



## 2018 Post-Election Briefing for Grantmakers:

### Philanthropy at the Crossroads

November 27, 2018 | 8:30-5:30pm

FHI 360, Academy Hall, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW, 8th Floor, Washington, DC

## SPEAKER BIOS

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**Wa'el N. Alzayat**, Chief Executive Officer, Emgage  
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Wa'el Alzayat is the CEO of Emgage Foundation, a national grassroots organization that advocates for the Muslim-American community. As the leader of Emgage's not-for-profit and political entities, he oversees an ecosystem of initiatives that promotes civic education and political engagement among Muslim-Americans. Previously, Alzayat served for nearly a decade as a U.S. diplomat, holding senior policy roles at the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, and at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. From 2014 to 2017, he was Senior Policy Advisor to U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power, serving as her top advisor on the Middle East. From 2012 to 2014, he served as Syria Outreach Coordinator at the State Department, where he was a senior advisor to U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford. In this capacity, he was the lead U.S. diplomat engaging with the Syrian opposition at the onset of the Syrian civil war and represented the U.S. at the Geneva II peace negotiations. From 2007-2012 he held multiple positions related to Iraq in Washington, DC and Baghdad, including: Special Assistant to U.S. Ambassador to Iraq James Jeffrey; Senior Iraq Desk Officer; and Provincial Affairs Officer covering Al-Anbar province. Prior to government service, he worked in various academic and research capacities. Alzayat is also a Senior Fellow at the Middle East Institute and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University, teaching courses on security, political, and humanitarian issues in Iraq and Syria. He also serves on the Syria Study Group at the Middle East Institute. He holds a Master of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Middle East History from the University of California at Berkeley.



**Alexis Anderson-Reed**, Executive Director, State Voices [alexis@statevoices.org](mailto:alexis@statevoices.org)

Alexis Anderson-Reed is the Executive Director of State Voices. Alexis has been an activist since she was a college student. Driven by the disparities in educational opportunity she encountered growing up in Wisconsin, she co-founded Youth Reclaiming Our Communities (Youth ROC), mobilizing students across the state to press for education finance reform. Since then, she hasn't stopped working toward a vision of a more inclusive and more equitable society. She has dedicated her career to community organizing, coalition building, public policy, and strategic planning, exemplified by her work on issues of racial and gender equity and the politics of power and privilege. Prior to her tenure as State Voices' Executive Director, Alexis served as the deputy director of the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation, a philanthropic affinity group dedicated to enhancing democratic participation in all aspects of civic life. Before joining FCCP in 2016, Alexis served as the senior director of programs for State Voices, leading efforts to support and expand the work of our national network of state tables in promoting civic engagement, civic access, and civic representation. She came to the national office of State Voices after serving for three and a half years as executive director of Wisconsin Voices, where she worked to expand and defend voting rights in the state. Alexis graduated with honors from Alverno College with a degree in History and Political Science, and is completing a Master of Arts from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Alexis serves on the boards of the Alliance for Youth Organizing and the Analyst Institute. When not at work, she can be found trying out new recipes for family and friends and traveling with her husband, Derek.



**Jhumpa Bhattacharya**, Vice President of Programs and Strategy, Insight Center for Community Economic Development  
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Jhumpa is the Vice President of Programs and Strategy at the Insight Center for Community Economic Development. In this role, Jhumpa is a key contributor to the thought leadership of the Insight Center, provides cross-program content support and strategic guidance, and oversees the racial and economic equity portfolio. She directly leads work identifying policy and narrative solutions to racial wealth inequities. Grounded with a deep equity lens, Jhumpa has provided her leadership, racial justice analysis and thinking on various national and local research and capacity building projects focused on creating systems that address and meet the needs of communities of color, low-income communities and immigrants. Her expertise includes developing equity-based policies; practices tools and frameworks; conducting best practice research; technical assistance and capacity building; incorporating community and student voice into policy and programming; and facilitating complex dialogues on race, culture, and immigration. A former Director at California Tomorrow, Jhumpa has roots in youth organizing and youth development, and brings over 18 years of experience advocating for and creating policy and system changes towards racial and economic equity. She is a board member of the Pacifica Family Fund, which works to provide quality prenatal and birth midwifery care to low-income families, families of color, teenagers, trans and non-gender conforming people. She is a lover of music, the Lakers and fluent in Bengali.



