

December 2008

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Warm winter greetings from the Institute for Research on Poverty. As snow falls on the carillon in front of the Social Science building, I am getting in touch to re-introduce myself to those I knew in other roles; to meet those of you I do not know personally; and to update you on my new job and offer uplifting news from IRP.

I returned to my alma mater this fall to take over as the 11th Director of IRP, replacing Maria Cancian, whose term ended in July. I was attracted to IRP because we have learned a great deal about how to reduce poverty in our nation, and I believe that now, after the recent election, it is time to apply that knowledge to a renewed drive to reduce poverty and enhance social and economic mobility for those who are less fortunate.

IRP is well positioned to make a difference. We are working closely with state and federal leaders to advance the antipoverty agenda and to craft policy to reduce poverty and enhance opportunity. More specific information about our latest research, news and events can be found on our Web site at <http://www.irp.wisc.edu/newsevents/whatsnew.htm>.

We are fortunate to have a dynamic mix of intellectually curious, methodologically sensitive, and programmatically knowledgeable graduate students, researchers and faculty who are passionate about reducing poverty. With your help, I would like to increase IRP's role in connecting research to policymaking and program evaluation. Private support has become vital to our success, and I hope you will consider giving back to the work we share. Giving information is enclosed and also on our Web site. Gifts to the IRP General Fund are used to support the next generation of poverty research through graduate student awards, to recruit the best faculty affiliates, to bring nationally known lecturers to our campus, and to inform policymakers about new strategies for reducing poverty and how they might be implemented and evaluated.

I would enjoy hearing from you about your work and feedback about IRP and our programs. Please feel free to get in touch with me at smeeding@lafollette.wisc.edu or 608-262-6358, or stop by for a visit.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Smeeding
Director