



The Role of Immigrants in the Regional Economy

Tuesday, October 1, 2013

10:00 AM to Noon

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Patty Elkis, PP, AICP, is Associate Director in the Planning Division at the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, where she has worked since 1992. She oversees a staff of 19 in long-range planning, environmental planning, smart growth planning, corridor planning, economic and demographic analyses, as well as DVRPC's new initiatives in energy, climate change and food system planning. Ms. Elkis has partnered with a number of non-profits and other governments on regional projects, including the GreenSpace Alliance, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Natural Lands Trust, the Philadelphia Water Department, and 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania. Ms. Elkis has worked on DVRPC's long-range plans for the years 2020, 2025, 2030, and 2035, with responsibility for the land use and open space elements. Her land prioritization modeling work, greenway work, and New Regionalism project have received awards of recognition from the Schuylkill Action Network, Delaware River Greenway Partnership, the Rancocas Conservancy, and the Pennsylvania Planning Association. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania, and her Master of City Planning, with a Certificate in Appropriate Technology for Developing Countries, also from Penn.

Mary Bell is the Manager of Demographic and Economic Analysis at DVRPC. In 2011, Ms. Bell co-authored *The Mismatch between Housing and Jobs*, an assessment of the location, condition, and affordability of housing throughout Greater Philadelphia and a comparison of housing location to employment, infrastructure, and the regional transportation network. Ms. Bell was the primary staff person responsible for the Greater Philadelphia Economic Development Framework, Greater Philadelphia's regional CEDS. Her current responsibilities include organizing and analyzing population, housing, and economic data to support the Commission's regional land use and transportation planning activities. Ms. Bell is also responsible for the preparation of DVRPC's long range population and employment forecasts and has evaluated planning policy issues of region-wide significance, authoring DVRPC reports on affordable homeownership, the regional rental housing market, public housing, and homelessness. She has worked on DVRPC's long range plans for the years 2020, 2025, 2030, and most recently 2035 (Connections, the Commission's current long range plan) as well as *Tracking Progress Towards 2030*, which identified and evaluated performance measures related to *Direction 2030*. Ms. Bell has been at DVRPC for 23 years and worked previously for Cherry Hill Township, New Jersey, where she managed the local housing programs and assisted with the preparation of the local Master Plan and COAH housing plan. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Geography from the University of Delaware and a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Christina Arlt, AICP is a planner in the Office of Smart Growth at the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) in Philadelphia. She also coordinates DVRPC's Municipal Outreach Program and PennDOT's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Christina has experience working on Environmental Resource Inventories, Farmland Preservation Plans, Open Space & Recreation Plans, Transit Oriented Development plans, and waterfront plans. Prior to working at DVRPC, she worked in the Planning & Zoning Office for Warwick Township in Bucks County, and spent a year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Hamburg, Germany. She obtained her Masters in City Planning with a focus on Land Use and Environmental Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, where she also obtained a Certificate in GIS and Spatial Analysis. Her undergraduate degree is in Urban & Environmental Studies from Franklin & Marshall College. Christina is active in numerous professional organizations and non-profits. She helped found the Emerging Professionals group of the American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter Southeast Section (APAPASE). She currently serves on the board of Young Involved Philadelphia (YIP) and the Greater Philadelphia chapter of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals (SWEP).

**Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, Director of Outreach and Program Evaluation,
Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians**

Amanda is the director of outreach and program evaluation at the Welcoming Center. She coordinates data collection and analysis, enabling the Welcoming Center to use hard evidence to support its decision making. She also handles inquiries from members of the media, researchers, community partners, and others who need clear, factual information about immigration in our region and the Welcoming Center's work. Amanda previously worked at the OMG Center for Collaborative Learning, where her duties included grants management for the Pew Fund for Health and Human Services in Philadelphia.

She was educated at the University of Pennsylvania, where she studied American Civilization with an emphasis on minority populations. She is a native Pennsylvanian whose roots go back to Wales, Germany, Lithuania, England, and France, among other countries.

