

Rebecca Vallas
Senior Fellow at the Century Foundation



Rebecca Vallas is a senior fellow at The Century Foundation, where she leads TCF’s work to achieve economic justice for people with disabilities and their families. She also serves as co-director of the newly formed Disability Economic Justice Collaborative, which brings together more than thirty leading disability organizations, think tanks, and research organizations to learn from each other, work in partnership, and bring a disability lens across economic policymaking. Vallas joins TCF after seven years at the Center for American Progress, during which she helped to build and lead CAP’s Poverty to Prosperity Program, in a range of roles, including as the program’s first policy director and managing director, and later as vice president. During her time at CAP, Vallas also helped to establish CAP’s Disability Justice Initiative—the first disability policy project at a U.S. think tank—as well as the organization’s criminal justice reform work.

Much of Vallas’s policy and advocacy work flows from her years as a legal aid lawyer. In partnership with her legal aid alma mater, she co-developed the “clean slate” model of automated, automatic criminal record-clearing that is now law in Pennsylvania, Utah, Michigan, Connecticut, Delaware, Virginia, and advancing in additional states—while advancing national momentum for removing barriers to economic opportunity for justice-impacted individuals and families. In 2019, she co-founded the Clean Slate Initiative, a national organization supporting state efforts to adopt clean slate policies.

Vallas previously served as the deputy director of government affairs for the National Organization of Social Security Claimants’ Representatives, working to protect and strengthen the Social Security disability programs, including as co-chair of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Social Security Task Force. Forever a legal aid lawyer at heart, Vallas spent several years representing low-income individuals and families at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, where she began her work as a Skadden Fellow, and was the inaugural recipient of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association’s New Leaders in Advocacy Award.

She is also the creator and host of *Off-Kilter*, a nationally distributed podcast about poverty, inequality, and everything they intersect with. Vallas serves on the Board of Directors of the National Academy of Social Insurance and is a member of the Academy’s 2020–2021 Economic Security Study Panel. Vallas was twice named to *Forbes* magazine’s “30 Under 30” for law and policy, and later to Emory University’s “40 Under 40.” She received her law degree from the University of Virginia and graduated *summa cum laude* from Emory University, where she received a bachelor’s degree in psychology. In a past life, she was an operatically trained mezzo soprano. She’s the proud mother of three rescue kitties.