

MEET
OUR
EXPERTS





Dedrick Asante-Muhammad

President

Expert in: Racial wealth divide and racial economic inequality

Dedrick Asante-Muhammad is president of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. [Dedrick](#) has spent 20 years dedicated to understanding and tackling racial and economic inequities, and as a result, was recognized as one of [TIME's Closers](#).

He has worked at many of the nation's top national non-profit advocacy organizations including the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, Prosperity Now, the NAACP, Institute for Policy Studies, Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network, and United for a Fair Economy. Previous to his work at national non-profits, Asante-Muhammad worked in higher education at Williams College, Oberlin College, and Morgan State University. He also helped coordinate a college program at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women.

While at United for a Fair Economy, Asante-Muhammad co-founded the State of the Dream report, an annual publication honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., that examines the state of racial and economic inequality in the U.S. Asante-Muhammad has continued to be a co-author, providing analysis in publications, including "[The Road to Zero Wealth](#)" and "[Ten Solutions to Bridge the Racial Wealth Divide](#)."

Over the years, Asante-Muhammad has also become a thought leader in diversity, inclusion, and procurement, as reflected in the Opportunity and Diversity series and the "[Racial and Ethnic Representation and Investment Framework for the Banking Industry](#)."

Asante-Muhammad has served and serves on various advisory committees and boards including The Racial Equity Subcommittee of the Joe Biden Economic Policy Committee, Better Markets, the Advancing Black Strategists Initiative, and the Council of US Financial Health Network. Asante-Muhammad has a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Government from Williams College and a master's degree in Systematic Theology from Union Theological Seminary.

Asante-Muhammad has been featured in outlets including The Hill, MarketWatch, Yahoo! News, Bloomberg, CNN, MSNBC, Time, The New York Times, C-SPAN, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The Atlantic, TheGrio, Black Enterprise, and Inside Philanthropy. An avid writer and researcher, more of Asante-Muhammad's work can be found in [Medium](#), [HuffPost](#), and the [Racial Wealth Divide Initiative's blog](#).



Jessica Fulton

Vice President, Policy

Expert in: Intersection of race and economic policy, economic inequality, and small businesses

Jessica Fulton is the vice president of Policy. An expert on issues at the intersection of race and economic policy, Jessica's work focuses on identifying and promoting policies to advance the socioeconomic status of the Black community. In her current role, she oversees the Joint Center's research and policy team and leads the economic policy program.

Before joining the Joint Center, she served as External Relations Director at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, where she worked with scholars to advance policymaker understanding of the connection between economic inequality and economic growth. She has also held local research and advocacy positions at the DC Fiscal Policy Institute and the Chicago Urban League.

Jessica serves on the Board of The Black Swan Academy, an organization focused on increasing civic engagement among Black youth, and the Advisory Board of the Sadie Collective, which strives to increase the representation of Black women in economics. Jessica earned a bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Chicago and a master's degree in Economic Policy Analysis from the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul University. Jessica is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Jessica is a frequent guest on NPR and has appeared on [MSNBC](#) and [The Hill](#). Her work has also been featured in [The New York Times](#) and [TIME Magazine](#).

Jessica's most recent publications include "[Exploring Challenges for Small-Business Owners Across Race](#)" and "[Improving the Earned Income Tax Credit for Black Workers Without Children](#)." For more publications, [click here](#).



Dr. LaShonda Brenson

Senior Researcher

Expert in: Hill diversity, data analysis,
and qualitative research

LaShonda Brenson, Ph.D., is the senior researcher. Prior to her current role, she served as the Senior Fellow of diversity and inclusion at the Joint Center.

Prior to her current role, she served as a Civil Rights Analyst at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. At the Commission, LaShonda organized national briefings and wrote reports on municipal fines and fees and its impact on minority communities, minority voting rights, and women in prison. Previously, she was the Research Director at Project Vote, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization founded on the belief that an organized, diverse electorate is the key to a better America.

LaShonda earned her bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Political Science from the University of Rochester, and her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Using qualitative interviews with congressional staffers and quantitative methods, her dissertation research provides evidence that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), as institutions, matter. One way she demonstrates the added value of the CBC and CHC is by illustrating that when caucus members serve as caucus leaders, they introduce more bills because of their additional staff capacity.

LaShonda's work has been featured in [Essence](#), [The Grio](#), [Roll Call](#), [Politico](#), [ABC News](#), [CNN.com](#), and [The New York Times](#), among others. Dr. Brenson has appeared on [MSNBC](#) and has contributed to [The Hill](#) and [The Washington Informer](#).

LaShonda's most recent publications include "[Racial Diversity Among U.S. Senate State Directors](#)" and "[Recent U.S. House Compensation and Diversity Survey Shows African Americans and Latina/os are Underrepresented Among Senior Roles.](#)" For more publications, [click here](#).



Danielle Davis, Esq.

