

**UNC CENTER ON POVERTY, WORK AND OPPORTUNITY**

***Poverty and the Recession in North Carolina: Challenges  
and Opportunities***

April 9, 2009

George Watts Hill Alumni Center  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**I. Welcome and Introduction 9-9:15 a.m.**

*Gene Nichol, UNC Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity and  
University of North Carolina School of Law*

**II. Keynote Address 9:15-10 a.m.**

*The Honorable Joe Hackney, Speaker, N.C. House of Representatives and  
President, National Conference of State Legislatures*

Break 10-10:15 a.m.

**III. Panel One: Poverty and the Economic Crisis in the U.S. 10:15-11:45 a.m.**

*The most recent economic expansion failed to lift many boats. Real median household income was lower in December 2007, when the recession began, than at the start of the decade. In 2007, 37 million people were living in poverty with millions more on the precipice. What is happening to low income households in this environment? Are current federal measures an adequate response to hardship, new and old? How can we provide broad-based access to resources and opportunity?*

**Moderator:** *Deborah Weissman, University of North Carolina School of Law*

**Speakers:** *Alan Berube, Brookings Institution  
Cynthia "Mil" Duncan, Carsey Institute, University of New  
Hampshire  
Margaret C. Simms, Urban Institute  
Karl Stauber, Danville Regional Foundation*

**IV. Lunch 11:45-1:15 p.m.**

*The Honorable Brad Miller, U.S. House of Representatives,  
13<sup>th</sup> District of North Carolina*

**V. Panel Two: Poverty and the Recession in North Carolina 1:15-2:45 p.m.**

*North Carolina has not been exempt from the recession blues. Its statewide unemployment rate of 10 percent masks county rates approaching 14 percent. Its traditional manufacturing base is shrinking; the shape of the new economy is still unclear. Home to affluent centers of technology and innovation, North Carolina also contains large pockets of deep and persistent poverty. Is the recession here different than the national picture? Is the experience of poverty here different? What will the state budget look like and what will proposed cuts do to the state's low income families?*

**Moderator:** *Ferrel Guillory, UNC Program on Public Life and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

**Speakers:** *Yolanda Burwell, North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.  
Chris Estes, North Carolina Housing Coalition  
Chris Fitzsimon, N.C. Policy Watch  
George Hausen, Legal Aid of North Carolina  
Mark McDaniel, Center for Community Capital, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Alexandra Sirota, Action for Children North Carolina*

Break 2:45-3 p.m.

**VI. Panel Three: Bridge to Nowhere or Road to Recovery?:  
What Happens Now? 3-4:30 p.m.**

*Despite the economic gloom, reason for optimism persists. In this pivotal and historic moment, new approaches to overcoming the problems of poverty can emerge. How can we ensure that policies designed to improve our economic well-being are not tailored exclusively to the interests of the "middle class"? What are feasible short and long term solutions to poverty in North Carolina? How do we move forward without leaving the state's disadvantaged residents behind?*

**Moderator:** *Gene Nichol, UNC Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity and University of North Carolina School of Law*

**Speakers:** *Andrea Bazan, Triangle Community Foundation  
David Dodson, MDC, Inc.  
James H. Johnson Jr., UNC Urban Investment Strategies Center and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Adam Searing, N.C. Justice Center  
Eric Stein, Self-Help*

Reception 4:30-5:30