

# BROOKINGS

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## America's Innovation Challenge: Innovation Policy & Regional Industry Clusters

Hosted by the **Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings**, the **Information Technology & Innovation Foundation**, and the **Council on Competitiveness**

National Press Club  
529 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, DC 20045  
Tuesday, April 22, 2008, 8:00 — 10:00 a.m.

### Participant Biographies

#### **Rob Atkinson**

Robert Atkinson is President of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a Washington, DC-based technology policy think tank. He is also author of the *State New Economy Index* series and the book [The Past and Future Of America's Economy: Long Waves Of Innovation That Power Cycles Of Growth](#) (Edward Elgar, 2005). He has an extensive background in technology policy, has conducted ground-breaking research projects on technology and innovation, is a valued adviser to state and national policy makers, and a popular speaker on innovation policy nationally and internationally. Before coming to ITIF, Dr. Atkinson was Vice President of the Progressive Policy Institute and Director of PPI's Technology & New Economy Project. Previously Dr. Atkinson served as the first Executive Director of the Rhode Island Economic Policy Council.

#### **Ron Blackwell**

Ron Blackwell is chief economist of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) where he coordinates the economic agenda of the federation and represents the AFL-CIO on corporate and economic issues affecting American workers and their unions.

Ron chairs the economic policy working group of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD and is a director of the Baltimore branch of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank. He recently won the Nat Weinberg Award for service to the labor movement and social justice.

Before coming to the AFL-CIO, Ron was assistant to the president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) and chief economist of UNITE. Before joining the labor movement, Ron was academic dean in the Seminar College of the New School where he taught economics, politics and philosophy.

## **Emily DeRocco**

Emily DeRocco is president of The Manufacturing Institute and its new National Center for the American Workforce and Senior Vice President of the National Association of Manufacturers. Elected by The Manufacturing Institute's Board of Trustees on March 5, 2008, she will oversee the education and research arm of the NAM and the design and operations of the new national center dedicated to fostering a new generation of manufacturing workers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nominated by President Bush and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Assistant Secretary of Labor in 2001, DeRocco was responsible for managing a \$10 billion investment in the nation's workforce in her previous position. She created and implemented regional economic development initiatives in 39 regions across the nation during her tenure, using talent development strategies to drive competitive advantage for America's businesses. Her responsibilities included implementation of Trade Adjustment Assistance for displaced workers, alternative educational pathways for the nation's youth, the permanent and temporary foreign labor certification programs for employment-based immigration, the national apprenticeship program, and workforce development programs nationwide. She created and led Presidential initiatives to align education, economic development, and workforce development investments and to increase the capacity of the nation's community college system.

During her tenure with the Labor Department, DeRocco chaired or vice-chaired numerous boards and commissions, including the Education and Workforce Committee of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education, the Education and Workforce Committee of the Department of Commerce's Interagency Working Group on Manufacturing, and the President's Committee on Economic Adjustment for the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Adjustment Commission. She also was active on the National Advisory Board of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

DeRocco has represented the United States and led delegations in international forums including the G-8 Labor Ministerials, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Western Hemisphere Competitiveness Forum, U.S.-Canada Policy Forums, and U.S.-EU Dialogues.

DeRocco also brings over 10 years of private sector experience in managing a national non-profit organization and prior federal government experience at the Departments of Energy and Interior, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Interstate Commerce Commission.

DeRocco is a proud graduate of The Pennsylvania State University and received her Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown Law Center.

## **Ernest Dianastasis**

Ernest ( Ernie ) Dianastasis is Managing Director of CAI's Delaware Valley Operation and is one of the four principals of the company. CAI is an Information Technology consulting and outsourcing services organization that focuses on IT productivity and has over 2,300 associates world-wide.

In his role, Ernie is responsible for all CAI's start up and continuing operations in the Delaware Valley including Sales and Marketing, Consulting, Delivery and Quality. This operation, headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, has grown under Ernie's leadership from 1 to 700 associates, making CAI the largest IT consulting company in the Delaware Valley. CAI's Delaware Valley operations include offices in Lancaster and New Hope, Pennsylvania. The Ohio, Michigan and Texas operations also report into Ernie. CAI is currently evaluating expansion locations in both Wilmington and the City of Philadelphia. In addition to regional expansion in the Delaware Valley, Ernie also oversees CAI's operation in Shanghai, China, which opened in the third quarter of 2005.

