

About the Speakers

Margaret Caughy

*Associate Professor of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences
Director, Maternal and Child Health Training Program*
University of Texas School of Public Health

Caughy is director of the maternal and child health training program at the UT School of Public Health and also principal investigator of the Dallas Preschool Readiness Project funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The project explores the contextual, cultural and family factors contributing to the development of self-regulation in low-income African-American and Latino preschoolers and the impact on school readiness in these children. Her work combines the unique perspectives of developmental science, epidemiology and public health in studying the contexts of risk and resilience affecting young children, with a focus on race/ethnic disparities in health and development and the disparities within the unique ecological niches of ethnic minority families. Caughy has completed a number of studies focused on how inequities in neighborhood structural characteristics and social processes affect the cognitive development, socioemotional functioning and early academic achievement of young children in diverse race/ethnic groups.

Her work has been published in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies* and *Social Science & Medicine*. Caughy earned a BS in psychology from Texas A&M University, an MEd in human development from the University of Maryland, College Park and an ScD in maternal and child health from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

Wenhua Di

Senior Economist
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

Di is a senior economist in the Community Development Department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Her current research interests include housing economics, program evaluation and consumer finances. Before she joined the Dallas Fed, she was a visiting assistant professor at the University of Texas at Dallas. She taught probability and statistics, econometrics, environmental economics and resource economics. She also worked in the development and research group at the World Bank. She holds a PhD in public policy with a concentration in environmental economics from Harvard University and an MS and a BS in environmental sciences from Peking University in China.

Catherine C. Eckel

Sara and John Lindsey Professor of Economics
Texas A&M University

Eckel serves as the Sara and John Lindsey Professor of Economics and is also director of the Initiative on Behavioral Economics and Public Policy at Texas A&M University. Her research bridges economics, psychology and sociology and uses experimental methods to investigate differences in the behavior of women and men, gender- and race-based discrimination, charitable giving, trust and reciprocity, and decisionmaking under uncertainty. Previously, Eckel served as the Ashbel Smith Professor of Economics and director of the Center for Behavioral and Experimental Economic Science at the University of Texas at Dallas (2005-12), professor of economics and director of the Lab for the Study of Human Thought and Action at Virginia Tech (1983-2005) and as a program officer for the economics program at the National Science Foundation (1996-98). Her research has been funded by the National Science Foundation and various private foundations. She has been president of the Southern Economic Association, North American vice president of the Economic Science Association and coeditor of the *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* (2005-12). Eckel earned a PhD in economics from the University of Virginia.

Tammy Leonard

Senior Lecturer and Director of Graduate Studies
University of Texas at Dallas

Leonard is a senior lecturer and director of graduate studies in the economics program at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her research focuses on understanding individual decisionmaking and behavior—particularly among members of low-income households. Her work uses applied econometrics and spatial analysis to analyze outcomes related to housing, health and financial behaviors. Most recently, Leonard has managed a large National Science Foundation project studying the role of economic development in shaping behaviors among low-income, African-American households. Leonard earned a BS in chemical engineering from Texas A&M University and an MS and PhD in economics from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Caitlin McKillop

*Doctoral Student,
Economics Program*
University of Texas at Dallas

McKillop is a third-year doctoral student in the economics program at the University of Texas at Dallas. McKillop's research investigates the efficacy of using spatial econometrics models in the identification and empirical estimation of neighborhood and social network effects. Her work focuses on comprehending the

influence of human behavior and decisionmaking in evaluating economic outcomes related to nutrition, health and education. For the past two years, McKillop has studied the role of peer effects in determining nutrition outcomes for individuals living in a low-income, minority neighborhood. She is also developing a project to examine the likelihood of completion of a multidose vaccine treatment, based on spatial patterns of neighborhood-level initiation rates, for minority and underserved adolescents.

James C. Murdoch

*Professor and Head of
Economics Program*
University of Texas at Dallas

Murdoch is head of the economics program and professor of economics in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas. Prior to joining UTD in 1991, Murdoch held teaching and administrative positions at the University of Louisiana–Monroe and Auburn University at Montgomery that included dean of the School of Social Sciences. Murdoch’s research generally reflects an applied econometric approach with some emphasis on policy analysis and prescription. His current research concerns the role of neighborhood in a variety of dimensions that relate to individual health and welfare. He has authored or coauthored numerous scholarly

journal articles in the areas of environmental economics, public economics and defense economics in publications such as *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Economica*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Land Economics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*. Murdoch graduated from Grand Valley State College and received his PhD in economics from the University of Wyoming.

Alfreda B. Norman

*Vice President and
Community Development Officer*
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

Norman supports the Federal Reserve System’s economic growth objectives by promoting community and economic development and fair and impartial access to credit. Norman was one of the first neighborhood development officers hired by Bank of America in Texas in 1992. In charge of developing a strategic community development plan to extend credit to low- and moderate-income communities, she went on to assume statewide Community Reinvestment Act responsibilities with Bank of America’s mortgage lending group. Norman has also been a supervisor in the city of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs and held management positions at The Con-

tainer Store headquarters in Dallas. Norman earned a bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University and is a graduate of the University of Virginia's Graduate School of Retail Banking.

Shawn Williams

Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the Mayor
City of Dallas

Williams serves as deputy chief of staff for Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings. Williams is the project manager for Mayor Rawlings' GrowSouth plan and handles the social media and digital initiatives in the mayor's office. His responsibilities included the launch of DallasSouthBlog.com, one of a select number of blogs nationwide awarded credentials for the Democratic National Convention in 2008. He helped organize Dallas South News, a nonprofit news organization focused on Southern Dallas, and served as publisher and editor-in-chief of the news website. He has been featured on NBC Nightly News, CNN, NPR and BBC and in the *Chicago Tribune*. He has been a guest columnist for the *Dallas Morning News*, written articles for *D Magazine*, provided commentary for WFAA's Inside Texas Politics and in 2011 published his first book, *Bloggng While Black*. Williams received the *Austin American-Statesman's* Texas Social Media Award in 2010, was named to the national advisory board of the Poynter Institute

for Media Studies in 2011 and was a panelist for the 2012 South by Southwest Interactive Conference.