



MICHIGAN LEAGUE FOR PUBLIC POLICY'S 2025 PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL

AGENDA

Thursday, March 13, 2025

9:15 AM | Check-in Begins at the Lansing Center, Banquet Rooms 1-8

10:00 AM | Event Begins

WELCOME

Sonia Harb, Michigan League for Public Policy Board Chair

Monique Stanton, Michigan League for Public Policy President and CEO

SHARON PARKS AWARD

Presented to **Angela Reyes**, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation

KEYNOTE CONVERSATION

Ashleigh Gardere, PolicyLink

Address followed by audience Q&A

PANEL DISCUSSION

Kyle Caldwell, Moderator, Council of Michigan Foundations

Panelists:

Gabe Gonzalez, Economic Security Project

Donna Price, Detroit Action Commonwealth

Dr. Michael Shepherd, University of Michigan

Discussion followed by audience Q&A

CLOSING REMARKS

Monique Stanton, Michigan League for Public Policy President and CEO

12:00 PM | Event Concludes

#mlppforum @michleague

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FEATURED SPEAKERS AND GUESTS



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Ashleigh Gardere is the President of PolicyLink, a research and action institute, where she is focused on redesigning the nation to work for all. Throughout her 20+ year career, she has harnessed the power of collaboration to help accelerate systems transformation and equity through executive roles in government, business and the nonprofit sector. Ashleigh served as Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer of the New Orleans Business Alliance; Vice President of Community Relations at Chase Bank for Louisiana; and a Senior Advisor to former New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, where she was the Chief Strategist of the Mayor's Economic Opportunity Strategy.



AWARD RECIPIENT

Angela Reyes was born in Southwest Detroit where she still lives and works, serving her community for over 50 years and dedicating much of her life to working with youth. In 1997, she founded the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation from her living room, "because I was tired of burying children." She helped negotiate a truce between several rival gangs and encouraged them to "retire" in return for jobs. She is the recipient of several awards and in addition to DHDC, helped to establish the Southwest Detroit Community Justice Center, which provides alternatives to incarceration, and MI PODER, a Latinx-led organization working statewide to strengthen the Latinx community's voice. Today Angela will receive the League's Sharon Parks Award.



MODERATOR

Kyle Caldwell is a dedicated advocate for Michigan's philanthropic sector, bringing over 25 years of experience in government, nonprofits and philanthropy. Since 2018, he has served as President and CEO of the Council of Michigan Foundations, where he guides the Council's "Equity at the Center" framework and leads efforts to strengthen and support the state's philanthropic community. Previously, he held leadership roles at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy at GVSU, the C.S. Mott Foundation, Michigan Community Service Commission, and Michigan Nonprofit Association. Throughout his work in government, nonprofits, and foundations, Kyle has helped develop innovative and collaborative strategies and programming that strengthen communities in Michigan.

YOUR SUPPORT IS INVALUABLE



Thank you for being part of this important conversation. Please consider scanning the code at the left to make a gift so the League can continue to offer programming like today's forum, our budget and policy training, our Advocacy Boot Camps and more. Your support enables us to push for bold policies that help Michigan's families thrive!



PANELIST

Gabe Gonzalez is the Senior Director for State Campaigns at the Economic Security Project. Gabe has worked as a community organizer, strategist and leader for more than three decades. He has addressed issues as diverse as banking, mass incarceration, housing and education policy. Gabe spent 15 years fighting for immigration reform in the U.S., with both the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and the Center for Community Change in Washington, D.C. Gabe worked at the Sierra Club in a number of positions, notably as Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to the CEO.



PANELIST

Donna Price is a housing advocate and President of Detroit Action Commonwealth. After years of struggling with housing, Donna lost everything and turned to a shelter. Through an acquaintance at a soup kitchen, Donna soon found a platform to express her voice through Detroit Action Commonwealth. She began her journey of advocacy with the Detroit Continuum of Care (CoC) and now serves as a board member of the organization as well as Detroit Advisors Group and several other CoC committees.



PANELIST

Dr. Michael Shepherd is an Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health, Health Management & Policy Department, and (by courtesy) in the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan. His research focuses on questions of political, economic and health inequality especially in rural communities. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Vanderbilt University.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Scan the code on the right to ask our speakers a question during the Q&A portion.





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Guardian



Defenders



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Advocates

ACCESS | Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS) | Community Mental Health Association of Michigan | Michigan College Access Network | Michigan Community Action Michigan Immigrant Rights Center | Michigan Nonprofit Association National Association of Social Workers- Michigan | Public Policy Associates Urban League of West Michigan

SAVE THE DATE!
Champions for Kids Luncheon - Tuesday, September 16, 2025