What's new at the Economic Opportunities Program - Sept. 2017

We are pleased to bring you the latest edition of the Economic Opportunities Program's newsletter! Learn how the Economic Opportunities Program (EOP) is driving change and helping low- and moderate-income Americans connect to and thrive in a changing economy.

Consider the quality of jobs when diagnosing a company's challenges

Maureen Conway, executive director of the Economic Opportunities Program, and Mark Popovich, director of EOP’s Good Companies/Good Jobs Initiative, wrote a Letter to the Editor in response to a recent Washington Post article on the challenges of a manufacturing firm to attract and retain workers. Maureen and Mark argued that the quality of the jobs they offered might have something to do with it. More.

Reducing "dream hoarding" and creating more equitable opportunities

"Part of the challenge to change social norms is to challenge this idea that we live in a meritocracy," said Richard Reeves, author of the new book Dream Hoarders. Reeves spoke with Maureen Conway about his new book, inequality, economic mobility, "opportunity hoarding," and more at our latest Working in America event in July. Read the summary and watch the full video online.

Work, wealth, and the future of the middle class

Our Initiatives

The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program has several initiatives. Learn more.

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In the News

The Washington Post

Maybe Consider the Company's Practices When Diagnosing Its Challenges
By Maureen Conway and Mark Popovich, Washington Post

Money Talks: Can Business Decisions Align with Social Needs?
By Mark Popovich

Who Can Access the American Dream?
By Nicole Corea

Economic Inequality and the Future of Democracy
By Karen Kahn

When Filling Vacancies, Don't Overlook Current Employees
By Tess Taylor, HRDive, quoting UpSkill America
EOP partnered with the Institute’s Financial Security Program to hold the second Economic Security Summit. The programs convened leaders from across sectors and across the country to discuss strategies to address the growing disconnect between work and wealth. “The Summit was a rare and valuable opportunity for me to step back and situate our work in broader economic and social context,” wrote participant Alex Mazer of Common Wealth. More.

What makes a “good job?”

At the 2017 Aspen Ideas Festival, EOP’s Maureen Conway and the Institute’s Business and Society Program Director Judy Samuelson led a discussion about what constitutes a “good job” and what roles government and business play in creating them. More.

Women in community development finance

FIELD partnered with the Opportunity Finance Network and the Feighan Team to host a regional networking event at the Aspen Institute for women working in or interested in the community development finance (CDFI) industry. The event was part of a national movement to formalize a network for women in the CDFI industry. More about the CDFI Women’s Network.

Economic stability and mobility

Closing biz ownership gender gap. Women are 37% of US biz owners but 50% of microbiz clients. #WomensEqualityDay -FIELD, @AspenMicro

#Dreamhoarding is a collective action/equilibrium problem. If everyone does it, everyone will keep doing it. - @RichardvReeves talkgoodjobs
-AspenWSI, @AspenWorkforce

Once you start upskilling, how can you maintain success? bid.ly/Upskilling8 -UpSkill America, @upskillamerica

Reality of today’s economy: Jobs are plentiful, but jobs with good wages aren’t...

US Microenterprise Census Survey

Funders, federal and state policymakers, and others look to FIELD's US Microenterprise Census as the primary source of program data on the microenterprise industry. By submitting data, microenterprise development organizations help demonstrate the value of their work. They also get access to data they can use to compare and benchmark their performance with that of others in the industry. To submit data, organizations can go to microTracker.org. More.

Upcoming events

Join the Economic Opportunities Program at one of our upcoming events, either in person or online.

- On September 25, the Economic Opportunities Program and the Financial Security Program will host a discussion at the Aspen Institute with Rick Wartzman about his new book, The End of Loyalty: The Rise and Fall of Good Jobs in America. Save the date!
- On October 25, we will host another Working in America event on the experiences of black workers in the United States and the implications for economic mobility overall. Stay tuned for more information and the option to register.
- FIELD is hosting two webinars for leaders in microfinance organizations in the coming months. The first will be held on September 21 and will cover best practices for microloan underwriting. The second will occur on October 26 and will cover portfolio management. Stay tuned for more information!
- Joyce Klein will be speaking at the Behavioral Finance Symposium, hosted by Ideas42 and Center on Finance, Law, and Policy and the University of Michigan: on September 14.
- UpSkill America’s Jaime Fall will be the keynote speaker at NYC Employment & Training Coalition’s 2017 Summit: Building Talent Pipelines for Today’s Economy, on September 19.
- Jaime will also moderate a session on the Toyota Model of upskilling at a day-long forum hosted by The Philanthropy Roundtable and the Morse Family Foundation in Lakewood, Colorado, on September 12.
- Jaime will moderate a session on the role of employers in education, training, and development, at the Close It Summit in Chicago, Illinois, on September 26.

Stay tuned for more event announcements soon.

The Economic Opportunities Program (EOP) advances promising strategies, policies, and ideas to help low- and moderate-income Americans thrive in a changing economy. Over its 25 years of work, EOP has focused on expanding individuals' opportunities to connect to quality work, to start businesses, and to build assets and economic stability. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org/eop.

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, CO; and on the Wye River on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

Thank you to our many partners and funders for supporting our efforts.

Questions or comments? Email us at eop@aspeninst.org or call us at (202) 736-2933.