provided through these PFS projects. Future services can also be improved or funding reallocated to effective models based on learning from PFS projects.

Examples

- States and localities have closed seven PFS-finance deals to date, and the federal government is increasingly supporting PFS activity on the ground. Examples of the federal government's involvement include:

    - The Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund has selected eight grantees to help communities study the use of PFS or get PFS projects off the ground, helping to tackle social problems ranging from childhood asthma to chronic homelessness. As of June 2015, the SIF is currently funding 34 feasibility studies and providing support for transaction structuring for five PFS projects, with more to come.

    - DOL has pledged almost $24 million in outcomes payments to PFS projects focused on reducing recidivism and increasing employment in New York State and Massachusetts.

    - VA is exploring PFS possibilities to address veteran unemployment.

    - HHS/ASPE is currently funding a thorough study of the potential use of PFS to advance seven health interventions with implications for Medicaid and Medicare.

    - HUD and DOJ are collaborating on a PFS initiative aimed at supporting homeless, 'super-utilizers' of services.

    - ED has held an agency PFS learning series and is exploring PFS funding possibilities.

Further reading

- *"Improving Outcomes through Pay for Success," an OMB FY16 Budget fact sheet:* *https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2016/assets/fact_sheets/improving-outcomes-through-pay-for-success.pdf*

- *Corporation for National and Community Service Social Innovation Fund Pay for Success Program:* *http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund/pay-success*

- *Pay for Success learning hub, sponsored by the Nonprofit Finance Fund:* *http://payforsuccess.org/*

Speaker Bios

Michael Contreras is an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Science and Technology Policy Fellow at the Department of Energy (DOE), Solar Energy Technologies Office, SunShot Initiative. He is a co-founder and the Managing Director of the SunShot Catalyst prize program which was the recipient of the International Society of Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM) 2015 Grand Prize. Prior to his work at the DOE, Mike was a Principal Investigator and spacecraft structural analyst at the Caltech Jet Propulsion Laboratory advancing the technology readiness of aerodynamic decelerator systems funded by NASA. He has been a Fulbright Scholar and an Air Force Research Laboratory Space Scholar. Mike holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Ph.D. in civil engineering and a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Rice University.

Andrew Feldman is the Special Advisor for Evidence-Based Policy within the Office of the Deputy Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education. He previously served on the Evidence Team at the White House Office of Management and Budget from 2012-14. His previous roles include being as one of the top three appointed leaders at Wisconsin's labor department, an agency of 1,600, under Governor Jim Doyle; a senior policy advisor in the Office of Governor Doyle; staff economist at the White House Council of Economic Advisors in the Clinton Administration; and special assistant to the president at MDRC, the social policy research organization. A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he earned a B.A. in economics from Swarthmore College, an M.P.P. from the Harvard Kennedy School, and a Ph.D. in public policy from Harvard University. Outside of his day job, Andy also hosts the Gov Innovator podcast, via the web and iTunes.

Naomi Goldstein is the Director of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Previously she directed the U.S. Postal Service Commission on A Safe and Secure Workplace, an independent commission that examined workplace violence affecting the Postal Service and the nation. She served as Project Manager for the Urban Institute's Assessing the New Federalism project, and as Executive Officer in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at HHS. Earlier in her career, she served in the Massachusetts state government and developed infant mortality prevention programs at Brigham and Women's Hospital. She received a B.A. from Yale University, an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School, and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from Harvard University. She was awarded the Presidential Rank of Distinguished Executive in 2012.

Seth Harris served as Deputy Secretary for the U.S. Department of Labor from 2009 to 2014, managing 19 agencies. He oversaw functions ranging from strategic planning and performance management to legislation and policy development and implementation. As acting labor secretary for a portion of his service, he served as a member of President Barack Obama's cabinet. Before joining the Obama administration, he was a professor and director of labor and employment law programs at New York Law School since 2000. Today he is an Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) School Distinguished Scholar at Cornell University and counsel at Dentons' Public Policy and Regulation practice. He is a graduate of the New York University School of Law and served as a law clerk to Judge William Canby of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and to Judge Gene Carter of the US District Court for the District of Maine. He received his Bachelor of Sciences degree from Cornell University.

Carter Hewgley is the Enterprise Analytics Division Director at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He has been leading data-driven initiatives at the local, state and federal levels for the past ten years. He started as a Budget & Performance Analyst in Fairfax County, Virginia, then became the City Administrator's Advisor for Health & Human Services in Washington DC. In 2009, he launched a STAT program for DC Public Schools, focused on improving outcomes for students with disabilities. In 2011, he began leading the FEMASTAT program, which drives data-driven conversations among national emergency management leaders. In 2014, Carter took on his current role, which focuses on generating insights for all FEMA programs and field operations, communicating those insights, and cultivating the professional analytical capability across the agency. He received an MPA from Syracuse University and a B.A. from Miami University.