Elisabeth Perez-Luna, WHYY

Journalist and producer Elisabeth Perez Luna was WHYY's News Director for six years. In July 2008 she became the Executive Producer of Audio Content where she continues to produce and design national and local programs for WHYY-FM and WHYY.org. She is an award winning journalist and has produced and developed several independent and WHYY weekly radio news-magazines for the past 28 years or so. Perez Luna is a regular contributor to NPR's programs such as *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered* and *Weekend Edition*. She's the executive producer of WHYY's *A Chef Table*, *You Bet Your Garden*, *What Are We Thinking?* *WHYY's This I Believe*, *Impact of War* and others. Since 1999 she has been working at WHYY, the leading News and Information NPR station in the Delaware Valley. Perez Luna has a degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

Dr. Nicholas V. Montalto, President of Diversity Dynamics, brings more than 30 years of experience to his work with Diversity Dynamics. Manager, trainer, consultant, researcher, speaker and author, Dr. Montalto has extensive knowledge of and contacts within America's immigrant communities. He has designed and implemented creative solutions to the policy challenges caused by America's ever-changing diversity. He holds a doctorate in American immigrant and ethnic history from the University of Minnesota, and served for 25 years as President and CEO of the International Institute of New Jersey. Certified as a consultant by the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University, Dr. Montalto has successfully completed consulting assignments with many public and private organizations. He has served as special advisor to the Program on Immigration and Democracy at Rutgers University, as chair of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Immigration Policy Network, and as a member of the Hispanic Advisory Committee of the NJ Department of Human Services. Through a partnership with the Graduate School of Social Work at Rutgers University, Dr. Montalto coordinates the American Immigrant Policy Portal (<http://www.usdiversitydynamics.com/nj>), a web site devoted to dissemination of research-based knowledge on immigration policy and immigrant integration. An alumnus of Leadership New Jersey, Dr. Montalto has also served as President of the New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning and Treasurer of the New Jersey Statewide Network for Cultural Competence.

Domenic Vitiello, University of Pennsylvania, teaches courses on community development, food systems, immigration, and urban and planning history. He also teaches for Penn's Urban Studies Program

(<http://urban.ssc.upenn.edu/>) and is a senior fellow of Penn's Center for Public Health Initiatives (<http://www.cphi.upenn.edu/>). Trained as a planner and historian, Domenic's research focuses on community and economic development institutions, migration, and urban agriculture. His historical scholarship includes books on the economic development and decline of Philadelphia. He has published articles in the Journal of the American Planning Association, Journal of Planning History, Journal of Urban History, Planning Perspectives, and Progressive Planning, as well as book chapters on community development and planning history. As a practitioner, Domenic has worked with public, private, and third sector organizations in community development and food system planning. He has served as founding president of the Philadelphia Orchard Project (<http://www.phillyorchards.org/>); board chair of JUNTOS/Casa de los Soles (<http://www.vamosjuntos.org/>) and on the boards of the African Cultural Alliance of North America (<http://www.acanaus.org/>) and the Society for American City and Regional Planning History (<http://www.dcp.ufl.edu/sacrph/>). Through Domenic's courses, MCP students have planned refugee housing systems, urban farming enterprises, and transnational development projects; helped the City of Philadelphia develop food policy; and produced research and reports for a wide variety of community development organizations. He has received the Michael B. Katz Award for Excellence in Teaching in Urban Studies and the G. Holmes Perkins Award for Distinguished Teaching in the School of Design.

Jennifer Rodriguez, Philadelphia Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs

Jennifer I. Rodriguez is Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs for the City of Philadelphia, established in 2013 to ensure the wellbeing of immigrants and other groups. In addition to her work for the City, Ms. Rodríguez has been active on various boards including the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority where she is Vice Chair and the Greater Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Prior to joining Mayor Michael Nutter's administration, Ms. Rodríguez was Vice President for Community Engagement and Programs for Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha where she oversaw the organization's efforts to improve quality of life for Latinos in Philadelphia. She is also a founding member of the Latino Professional Mentoring Network and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce CEO Access Network. Ms. Rodríguez is recipient of various awards, including the *2012 Rising Star Award* from the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations and has been named among the region's *40 Under 40* and *Minority Business Leaders* by the Philadelphia Business Journal. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, Ms. Rodríguez migrated to the US in 1990 to pursue higher education. She holds a BA in Business Administration from Boston University and an MA in City and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

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