Welcome to the Poverty Solutions Five Years of Impact Report.

Fall of 2021 marked the five-year anniversary of the launch of Poverty Solutions. Since then, we have undertaken hundreds of projects, established powerful community partnerships throughout the country, and demonstrated the myriad ways we can connect our research to policy and practice. In this five-year anniversary report, we offer a brief look at some of the people and projects that have helped advance our efforts to prevent and alleviate the devastating effects of poverty.

poverty.umich.edu | #UMPovertySolutions

INSIDE THIS REPORT

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR 2
OUR HISTORY 3
SECTION 1: FIVE YEARS OF IMPACT 4
STRENGTHENING THE CASH SAFETY NET TO REDUCE POVERTY AND HARDSHIP 5
BUILDING A PATH TO SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING FOR ALL DETROITERS 7
ADDRESSING STUDENT HOMELESSNESS AMID THE PANDEMIC 10

SECTION 2: AMPLIFYING IMPACT THROUGH ROBUST PARTNERSHIPS 12
CROSS-CAMPUS PROJECTS 12
WASHTENAW COUNTY INITIATIVES 18
DETROIT PARTNERSHIPS 20
STATE COLLABORATIONS 22
NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT 24

SECTION 3: NEXT STEPS 28
OUR TEAM 29

IN 2021

500+ TIMES IN NATIONAL & REGIONAL MEDIA
1.7M+ SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS
250 STUDENTS in Research Assistantships, Projects, and Courses

SINCE 2016

100 ACADEMIC JOURNAL ARTICLES, WORKING PAPERS, & POLICY BRIEFS
4 TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TESTIFIED BEFORE CONGRESS
140 FACULTY EXPERTS in Efforts to Address Economic Disparities
105 EVENTS
1,500 STUDENT PARTICIPANTS
15,000 PEOPLE in Our Efforts to Eliminate Poverty
19 SCHOOLS & COLLEGES on Projects and Events

CITED

500+

ENGAGED MORE THAN

250 STUDENTS

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

WITH MORE THAN

1.7M+

PARTNERED WITH ALL

19 SCHOOLS & COLLEGES
Poverty Solutions is a presidential initiative of the University of Michigan that partners with communities to find new ways to prevent and alleviate poverty. In confronting the challenges of poverty, we know scholars do not have all the answers. Yet we have an important role to play. We can use evidence, data, and analysis to identify critical issues and evidence-based solutions to inform action.

Our team also recognizes that structural racism plays an important role in the systems that create and perpetuate poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. In 2021, we partnered with the U-M Center for Social Solutions to create the Confronting and Combating Racism Faculty Grant Program, which awarded grants to six action-based research projects. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.

Since Poverty Solutions was launched in 2016, we have sought to make good on the investment by the University of Michigan in this initiative. I am so grateful to be at a public university that would make such a commitment to tolerated, and perpetuated poverty. In turn, our efforts to address poverty must also commit to addressing racism. We have supported the work of the three-faculty project conducted by the Center for Social Solutions that is working with communities to develop local reparations plans. We supported the launch of the Center for Racial Justice at the Ford School of Public Policy, a cross-disciplinary hub that aims to foster teaching and research opportunities that prepare future leaders to advance our efforts to confront poverty and be a part of positive change.
In March 2021, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act, which included an expansion of the Child Tax Credit that increased the amount of the credit, made it available to more families, and distributed it in monthly payments. Poverty Solutions Director H. Luke Shaefer and his colleagues contributed to this legislation through significant research demonstrating the poverty-reduction potential of the expanded tax credit, which mirrors the design of a near-universal child allowance used in other countries. This policy change is estimated to have already lifted millions of children out of poverty.

Shaefer’s interest in this kind of policy emerged from his work with Princeton Professor Kathryn Edin on their 2015 book, "$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America." The book traces the policy decisions that contributed to a sharp rise in the number of families with children who endured periods with virtually no cash income, and it profiled several families living in this kind of extreme poverty. After listening to the stories of these families, Shaefer and Edin made the case for major policy reforms including strengthening the cash safety net. The New York Times and Time Magazine have credited the book with helping to change the narrative about child poverty in a way that opened the door for an expanded Child Tax Credit.

A 2018 journal article authored by Shaefer, Edin, and eight colleagues laid out a vision for how the U.S. could transform the Child Tax Credit into a near-universal child allowance of up to $300 per child per month. Informed by this research, the American Families Act was first introduced in the U.S. Senate in 2017, setting the table for the current expanded Child Tax Credit.

During the pandemic, federal policymakers used other kinds of cash transfers to reduce poverty and buffer families against hardship during a time of unprecedented job loss. These included Economic Impact Payments and expanded unemployment assistance. Poverty Solutions researchers found that material hardship and adverse mental health symptoms fell following cash transfers from the federal government and rose in the absence of government action.

"We can see in the data the ways in which these payments are impacting families across the country, helping them pay for food, bills, and other essential expenses," said Patrick Casey, assistant director of policy impact at Poverty Solutions. "But we can also see that there’s more work to do to ensure all eligible families receive the help they need.”

THE ARC OF SYSTEMS CHANGE

The following stories demonstrate how Poverty Solutions has worked with partners to inform concrete policy change in the areas of expanding the Child Tax Credit, increasing access to affordable housing, and improving systems to identify students experiencing homelessness. Our approach begins with listening to community input to set our research agenda, followed by analyzing data and conducting research to identify existing policy gaps, sharing those findings and proposing evidence-based interventions, supporting the implementation of new policies, then evaluating the outcome of those new policies, and sharing the findings.

