

NC Office of Strategic Partnerships Team Bios

Kaitlin Anderson

As an Evidence Advisor at OSP, Kaitlin Anderson will partner with multiple state agencies to review discretionary spending, review the evidence base for adjusting that spending, and identify opportunities for further evaluation of policy and program effectiveness through randomized controlled trials and other methods. Prior to joining OSP, she was on the faculty of the College of Education at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania. She brings with her a diverse set of experiences as a post-doctoral researcher in the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative at Michigan State University, a high school math teacher in Arkansas, and a financial analyst. She holds a bachelor's degree in Commerce and Economics from the University of Virginia, and a Ph.D. in Education Policy from the University of Arkansas.

Eliza Edwards

As Deputy Director, Eliza oversees OSP operations to ensure the team is successful in identifying, developing, launching, and enhancing partnerships between state agencies and non-governmental partners. She also plays a critical role in doing this work. Other aspects of her role include providing leadership to and support for OSP's portfolio of cross-sector research partnerships; coordinating and managing a range of OSP meetings/convenings and communications deliverables; managing OSP's intern program; providing supervisory support to the Director of OSP; representing OSP at speaking engagements/presentations; and contributing to OSP's overall strategic planning and implementation efforts. Prior to joining OSP, Eliza was a member of North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's policy team.

Tim Griffith

As an Evidence Advisor, Tim helps lead efforts to maximize discretionary spending on evidence-based policies and programs in North Carolina. His role includes working with North Carolina state agencies to conduct evidence reviews of discretionary spending and identify areas and opportunities for evaluating policy and program effectiveness through rigorous evaluation methods such as randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Prior to joining OSP, Tim worked in several evaluation roles at non-profit and private sector research organizations. His work included conducting evaluations and providing evaluation technical assistance for clients at the federal, state and local level focused on workforce development and unemployment insurance policies and programs. Tim holds a Master of Science in Applied Economics from Johns Hopkins University and a Graduate Certificate in Program Evaluation from Michigan State University.

Keegan Huynh

As Program Support Specialist, Keegan supports the team on an array of existing and emerging projects focused on institutionalizing partnerships between state government and the state's research and philanthropic sectors. This includes coordinating meeting logistics, drafting the OSP Highlights newsletter, documenting outreach & impact, and maintaining OSP's electronic files. Prior to joining OSP, Keegan served as a fellow in UNC Chapel Hill's Lead for North Carolina program, where he worked to strengthen the capacity of local government to effectively deliver services in NC's Tier One communities. As a former paralegal and field organizer, he brings extensive experience in office administration and a passion for public service.

Alicia James

As Program Manager, Alicia facilitates cross-sector partnerships between North Carolina state agencies and external research partners, and promotes evidence-based decision-making within state government. Prior to joining OSP, she served as a Policy and Program Manager with the Institute for Emerging Issues at NC State. She also worked as a Budget Analyst in local and state government, including the NC Office of State Budget and Management. She began her career in local government with the City of Alexandria, Virginia, where she developed the city's inaugural performance management initiative. Alicia earned a Bachelor's degree in English, with Honors, from UNC Chapel Hill. She also holds a Master of Public Administration from UNC Chapel Hill with concentrations in public finance and performance management.

Lori Ko

Lori Ko is an undergraduate Intern with OSP through the State of North Carolina Internship Program. In this role, Lori is exploring how cross-sector partnerships enable state government to effectively generate and use evidence to support policy and programmatic functions. She is a B.A. candidate in Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and is minoring in Survey Research and Data Analytics and in East Asian Languages and Civilizations, with a concentration in Korean Studies.

Jenni Owen

As Director, Jenni identifies and launches strategic partnerships between and among state government, universities/colleges, philanthropy, and other entities. This includes deepening state government connections with external research experts and increasing agency capacity to conduct and use evidence to improve policy. Jenni was previously Policy Director for Governor Roy Cooper and Director of Policy Engagement and on the faculty of the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University. A 2007 Eisenhower Fellow to South Africa, her civic roles have included: commissioner, NC Indigent Defense Services; board member, El Futuro and Durham Children's Initiative; Policy Council, Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management; and member, National Conference of State Legislatures Evidence-Informed Policymaking work group.

Caleb Shuda

Caleb Shuda, graduate intern with OSP, is a Master of Public Policy candidate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill studying economic development and cross-sector collaboration. He has researched the impacts of global climate change on underserved populations across North Carolina, including how to better prepare them for natural disasters. While interning with OSP, he aims to better understand how NC state government can facilitate partnerships to better serve its residents.

Joy Vermillion-Heinsohn

As Philanthropy Liaison, Joy works to build, strengthen, and institutionalize relationships between state government and the philanthropic sector in North Carolina. Prior to joining OSP, Joy spent over 22 years in the philanthropic sector, serving most recently as Assistant Director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. She has served on numerous local, state, and national boards and commissions. Joy is a recipient of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Lucius N. Littauer Award, a former Hull Fellow of the Southeastern Council of Foundations, and an alumna of Leadership North Carolina.

Ruth Wygle

As Doctoral Associate, Ruth offers research and programmatic support to the OSP team. This includes helping develop new research projects for state government agencies, identify potential research partners, and create OSP communications about research partnership opportunities and other efforts to enhance the use of evidence-based decision making in state government. She is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Duke University, with qualifications in demography and criminology.

David Yokum

David Yokum, JD, PhD is Director of The Policy Lab at Brown University, Senior Advisor to OSP, Chief Scientist at OSBM, and host of the 30,000 Leagues podcast. As Senior Advisor, David brings unique and important skills and experience from leading and managing a wide portfolio of work leveraging scientific insights and methods to improve public policy and operations with governments across the country. David was previously the founding director of The Lab @ DC in the D.C. Mayor's Office and, before that, a founding member of the White House's Social & Behavioral Sciences Team and director of its scientific delivery unit housed at the U.S. General Services Administration.