**Sayu Bhojwani**, Founder and President, New American Leaders  
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Sayu Bhojwani is the Founder and President of New American Leaders, which works across the country to build the power and potential of first- and second-generation Americans. She served as New York City's first Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs and is the founder of South Asian Youth Action, a community-based organization in Queens. Sayu earned a PhD in Politics and Education from Columbia University, where her research focused on immigrant political participation. Her [TED talk](#) focuses on the importance of immigrants to American democracy, and her work to build a more inclusive democracy has been featured in [The Wall Street Journal](#) and in [The New York Times](#). Her book, *People Like Us: Knocking at Democracy's Door*, will be published by The New Press in October 2018. An immigrant of Indian descent, she grew up in Belize and now lives in New York City with her husband and child.



**Melissa Boteach**, Senior Vice President, Poverty to Prosperity Program, Center for American Progress  
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Melissa Boteach is the senior vice president of the Poverty to Prosperity Program at American Progress. In this capacity, she oversees American Progress' poverty policy development and analysis, as well as its advocacy and outreach work.

Boteach served as the policy lead on [The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink](#), a book and multimedia platform by Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress about the one in three women living in or on the brink of poverty and the public, private, and personal solutions to help the nation push back. Under her tenure, CAP's Poverty team has launched its annual report tracking progress to cut poverty in half in 10 years, its [TalkPoverty.org](#) blog and website, and the Our American Story project—a network of people working to expand economic opportunity through the power of their personal stories. Prior to joining American Progress, Boteach worked as a senior policy associate and the poverty campaign coordinator at the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), where she designed, spearheaded, and implemented the JCPA's national anti-poverty campaign, which has been launched in more than 50 U.S. cities. A Harry S. Truman and George J. Mitchell scholar, Boteach earned a master's degree in public policy from George Washington University with a concentration in budget and public finance, as well as a master's degree in equality studies from University College Dublin. She also graduated summa cum laude from the University of Maryland with degrees in government and Spanish. Boteach has appeared on MSNBC, Fox News, and C-SPAN; has been a guest on several radio shows; and is frequently cited in English and Spanish print and online media. She was named as one of *Forbes* magazine's 30 under 30 for law and policy in 2011.



**Jennifer Epps-Addison**, Network President and Co-Executive Director, The Center for Popular Democracy

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Jennifer Epps-Addison, JD, is the Network President and Co-Executive Director of the Center for Popular Democracy, a nationwide racial and social justice advocacy organization. She boasts over 15 years of organizing experience and a history of activism for economic and social justice issues. Her accomplishments include leading the campaign for paid sick days and fighting for in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants. Epps-Addison leads CPD's racial justice campaigns and works closely with the organization's growing network of local affiliates. She holds a BA in Political Science and Women's Studies and a JD from the University of Wisconsin. She currently lives in Los Angeles with her husband and their two children.



**Julie Fernandes**, Associate Director, Institutional Accountability and Individual Liberty, Rockefeller Family Fund

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Julie Fernandes is the Associate Director for Institutional Accountability and Individual Liberty at the Rockefeller Family Fund. Prior to joining the Fund, she served as Advocacy Director for Voting Rights and Democracy at the Open Society Foundations. She also worked as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Division in the Obama administration and as Special Assistant for Domestic Policy to President Bill Clinton. In addition, Ms. Fernandes served as the senior counsel and senior policy analyst at the Leadership Conference for Civil & Human Rights, one of the nation's leading civil rights organizations. Ms. Fernandes has testified before Congress on voting rights issues and has authored several research reports and magazine pieces primarily in the areas of voting rights and criminal justice reform. Ms. Fernandes received both her J.D. and A.B. degrees from the University of Chicago and clerked for the Honorable Diane P. Wood at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.



**Ceilidh Gao**, Staff Attorney, National Employment Law Project

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Ceilidh Gao (pronounced "KAY-lee") joined the National Employment Law Project in 2017 as a staff attorney. Her work focuses on policies that improve economic security for low-wage workers and the contingent workforce, including issues of forced arbitration, the "on demand economy," and the future of labor organizing. Ceilidh is a respected media resource, and has been quoted in numerous outlets including NPR, Marketplace, Politico, The Washington Post, The Stranger, The San Francisco Chronicle, and Newsweek. Prior to joining NELP, Ceilidh worked in private practice, representing unions and workers at Levy Ratner P.C., and she has also served as a legal fellow at the Service Employees International Union. She received her law degree from Harvard Law School, where she was a member of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, and she received her bachelor's degree from Queen's University.