Read Holman is a Program Director in the HHS IDEA Lab and Senior Advisor on Internal Entrepreneurship to the Chief Technology Officer. His focus is on the development of programs and services that promote the use of startup methodologies as a means to deliberately disrupt and improve government operations and services. Among his portfolio of activities, Read manages the HHS Ignite Accelerator and the HHS Ventures Fund. Prior to the IDEA Lab, Read directed the digital strategy of the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation and served in public affairs within the Office of the Secretary where he bridged the worlds of communications, policy, and web technologies. Read has a B.S. in Biology and a Masters of Public Health in Health Care Policy and Management.

John King is the Delegated Deputy Secretary of Education. Previously he served as the commissioner of education for the state of New York. King was one of the nation's youngest state education leaders at the time of his appointment and the first African-American and Puerto Rican to serve in that role. Before becoming commissioner, he was senior deputy commissioner for P-12 education at the New York State Education Department and, before that, as managing director with Uncommon Schools, a non-profit charter management organization. King is also the co-founder and co-director for curriculum and instruction of Roxbury Preparatory Charter School and taught high school social studies in San Juan, Puerto Rico and Boston, Massachusetts. He has a B.A. from Harvard University, a master's degree from Teachers College, Columbia University, a J.D. from Yale Law School, and a Doctor of Education in educational administrative practice from Teachers College.

Joy Lesnick is the Associate Commissioner for Knowledge Utilization at the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education and a former project officer for the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). Prior to coming to IES in 2011, she was a researcher at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and the Consortium on Chicago School Research, where she worked on evaluations of comprehensive high school reform strategies, pre-service teacher preparation programs, and coaching supports for new teachers. She earned a B.A. in History and an Ed.M. in Early Childhood/Elementary Education from Rutgers University, a Ph.D. in Education Policy from the University of Pennsylvania, and completed an IES postdoctoral fellowship in the Experimental Education Research Training (ExpERT) program at Vanderbilt University.

Shane Mulhern is the Director of the Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) within the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) at the U.S. Department of Education. He is a lifelong educator focused on serving children and their families. He has most recently served as the chief schools officer of the SEED Foundation. He was also the executive director of New Leaders, New York City and Newark, overseeing the recruitment, training and support of school leaders. Shane has also worked for New Visions for Public Schools as the senior executive for Transfer Schools. Prior to that he held a number of senior-level positions with the New York City Department of Education. Earlier in his career, he served as a youth program director and a high school teacher in Brooklyn, NY. He holds a B.A. from the College of the Holy Cross and a master's degree in education administration, planning, and social policy from Harvard University.

Jessica Barrett Simpson is the Senior Advisor for the Borrower Experience at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid. She has also worked in ED's Office of Postsecondary Education overseeing and evaluating grant programs for colleges and universities. Prior to joining the Department, she managed programs at various nonprofits, including a homeless shelter, an HIV/AIDS clinic, and an international development agency. Jessica has a BA in Intercultural Studies and a MPA from New York University.

Kathy Stack is Vice President for Evidence-Based Innovation at the John and Laura Arnold Foundation. Previously she was the Advisor for Evidence-Based Innovation at the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and, before that, was the Deputy Associate Director for Education, Income Maintenance, and Labor at OMB. Her division oversaw budget, policy, legislation, regulations, and management issues concerning the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, the Social Security Administration, the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and two social service agencies within the U.S Department of Health and Human Services. She formerly served as an examiner and as Chief of the Education Branch of OMB, and has held several management and budget positions at the U.S. Department of Education. She is a graduate of Cornell University and a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Will Tucker is a Fellow on the White House Social & Behavioral Sciences Team (SBST). He is also Vice President at the design firm ideas42. He's managed large-scale behavioral economics projects with Fortune 500 companies and government agencies from the Department of Defense to the New York Police Department. His work has been published in the Sage Handbook of Measurement and the Harvard Business Review. A Truman Scholar, Will holds a Master in Public Affairs from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, and has worked at the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. He has also been safety-certified in forklift and chainsaw operation.

Carol Star is the Director of the Program Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She oversees the design, implementation, and procurement of the department's program evaluation research, addressing a wide array of program areas, including homelessness, rent reform, neighborhood change, housing discrimination, family self-sufficiency, housing for special populations, publicly assisted housing, housing rehabilitation, and others. She brings extensive experience in the research and practice of housing development, housing finance, and community development at the national and local level. Prior to joining PD&R, she worked for private and non-profit research organizations, local government, and a local government supported housing finance corporation in management and research capacities. She received her undergraduate degree from Brooklyn College and her MCP from the University of Pennsylvania.

David Wilkinson is the Director of the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation. He leads White House efforts to identify and scale better, more effective social solutions, advancing Presidential priorities that strengthen communities and enable upward economic mobility. This involves identifying programs that work better through use of data and evidence as well as scaling what works through smarter use of federal resources and public-private partnerships. Prior to his work at the White House, Mr. Wilkinson served as Executive Director of City First Enterprises, a federally regulated nonprofit bank holding company and incubator of social finance solutions. He also co-founded and helped lead a successful effort to launch a start-up community development bank in New Haven, CT, and served as Executive Director of Common Cause New Jersey. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Yale Law School.