SHARING FINDINGS

The New York Times featured Poverty Solutions’ analysis of material hardship levels over the course of the pandemic in a front page story, leading to stories in dozens of other news outlets, an appearance on PBS NewsHour, and a White House press release. In September 2021, Shaefer testified about the impact of pandemic cash transfer programs at a hearing before the U.S. House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis.

"The social safety net response ushered in by the bipartisan CARES Act and continued in the December COVID relief bill and American Rescue Plan is truly historic. A wealth of evidence now shows it has proven incredibly effective," Shaefer said during his testimony. "I believe the success is due in large part to the speed and flexibility of a broad-based approach that prioritized putting money in people’s pockets. The major expansion of the child tax credit follows this approach.

Poverty Solutions researchers found that material hardship and adverse mental health symptoms fell following cash transfers from the federal government and rose in the absence of government action.

"We can see in the data the ways in which these payments are impacting families across the country, helping them pay for food, bills, and other essential expenses," said Patrick Casey, assistant director of policy impact at Poverty Solutions. "But we can also see that there’s more work to do to ensure all eligible families receive the help they need.”
IMPLEMENT

To realize the full poverty-reduction potential of the federal safety net cash transfers during the COVID-19 era, eligible families need to claim them. Poverty Solutions worked closely with a coalition of Detroit leaders and collaborated with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to raise awareness of the expanded tax credit. In addition, in the spring of 2020, Poverty Solutions launched a website answering questions about Economic Impact Payments. By the summer of 2021, it had generated more than 15,000 visits. A similar website on the Child Tax Credit generated well over 13,000 views. Outreach efforts resulted in news coverage raising awareness of how to claim the credit from Spanish NPR podcast ¿Que Onda Michigan?, the American Public Human Services Association, MLive, Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, Michigan Radio, and Mid-Michigan Now, among others.

EVALUATE

Census Bureau research shows the expanded Child Tax Credit has already contributed to a decline in food hardship among families with children. Additionally, Poverty Solutions researchers partnered with Propel, which runs the Providers mobile app used by more than 5 million families receiving food assistance, to survey families with low incomes about their receipt and usage of the initial Child Tax Credit payments. The survey results guided ongoing outreach efforts and received news coverage from CNN, WHYY Philadelphia, the Detroit Free Press, and other media outlets across the country.

However, the expanded Child Tax Credit expired at the end of 2021. Academic research will play a key role in informing decisions to extend the Child Tax Credit or make it permanent.

BUILD A PATH TO SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING FOR ALL DETROITERS

Detroit’s housing crisis is multifaceted and complex. It has been shaped by an inadequate supply of affordable housing; high property tax rates often based on inflated property assessments; a lack of home repair resources; and a pattern of bulk ownership that has exacerbated displacement pressures.

Each of these factors contributes to an environment in which safe, stable, and affordable housing is out of reach for many residents with low incomes. As city officials and housing advocacy organizations work to address those challenges, research supported by Poverty Solutions provides crucial feedback on what’s effective and what’s not.

LISTEN

Over the past five years, researchers at Poverty Solutions have explored a number of features of Detroit’s housing ecosystem that prevent many Detroiters—78% of whom are Black—from obtaining safe, stable, affordable housing. First, predatory lending practices and the economic impact of the recession led to widespread mortgage and tax foreclosures. From 2005 to 2015, 120,000 residential properties in Detroit—nearly half of all such properties in the city—experienced at least one mortgage or tax foreclosure. During this time, Detroit shifted from a majority-own to a majority-rent city.

In addition, due to the city’s aging housing stock, deferred maintenance from investor-landlords, and limited enforcement of rental codes, homeowners and renters alike face significant home repair needs, threatening their health, safety, and long-term housing stability. These factors combine to create significant barriers to Detroters obtaining safe, stable, affordable housing. And it is these barriers that Poverty Solutions researchers have set out to tackle, in partnership with policymakers and community groups.

ANALYZE

To fully understand how these housing issues affected Detroters, Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates took an in-depth look at the housing needs of residents and the housing ecosystem in a variety of ways:

• Helped identify housing issues affecting Detroters, Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates took an in-depth look at the housing needs of residents and the housing ecosystem in a variety of ways:

• Helped identify housing issues affecting Detroters, Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates took an in-depth look at the housing needs of residents and the housing ecosystem in a variety of ways:

• Helped identify housing issues affecting Detroters, Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates took an in-depth look at the housing needs of residents and the housing ecosystem in a variety of ways:

• Helped identify housing issues affecting Detroters, Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates took an in-depth look at the housing needs of residents and the housing ecosystem in a variety of ways:
In December 2018, Poverty Solutions faculty expert Robyn Mathias and postdoctoral fellow Alexos Eisenberg published a working paper and policy brief sharing the findings of the HPTAP research. This research found that 72% of the homeowners interviewed had never applied for HPTAP, even though 72% would have been eligible for the exemption in 2018. It is also hard to convey how valuable I find my relationship with Poverty Solutions and its partners, but I can attest, they have my trust, and I look forward to collaborating on additional projects in the future.”

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.