Ernie, in addition to being a successful business leader and entrepreneur, has a passion for community involvement and is extremely active within the region. He has been a member of The Delaware Business Roundtable since 2001 and is currently serving as the Chairman. He is also a member of the Delaware State Chamber Board of Directors and serves on the MAREL Board (Mid-Atlantic Regional Education Lab). Ernie also serves on the executive committee of the State of Delaware Vision 2015 effort. This initiative focuses on the future of Delaware's public education model.

He is also on the Board of Directors of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Innovation Philadelphia, and served as a Trust Team Board Member of the Greater Philly Roadmap 2010 Economic Development Initiative.

Ernie is also chairing a federal initiative for the Council on Competitiveness, based in Washington, DC. He is leading a 20-person advisory board made up of public, private and academic sectors in developing and implementing a plan to foster a more entrepreneurial environment in Delaware. The group is called First State Innovation.

Ernie and CAI are also involved in a number of local charitable causes that help the less fortunate. He is an active member of the Board for Easter Seals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore. In addition, CAI continues to be the title sponsor for the CAI/ Easter Seals Volleyball Challenge, Easter Seal's major annual fundraising event.

Prior to joining CAI, Ernie was with the IBM Corporation. He earned a B.S. degree in Finance and an M.B.A. in Management from Lehigh University, and remains active in supporting numerous university initiatives.

Ernie and his wife Jennifer reside in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, with their two children, Jack and Paisley.

## **Bruce Katz**

Bruce Katz is a Vice President at the Brookings Institution and founding Director of the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program. The Metro Program seeks to redefine the challenges facing cities and metropolitan areas by publishing cutting edge research on major demographic, market, development and governance trends.

Mr. Katz regularly advises national, state, regional and municipal leaders on policy reforms that advance the competitiveness of metropolitan areas. He focuses particularly on reforms that promote the revitalization of central cities and older suburbs and enhance the ability of these places to attract, retain and grow the middle class. In 2006, he received the prestigious Heinz Award in Public Policy for his contributions to urban and metropolitan America.

Mr. Katz is a frequent writer and commentator on urban and metropolitan issues. He is the editor or coeditor of several books on transportation, demographics and regionalism, including *Taking the High Road* (Brookings Press, 2005), *Redefining Urban and Suburban America* (Brookings Press, 2003), and *Reflections on Regionalism* (Brookings Press, 2000). His op-eds and articles have appeared in a wide range of major national and regional newspapers including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Boston Globe*, *BusinessWeek*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *The Baltimore Sun*. Mr. Katz frequently appears on TV and radio, including National Public Radio's Morning Edition, PBS's The Lehrer Newshour, and CNN.

He is also a Visiting Professor of Social Policy at the London School of Economics.

Before joining Brookings, Mr. Katz served as Chief of Staff to Henry G. Cisneros, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Katz has also served as the staff director of the Senate Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Affairs.

Mr. Katz is a graduate of Brown University and Yale Law School.

## **Randall Kempner**

Randall Kempner is Vice President for Regional Innovation at the Council on Competitiveness. Mr. Kempner brings nearly fifteen year of work in the field of national and international development consulting to the Council. In leading the Council's regional innovation program area, Mr. Kempner has directed regional economic development initiatives in nearly a dozen US regions. He leads the Council's policy guidance and technical assistance team that is supporting the US Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Development (WIRED) initiative.

Prior to joining the Council in 2003, Mr. Kempner served as Vice President of OTF Group, an international consulting firm that advises regions and nations on how to create competitive advantage. While there, he served as the lead advisor to the Clusters of Innovation Initiative, the Council's seminal regional economic development research project. In 2003, Mr. Kempner served as chair of the City of Austin, Texas Economic Development Task Force that developed a public sector strategy to foster cultural vitality and creative economy within the region.

Mr. Kempner has an extensive international background, having led comprehensive competitiveness projects in Bermuda, Colombia, El Salvador, and Peru, and most recently, heading the Council's work with life sciences clusters in Mexico. He has worked in a wide variety of industry clusters including agro-industry, apparel, biotechnology and tourism.

Mr. Kempner is a frequent speaker and trainer on competitiveness and regional innovation. Recently, Mr. Kempner has been a featured speaker at Workforce Innovations 2007, the 2007 National Governor's Association Winter Meeting, the inaugural Americas Competitiveness Forum, and the 2007 Competitiveness Institute Annual Global Conference. He is the primary author of the three most recent Council publications on regional innovation: *Regional Innovation: National Prosperity*, *Measuring Regional Innovation*, and *Illuminate: A Roadmap to Regional Asset Mapping*.

Mr. Kempner graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a M.B.A and an M.P.Aff. He earned his bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard University. In 2004, he was a German Marshall Fund-American Memorial Marshall Fellow.