**Surina Khan**, Chief Executive Officer, The Women's Foundation of California  
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Surina Khan is CEO of the Women's Foundation of California where she leads the Foundation's work to advance the health, safety, and economic security of women, girls and transgender people in California. The Foundation's program strategy is focused on building community-based power through investing in community organizations, training community leaders in policy advocacy, convening key partners, and mobilizing significant financial resources. For more than two decades, Surina has been a leader in the philanthropic and non-profit social justice sector starting with local community-based publishing in New England and then shifting to national and global work on an array of social justice issues including women's rights, LGBT rights, human rights and more. She is a recognized advocate for gender, racial, and economic justice and a frequent commentator on the power of women's philanthropy.



**Michael Laracy**, Senior Fellow, The Annie E. Casey Foundation and GIST Steering Committee Member (Moderator)  
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Mike Laracy is a Senior Fellow at The Annie E. Casey Foundation and former director of policy and advocacy reform. As director of policy reform and advocacy, Michael Laracy advanced philanthropy's efforts to inform, guide and [influence public policy at the state and federal levels](#). He was responsible for the Foundation's [KIDS COUNT network](#) and [State Fiscal Analysis Initiatives](#) and grant-making portfolios in poverty reduction and in budget and fiscal issues. Before joining the Foundation in August 1994, Laracy was assistant commissioner for policy, planning and program evaluation in the New Jersey Department of Human Services, where he served for 17 years. He did his undergraduate and graduate work at Rutgers University, majoring in urban planning and public policy.



**Cassandra McKee**, Senior Program Officer, Children's Economic Security Program, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund and GIST Steering Committee Member (Moderator)  
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Cassandra is the Senior Program Officer for the Children's Economic Security Program at Wellspring Philanthropic Fund. Prior to joining Wellspring in August 2014, Cassandra spent 17 years advocating for economic justice for all families. During her career Cassandra developed expertise in field strategy, and she led campaign efforts on a variety of issues including the protection of Social Security, expansion of health care, fair taxes and federal budget priorities. In 2009, Cassandra received the Midwest Academy Heather Award in recognition of her national leadership and organizing experience. Cassandra received her BA in Women's Studies from Drew University.



**Matt Morrison**, Executive Director, Working America  
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Matt Morrison is executive director of Working America, a three-million-member labor organization mobilizing working people who don't have the benefit of a union at their jobs. His work has been described (2018) by the American Political Science Association as a "bedrock of experimentation in American politics." He is a leading political practitioner with experience working in over 400 elections throughout his career. The APSA recognized him as "influential on our understanding of political campaigns within political science." In his earlier role as Working America's political director, Morrison led the refinement of the organization's field and member communications programs through the use of clinical testing and advanced analytics. Under his direction, Working America combines innovative integration of traditional field organizing with analytics to increase targeting accuracy and voter turnout for candidates who support a fair economy for working-class Americans. Prior to joining Working America, Morrison served on John Edwards' 2008 presidential campaign, in the government affairs department of the American Federation of Teachers and on Capitol Hill in the office of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.). He holds undergraduate and law degrees from Washington University in St. Louis.



**Henry Olsen**, Senior Fellow, Ethics & Public Policy Center  
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Henry Olsen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, studies and provides commentary on American politics. His work focuses on how America's political order is being upended by populist challenges, from the left and the right. He also studies populism's impact in other democracies in the developed world. He is the author of *The Working Class Republican: Ronald Reagan and the Return of Blue-Collar Conservatism* and *The Four Faces of the Republican Party*, co-authored with Dante Scala. Mr. Olsen is also an editor at *UnHerd.com*, where he writes about populism and politics around the world, and he is a regular contributor to *American Greatness*, *City Journal*, and *World Magazine*. Mr. Olsen's work has been featured in many prominent publications, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *National Review*, *The Guardian*, and *The Weekly Standard*. His pre-election predictions of the 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 elections were particularly praised for their remarkable accuracy. In the 2016 campaign, he accurately identified the factors fueling the rise of Donald Trump early in the race, and his election eve predictions were more accurate than those of virtually any other major analyst or commentator. Mr. Olsen has worked in senior executive positions at many center-right think tanks. He most recently served from 2006 to 2013 as Vice President and Director, National Research Initiative, at the American Enterprise Institute. He previously worked as Vice President of Programs at the Manhattan Institute and President of the Commonwealth Foundation. Mr. Olsen started his career as a political consultant at the California firm of Hoffenblum-Mollrich. He then worked with the California State Assembly Republican Caucus before attending law school. He served as a law clerk to the Honorable Danny J. Boggs on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and as an associate at Dechert, Price & Rhoads. He has a B.A. from Claremont McKenna College and a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School, where he served as Comment Editor for the *University of Chicago Law Review*.