In March 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drew from the Poverty Solutions research to help draft an ordinance and revise the city’s HPTAP application. This program was informed by Poverty Solutions work with the Detroit Metro Area Community Study to improve Detroit residents on home repair needs as well as its evaluation of home repair resources in Detroit and analysis of the GIC’s Make It Home Repair Program.

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.

In March 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drew from the Poverty Solutions research to help draft an ordinance and revise the city’s HPTAP application. This program was informed by Poverty Solutions work with the Detroit Metro Area Community Study to improve Detroit residents on home repair needs as well as its evaluation of home repair resources in Detroit and analysis of the GIC’s Make It Home Repair Program.

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.

In March 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drew from the Poverty Solutions research to help draft an ordinance and revise the city’s HPTAP application. This program was informed by Poverty Solutions work with the Detroit Metro Area Community Study to improve Detroit residents on home repair needs as well as its evaluation of home repair resources in Detroit and analysis of the GIC’s Make It Home Repair Program.

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.

In March 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drew from the Poverty Solutions research to help draft an ordinance and revise the city’s HPTAP application. This program was informed by Poverty Solutions work with the Detroit Metro Area Community Study to improve Detroit residents on home repair needs as well as its evaluation of home repair resources in Detroit and analysis of the GIC’s Make It Home Repair Program.

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.

In March 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drew from the Poverty Solutions research to help draft an ordinance and revise the city’s HPTAP application. This program was informed by Poverty Solutions work with the Detroit Metro Area Community Study to improve Detroit residents on home repair needs as well as its evaluation of home repair resources in Detroit and analysis of the GIC’s Make It Home Repair Program.

In 2020, Poverty Solutions served on a working group with the governor’s office to establish a comprehensive $50 million emergency rental assistance program to prevent evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty Solutions researchers also provided input on pivotal policy changes to the program that were enacted by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in December 2020.
The COVID-19 pandemic made an already challenging task for school staff even more difficult: how to identify which students do not currently have a stable place to live and connect them with resources to ensure they’re able to fully participate in school.

Prior research by Poverty Solutions Senior Research Associate Jennifer Erb-Downward, who specializes in family homelessness, had already identified an undercount of students experiencing homelessness across Michigan, and especially in Detroit and parts of rural northern Michigan with high rates of student homelessness. Poverty Solutions partnered with Chalkbeat Detroit to host a virtual panel discussion on the findings that brought together Detroit educators, service providers, and people with lived experience with housing instability to discuss how schools can better identify and support students experiencing homelessness.

Meanwhile, Erb-Downward continued work on a databook outlining the connections between homelessness in Michigan and chronic absenteeism, the number of midyear school transfers, graduation and dropout rates, school discipline and expulsions, as well as the number of students experiencing homelessness

Since Erb-Downward first identified an undercount of students experiencing homelessness in Detroit in 2018, the city’s shelter system and school districts have implemented a referral system to make sure schools are aware when one of their students enters a shelter. Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) has also strengthened its systems of identification and support for students experiencing homelessness. In a letter to the U.S. Department of Education about the American Rescue Plan Act for identifying and supporting students experiencing homelessness, Erb-Downward recently mapped school discipline and homelessness data at the school district level to provide local stakeholders across the state with the information they need to consider school discipline reform that takes into account students’ history of homelessness.

On a national scale, Erb-Downward’s partnership with SchoolHouse Connection will turn to assessing current trends in identifying students experiencing homelessness as the pandemic continues. This work will inform policy recommendations and ongoing efforts by schools and service providers to evaluate what is working in addressing student homelessness and identify opportunities to improve available resources.
AMPLIFYING IMPACT THROUGH ROBUST PARTNERSHIPS

DETROIT RIVER STORY LAB
David Porter, a professor in U-M’s English Department, partnered with regional leaders to develop a three-pronged approach to amplifying the history and ongoing importance of the Detroit River from an anti-racist perspective. The first part entailed co-creating a curriculum for middle and high school students on the history and enduring effects of the Detroit River in the Underground Railroad from an angle that emphasized Black Americans’ history of resilience, agency, and liberation. The second component of this project involved a partnership with Bridge Detroit to promote public discussion of the place of Black history in recent efforts to redevelop the waterfront and claim it as a site of cultural heritage. Finally, Porter used this grant to advance an ongoing bid to secure a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Site designation for the Detroit River. This included a congressional resolution, introduced by U.S. Representatives Rashida Tlaib and Brenda Lawrence, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the International Underground Railroad Monument Site designation for the Detroit River. This resolution declared the Detroit River to be a UNESCO World Heritage Site, calling for the addition of the Detroit River to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, and the creation of an International Gateway to Freedom World Heritage Corridor.

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

CROSS-CAMPUS PROJECTS

Poverty Solutions has engaged more than 650 students in research assistantships, projects, courses, and events representing all 19 schools and colleges. In addition, Poverty Solutions’ faculty partnerships encompass the full range of expertise represented across U-M departments and campuses.

SUPPORTING FACULTY RESEARCH WITH REAL-WORLD IMPACT

Supporting faculty research that explores and develops strategies to address poverty from a broad range of disciplinary perspectives is a central tenet of Poverty Solutions’ mission. We prioritize action-based research that focuses on effective, real-world solutions. This past year we launched a Confronting and Combating Racism Faculty Grant Program in partnership with U-M’s Center for Social Solutions to support research addressing challenges such as systemic oppression, organizational exclusion, institutional discrimination, neglectful policy, and violence against the minds, bodies, and cultures of people of color.