## **Karen Mills**

Karen G. Mills is a principal in the private equity and venture capital industry and has invested in and grown more than 20 companies in the consumer products, food, distribution, textile, and industrial component sectors. Ms Mills is President of MMP Group and was a co-founder and managing director of Solera Capital. In 2007 Ms. Mills was appointed by the Governor of Maine to Chair the Council on Competitiveness and the Economy. In 2006, she led the initiative for a \$50 million competitive research and development bond which passed the legislature with strong bipartisan support, and was approved by public referendum. Ms. Mills plays a leadership role in a number of regional economic clusters, including boatbuilding and food and speaks nationally on clusters and U.S. competitiveness. She serves as a director of several public companies and of the Maine Technology Institute and the Maine chapter of the Nature Conservancy. Ms. Mills has an A.B. in Economics from Harvard University, and an MBA from Harvard Business School and has been Vice Chair of the Harvard Overseers. Her background includes consulting in the U.S. and Europe for McKinsey and Co. and product management for General Foods.

## **Ray Scheppach**

Ray Scheppach was appointed Executive Director of the National Governors Association (NGA) in January 1983. As executive director, Ray oversees the day-to-day operations of the association and works closely with NGA's chair and vice chair and their staffs to help identify priorities for the nation's governors. The association has three major missions: to produce information and analysis of state innovations and practices, to create a bipartisan forum for governors to establish and implement policy on federal issues and to assist governors in managing state government.

Prior to NGA, Ray worked for seven years at the Congressional Budget Office, serving the last two years as Deputy Director. Prior to that he worked for seven years in economic consulting and two years as an economist with the Standard Oil Company (Ohio).

Under his leadership, NGA has risen to become one of the most powerful lobbying groups in Washington. NGA was ranked 12<sup>th</sup> by *Fortune* magazine in its 1999 annual survey of the most influential trade associations, labor unions, and interest groups. As an advocate for federalism, Ray has testified before Congress on behalf of the nation's governors on numerous occasions.

He has written numerous professional articles on various public policy issues and has authored and co-authored four books on economics, including co-writing the 1984 book *New Directions in Economic Policy: An Agenda for the 1980s*. His specializations include federal and state budgets, health care policy, energy policy and United States competitiveness in the world economy.

Ray is one of the country's foremost experts on the role of government in the new economy. He co-authored the NGA report, *Governance in the New Economy*, which examines the forces shaping the U.S. economy and influencing American governance.

Ray received his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Maine, and his master's and doctorate degrees in economics from the University of Connecticut.

## **Howard Wial**

Howard Wial is an economist in the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, where he directs and contributes original research to the Metropolitan Economy Initiative. He previously taught economics at Swarthmore College, Brandeis University, Carleton College, and Brown University; industrial relations at Pennsylvania State University; and law at Rutgers University-Camden.

He served as an economist at the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Technology Assessment, and General Accounting Office, and was research director of the Working for America Institute and the Keystone Research Center, a Pennsylvania think tank. Dr. Wial is a co-author of the book *New Rules for a New Economy* (Cornell University/ILR Press, 1998) and has published numerous research articles and reports in the areas of regional and labor economics.

## **Deborah Wince-Smith**

Deborah L. Wince-Smith is the president of the Council on Competitiveness - a premiere group of CEOs, university presidents and labor leaders committed to driving U.S. competitiveness. Since her appointment as President in 2001, she has spearheaded a national campaign that made innovation a top-tier national policy issue. Deborah is recognized in the global business community as a "go-to" person for strategic counsel, as exemplified by her appointment to the Board of Directors of the NASDAQ OMX Group, Inc. and the NASDAQ Stock Exchange.

As president of the Council on Competitiveness, Deborah's expertise in technology policy, economic development and global competition is frequently sought after by government, industry and news media. She was appointed by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a member of the Oversight Board of the Internal Revenue Service.



She is also a member of the U.S. Department of State's Advisory Committee on International Economic Policy.

Her eclectic knowledge and prescient foresight have been called on by three presidents. She has more than 20 years of experience as a senior U.S. government official, including as Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy in the Department of Commerce during the George H.W. Bush administration. Following her government tenure, Wince-Smith became active in governance of various national scientific laboratories and provided strategic counsel to several FORTUNE 100 companies.

Since becoming president of the Council on Competitiveness, Deborah has helped recharge the national debate on competitiveness, innovation and resilience.

Wince-Smith earned a degree in classical archaeology and graduated Magna cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College. She earned her master's degree from King's College, Cambridge University. In December 2006 she received an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from Michigan State University.