This lecture is funded by the Kenneth M. Piper Endowment, established by a gift from Mrs. Kenneth M. Piper in memory of her husband. Mr. Piper was a distinguished executive with Motorola, Inc., and Bausch & Lomb, Inc., who made important contributions in human resources and labor relations for more than two decades.

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Institute for Law and the Workplace
36th annual Kenneth M. Piper Lecture
Tuesday, April 8, 2014 | 11:30am–1:00pm
1.25 hours of IL MCLE credit

The Post-Recession Economy: A Return to...What?

565 West Adams Street
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Continuing Legal Education
Lecture Overview

As the great recession fades into the past, many economists are predicting a “breakthrough year” for the 2014 economy, implying a return to...what? To the economic conditions of the last business cycle? That one was fueled by a massive and terribly damaging housing bubble which was itself inflated by financial “innovations” that proved to be destabilizing not just to our economy but to other advanced economies as well. The last cycle was also accompanied by sharply increasing wage, income, and wealth inequality; very slow job growth; large trade deficits; and short-sighted fiscal policy. Economists must therefore be very careful in making aggregate, or macro, predictions about where things are headed. From the perspective of working families, it hardly makes sense to talk about how the “economy” is doing. Whose economy are you talking about?

In thinking about the post-recession economy and workplace, the lecture will cover these nuances. What roles are technology, globalization, inequality, and fiscal policy likely to play in shaping economic outcomes facing workers at different positions in the wage scale? Is labor-saving technology accelerating in new ways that will displace ever more workers, particularly in factories? Why is it taking so long to get back to full employment? Will revived financial markets stay “on the rails?” By providing evidence-based answers to these questions, the lecture seeks to impart a strong sense of the opportunities and risks facing working Americans in coming years.

Two labor and employment leaders will comment on the lecture from management and employee perspectives.

Lecturer

Jared Bernstein
Senior Fellow
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities,
Former Chief Economist and
Economic Adviser to Vice President
Joseph Biden

Jared Bernstein joined the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in 2011 as a senior fellow. From 2009 to 2011, Dr. Bernstein was Chief Economist and Economic Adviser to Vice President Joseph Biden, Executive Director of the White House Task Force on the Middle Class, and a member of President Obama’s economic team.

Dr. Bernstein’s areas of expertise include federal and state economic and fiscal policies, income inequality and mobility, trends in employment and earnings, international comparisons, and the analysis of financial and housing markets. Prior to joining the Obama administration, he was a senior economist and the director of the Living Standards Program at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. Between 1995 and 1996, Dr. Bernstein held the post of deputy chief economist at the U.S. Department of Labor.

He is the author and co-author of numerous books for both popular and academic audiences including, CRUNCH: Why Do I Feel So Squeezed? and nine editions of THE STATE OF WORKING AMERICA. Dr. Bernstein has published extensively in various venues, including THE NEW YORK TIMES, WASHINGTON POST, FINANCIAL TIMES, and RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS. He is an on-air commentator for the cable stations CNBC and MSNBC and hosts the popular economics blog, jaredbernsteinblog.com. He holds a Ph.D. in social welfare from Columbia University.

Commentator

Mary Joyce Carlson
Labor and Employment Attorney
Washington, D.C.

Mary Joyce Carlson is a labor and employment attorney practicing in Washington D.C. She currently serves as the national counsel to the Fast Food Workers Organizing Committee. Her 25 years of labor and employment representation has encompassed representation of workers in the public and private sectors.

During the Clinton administration, Ms. Carlson served as Deputy General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board. In that capacity, she handled complex labor disputes, as well as cases arising out of organizing campaigns in textile, trucking, communications, and other industries.

She served on the negotiating team for the 1.3 million Service Employees International Union members in reaching labor accords and collective bargaining agreements with two of the largest health care corporations in the United States.

Ms. Carlson has consulted with the U.S. State Department and labor ministries in Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East on issues of labor law and industrial relations.

She has spoken at programs sponsored by the American Bar Association, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, as well as various universities, including the Beida University in Beijing, China. Ms. Carlson holds a J.D. from Duke University School of Law.

Commentator

James J. Glynn
Vice President, Labor Relations
GM North America

James Glynn was appointed GM North America Labor Relations Vice President in 2013. He previously was a manufacturing manager for GM’s North American region.

Mr. Glynn joined GM in 1978 as a college co-op student with Chevrolet in Tonawanda, NY. He held a number of manufacturing, engineering and quality positions with increasing responsibility at Rochester Products, Mansfield Stamping Plant, Parma Metal Center and Grand Blanc Metal Center. In 2001, Mr. Glynn was named plant manager for the Flint Metal Center and subsequently, the Flint Assembly Plant. During the years 2004 to 2006, he led operations in Mexico as manufacturing manager. Upon repatriation, Mr. Glynn held executive director positions leading Global Vehicle Manufacturing Engineering and Global Program Management. In 2010, he became GM North America Manufacturing Manager for several assembly, stamping, and powertrain operations in the U.S. and Canada.

Mr. Glynn earned a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial engineering from Rochester Institute of Technology and a Master of Science degree in industrial engineering with a concentration in manufacturing systems engineering from Ohio State University.