BEYOND RHETORIC: CONFRONTING AND COMBATING RACISM IN GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

On June 10, 2020, the Genesee County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis. Lisa M. Lapeyrouse, associate professor in UM-Flint’s Department of Public Health and Health Sciences, aims to ensure this resolution has a meaningful impact on the health and well-being of residents of color, extending beyond mere rhetoric. To accomplish that, Lapeyrouse is leading efforts to develop a decision-making Community Action Council that is responsible for developing an evidence-based strategic plan to eliminate racist policies and practices impacting the health and well-being of Genesee County residents of color. She is also cultivating opportunities for public input on the strategic plan at virtual town hall meetings, and reaching out to key stakeholders for their insights. Finally, Lapeyrouse is developing a website of resources for anti-racist policies and practices to assist other local, state, and national organizations to assess their current policies and practices, and adopt anti-racist policies and practices that impact the health and well-being of people of color.

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse

“Poverty Solutions facilitated many conversations with different stakeholders and helped disseminate our findings. As a junior faculty, I am really grateful for the opportunities Poverty Solutions has given me to establish myself as a researcher in this field.”
— Roshanak Mehdipanah, assistant professor, public health

“If you’re not looking at racism as a systemic problem, then it becomes a lot easier to ignore.”
— Lisa M. Lapeyrouse
Over the past five years, Poverty Solutions and partners across campus hosted more than 100 events and talks, including the annual Real-World Perspectives on Poverty Solutions Speaker Series that featured experts in policy and practice from across the nation. Some of the noteworthy speakers included:

2018
Robert Vargas, assistant professor of sociology, University of Chicago

2019
Faith Fowler, pastor of Cass Community United Methodist Church and the executive director of Cass Community Social Services

Dorian Warren, president of Community Change

Michael Arceneaux, New York Times best-selling author

Lori Lightfoot, mayor of Chicago

Joseigh Khaddan, former chief medical executive and chief deputy director for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Garlin Gilchrist II, lieutenant governor of Michigan

Nicholas Kristof, New York Times columnist and author

2020
Robert Vargas

Faith Fowler

Dorian Warren

Michael Arceneaux

Lori Lightfoot

Joseigh Khaddan

Garlin Gilchrist II

Nicholas Kristof

2021
Eric Garcetti, mayor of Los Angeles
ENGAGING STUDENTS TO FIND NEW POVERTY SOLUTIONS

Since its inception, Poverty Solutions has sought to equip the next generation of leaders with the skills they need to prevent and alleviate poverty. This has resulted in many students using courses to engage community partners or students with experiential learning opportunities to shape their future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and stakeholders. This experience will undoubtedly influence my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and systems.

“My involvement with Poverty Solutions has allowed me to develop a more robust understanding of poverty and the various failed systems involved. Additionally, I have gained valuable skills related to academic writing, data analysis, interview facilitation, and stakeholder engagement, among others. This experience will undoubtedly shape my future practice as a social worker, particularly in how I engage with clients, communities, and systems.” — Katlin Brantley

POVERTY SOLUTIONS IMPACT REPORT

POVERTY SOLUTIONS CROS-CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

Architecture & Urban Planning

26 (8)

21

6

3

Art & Design

5 (3)

9

2

7

Business

12 (7)

32

5

6

Dental Hygiene

2 (1)

3

5

1

Education

13 (7)

13

5

—

Engineering

6 (3)

13

9

—

Environment & Sustainability

10 (3)

7

4

—

Information

15 (3)

46

—

1

Law

10 (4)

7

5

—

Literature, Science, and the Arts

67 (19)

119

10

25

Medicine

31 (11)

9

—

6

Music, Theater & Dance

1 (1)

3

—

—

Nursing

7 (2)

8

1

—

Pharmacy

1

—

1

—

Public Health

66 (17)

63

5

—

Public Policy

51 (14)

75

24

17

Social Work

59 (17)

65

13

—

U-M Libraries

—

—

—

13

U-M Administration

—

—

—

31

UM-Ontario

18 (12)

2

—

2

U-M-Flint

4 (3)

1

—

—

Institute for Social Research

18 (8)

—

5

10

Center for Health and Research Transformation

2 (1)

—

1

—

Information and Technology Services

—

—

—

3

Operations

—

—

—

3

Other Units

—

11

7

—

Faculty partnerships include expert network members, pilot research grants, academic publications, working papers, policy briefs, and externally funded projects. The number of individual faculty partners are included in parentheses.

Student collaborations include undergraduate and graduate student research assistants, doctoral students, postdocs, certificate enrollees, course enrollees, and student competition award winners.

SummerWorks include internship placements and professional mentors.
In 2018, Poverty Solutions partnered with Washtenaw County’s Office for Community and Economic Development to refresh the county’s Opportunity Index, which was originally created in 2015 to map a variety of metrics related to health, job access, economic well-being, education and training, and community engagement and stability by census tract. Working closely with county officials, Poverty Solutions provided technical assistance with revising the metrics included in the index, reimagining the index methodology, data analysis, and developing a narrative to help users make sense of the disparities revealed by the index. The Office for Community and Economic Development unveiled the new Opportunity Index in April 2021. Based on the Opportunity Index, the Office for Community and Economic Development identified the most economically segregated metropolitan areas in the country. Recognizing the university’s connection to the local community, Poverty Solutions pursues partnerships with a variety of government officials, service providers, criminal justice administrators, educators, business leaders, and community advocates in Washtenaw County to promote equity and reduce poverty.