**Emma Oppenheim**, Program Officer, Open Society Foundations  
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Emma Oppenheim is program officer for economic advancement with the Open Society Foundations' U.S. Programs. She manages a grant-making portfolio that seeks to build an economy governed by policies that promote equitable growth and just distribution of resources, as well as a portfolio focused on strategies that harness technology to build the power, reach, and sustainability of organizing and advocacy. Most recently, Oppenheim was senior advisor with the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity within the Office of the Mayor, where she oversaw a portfolio of employment and youth development programs implemented in partnership with city agencies and nonprofit service providers. Prior to that, she was associate director of workforce development at the National Council of La Raza, where she led its workforce development policy advocacy and research. She began her career as a workforce development case manager with BronxWorks, a community-based organization in the South Bronx. She holds a BA in urban studies from Barnard College, Columbia University, and an MA in public administration from Baruch College, City University of New York.



**Rebecca Vallas**, Vice President, Poverty to Prosperity Program, Center for American Progress  
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Rebecca Vallas is the vice president for the Poverty to Prosperity Program at American Progress. Before joining American Progress, Vallas served as the deputy director of government affairs at the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives, where her work was devoted to preserving and strengthening Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income for workers with disabilities. Prior to that, Vallas worked directly with low-income individuals and communities for several years as a legal aid attorney and policy advocate at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, where she was named a Skadden Fellow and a Borchard Fellow in Law and Aging. She is also a past co-chair of the national Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Social Security Task Force. Vallas has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, C-SPAN, Fox News, PBS, Al-Jazeera America, and NPR, as well as several local television and radio outlets, and she is frequently quoted in national and local media. She is the author of numerous briefs and articles on poverty, income security, disability, and criminal justice policy, and she frequently testifies before Congress. She is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance and was the inaugural recipient of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association's New Leaders in Advocacy Award. She was twice named one of Forbes Magazine's "30 Under 30" for Law & Policy, in 2011 and 2014. Vallas also hosts "Off-Kilter," a podcast about poverty and inequality.



**Manisha Vaze**, Senior Program Manager, Funders for a Just Economy,  
Neighborhood Funders Group  
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Manisha Vaze joined NFG in February 2017 as the Senior Program Manager for Funders for a Just Economy (FJE). Manisha has more than 12 years' experience as a community organizer. Before joining FJE, Manisha was the Director of Organizing at Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE) based in South Los Angeles. At SCOPE she managed its grassroots voter engagement and community organizing strategy, and co- led its campaign activities to build power alongside residents of South LA. Her work at SCOPE helped advance an agenda to eliminate structural barriers to social and economic opportunities, and build replicable job training and workforce models that have regional and national impact. She also was the Senior Organizer at Families for Freedom (FFF), a New York City-based community organization by and for families facing deportation due to an interaction with the criminal system. She campaigned to win federal changes to immigration law and statewide changes to cut ties between the local criminal system and the federal immigration system. Manisha also has experience in mental health program development and policy advocacy and served as the Follow-up Coordinator at the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Cognitive Science from the University of California at Berkeley and a Masters in Social Work from Columbia University.



**Jonathan Voss**, Vice President, Lake Research Partners  
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Jonathan Voss joined Lake Research Partners in 2011 and has a wide-range of experience conducting quantitative and qualitative research. A trained focus group moderator, he currently works on a variety of issues for LRP including protecting the environment for future generations, ensuring every child has quality public education no matter the zip code they live in, restoring the balance in our economy so that hard working families can sustain a family, and ensuring that people can retire in dignity. Jonathan's clients include Ascend at the Aspen Institute, AFT, Center for American Progress, Center for Community Change, Choose Clean Water Coalition, Community Service Society of New York, Demos, ecoAmerica, Food Policy Action, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, NEA, NextGen Climate Action, New America Foundation, The Opportunity Agenda, Potomac Conservancy, Sierra Club, UnidosUS, and The Wilderness Society. Originally from Orange County, New York, he has a Master's degree in public administration from NYU's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service, and also has a Bachelor's degree in politics from NYU.



