

## DEBORAH I. KOBES

### PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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Experienced senior leader dedicated to expanding economic advancement, with a demonstrated history of nonprofit leadership. Strategic thinker skilled in knowledge and capacity building, written and oral communication, and partnership development. Interdisciplinary background spans research, stakeholder engagement, and program design and implementation. Ph.D. in Urban Political Economy and Governance, MIT and a B.S.E., Princeton University.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Jobs for the Future, Boston, MA** 2011-present  
Senior Director, 2020-current; Interim Director, Center for Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, 2022-current  
Center Deputy Director, 2018-2022; Director, 2017-2020; Associate Director, 2015-2017; Senior Project Manager, 2011-2015

- Current areas of interest include examining how government procurement can drive employer responsibility to expand workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion; policy and programmatic innovations to address the gap between nontraditional credential attainment and employment, particularly in the IT sector.
- Nationally recognized expert contributing to Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship initiatives led by JFF, national nonprofits, and the Department of Labor. Identify and disseminate best practices to broad audiences through written briefs, multimedia toolkits, and conference presentations. Build site capacity through coaching and partnership building. Develop conferences, workshops, and virtual events.
- Expertise in the intersection of workforce development and broader issues of the labor market and labor economics. Serve on JFF's strategic planning committee to promote job quality and integrate worker voice into organizational strategy and program design. Convened and facilitated an alt-labor panel at JFF's national Horizons conference in 2018.
- Inaugural leadership role in the creation and operations of the Center for Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning. Co-designed the Center mission, structure, staffing, and communications. Led the first two rounds of strategic planning, aligned with programmatic agenda, business development, and Center growth. Collaborative process drew on the expertise and priorities of teams from across the organization. Member of the leadership team for the organization's workforce innovations unit.
- Built an extensive network of relationships with workforce stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels. Maintain relationships with state and federal agencies, employers, unions, national nonprofits, community-based organizations, and community colleges, and support relationship building among them.
- Led a range of workforce development projects including: expanding diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship, spanning multiple Department of Labor contracts and a philanthropic grant convening 22 leading companies and industry associations; directing a \$10+ million initiative funded by Google.org to deliver an IT Certificate through a portfolio of nonprofit training providers and 100 community colleges; principal investigator on NSF project to design and pilot a new form of postsecondary work-based learning; and leading or managing multiple multi-year workforce initiatives, supporting partners across ten regions.
- Raised over \$26m in last fiscal year from public agencies and foundations. Past successful fundraising includes multi-million, multi-year philanthropic and federal grants. Maintain federal, philanthropic, and corporate funder relationships, with ongoing communication responsive to evolving priorities.
- Supervise a team of 19 direct and indirect reports. Facilitate regular professional development opportunities that have resulted in promotions or bonuses in recognition of high performance for multiple employees.

**Community Innovators Lab, MIT, Cambridge, MA** 2008–2012  
Research Affiliate, 2009-2012; Project Manager, 2008

- Coordinated "*Innovation and Equity Transform America*" memos to Barack Obama's Presidential Transition Team. Supported contributors, authored a federal taxation memo, and wrote abstracts.
- Contributed to design of a model for equitable and comprehensive green retrofits and drafted grant proposals that served as the foundation of the nonprofit Emerald Cities Collaborative.

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (Continued)

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#### **Emerald Cities Collaborative, Washington DC**

2009-2011

Projects Director, 2010-2011; National Policy Director, 2009-2010

- First staff member, reporting directly to a Board of Directors comprised of executive leadership from a wide range of organizations including policy organizations, research centers, unions, and nonprofits.
- Involved in all aspects of establishing a national coalition to promote comprehensive and equitable retrofits of cities including program design, policy, research, fundraising, and operations.
- Co-planned nonprofit launch at the White House and supported other government relations activities.
- Conducted the preliminary outreach to, capacity building for, and oversight of field operations in 10 cities, including convening diverse local partners and supporting relationship building among them.

#### **Brookings Institution, Washington, DC**

2007-2008

Brookings Research Fellow

- Awarded first pre-doctoral fellowship for dissertation research granted by the Metropolitan Policy Program.
- Conducted the first national analysis of the interaction between local democracy and financial control boards. Research included case studies on the control boards of Miami and Washington, DC with qualitative analysis of interviews, archival research, and evaluating financial reports.
- Quantitative analysis of fiscal impact of control boards in small cities.

#### **Urban Institute, Washington, DC,**

2001-2004

Research Associate II, 2003-2004; Research Assistant, 2001-2003

- Inaugural staff member of the Tax Policy Center supporting both start-up and research activities.
- Conducted statistical analysis of tax policy, with a focus on the distributional impact of national legislation, the interaction of tax policies and fringe benefits, and state code relevant to low-income residents.
- Oversaw design and launch of the Tax Policy Center website for press, policymakers, and researchers. With over 12,500 hits per day, website was praised by Forbes, National Journal, and Business Week.

### EDUCATION

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#### **Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA**

2009

PhD, Urban Political Economy and Governance (Department of Urban Studies and Planning)

Dissertation Committee: J. Phillip Thompson (chair), Diane Davis, Alice Rivlin

#### **Princeton University, Princeton, NJ**

2001

B.S.E., Civil Engineering with Architecture, summa cum laude

### SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES

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- “Investing in a Rural Talent Strategy.” Keynote Speaker. NADO Development District Association of Appalachia, Annual Conference. March 16, 2022, Arlington, VA (upcoming).
  - Myriam Sullivan & Deborah Kobes. Giving Manufacturing Career Pathways a LIFT. In Jerry Hedges and Gary Carter (Eds.), *Career Pathways—School to Retirement, and Beyond*. Oxford University Press. 2020.
  - “How National Momentum is Transforming Apprenticeship.” June 15, 2020. Oklahoma Work-Based Learning Summit. Virtual event. With Ryan Gensler.
  - “A National Perspective on Expanding Apprenticeship to More Populations.” Pennsylvania Apprenticeship Summit, October 30, 2019. Hershey, PA.
  - Deborah Kobes. Apprenticeships: The Next Stackable Credential? Jobs for the Future. November 2018.
  - Mary Gatta, Lauren Sugerma, Matt Unrath, Katie Onachila Spiker, Geri Scott, Deborah Kobes, and Alexandra Waugh. Pink to Green: Promising Workforce Development Practices for Women in Nontraditional Occupations. In Carl Van Horn, Tammy Edwards, and Todd Greene (Eds.), *Transforming U.S. Workforce Development Policies for the 21st Century*. W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. 2015.
  - “Out of Control? Local Democracy Failure and Fiscal Control Boards,” for panel “Dynamics of Policymaking in a Federal System.” American Political Science Association Annual meeting. August 29, 2008. Boston.
  - “Governance from Above and Below: Miami’s Response to Fiscal Crisis,” panel “New Forms of Governance.” Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, ACSP-AESOP Fourth Joint Congress. July 10, 2008. Chicago.