Poverty Solutions joined American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan and U-M Law School in backing an unbiased manner moving forward.” —Eli Savit, Washtenaw County Prosecutor

We value making data easily accessible and putting it in context. We know it can help us start to ask the right questions and have the right conversations about systems and policies. We hope the Opportunity Index will inform this work and help lead us toward solutions for making the changes we want to see.”

Poverty Solutions pursues partnerships with a variety of government officials, service providers, criminal justice administrators, educators, business leaders, and community advocates in Washtenaw County to promote equity and reduce poverty.

As the project—of which includes Washtenaw, Oakland, and Ingham counties—is to uncover potential racial inequities through the collection and analysis of data on decisions made by the prosecutor’s office, including who is charged with a crime, the nature of the charge, the race of the individual charged, and other crucial demographic information such as place-targeting conduct. The results will be shared publicly through a data dashboard designed by Poverty Solutions.

For the university to be an ethical partner in the community we have to think about the ways we can inform how we make decisions and that will go a long way toward helping us understand the disparities revealed by the Opportunity Index. The Office for Community and Economic Development to refresh the county’s Opportunity Index, which was originally created in 2015 to map a variety of metrics related to health, job access, economic well-being, education and training, and community engagement and stability by census tract. Working closely with county officials, Poverty Solutions provided technical assistance with revising the metrics included in the index, reimagining the index methodology, data analysis, and developing a narrative to help users make sense of the disparities revealed by the index. The Office for Community and Economic Development unveiled the new Opportunity Index in April 2021. Based on the Opportunity Index, the Office for Community and Economic Development identified the most economically segregated metropolitan areas in the country. Recognizing the university’s connection to the local community, Poverty Solutions pursues partnerships with a variety of government officials, service providers, criminal justice administrators, educators, business leaders, and community advocates in Washtenaw County to promote equity and reduce poverty.

The University of Michigan’s Ann Arbor campus is located in Washtenaw County, one of the most economically segregated metropolitan areas in the country. Recognizing the university’s impact on the local community, Poverty Solutions pursues partnerships with a variety of government officials, service providers, criminal justice administrators, educators, business leaders, and community advocates in Washtenaw County to promote equity and reduce poverty.

POVERTY SOLUTIONS’ SUMMERWORKS PROGRAM

Poverty Solutions pursues partnerships with a variety of government officials, service providers, criminal justice administrators, educators, business leaders, and community advocates in Washtenaw County to promote equity and reduce poverty.

SUMMERWORKS

Since Poverty Solutions partnered with Washtenaw County’s summer youth employment program in 2017, SummerWorks has placed young adults in 433 summer internships and engaged over 105 mentors in programs that offer youth a variety of professional development opportunities. The program is a partnership between the county’s summer youth employment program, U-M, and Washtenaw County’s Office for Community and Economic Development, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and others.

In addition to evaluating the county’s summer youth employment program, U-M provided new half of all of the summer’s interns offered, U-M also welcomed program participants to campus for workshops, professional development sessions, and speaker events. The SummerWorks program will continue in the summer of 2022 and we look forward to identifying even more opportunities for youth throughout the county throughout the county.

“Standards of professionalism are oftentimes rooted in White supremacy. Young adults who live in disenfranchised communities are not always taught these unspoken rules. As the pandemic changes workforce development, SummerWorks provides local employment opportunities, comprehensive mentorship, and tools for success that our participants may not have access to otherwise.” —Zack Erb, Poverty Solutions’ SummerWorks manager

“SummerWorks has allowed me to become the person that I want to be and have the opportunity to grow.” —Amea Gandy, 2019 and 2021 SummerWorks participant

“Standards of professionalism are oftentimes rooted in White supremacy. Young adults who live in disenfranchised communities are not always taught these unspoken rules. As the pandemic changes workforce development, SummerWorks provides local employment opportunities, comprehensive mentorship, and tools for success that our participants may not have access to otherwise.”

“SummertimeWorks has allowed me to become the person that I want to be and have the opportunity to grow.” —Amea Gandy, 2019 and 2021 SummerWorks participant
Poverty Solutions continues to work closely with city officials, service providers, faculty researchers, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, and resident leaders in Detroit on a variety of projects aimed at poverty prevention and alleviation. Highlights from the Detroit Partnership on Economic Mobility, a collaboration between Poverty Solutions and the Detroit mayor’s office launched in 2018, include:

• outreach campaigns to ensure Detroit residents received stimulus checks and the expanded Child Tax Credit during the pandemic,

• advising on evidence-based interventions to improve access to affordable, quality housing in the city,

• assessment of labor market factors and barriers to employment, and

• six economic mobility fellowships to support city staff on issues like homelessness response, digital inclusion, and spending American Rescue Plan Act funds.

AMPLIFYING DETROITERS’ VOICES

Listening to community partners is a priority in all of Poverty Solutions’ work. Consistent with this priority, Poverty Solutions works with the Detroit Metro Area Communities Study (DMACS), a panel study that draws upon state-of-the-art scientific methods to provide the most representative insights available on issues that matter to Detroit residents. Over the course of the last five years, DMACS has administered 16 surveys and disseminated over 20 reports outlining Detroiters’ views on crime and policing, COVID-19 vaccines, the impact of recent investments in the city, transportation and mobility, housing, and more.

