

# Cleveland: People, Place, and Innovation

Wednesday afternoon 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

The Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development (the Poverty Center) at Case Western Reserve University is NNIP's Cleveland partner. The Poverty Center works to inform public policy and program planning through data and analysis to address urban poverty, its causes, and its impact on communities and their residents. Since its founding in 1988, the mission has broadened to understanding and addressing poverty by delving into its human, social, and economic implications as experienced at the levels of the family and community.

Cleveland has faced many challenges in recent years: population loss, economic decline, and a massive reduction in housing value during the foreclosure crisis. Recently, many remark at Cleveland's comeback. Cleveland has been taking innovative strides in solving issues related to persistent poverty for many years, and its strategies have grown increasingly sophisticated as data and technology has come into greater use. Over time the challenges have shifted, but what has remained consistent is the need for quality data to inform policy and relevant practice.

In the first part of this panel, Rob Fischer, co-director of the Poverty Center, will briefly introduce the Center's work; focusing on longitudinal integrated data systems, CHILD and NEO CANDO, and how these data systems are plugged into local efforts to aid in informing programs and policies.

In the second part of this session, Mark Joseph, a faculty associate of the Poverty Center, will moderate a panel that convenes key actors in three important sectors - people, place, and innovation - to describe programs and policies in their respective areas, and the intersections between them. The panelists will introduce the Cuyahoga County's Invest in Children Initiative (people), describe the city's sophisticated community development infrastructure (place) and share directions for civic technology and data applications in the region (innovation).

A facilitated discussion among the panelists and audience will follow after the panelists' initial remarks.

## Panelists:

**Rob Fischer, Ph.D.** is a Research Professor at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences and has served as co-director of the Poverty Center since 2007. He leads the Poverty Center's efforts in regard to evaluation research, including the evaluation of Cuyahoga County's Invest in Children initiative. Dr.

Fischer is also faculty director of the Master of Nonprofit Organizations degree program at the Mandel School. He is the 2016 recipient of the Evaluation Recognition Award from the Ohio Program Evaluators' Group and a 2006 recipient of the Teacher of the Year Award from the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations. Dr. Fischer received his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University in policy development and program evaluation and holds a master degree from Vanderbilt's Peabody College of Education, and a bachelor degree from Duke University, both in public policy studies.

**Rebekah L. Dorman, Ph.D.** is a developmental psychologist and the Director of the Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood and Invest in Children, our community public/private partnership focused on young children. In this role she oversees the county's annual \$20 million investment in a wide array of programs for children and their families and provides leadership on early childhood issues in the community. Dr. Dorman serves, by gubernatorial appointment, on Ohio's Early Childhood Advisory Council. Prior to her current position, Dr. Dorman served as Senior Program Director for Children and Families at United Way of Greater Cleveland, and as Vice President for Family and Child Development at Applewood Centers. She received her undergraduate degree Cum Laude from Brandeis University and her doctorate from Cornell University.

**Anthony Brancatelli** has been a member of Cleveland City Council since 2005, representing Cleveland's Ward 12. Over the last decade, Councilman Brancatelli has been a leader in the fight against urban blight, brought on by a national foreclosure crisis and followed by a global recession, focusing on efforts to demolish vacant, nuisance properties, rebuild neighborhoods and hold fraudulent real estate speculators responsible for their devastation. Councilman Brancatelli chairs City Council's Development, Planning & Sustainability Committee. He is a member of Council's Finance Committee, the Utilities Committee and the Municipal Services and Properties committees. He is also chairman of the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corp., commonly known as the County Land Bank. A grandson of Polish and Italian immigrants, Councilman Brancatelli is a lifelong resident of the Slavic Village neighborhood in Cleveland.

**Leon Wilson**, is the Chief Technology & Information Officer at the Cleveland Foundation. In this role, Leon is part of the executive committee leading the foundation's IT department, focusing on strategic and transformational use of technology within the foundation. In addition, Leon is responsible for helping to develop and implement an external Digital Community strategy focused on building a more equitable and inclusive digital community along with elevating Cleveland's position as a major regional smart tech hub. In his most recent role as Senior Director for Technology & Data

Engagement for the Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA), Leon advised executive staff, board and advisory committee members on strategic technology programs, planning initiatives and investments. Leon earned his bachelor's degree in computer science from Michigan State University and a master's degree in software engineering from the University of St. Thomas. He is a graduate of Leadership Detroit, 2015 NTEN Lifetime Achievement Awardee, and Idealware board member.

**Mark Joseph** is an Associate Professor at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, Director of the National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities, and a Faculty Associate at the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development. His general research interests are urban poverty and community development. His current research focuses on mixed-income development as a strategy for addressing urban poverty, with particular attention to transforming public housing developments. He is the co-author of *Integrating the Inner City: The Promise and Perils of Mixed-Income Public Housing Transformation*, published in November 2015.