

# The Institute

*Turning Information into Insight*

*Economic, Impact, Health,  
Social, and Education  
Research, Evaluation, and  
Consulting*

## *Get Acquainted with the Newest Members of the Research Team!*



Sarah Bender has assumed the role of Research Assistant. She is a graduate of Misericordia University, with a background in statistics and management—not to mention a former star of The Institute's internship program!



Research Analyst Jolene Carey-Pace is also a graduate of Misericordia University, where she studied English and Organizational Management. She has recently earned Doctor of Education from Wilkes University as well.

*As we welcome our new colleagues, we also extend warm wishes to former Research Analyst, Megan Stachowiak.*

*It has been a pleasure, Megan. Thank you for your expertise!*



### **In this Issue:**

- Special Thanks to Sponsors
- Task Force Research
- Community Partnerships
- Team Transitions
- Student Poll results
- Media Impressions
- New Issues of the Economy and Policy Trackers
- Client Solutions

*A collaboration among Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Johnson College, Keystone College, King's College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Scranton, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education, University of Scranton, Wilkes University, and the business community*

# Many Thanks

TO OUR 2021 COMMUNITY-BASED UNDERWRITERS  
AND INDICATORS EVENT SPONSORS!

## **SIGNATURE UNDERWRITERS**

Andrew J. Sordoni Foundation  
Luzerne County  
PPL Electric Utilities  
Sordoni Family Foundation

## **CONTRIBUTING UNDERWRITERS**

Borton-Lawson  
Geisinger Health System  
WVIA

## **SUPPORTING UNDERWRITERS**

Berkshire Asset Management  
BlackOut Design  
FNCB  
Greater Hazleton CANDO  
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield  
M&T Bank  
McCarthy Tire

Navient  
PNC  
Prudential  
The Luzerne Foundation  
The Wright Center for Community Health  
Topp Business Solutions  
UGI Utilities

## **MAIN EVENT SPONSOR**

The Wright Center  
for Community Health  
& Graduate Medical Education

## **GOLD SPONSORS**

Allied Services Integrated Health System  
Coal Creative  
UGI Utilities  
Scranton Area Community Foundation

## **SILVER SPONSORS**

Marywood University  
The Scranton Plan

## **BRONZE SPONSORS**

Berkshire Hathaway Guard Insurance  
Community Bank  
Johnson College  
Luzerne County Visitor Bureau

## **2021 Task Force Research**

Are you intrigued by The Institute's 2021 task force research, yet constrained by a busy schedule that does not allow for a thorough read of a full study? No need to worry! The chair of each task force has summarized findings and recommendations in a brief video.

Take a look!

### ***Education & Workforce Development***

As the labor market recovers, it is important to plan for a return to tight conditions and shortages of skilled workers in a number of key occupations—and to attract and retain younger workers in the region. This research determined which skillsets and certifications are needed, identified influential factors driving out-migration of talent, described the role of higher education institutions in overall talent attraction and retention, elaborated on the role of K-12 education in the development of a workforce pipeline, and explored how the region can attract an increasingly remote workforce.

[Watch here](#)

### ***Planning, Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure***

The theme of transportation continued, with a focus on the short-term and long-term effects of COVID-19 on transportation and land use. It also considered the plight of municipal services in communities struggling for revenue, and how they are handling infrastructure improvements such as road and bridge repair.

[Watch here](#)

### ***Jobs, Economy & Economic Development***

Considering the major economic changes induced by COVID-19, this study addressed ways NEPA can compete in light of an enhanced logistics industry and a rise of remote work along with automation across all sectors.

[Watch here](#)

### ***Health & Health Care***

A study of Pennsylvania's public health infrastructure (including historical context and policy issues) revealed implications for resilience to future public health emergencies. Dynamics surrounding county-level and city-level health departments were covered as well.

[Watch here](#)

### ***Energy***

It is essential to monitor the impact of commercial vehicle usage in a logistics-heavy area like Northeastern Pennsylvania. The rise in alternative energy use was detailed in this research, along with the effects of this adoption on economy, infrastructure, and environment.

[Watch here](#)

### ***Housing***

This research explored the region's housing issues as they relate to equity, through a lens including but not limited to race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The influence of COVID-19 was considered too.

[Watch here](#)

## Unleashing Possibilities Through Community Partnerships

### STIR

#### *(Sparking Transformation using Information and Research)*

This initiative is fueled by several local foundations, and produces information for informed decision-making along with resources to grantees and eventually the community at large. The weekly Institute Review—a combination of international, national, state, and regional articles on health, social services, the economy, and education—is one of these funded efforts.



Many thanks to our friends at the Scranton Area Community Foundation and the Robert H. Spitz Foundation for their ongoing support.

### RISE

#### *(Readiness in Skilled Employment)*

In partnership with Johnson College, United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and the William G McGowan Charitable Fund, we are helping Northeast Pennsylvania RISE.



This program offers support beyond technical training. It includes career coaching and a range of services—from transportation and childcare to assistance with housing and technology—that facilitate academic success and job placement.