**Anna Wadia**, Senior Program Officer, Future of Work, Ford Foundation  
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Anna Shireen Wadia is a Senior Program Officer in the Ford Foundation’s Future of Work Program which seeks to ensure that there is a meaningful future of work that places workers and their well-being at the center. Anna has been with Ford since 2009 and her grant making has focused on improving the quality of jobs and economic security of low-wage workers and their families, by supporting efforts to raise the minimum wage, guarantee paid sick days and develop new paid family and medical leave programs. Anna was previously a consultant for the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Ms. Foundation for Women, the National Council for Research on Women, and MDRC. Prior to launching her consulting business, Anna was Co-Director of Programs for the Ms. Foundation for Women, where she managed a funder collaborative focused on women’s economic development. Earlier in her career, she carried out community and economic development programming for the Ford Foundation and Catholic Relief Services in Africa. Anna co-authored *Kitchen Table Entrepreneurs: How Eleven Women Escaped Poverty and Became Their Own Bosses* (Westview, 2002), as well as several reports on best practices in grantmaking and women's economic empowerment. Anna holds a master’s degree in public affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and a bachelor’s degree from Yale University.



**Dorian Warren**, President, Center for Community Change  
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Dorian T. Warren is the newly-named President of the Center for Community Change (CCC). He will take on this new role in November. He is currently the vice-president of CCC and the president of the Center for Community Change Action (CCCA). He is also a Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute and Co-Chair of the Economic Security Project. A progressive scholar, organizer and media personality, Dorian has worked to advance racial, economic and social justice for more than two decades. He previously taught for more than 10 years at the University of Chicago and Columbia University, where he was Co-Director of the Columbia University Program on Labor Law and Policy. Dorian also worked at MSNBC where he was a contributor, fill-in host for Melissa Harris Perry and *Now with Alex Wagner*, and host and executive producer of *Nerding Out* on MSNBC’s digital platform. He currently serves on several boards including Working Partnerships USA, the Workers Lab, the National Employment Law Project, Capital & Main and The Nation Magazine Editorial Board. As a commentator on public affairs, Dorian has appeared regularly on television and radio including NBC Nightly News, ABC, MSNBC, CNN, CNBC, BET, BBC, NPR, Bloomberg, & NY1, among other outlets. He has also written for The Nation, Huffington Post, Newsweek, Salon, Washington Post, New York Times, Medium, Ebony, and Boston Review. Dorian is co-author of *The Hidden Rules of Race: Barriers to an Inclusive Economy* (Cambridge University Press) and co-editor of *Race and American Political Development* (Routledge). In 2013, he was included on the list of NBC’s the *Grio’s 100 People Making History Today*. Dorian received his B.A. from the University of Illinois and his M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from Yale University. He is a long-suffering Cubs fan who grew up on the South Side of Chicago.



**Tom K. Wong**, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of California San Diego

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Tom K. Wong is an associate professor of political science at the [University of California, San Diego](#) and recently served as an advisor to the [White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders](#) (WHIAAPI) under the Obama administration. He is also Director of the [International Migration Studies Program](#)

[Minor](#). His research focuses on the politics of immigration, citizenship, and migrant "illegality." As these issues have far-reaching implications, his work also explores the links between immigration, race and ethnicity, and the politics of identity. His first book, [Rights, Deportation, and Detention in the Age of Immigration Control](#), analyzes the immigration control policies of twenty-five Western immigrant-receiving democracies (Stanford University Press, 2015). In analyzing over 30,000 roll call votes on immigration-related legislation in Congress since 2005, his second book, [The Politics of Immigration: Partisanship, Demographic Change, and American National Identity](#) (Oxford University Press, 2016), represents the most comprehensive analysis to date on the contemporary politics of immigration in the United States. Wong's research has been used by policymakers both in the U.S. and in Mexico, as well as by organizations that serve immigrant communities. Wong and his work has been covered by *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, NPR and major media outlets across the country. He is also on the leadership committee of the California Immigrant Policy Center and the board of New American Leaders. Wong also consults on campaigns and elections, specializing in mobilizing low-propensity voters of color and immigrant communities.



**Shireen Zaman**, Program Director, Security & Rights Collaborative, Proteus Fund  
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Shireen Zaman is the Director of the Security & Rights Collaborative (SRC) at the Proteus Fund, where she leads efforts to mobilize resources to grow promising, innovative, community-based organizations in America's Muslim, Arab and South Asian (MASA) communities. The SRC's support to the MASA field has led to an increase in grassroots leadership, higher levels of civic engagement, diverse

coalitions, and coordinated, strategic messaging. Shireen comes to the SRC having led organizational transformation, resource development, and program management at several nationally recognized nonprofits. Most recently, she was Executive Director at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding in Washington, DC. In 2013, Shireen was recognized as a White House "Champion of Change" for her work as an Asian American woman leader. She currently serves as an advisor to the Muslim Philanthropy Initiative at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. She holds a B.A. in Human Development from Boston College and an M.A. from the School of International Service at American University.