DMACS researchers partner with city government, philanthropies, nonprofits, and community-based organizations to co-develop survey questions. Partners also work to share the analysis so it gets into the hands of policy decision-makers. Importantly, DMACS often repeats questions among their sample of respondents to see how attitudes toward different issues evolve over time.

“An essential ingredient to developing good policy is understanding what people want and need and how they experience their lives. At a really basic level, this is the government’s job. A lot of people don’t have an opportunity to articulate their needs, and they deserve to be represented in the policies that get made.”

—Elisabeth Gerber, professor of public policy and co-principal investigator of DMACS

DETROITERS’ PRIORITIES FOR ECONOMIC MOBILITY

In September 2020, Poverty Solutions published “Investing in Us: Resident Priorities for Economic Mobility,” which lifted up more than a decade’s worth of input from Detroit residents on how to increase economic mobility and decrease poverty in their city. The report was the culmination of a one-year, community-based research project that included focus groups with residents and the review of nearly 400 sources of information on how Detroiters view the connections between economic mobility and housing, education, work opportunities, environmental conditions, transportation, and other issues. The research aims to provide policymakers, philanthropic organizations, nonprofits, and other service providers with clear guidance on how Detroiters define economic well-being and what strategies they think will work best to increase economic mobility.

“The research world produces a lot of data, indicators, metrics, and maps to tell us how people are doing and how public policy might respond to the need. Often missing from this picture are the voices of residents themselves. Our goal with this project was to listen to residents, and make the voices of Detroiters our primary source of data,” said Allan Brashe-Riabin, assistant director of community initiatives at Poverty Solutions and lead researcher for “Investing in Us.”

“When we need thought partners in the work and friends in the fight and boots on the ground, we think of Poverty Solutions.”

—Nicole Sherard-Freeman, City of Detroit group executive for jobs, economy, and Detroit at Work

“By the Numbers”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects with the City of Detroit</th>
<th>Community Organization Partners</th>
<th>Economic Mobility Fellows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2016

Poverty Solutions Impact Report

University of Michigan
are much less likely to receive workers' compensation problems than U.S.-born workers. Yet immigrant workers in injury, workplace fatalities, and work-related health immigrants have significantly higher rates of workplace jobs with the highest risk. Consequently, unauthorized immigrant workers are often assigned the hardest employment. Within these industries, unauthorized workers tend to work in the most dangerous sectors significant risk to themselves and their families. These economy and society. However, they often do so at Undocumented workers play critical roles in our

To get an idea of the extent of its risk, Nothaft and her team analyzed the economic and social impact of the jobs held by unauthorized workers in Michigan. They found that these jobs are among the most dangerous in the state, with a higher frequency of injuries and fatalities compared to those held by U.S.-born workers. The work often involves exposure to hazardous materials, long hours, and low pay, which increases the risk of injury and illness. The lack of workplace safety regulations and the inability to access workers' compensation further exacerbates these risks.

The implications of this research for policymakers are significant. It highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve workplace safety and access to workers' compensation for unauthorized workers. This could include developing partnerships with local employers to implement safety training programs, providing access to legal resources for workers to claim their rights, and increasing funding for workplace safety research. By addressing these issues, we can reduce the risk of injury and illness among unauthorized workers and improve their quality of life, which in turn benefits the state economy as a whole.
This project is vital because each story offers an authentic perspective on how policies directly impact people’s lives. Rural communities have unique barriers that require unique solutions, and I believe the findings will be instrumental for policymakers and advocates advancing change.

—Maricruz Moya, Poverty Solutions Graduate Student Research Assistant

In 2018, Poverty Solutions, in partnership with Princeton University, began a project supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to identify America’s most disadvantaged communities and better understand the mechanisms driving the struggles community members face. Researchers identified these communities by creating an Index of Deep Disadvantage that combines income, health, and economic mobility data. The index revealed that the vast majority of the top 100 most disadvantaged communities are rural areas with histories of racial and ethnic exploitation, many of which are in the South. Academic work on poverty traditionally focuses on cities, and this finding pushed Poverty Solutions to think about the ways the lack of research further disadvantages rural areas and identify strategies that can support low-income rural communities.

To supplement the data with on-the-ground perspectives, graduate student research assistants spent time in Marion County, South Carolina, and Clay County, Kentucky, in 2019 as well as Brooks and Zavala counties, Texas, and Leflore County, Mississippi, in 2021. The graduate students sharpened their research skills and gained insights into the unique challenges and opportunities facing each community.

The project has already resulted in a series of “Stories from the Field” authored by the graduate students, media coverage of the Index of Deep Disadvantage by regional news outlets in the communities highlighted by the research, and a blogpost and op-ed on how the lack of social infrastructure in disadvantaged rural areas contributes to opioid use. Poverty Solutions Director Luke Shaefer and Princeton’s Kathryn Edin and Tim Nelson will elaborate on the findings in a forthcoming book that examines the historical and structural factors driving deep disadvantage in certain regions and the interventions that would help those communities thrive.

For most people, the stimulus checks provided by the federal government at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic were deposited directly into the bank account they listed on their most recent tax returns or delivered via the Social Security system. But people who didn’t file taxes, didn’t have a bank account, or didn’t have a stable address where the check could be mailed faced barriers to receiving their stimulus checks. The 2020 Coronavirus Stimulus Payment website—developed by Poverty Solutions in partnership with Detroit-based nonprofit design firm Civilla—walked people through a step-by-step process to ensure they are providing the IRS with the information necessary to receive their stimulus checks. The website has information on how to open a safe and affordable bank account, how to file a simple tax return for free, and how to provide the IRS with a current address.