Director, Technology Policy

Expert in: Broadband adoption and access, content moderation, and privacy

Danielle A. Davis, Esq., is the director of Technology Policy, where she leads the organization's Technology Policy program. Her primary areas of focus encompass broadband adoption and access, content moderation, and privacy issues. She brings a wealth of experience to her role as a highly accomplished attorney specializing in technology and telecommunications law, policy development, and civil rights advocacy.

Before assuming her current position, Danielle held the role of assistant general counsel at the Universal Service Administrative Company. In this capacity, she provided legal counsel related to the administration of the Affordable Connectivity Program and the USF Lifeline Program. Additionally, she served as a Tech and Telecom Policy counsel at the Multicultural Media, Telecom, and Internet Council. Here, she offered guidance on tech and telecom matters to leadership, managed the fellowship program, reviewed outgoing communications, and drafted and edited comments submitted to the FCC and NTIA.

Danielle's dedication to advancing technology and telecom policy is evident in her prior work as a Tech and Telecom Policy fellow at the National Urban League Washington Bureau. In this role, she advised senior management on tech and telecom issues, collaborated on cross-functional teams and projects, and was responsible for drafting U.S. congressional testimony, policy recommendations, comments, letters, and digital outreach materials.

Danielle's impressive academic background includes a Juris Doctor degree from Barry University, Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law, as well as a Bachelor of Science in General Economics and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Florida Atlantic University, where she graduated cum laude. She is an active member of the Florida Bar, the Federal Communications Bar Association (FCBA), and the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP). Danielle also serves as a co-chair on the FCBA's Privacy and Data Security Committee.

Read her policy analysis and commentary [here](#).



Dr. Kayla Elliott

Director, Workforce Policy

Expert in: Postsecondary finance and accountability, postsecondary access and completion, HBCU finance, and the intersection of race and higher education

Kayla C. Elliott, Ph.D., is the director of Workforce Policy. She leads a team of experts who center Black communities in policy debates concerning the future of work, workforce development, and access to good jobs. Prior to the Joint Center, Kayla was the director for higher education policy at The Education Trust. She has shared her expertise on outlets such as The Washington Post, TheGrio, and The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Kayla also holds a master's in philanthropy and a certificate in nonprofit management and has worked on P-20 education issues with a range of nonprofit organizations, including Lumina Foundation, the Southern Education Foundation, and Teach For America. Kayla earned a Ph.D. in higher education leadership from Florida Atlantic University, where she taught undergraduate courses and worked in research roles in the College of Education and the Provost's Office.

A proud HBCU advocate and third-generation alumna, Kayla earned studied business administration at Fisk University. Kayla is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She enjoys cooking, reading, and exploring parks, festivals, and restaurants in the Washington, D.C. area.

Read her policy analysis and commentary [here](#).



Justin Nalley

Senior Policy Analyst, Workforce Policy

Expert in: Workforce development, access to equitable resources and quality jobs, and jobs numbers

Justin Nalley is a senior policy analyst for the Workforce Policy Program.

Justin brings his experience advocating for access to equitable resources for Black communities to produce timely policy research and data analysis, which centers Black workers in workforce development, post-secondary access, and access to quality jobs.

Before joining the Joint Center, Justin served as the Senior Public Policy Analyst for the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland. In this role, Justin researched, lobbied, and conducted state fiscal analysis to shape policy for Black youth and families in public education, juvenile justice reform, and voting rights. Justin was also instrumental in the formation and recognition of the first union at the ACLU of Maryland and held the role of shop steward, leading contract negotiations. He also worked at Baltimore City Public Schools as an analyst, ensuring the large urban district received accurate state revenue to support their students.

Justin is a member of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management. Justin attended the University of Maryland Eastern Shore before earning his Bachelor of Business Administration from Temple University and Master of Public Administration from West Chester University.

Read his policy analysis and commentary [here](#).



Kimberly Victor

Research Associate

Expert in: Hill Diversity, data analysis, research verification, and racial inequality

Kimberly Victor is the research associate for the Hill Diversity Program at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. She previously served as the Joint Center's research analyst.

Prior to joining the Joint Center, she was a research assistant in various labs at Cornell and Stanford University. At Stanford's Social Psychological Answers to Real-World Questions (SPARQ), she worked on projects that utilized behavioral science insights to improve police-community relations and promote equity and inclusion in the education sector. At Cornell, she successfully defended her senior honors thesis on the intersection between race and purpose, arguing that the connection between one's sense of purpose and racial identity has important implications on one's well-being, particularly for communities of color.

She also served as a student assistant at the New York State Office of the Attorney General Civil Rights Bureau. There she conducted research to help with education campaigns and worked with various diverse communities to ensure the protection of their rights and access to legal counsel.

She earned a bachelor's degree in Human Development with minors in Inequality Studies and Crime, Prisons, Education, and Justice from Cornell University. During her tenure at Cornell, she worked as the Poetry Program Coordinator for Prisoner Express, helping the organization provide opportunities for creative self-expression through art and poetry to hundreds of incarcerated individuals across the U.S.

Read her policy analysis and commentary [here](#).



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