

Welcome, you're listening to a UC Davis Center for Poverty Research Conference podcast. I'm the Center's Director, Ann Stevens. In November 2013, the Center hosted the conference, the Affordable Care Act and Low Income Populations, Lessons From and Challenges For Research. Research. The conference featured top health care experts from across the country to discuss the roll out of the Affordable Care Act and what the new system means for poverty in the United States.

Thank all of you for coming. I'm really looking forward to today. I'm Anne Stevens. I'm the Director of the Center for Poverty Research here at UC Davis. The Center was started about two years ago, just over two years ago. With a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services.

It is an interdisciplinary center. Our mission is to support, research, and dissemination of research on poverty and inequality, and to support the training of, of graduate and undergraduate students in these areas as well. We right now we have about 50 faculty affiliates here at Davis, as well as connections with many researchers on other campuses.

We run a small grants program every year some past recipients are here today, I'm happy to say. And we're sort of expanding our programs. We're a new center, and we're very excited to, to continue to expand. I want to also thank the co-sponsor for this event, which is another center on campus, the UC Davis Center for Healthcare Policy and Research.

Who worked with us and who are responsible for the very interesting policy panel that we'll have later this afternoon. And their efforts are very much appreciated, as well. Just as far as logistics, a few very quick things to point out. First, is that if you have questions, need information, directions, parking our fantastic staff are the three women at the back here Lupe, Jessica, and Lynn, and they can help you with any problems or needs that you might have during the day.

As well as myself, but I will probably look for one of them if it's a really hard question that I can't answer. So today's conference really ties into several of the, the themes we have at the center, and two of our major research themes in particular are the social safety net and inter-generational poverty issues.

And of course health care access, and health and socioeconomic status are very much related to the Center's work and also to the prospects and issues raised by the Affordable Care Act. And so, we thought that in this year this was sort of the obvious topic for a conference hosted by the Center.

I think that this is likely to be, as a, as a poverty researcher it seems to us that the Affordable Care Act may be the major expansion of the social safety net that we see in this decade or so. And so we want to use our resources to learn, and to help contribute to that discussion.

I was thinking about I'm not, myself, I don't work directly in the area of healthcare but have worked a lot on broader issues of poverty and in, inequality in labor markets. And I was thinking about the research community during, right after the federal welfare reform in the, at the end of the 1990s.

And I think after federal welfare reform was passed, researchers were, in many ways very excited, because we thought it was a great opportunity to really learn something about how these social assistance programs were working. We had a, a very major change. There was also, though, a lot of apprehension, because I think the feeling was, we've got this new set of programs rolling out state by state.

But it's very complex and I think there was concern that it might be difficult to evaluate in a really clean, convincing manner because everything was changing at once. There was you know, work requirements and time limits and different changes in eligibility and, and various versions of state level waivers.

And it was a, a very, a lot to get a grasp on to really do the evaluation work. Not to mention the, the implementation that was going on at the state level. And I was thinking back about that, because as I think about the Affordable Care Act and its implementation, I think it's probably safe to say that we will long for the simplicity of welfare reform, given the, the complexities that, that we're facing and, and understanding this.

And I'm speaking as a researcher. And I think that's only a fraction of what the, the people implementing and working directly with it will face. So, you know, today's conference is really motivated by all of these thoughts. And I think we wanted to contribute to a conversation that really brought together academics working in this area.

Practitioners and policy makers, and I'm really happy to see the mix of people we have here. And I think just given the audience and the presenters I'm very optimistic that we'll, we'll have a, a good conversation today. I'm Ann Stevens, the director of the Center of Poverty Research at UC Davis, and I want to thank you for listening.

The center is one of three federally designated, poverty research centers in the United States. Our mission is to facilitate non-partisan, academic research on domestic poverty. To disseminate this research, and to train the next generation of poverty scholars. Core funding comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information about the center, visit us online at poverty.ucdavis.edu.