The website has garnered more than 658,000 visitors and received mentions in over 70 media outlets around the country.

"While eligibility for these funds was nearly universal, we were concerned about administrative procedures that could end up denying or delaying stimulus checks to the most vulnerable people," said Poverty Solutions Director Luke Shaefer. "We needed to act to ensure the timely delivery of aid to the people who needed it most."
A New Plan to Combat Inequality.

and her co-authors in their book, “Cradle to Kindergarten: Poverty Solutions faculty affiliate and U-M Assistant Professor at the School of Education Christina Weiland attend preschool, while most poor kids do not, according By age 3, the inequality is clear: most rich kids in the U.S. families can afford infant care. is often unaffordable, and studies show that only 26% of price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is with a steep As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep challenges that families face, and the strategies that we can all to ensure all children have access to early childhood education.

—U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan (NH)

Between 2017 and 2019, the “Cradle to Kindergarten” authors made over 70 presentations to federal, state, and local governments, academic, policy research, and advocacy professionals, philosophers, and literary figures. The included events hosted by Poverty Solutions and the School of Education in both Michigan and Washington, D.C., where Weiland and her co-authors presented concrete plans to educate organization leaders and policymakers. However, since their book was first published, the world was confronted with a pandemic that only magnified levels of socioeconomic and ethnoracial inequality. Weiland and her co-authors consequently released a second edition in 2021 in which they included updated proposals to address this new landscape, as well as guidance on how to effectively structure their proposals in a range of political contexts. Their research has played an important role in Congress to multiple ways policymakers and the public think about importance role in the early childhood education policies implemented in cities and states across the country as well as in federal legislation currently being considered by the U.S. Senate. “States are going to need a vision for how to scale up high-quality early learning for all young kids. That’s exactly what our proposals offer,” Weiland said.

“Luke, your work, including your book $2 a Day, has shaped the way policymakers and the public think about poverty and justice in America. I quote you all the time.” —Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator (OH)

STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

Solutions Policy Director Dr. Luke Shaefer was called to Congress multiple times to discuss ways to strengthen the social safety net, especially for families with children. In 2015, he testified at a U.S. Senate Finance Committee hearing on welfare and poverty in America. At a Congressional briefing on how to promote child health equity through the tax code in July 2020, Shaefer outlined opportunities to enhance the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. In September 2019, Shaefer testified about the impact of pandemic relief programs at a hearing before the U.S. House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis.

“A New Plan to Combat Inequality.”

“A New Plan to Combat Inequality.”

Over the past five years, Poverty Solutions scholars have been recognized as thought leaders and anti-poverty experts at the federal level.

AUTO INSURANCE COSTS AS AN ECONOMIC MOBILITY ISSUE

Joshua Rivera, formerly a senior data and policy analyst at Poverty Solutions who now is the Economic Stability Administration policy director at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, testified before the U.S. House Financial Services Committee’s Oversight and Investigative Subcommittee in May 2019. Rivera commented on how the high cost of auto insurance perpetuates the cycle of poverty and explained how certain auto-insurance rate-setting practices have a disproportionate impact on drivers with low incomes and Black people. Rivera was invited to the hearing titled “Examining Discrimination in the Automobile Loan and Insurance Industries,” based on his analysis of auto insurance costs in Michigan, which helped inform the state’s auto insurance reform passed in 2019.

Using Data to Improve Services for Homeless Youth

Jennifer Erb-Downdward, a senior research associate at Poverty Solutions who specializes in family homelessness, testified at a virtual hearing held by the U.S. House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education in May 2021. The hearing was titled “Picking up the Pieces: Strengthening Connections with Students Experiencing Homelessness and Children in Foster Care,” and Erb-Downdward discussed her research on the educational challenges faced by students who do not have a stable place to live. She also highlighted the ways the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult for schools to identify and support students experiencing homelessness.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE TO PROVIDE NEW ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Joshua Edmonds, the City of Detroit’s director of digital inclusion and a former Detroit economic policy fellow supported by Poverty Solutions, spoke at a hearing on “empowering and connecting communities through digital equity and internet adoption” held by the U.S. House Communications and Technology Subcommittee in January 2020. Edmonds outlined how digital equity and internet access affect access to online banking, health care, job opportunities that require tech-skills, participation in Census 2020, and kids’ ability to do their homework. He shared his strategy for developing public-private partnerships in Detroit to promote digital inclusion now and the need for more federal support to bring those efforts to scale.

As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is often unaffordable, and studies show that only 26% of Michigan families can afford infant care. The inequality is clear: most rich kids in the U.S. families can afford infant care. is often unaffordable, and studies show that only 26% of price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is with a steep As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep challenges that families face, and the strategies that we can all to ensure all children have access to early childhood education.