Interested in learning more about this workforce development program?

[Click Here!](#)

*"By providing pathways to earning a family-sustaining wage, RISE helps to break the cycle of poverty and paves the way for future generations to succeed!"*





## Transformative News!



Organizational restructuring has positioned The Institute for greater success in pursuit of an ambitious mission. During this process, **Andrew Chew** transitioned from his role as Senior Research & Policy Analyst to **Director of Research**. **Jill Avery-Stoss** also transitioned from her role as Data, Research, Intern & Administrative Coordinator to **Director of Operations**. According to Executive Director Teri Ooms, “I have utmost confidence in the abilities of Andrew and Jill to help guide our team and assist my efforts to maintain The Institute’s upward trajectory.”

## 2021 Student Poll: Public Policy and Civic Engagement

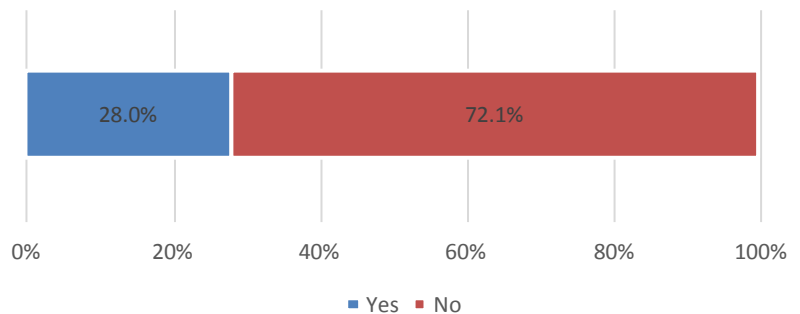
Our research team regularly polls students at partnering higher education institutions. These polling and survey research services are part of The Institute’s menu of services offered to all types of clients.

This poll assesses students’ opinions about public policy issues and civic engagement. Nearly 2,200 students participated — from all class years and a variety of majors. Part-time and graduate students are well represented in the data.

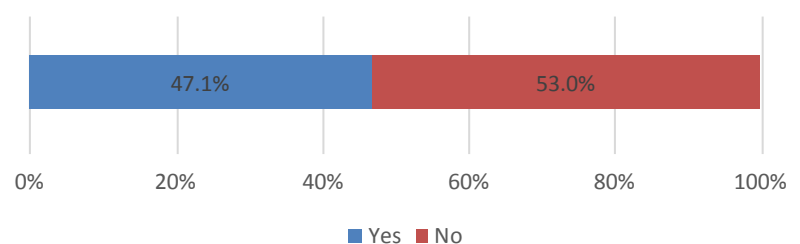
### Among the findings:

- ◇ Health care and public health, the cost of education, jobs and economic development, equality and civil rights issues, and government corruption are deemed by student respondents to be the most important public policy issues, while policies related to national debt were rated least important.
- ◇ Students largely feel that the United States is not moving in the right direction. Perceptions of Pennsylvania’s trajectory, however, are not as clear.
- ◇ An overwhelming majority of students are registered to vote, and 65 percent say they are very likely to vote in the November 2021 general election and 43.7 percent indicating that they are very likely to vote in the November 2022 general election.

Do you think the federal government handled this year's public health crisis the right way?



Do you think your state government handled this year's public health crisis the right way?



[View the brief here](#)

## The Institute is in the news!

RealClear, a publication committed to political news and policy analysis, has recently featured two op-eds from our own Executive Director, Teri Ooms. These pieces were picked up by The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Scranton Times, and Trib Live (digital version of the Pittsburgh Tribune Review)



One article reflects on Northeast Pennsylvania as a microcosm of a larger workforce shortage.

[Read the full editorial here!](#)

The other emphasizes the value of regional collaboration over competition.



[Read the full editorial here!](#)

## In case you missed them...

New editions of the Economy Tracker and Policy Tracker are now available!

In the **Economy Tracker**, read about:

- The housing wage
- The region's restaurant industry
- The economic recovery of families
- 2020 Census data
- NEPA cost of living
- Vaccination rates
- And more!

[Access the issue here!](#)

In the **Policy Tracker**, read about:

- Recent legislative developments
- The state of healthcare occupations
- COVID vaccination rates
- The intersection of childcare and workforce development
- Basic needs among young adults
- And more!

[Access the issue here!](#)

## Client Solutions

Market & Feasibility Studies  
Indicators- Indexes  
Community Needs Assessments  
Housing Studies  
Economic Development Strategies  
Economic and Tax Impact Studies

Survey Research  
Industry Studies  
Workforce Studies  
Education Studies  
Policy Analysis  
Site Selection Research  
Arts & Culture Studies

Economic and Demographic Profiles  
Grant and Program Evaluation Support  
Research Validation and Peer Review  
Tourism Strategic Plans  
Comprehensive Plans  
Asset Maps

## Who We Are

The Institute is dedicated to empowering business and community leaders with researched-driven strategies for informed decision-making.

