

Experts Available: Biden Administration Student Debt Relief

JANUARY 19, 2021

Harrison Young

As the Biden-Harris Administration sets its agenda for its first one hundred days in office, Scholars Strategy Network has compiled a list of experts who are available to be contacted for commentary and analysis on new policy developments. Below are the scholars who can comment on student debt relief.

You can connect with all researchers available to comment on the Administration's policy priorities [here](https://scholars.org).

CHARLIE EATON

University of California, Merced



Eaton's research investigates the roles of organizations in the interplay between economic elites and disadvantaged social groups. He is available to comment on student debt relief, financial market regulation (especially regarding private equity), and tax compliance reform.

"Biden has an historic opportunity to transform a higher education finance system that has created new inequalities from student debt, with Black and low-income borrowers paying the highest price. Policy choices in the coming days will significantly impact the lives of 40 million Americans with student loans."

THOMAS LEE HARNISCH

Georgetown University



Harnisch's research focuses on state and federal higher education policy, including issues related to finance, student success, and quality. He is available to comment on Biden-Harris education policy, including student debt forgiveness.

JOAN MAYA MAZELIS

Rutgers University-Camden



Mazelis specializes in the study of urban poverty and social support, using qualitative interview methods to explore the meaning and understanding people have of their own situations. She is available to comment on housing insecurity and homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, student loan debt forgiveness, interest rates on loans, and loan repayment pause/freeze.

"An extension of the pause on loan repayments and forgiveness of at least some student debt would provide immediate relief to many who are struggling. Longer-term, permanently reducing the interest rate on student debt to zero and more substantial loan forgiveness would make an enormous difference in people's lives."

SHERICE JANAYE NELSON

Southern University



Nelson's research interests include Black political leadership, Black women as political agents, and the Black experience throughout the Diaspora. She is available to comment on policies that will particularly effect Blacks in the following areas: higher-education, racial wealth gap, voting rights, and housing.

"Data from the US Department of Education show that Blacks are two times more likely to default on their student loans. This is not surprising as 46% of Blacks are eligible for the Pell Grant, a federal financial aid award given to students with exceptional financial need. Loan forgiveness especially for Black students is needed if the racial wealth gap is ever to be closed."