—U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan (NH)

Between 2017 and 2019, the “Cradle to Kindergarten” authors made over 70 presentations to federal, state, and local governments, academic, policy research, and advocacy professionals, philosophers, and literary figures. The included events hosted by Poverty Solutions and the School of Education in both Michigan and Washington, D.C., where Weiland and her co-authors presented concrete plans to educate organization leaders and policymakers. However, since their book was first published, the world was confronted with a pandemic that only magnified levels of socioeconomic and ethnoracial inequality. Weiland and her co-authors consequently released a second edition in 2021 in which they included updated proposals to address this new landscape, as well as guidance on how to effectively structure their proposals in a range of political contexts. Their research has played an important role in Congress to multiple ways policymakers and the public think about poverty and justice in America. I quote you all the time. —Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator (OH)

“A New Plan to Combat Inequality.”

“A New Plan to Combat Inequality.”

Over the past five years, Poverty Solutions scholars have been recognized as thought leaders and anti-poverty experts at the federal level.

AUTO INSURANCE COSTS AS AN ECONOMIC MOBILITY ISSUE

Joshua Rivera, formerly a senior data and policy analyst at Poverty Solutions who now is the Economic Stability Administration policy director at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, testified before the U.S. House Financial Services Committee’s Oversight and Investigative Subcommittee in May 2019. Rivera commented on how the high cost of auto insurance perpetuates the cycle of poverty and explained how certain auto-insurance rate-setting practices have a disproportionate impact on drivers with low incomes and Black people. Rivera was invited to the hearing titled “Examining Discrimination in the Automobile Loan and Insurance Industries,” based on his analysis of auto insurance costs in Michigan, which helped inform the state’s auto insurance reform passed in 2019.

Using Data to Improve Services for Homeless Youth

Jennifer Erb-Downdward, a senior research associate at Poverty Solutions who specializes in family homelessness, testified at a virtual hearing held by the U.S. House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education in May 2021. The hearing was titled “Picking up the Pieces: Strengthening Connections with Students Experiencing Homelessness and Children in Foster Care,” and Erb-Downdward discussed her research on the educational challenges faced by students who do not have a stable place to live. She also highlighted the ways the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult for schools to identify and support students experiencing homelessness.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE TO PROVIDE NEW ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Joshua Edmonds, the City of Detroit’s director of digital inclusion and a former Detroit economic policy fellow supported by Poverty Solutions, spoke at a hearing on “empowering and connecting communities through digital equity and internet adoption” held by the U.S. House Communications and Technology Subcommittee in January 2020. Edmonds outlined how digital equity and internet access affect access to online banking, health care, job opportunities that require tech-skills, participation in Census 2020, and kids’ ability to do their homework. He shared his strategy for developing public-private partnerships in Detroit to promote digital inclusion now and the need for more federal support to bring those efforts to scale.

As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is often unaffordable, and studies show that only 26% of Michigan families can afford infant care. The inequality is clear: most rich kids in the U.S. families can afford infant care. is often unaffordable, and studies show that only 26% of price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is with a steep As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep challenges that families face, and the strategies that we can all to ensure all children have access to early childhood education.

—U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan (NH)
Over the past five years, Poverty Solutions has come a long way. There is still much to be done to prevent and alleviate poverty, and the initiative plans to build on its momentum to achieve a much larger impact in the years ahead. We will continue to:

- Analyze how policies and systems affect rates of poverty in the U.S. and generate policies that reduce it at the local, state, and federal level;
- Address the connections between poverty and structural racism and support the work that U-M’s Center for Social Solutions is leading to explore potential avenues for community-based reparations;
- Broaden and deepen partnerships with faculty across U-M’s three campuses, fostering an interdisciplinary approach to poverty alleviation;
- Strengthen partnerships with community organizations in Detroit, Washtenaw County, and northern Michigan to ensure Poverty Solutions’ research is responsive to real-world needs;
- Provide undergraduate students, graduate students, and early-career professionals with research support, training, and coursework to build the next generation of leaders working to eliminate poverty; and
- Deepen relationships with city governments and the State of Michigan to inform the design and implementation of eviction and foreclosure prevention efforts, child care subsidy outreach, and other public assistance programs.

Our communities have faced profound challenges over the past few years. These challenges have highlighted the urgency of the work that Poverty Solutions is doing to reduce poverty. We hope you will partner with us to continue to:

- Analyze how policies and systems affect rates of poverty in the U.S. and generate policies that reduce it at the local, state, and federal level;
- Address the connections between poverty and structural racism and support the work that U-M’s Center for Social Solutions is leading to explore potential avenues for community-based reparations;
- Broaden and deepen partnerships with faculty across U-M’s three campuses, fostering an interdisciplinary approach to poverty alleviation;
- Strengthen partnerships with community organizations in Detroit, Washtenaw County, and northern Michigan to ensure Poverty Solutions’ research is responsive to real-world needs;
- Provide undergraduate students, graduate students, and early-career professionals with research support, training, and coursework to build the next generation of leaders working to eliminate poverty; and
- Deepen relationships with city governments and the State of Michigan to inform the design and implementation of eviction and foreclosure prevention efforts, child care subsidy outreach, and other public assistance programs.
NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT
The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity, and Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office for Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388, institutional.equity@umich.edu. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

Regents of the University of Michigan: Jordan B. Acker, Michael J. Behm, Mark J. Bernstein, Paul W. Brown, Sarah Hubbard, Denise Ilitch, Ron Weiser, Katherine E. White, Mary Sue Coleman, ex officio

© 2022 Regents of the University of Michigan

Five Years Impact 2016–2021 was compiled and edited by Lauren Slagter and Mara Ostfeld. Designed by Michigan Creative, a unit of the Vice President for Communications | MC220056