

## BROOKINGS MOUNTAIN WEST

*Fall 2014 Lecture Series*

All lectures are held in Greenspun Hall Auditorium

Free and open to the public

**Wednesday, September 10, 2014 7:00 p.m.****"The Shortage of Skilled Workers: Quality Jobs for a Trained Workforce"***Jonathan Rothwell, Fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program*

The Great Recession of 2008 temporarily solved employer workforce needs by lowering demand and increasing the number of unemployed skilled workers. After a few years of modest but sustained economic growth, the labor market for skilled workers has once again tightened and positions are going unfilled. This research helps national and regional leaders understand which skills are in short supply and offers policy advice on how to redress the imbalance between supply and demand. In addition to offering a national perspective on this topic, the lecture will examine the situation in Nevada.

**Wednesday, September 24, 2014 7:00 p.m.****"Grit and Dreams: Character Strengths, Social Mobility and the American Dream"***Richard V. Reeves, Fellow, Economic Studies*

The issue of social mobility is at the forefront of current political debate. President Obama has described it as 'the defining challenge of our times.' Paul Ryan says that the 'engines of upward mobility have stalled.' Most approaches to restoring the American dream focus on institutions: schools, companies, and colleges. There is growing evidence that individual character strengths -- especially grit (the capacity to stick with a task or a journey), and prudence (valuing future outcomes) - matter just as much as more tangible factors. Blending history, philosophy, and economics, this public lecture will argue that restoring the American dream requires us to recapture - and cultivate through policy - the ideal of American character.

**Wednesday, October 1, 2014 7:00 p.m.****"Fixing the U.S. Congress by Embracing Earmarks"***John Hudak, Fellow, Governance Studies*

Too often, earmarks, pork barrel politics, and other types of federal spending are seen as a problem in American politics. Nothing could be further from the truth. Congress' abandonment of earmarks, the deconstruction of the appropriations process, and the breakdown in regular order in the House and Senate has coincided with a period of intense gridlock. For decades, pork greased the wheels of the legislative process, ensuring legislators could fund local needs in exchange for support on key legislation. Returning to the politics of pork offers a possible pathway to fixing a broken legislative process and meeting mounting public needs at the state and local levels. In an era where Congress has record low approval ratings—due in large part to its inability to address the nation's problems—we should seek solutions (however unorthodox) to rehabilitating our institutions of government. Embracing earmarks is a controversial recommendation and one of the most commonsense solutions to a major source of legislative dysfunction.

**Wednesday, October 15, 2014 6:30 p.m.****"The U.S. Oil and Gas Boom: Implications for the Intermountain West"***Adele Morris, Fellow and Policy Director, Climate and Energy Economics Project*

This lecture will explore the implications of the dramatic increase in oil and gas production in the United States with an emphasis on the economic and environmental outcomes in the Intermountain West. The lecture will discuss the revenues states and households receive from oil and gas production, the effect on labor markets, and the broader macroeconomic outcomes. It will also review concerns about greenhouse gas emissions and the local environmental implications of hydraulic fracturing and other production activities with an eye to assessing the tradeoffs that arise in the recent expansion of the domestic energy sector.

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**Wednesday, October 22, 2014 6:30 p.m.****"Advancing America's Advanced Industries: State by State, Region by Region"***Mark Muro, Senior Fellow and Policy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program*

With the U.S. economy still flat, economic experts and leaders continue to search for the next source of U.S. and regional growth. One key component of the next era of prosperity can be projected: It is what the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program and its associates at McKinsey & Co. call the advanced industry (AI) sector. The nation's most strategic R&D- and STEM worker intensive industries, AI like aerospace and IT are prime movers of regional and national prosperity, because they are key sources of technology innovation and generate domestic and international exports. Accordingly, the AI swatch of 23 discrete industries has emerged as an important new topic in economic discussions. In keeping with that, this lecture will introduce and describe the AI sector, review its strategic importance for states and regions, and consider the kinds of public strategies that can expand it. Along with national data, the talk will describe the AI sector in Southern Nevada and consider potential development strategies for the region.

**Wednesday, November 5, 2014 6:30 p.m.****"Health Information Exchange: Growth and Patient Privacy"***Niam Yaraghi, Fellow, Governance Studies*

Health Information Exchanges (HIE) provide the electronic movement of health-related information among organizations according to nationally recognized standards. The goal of health information exchange is to facilitate access to and retrieval of clinical data to provide safer, timelier, efficient, effective, equitable patient-centered care. HIEs are becoming integral parts of the national healthcare reform efforts, chiefly owing to their potential impact on cost reduction and quality enhancement in healthcare services. However, the potential of a HIE platform can only be realized when its multiple constituent users actively participate in using its variety of services. In this research, the speaker will model HIE systems as multisided platforms that incorporate self-service technologies whose value to the users depends on both user-specific and network-specific factors. The talk will also discuss patient privacy on HIE systems and show the effect of the emotional and environmental factors on the patients' decision to disclose their medical information on HIE systems.

**Thursday, November 20, 2014 6:30 p.m.****"Frustrated Achievers: Using Happiness Surveys to Predict Public Frustration and Protest around the World"***Carol Graham, Leo Pasvolsky Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development*

This lecture reviews a wide range of research based on surveys from around the world to better understand the underlying reasons for the recent wave of public protests around the world, in countries as diverse as Turkey, Russia, Brazil, Chile, and Middle East nations embroiled in the "Arab Spring." A consistent pattern that runs throughout the data is the traits of the protestors: they are above the poverty line, they possess above average levels of education, they are closer to middle age than they are to their youth, and they are very skeptical about existing governance structures. Their character traits also fit those of the "frustrated achievers" that we have found in rapidly growing middle income countries such as China, Russia, and Peru. These frustrated achievers have made significant income gains and escaped poverty, but they express dissatisfaction with their economic situations and their lives. This "progress paradox" can help explain why protest and civil unrest break out at unpredictable moments and places in countries around the world.