TAX POLICY CENTER
URBAN INSTITUTE & BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Taxing Wealth

Speaker Biographies

Janet Holtzblatt is a senior fellow at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center. Over a three-decade career in the federal government, she worked on a broad range of tax policy issues, with emphasis on the tax treatment of families and workers, health reform, the administration of the tax code, and tax simplification. Holtzblatt's research has focused on the earned income tax credit, marriage penalties and bonuses in the income tax system, the administration of health reform through the tax system, labor market effects of health reform, and the impact of Internal Revenue Service resources on revenues. She has also directed studies on the tax treatment of multinationals, corporate tax rates, pass-through entities, marginal tax rates, and federal assistance for higher education. Holtzblatt serves on the board of directors for the National Tax Association. In 2017, she received the Referee of the Year Award from the *National Tax Journal*. Before joining Urban, Holtzblatt was the unit chief for tax policy studies in the Tax Analysis Division of the Congressional Budget Office. Before that, she was deputy director of the Individual Taxation Division in the US Treasury Office of Tax Analysis and a senior analyst on the Senate Budget Committee. She earned her bachelor's degree in economics and history from the University of Illinois and a doctoral degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin.

Sony Kassam is a reporter at Bloomberg Tax. She covers global tax policy, focusing on what the 2017 US tax law means for multinational companies. She has an master's degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She interned at Bloomberg LP in New York as a reporter covering the oil and gas industry before joining Bloomberg Tax in Washington, DC.

Beth Shapiro Kaufman is a member in Caplin & Drysdale's Washington, DC, office. She was president of the firm from 2015 to 2018 and continues as an active member of the firm's board of directors. Kaufman rejoined the firm's private client group in 2001 after working for over six years in the Treasury Department's Office of Tax Policy. Serving first as attorney advisor and then as associate tax legislative counsel, Kaufman had principal responsibility for all tax policy matters affecting trusts and estates, including estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer taxes, as well as income taxation of trusts and estates. She has continued her focus in these areas in private practice.

Greg Leiserson is the director of tax policy and chief economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. Previously, he served as a senior economist at the White House's Council of Economic Advisers and as an economist in the US Treasury's Office of Tax Analysis. He holds a doctoral degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree from Swarthmore College.

Mark J. Mazur is the Robert C. Pozen director of the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center and a vice president at the Urban Institute. His research interests cover all aspects of tax policy. From 2012 until early 2017, he was the assistant secretary for tax policy at the US Department of the Treasury. Mazur served in the federal government for 27 years in various positions, including policy economist at the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation, senior economist at the President's Council of Economic Advisers; senior director at the National Economic Council; chief economist and senior policy adviser and director of policy at the US Department of Energy; acting administrator of the Energy Information Administration; director of research, analysis, and statistics at the Internal Revenue Service; and deputy assistant secretary for tax analysis in the Office of Tax Policy. Before entering public service, Mazur was an assistant professor in Heinz College at Carnegie-Mellon University. He has a bachelor's degree in financial administration from Michigan State University and a master's degree in economics and a doctoral degree in business from Stanford University.

Victoria Perry is a deputy director in the Fiscal Affairs Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Since joining the IMF in 1993, she has provided technical advice in tax policy and revenue administration to numerous countries in all regions. From 2002 to 2008, she served as division chief for revenue administration; from 2008 until June 2016, she was division chief of tax policy. She is a coauthor of the book *The Modern VAT*, published by the IMF in 2001. Before joining the IMF, Perry was the deputy director of the Harvard University International Tax Program, teaching comparative income taxation and value-added taxation and providing technical assistance in revenue policy through the Harvard Institute for International Development. Perry previously practiced tax law with the Boston law firm WilmerHale. She is past president of the National Tax Association and a past president of the American Tax Policy Institute, past chair of the Value Added Tax Committee of the American Bar Association Section of Taxation, and serves on the board of the International Institute of Public Finance. She received her doctoral degree from Harvard Law School and her bachelor's degree in economics and philosophy from Yale University.

Ian Simmons is cofounder and principal of Blue Haven Initiative, a single-family office focused on making investments that generate competitive financial returns across asset classes and address social and environmental challenges. Committed to starting and contributing to projects that advance the impact-investing ecosystem and strengthen democracy, Simmons has jumpstarted or cofounded initiatives including Foundation for Civic Leadership, Students Learn Students Vote, ActBlue, and The ImPact. Results of these initiatives have been recognized or featured in major media outlets, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, and CNN. Simmons is currently president of Foundation for Civic Leadership and chair of the Youth Engagement Fund. He serves on the boards of the US Impact Investing Alliance, Social Finance, Issue One, and Karibu Homes, an affordable housing company in Nairobi, Kenya. He graduated with honors from Harvard College.

Alan D. Viard is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where he studies federal tax and budget policy. Before joining AEI, Viard was a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and an assistant professor of economics at Ohio State University. He has also been a visiting scholar at the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Tax Analysis, a senior economist at the White House's Council of Economic Advisers, and a staff economist on the Joint Committee on Taxation. While at AEI, Viard has taught public finance at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy. A prolific writer, Viard is a frequent contributor to AEI's On the Margin column in *Tax Notes* and was nominated for *Tax Notes's* 2009 Tax Person of the Year. He has also testified before Congress, and his work has been featured in a wide range of publications, including the *New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Bloomberg*, NPR's Planet Money, and *The Hill*. Viard is the coauthor of *Progressive Consumption Taxation: The X Tax Revisited* and *The Real Tax Burden: Beyond Dollars and Cents* and the editor of *Tax Policy Lessons from the 2000s*. Viard received his doctoral degree in economics from Harvard University and a bachelor's degree in economics from Yale University. He also completed the first year of the juris doctorate program at the University of Chicago Law School, where he qualified for law review and was awarded the Joseph Henry Beale prize for legal research and writing.