

Demos



A BETTER DEAL: SECURING OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE NOW

October 15 and 16, 2009 | The Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC

DAY 1

8:30 – 9:30

Breakfast

9:30-9:45

Welcome (Palladian Room)

» **Tamara Draut**, Dēmos and author of *Strapped: Why America's 20- and 30-Somethings Can't Get Ahead*

9:45-10:45

Keynote Address (Palladian Room):

WHY THIS GENERATION NEEDS A BETTER DEAL

For the first time in a century, young people in their 20s and 30s are less economically secure than their parents and have limited opportunities for social and economic mobility. While the Millennial Generation was intensely engaged in the 2008 elections, their pocketbook concerns remain at the margin of political debates. But young adults are mobilizing to develop a policy agenda for a better deal. What does a better deal mean for this young generation?

» **Liz Shuler**, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO

10:45-11:15

Break

11:15 – 12:30

Plenary Session (Palladian Room):

GOING BEYOND GREEN: CREATING GOOD JOBS ACROSS THE ECONOMY

Going green has become cool, and everyone seems to be talking about the need to create green jobs. But green jobs alone can't reverse decades of declines in job quality, which have left this generation economically worse off than their parents. Jobs in retail and health services are still expected to grow the most over the next decade—how can we turn these often low-wage jobs into good jobs? This panel will discuss what has become one of the biggest challenges facing this generation: getting and keeping a good job.

MODERATOR

- » **Mafruz Khan**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Amy Hanauer**, Policy Matters Ohio
- » **Saru Jayaraman**, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
- » **Jane Norman**, American Rights at Work
- » **Scott N. Paul**, Alliance for American Manufacturing
- » **Jason Walsh**, Green for All

12:30-2:00

Lunch

Keynote Address (Palladian Room):

- » **Martha J. Kanter**, Under Secretary of Education

2:00-3:15

Concurrent Workshops

Panel A (Executive Room):

FAILING TO FINISH: THE COLLEGE DROP-OUT CRISIS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Getting a degree beyond a high school diploma has become essential in today's labor market—yet most students who enroll in college will drop out before getting their degree. Gaps in who goes to college, what type of college they attend, and whether they complete their studies are growing by race and class. This panel will discuss the barriers facing young people who want a college degree, what students need to succeed and the need to build a movement around college completion.

MODERATOR

- » **Nancy K. Cauthen**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Michelle Asha Cooper**, Institute for Higher Education Policy
- » **Tolu Olubunmi**, National Immigration Law Center
- » **Viany Orozco**, Dēmos
- » **Nisha Patel**, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- » **Melissa Perkins**, Student, Norwalk Community College

Panel B (Diplomat Room):

IT'S SICK: WHY HEALTH CARE REFORM MATTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

With over 18 million uninsured, young people make up the largest group of the uninsured. Though the popular perception is that young people turn down health insurance because they think they're invincible—the real reason is they can't afford it or aren't offered it at their job. Yet the voices and concerns of young people are invisible in the current political debate. This panel will discuss how the nation's broken health care system is hurting young people and what health care reform will mean for 20-somethings.

MODERATOR

- » **Caleb Gibson**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Melinda Gibson**, Health Care for America Now
- » **Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas**, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- » **Blaine Rummel**, AFSCME
- » **Brian D. Smedley**, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Panel C (Palladian Room):

A GENERATION IN THE RED:

WILL THE NEW CREDIT CARD REFORMS AND STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PLANS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

For too many young people, getting ahead today means getting into debt. The problem often starts with student loan debt and spirals out of control as young people turn to credit cards to meet basic living expenses. In the last year, Congress passed two new reforms that could help young people deal with their debt—but is it enough? This panel will discuss the recent credit card reforms, the new student loan repayment plans, and identify other reforms needed to end the debt trap.

MODERATOR

- » **Tamara Draut**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Janis Bowdler**, National Council of La Raza
- » **Gregory Cendana**, United States Student Association
- » **Edie Irons**, The Institute for College Access and Success
- » **Erica Williams**, Campus Progress
- » **Rich Williams**, U.S. PIRG

3:15-3:30

Break

3:30-5:00

Participant Generated Workshops

6:30-8:30

Reception

DAY 2

8:30-9:30 **Breakfast**

9:30-9:45 **Welcome**

9:45-10:45 **Plenary Session (Palladian Room):**

POLITICS IN THE AGE OF OBAMA: HOW THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION IS REMAKING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Young people played a key role in the 2008 elections and will continue to be a major force in politics for decades to come. Today's 20-somethings reflect the growing diversity of our nation and are bringing new ideas about civic participation and problem-solving to the table. This session will explore how Millennials are changing our political culture and what this generation is doing now to build a better future for themselves and the nation.

MODERATOR

- » **Heather McGhee**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Maria Teresa Kumar**, Voto Latino
- » **Darryl Perkins**, Hip Hop Caucus
- » **Heather Smith**, Rock the Vote

10:45-11:15 **Break**

11:15-12:30 **Concurrent Workshops**

Panel A (Congressional A/B Room):

GENERATIONAL THEFT?

UNDERSTANDING THE NATIONAL DEBT, SOCIAL SECURITY AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOUR FUTURE

Politicians are fond of saying that we are mortgaging away young people's future due to the growing national debt and the rising cost of Social Security and Medicare. But is it true? This panel will examine our nation's finances and expose the big myths about Social Security—namely that it won't be around when you retire.

MODERATOR

- » **Tamara Draut**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Stefanie L. Brown**, NAACP Youth and College Division
- » **Ashley B. Carson**, Older Women's League
- » **Barbara B. Kennelly**, National Committee to Preserve Social Security
- » **Ethan Pollack**, Economic Policy Institute

Panel B (Diplomat Room):

ON THE REBOUND? THE GREAT RECESSION AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

This recession has been hard on people of all ages—but young people have taken a particularly steep hit in terms of unemployment and rising debt. As states are forced to slash their budgets, higher education and child care funding are on the chopping block—cuts that disproportionately hurt 20-somethings. This panel will discuss the current impact of the recession on young people, the long-term effects it will have on our economic future, and what more needs to be done to turn the situation around.

MODERATOR

- » **José García**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Algernon Austin**, Economic Policy Institute
- » **Caitlin Howarth**, Roosevelt Institute
- » **Ditashiah Norris-Kohn**, DREAMS YouthBuild
- » **Paul Roales**, Councilor, West Lafayette, Indiana City Council and Associate, Pearl Street Venture Funds

Panel C (Palladian Room):

AND BABY MAKES BROKE: THE DESPERATE NEED FOR PAID FAMILY LEAVE AND CHILD CARE

Most people start families in their 20s—with 25 being the average age a woman has her first child. Today, cultural and economic changes mean that most women with children under the age of 6 are in the workforce. Yet the United States is the only “advanced” nation that does not guarantee workers paid leave after the birth of a child or ensure families have access to quality child care they can afford. This panel will discuss how these issues impact young people, the exciting advocacy campaigns underway to improve our nation’s family policies and the critical need for 20-somethings to lead the way to reform.

MODERATOR

- » **Nancy K. Cauthen**, Dēmos

PANELISTS

- » **Rachna Choudhry**, National Partnership for Women and Families
- » **Sangita Nayak**, 9to5
- » **Kathy Roth-Douquet**, author and former Clinton Administration official
- » **John Wilcox**, Corporate Voices for Working Families

12:30-1:00

Wrap-Up and Adjourn