

Scott Gaul

Chief Data Officer, State of Connecticut

Scott Gaul is Chief Data Officer for Connecticut, at the Office of Policy and Management, where he supports the state's efforts to improve open data, integrated data, geospatial data and data analytics and evaluation. Previously, Scott worked on research, evaluation and community indicators at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the community foundation for the Greater Hartford region. Prior to that, he served as director of analysis in the Washington, D.C.-based Microfinance Information Exchange and worked for the World Bank, Mercy Corps, and Quantitative Risk Management. He holds a master's degree in international affairs from Johns Hopkins and a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Chicago.



Rebecca Cai

Chief Data Officer, State of Hawai'i

Rebecca Cai was officially named the state's first CDO in October of 2023. She developed the state's data and AI strategy with the support from the Data Task Force. Before Hawaii, Rebecca served in the same role for the state of New York. While at New York, she created New York's first Acceptable Use Policy for AI and expanded the CDO role beyond open data to include all data-related functions including data governance, master data management, open data, geospatial data services, data analytics, data visualization, and AI. Before her role as CDO in New York, Rebecca has worked largely in the private sector.



Amy Hawn Nelson, PhD

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP)

Amy Hawn Nelson is Research Faculty and the Director of Training and Technical Assistance for Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP), an initiative of the University of Pennsylvania that helps state and local governments collaborate and responsibly use data to improve lives. Her primary role is to support field building for integrated data systems, working with sites across the US to develop shared, purpose-driven data infrastructure that centers strong data governance.



Jenni Owen

Senior Lecturer, Faculty, Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy

Jenni Owen is on the faculty of the Duke Sanford School of Public Policy where she focuses on government-research and government-philanthropy partnerships. She was on leave to serve in government from 2017-2025 as Governor Roy Cooper's first policy director and then as Director of the North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP), appointed by Governor Cooper to this new position in state government.



Dan Ferris, PhD

Assistant Professor of Practice at Brown School of Social Work

Dan Ferris (he/him) is the associate director of education and training at the Social Policy Institute and coordinates and oversees the education and training initiatives at SPI. He has gained diverse experience through his roles in policy, government affairs, and community engagement efforts focused on health, health care, poverty, and inequality. He is committed to research, programs, and policies that address food insecurity in St. Louis and beyond.



Robert L. Santos

Former Director, US Census Bureau

Robert L. Santos was the 26th director of the U.S. Census Bureau, serving from January 2022 to February 2025. His career spans more than 40 years in survey research, statistical design and analysis and executive-level management. Before coming to the Census Bureau, he spent 15 years as vice president and chief methodologist at the Urban Institute and directed its Statistical Methods Group – and served as executive vice president and partner of NuStats, a social science research firm in Austin, Texas. Santos specializes in quantitative and qualitative research design, including program evaluation, needs assessments, survey methodology and survey operations. He also has expertise in demographic and administrative data, decennial censuses, social policy research and equity issues in research.



Mark Hugo Lopez

Director of Race and Ethnicity Research, Pew Research

Mark Hugo Lopez is director of race and ethnicity research at Pew Research Center, where he leads planning of the Center's research agenda focused on chronicling the diverse, ever-changing racial and ethnic landscape of the United States. He is an expert on issues of racial and ethnic identity, Latino politics and culture, the U.S. Hispanic and Asian American populations, global and domestic immigration, and the U.S. demographic landscape. Lopez was previously the Center's director of Global Migration and Demography, and of Hispanic research.



Karthick Ramakrishnan, PhD

Director, AAPI Data

Karthick Ramakrishnan has served in leadership roles that span academia, government, public policy, and philanthropy. He is currently a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley and director of AAPI Data, a nationally recognized publisher of demographic data and policy research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. He is also [Strategy Lead for the Americas](#) at School of International Futures, and Senior Advisor at [States for the Future](#).



Meeta Anand

Senior Director of Census & Data Equity, The Leadership Conference

Meeta Anand has extensive experience in advocacy, strategic planning, and community engagement, having worked with organizations like The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and The New York Immigration Coalition. With a J.D. from Harvard Law School and a Master's Degree from The Fletcher School at Tufts University, Meeta specializes in creating opportunities for social change and promoting equity.



Todd Hughes

Director, California Health Interview Survey

Todd Hughes is the director of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), the nation's largest ongoing state health survey. With over 25 years of experience managing population-representative household surveys, in roles that grew from face-to-face interviewer to survey director, he brings a comprehensive vision of what is needed for population surveys to be successful operationally, fiscally, scientifically, and methodologically. A passion for efficiency, a strategic view toward the future, and an eye for methodological creativity make him a valued leader in survey research.



Andrew Juhnke

Assistant Director, California Health Interview Survey

Andrew Juhnke, MPH, is Assistant Director, Data Dissemination and Compliance for the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). Juhnke oversees CHIS data production and dissemination, project compliance coordination, data access and security, and research support. He has experience in program evaluation, community engagement, and data analysis through various experiences.



Jonathan Schwabish, PhD

Senior Fellow, Urban Institute

Dr. Jonathan Schwabish is an economist, writer, teacher, and data communications expert. He is considered a leading voice for clarity and accessibility in how analysts, researchers, and scholars communicate their findings. Across four books, he has provided a comprehensive guide to creating, communicating, and distributing data-rich content. [*Better Presentations*](#) coaches people through preparing, designing, and delivering data communication products; [*Elevate the Debate*](#) helps people develop a strategic plan to communicating their work across multiple platforms and channels; and [*Better Data Visualizations*](#) details essential strategies to create more effective data visualizations. His most recent book, [*Data Visualization in Excel*](#), helps readers create better graphs and charts in the Excel software tool.



Christen Pentek (they/them)

Enterprise Integrated Data Planner, Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Christen Pentek is an Enterprise Integrated Data Planner in the Department of Children, Youth, and Families in Minnesota, located on unceded [Očhéthi Šakówin](#) and [Wahpekute](#) lands. Their work advances the agency's [whole family systems](#) approach and integrated services model, connecting enterprise architecture, data architecture, governance, and showing up as a partner in helping understand what data might be available across the State of Minnesota for maximizing the use of the data in ways that improve people's lives.

When not solving the data, Christen can be found trail running in Minnesota's plentiful parks and creating carbon negative soil-to-soil textiles with local fiber producers in our fibershed.



Claire Prieto, MPH

Epidemiologist Manager, State of Hawaii's Office of Health Equity

Claire Prieto, MPH, is an Epidemiologist with the Hawai'i State Department of Health's Office of Health Equity. Since joining in 2022, she has led equity-driven data initiatives, including the development of a Social Determinants of Health Catalog, statewide health data trackers, and assessments of race and ethnicity data quality across surveillance systems. Claire also spearheads community-engaged efforts to ground life expectancy and public health data in cultural and lived experiences. A committed advocate for data equity, she actively contributes to both state and national conversations on the disaggregation and standardization of race and ethnicity data.