We conduct community-based, empirical research to identify the opportunities and challenges unique to our region, and offer innovative solutions for the problems facing our communities. **This research is funded by generous academic partners and sponsors who share our vision for a strong regional economy and vibrant communities.**

### Community-Based Research

Access the latest regional research on the Institute's website. [www.institutepa.org](http://www.institutepa.org)

### Regional Indicators Data & Research

Indicators data tracks the region's progress over time. They include economy, healthcare, environment, education and infrastructure measures.  
<https://institutepa.org/perch/resources/indicators18.pdf>

### Task Force Research

Recent and archived research studies identify and address the region's challenges. This research is a driving force behind many important economic development and community revitalization initiatives, which produce positive outcomes for our area.  
<https://institutepa.org/indicators.php>

### Quarterly Economic Tracker

This quarterly electronic publication explores the region's economic and business trends.  
<https://institutepa.org/economy-tracker.php>

### Policy Tracker

This tracker covers state and federal policy focused research and aims to educate and inform the reader about the challenges, opportunities, and potential non-partisan solutions.  
<https://institutepa.org/policytracker.php>

### Polling Program

Better understand the subject matter interests, public policy views, and civic engagement of our local college students and future leaders.  
<https://institutepa.org/polling-program.php>

## Thanks to our 2021 Research Underwriters!

**Sincere thanks to our generous stakeholders who share our vision for a strong regional economy and healthy communities. Your support makes our work possible!**

### Signature Underwriters

Andrew J. Sordoni Foundation  
Luzerne County  
PPL Electric Utilities  
Sordoni Family Foundation

### Contributing Underwriters

Borton-Lawson  
Geisinger Health System  
WVIA

### Supporting Underwriters

Berkshire Asset Management  
BlackOut Design  
FNCB  
Greater Hazleton CANDO  
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield  
M&T Bank  
McCarthy Tire  
Navient  
PNC  
Prudential  
The Luzerne Foundation  
The Wright Center for Community Health  
UGI Utilities

### Academic Partners

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine  
Johnson College  
Keystone College  
King's College  
Lackawanna College  
Luzerne County Community College  
Marywood University  
Misericordia University  
Penn State Scranton  
Penn State Wilkes-Barre  
The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education  
University of Scranton  
Wilkes University

**Locations in:**  
**Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, PA**  
**[www.institutepa.org](http://www.institutepa.org)**  
**570.408.9850**

### **Staff**

*Teri Ooms – Executive Director*  
[ooms@institutepa.org](mailto:ooms@institutepa.org)

*Andrew Chew – Senior Research & Policy Analyst*  
[chew@institutepa.org](mailto:chew@institutepa.org)

*Jolene Carey-Pace, Ed.D. — Research Analyst*  
[carey-pace@institutepa.org](mailto:carey-pace@institutepa.org)

*Sarah Bender – Research Assistant*  
[bender@institutepa.org](mailto:bender@institutepa.org)

*Kara McGrane – Research Assistant*  
[mcgrane@institutepa.org](mailto:mcgrane@institutepa.org)

*Jill Avery-Stoss — Research, Data & Intern Coordinator*  
[averystoss@institutepa.org](mailto:averystoss@institutepa.org)

*Follow us on Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn*



## **Advisory Board**

**Chairman - Greg Cant, Ph.D., Wilkes University**

**Vice-Chairman – Charlie Kasko, Classic Properties**

Heather Acker — Gentex Corporation  
Ron Beer , MHA, FACHE – Geisinger Health System  
Don Brominski — UGI Utilities  
Tracy L. Brundage, Ph.D. — Keystone College  
Cornelio Catena — Commonwealth Health System  
John Cefaly — Cushman & Wakefield  
Robert Durkin — Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce  
Dale Jones, Ph.D. — Penn State University Wilkes-Barre  
Charles Kasko— Classic Properties  
Thomas Leary — Luzerne County Community College  
Thomas Looney, C.S.C., Ph.D. — King’s College  
Katie Leonard, Ed.D.—Johnson College  
Joe Lettiere — CAN DO, Inc.  
Robert Luciani — Prudential  
Rev. John G. Marina, S.J. — University of Scranton  
Carla McCabe — WVIA  
Jill Murray, Ph.D — Lackawanna College  
Daniel Myers, Ph.D.—Misericordia University  
Mary Persico, IHM, Ed.D. — Marywood University  
Alana Roberts — PPL Utilities  
Steven Scheinman, MD — Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine  
Bill Sordoni — Sordoni Construction  
Matthew Sordoni — Sordoni Construction  
Linda Thomas-Hemak, M.D. – The Wright Center  
Marleen Troy, Ph.D., — Wilkes University  
Wico van Genderen — Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business & Industry  
Lucyann Vierling — Workforce Alliance  
Marwan Wafa, Ph.D. — Penn State University Scranton  
Tara Mugford Wilson,— Power Engineering Corporation

Join our growing list of research underwriters !

To learn more, contact Teri at [ooms@institutepa.org](mailto:ooms@institutepa.org).