



New Fellow Spotlight

Kimberley Isett

Kimberley Roussin Isett earned a Ph.D. (Management, Organization theory) and MPA (health and human services, Policy) from the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management. Her research focuses on institutional pressures and dynamics in implementing government services, with a particular interest in the delivery of services to vulnerable populations, and the use of evidence in public decision-making. Her goal is to do research that aids government organizations to find their optimal system design given their political, policy, regulatory, and financial constraints. To date, Dr. Isett has been the PI or co-PI on grants totaling over \$13m. She was recognized by the Academy of Management in both 2001 and 2002 for excellence in research and participated in the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Mental Health Policy Research Network from 2002 until 2008. Isett has worked with elected officials and policymakers at all levels of government on a variety of issues. Prior to joining the Biden School, Dr. Isett was on faculty at Georgia Tech, Columbia University, and Texas A&M, and completed a NIMH sponsored post doc at UNC-Chapel Hill's Sheps Center for Health Services Research.

What are you most looking forward to as a NAPA Fellow?

Connecting with professionals in Public Administration to think about and address important issues facing our country. Being able to contribute at the nexus of scholarship and real world problems is not only exciting, but it is what we should be doing to make improvements that matter to everyday citizens.

What inspires you during these challenging times?

The generosity of my colleagues from across the globe- sharing insight and knowledge, and most importantly empathy. This is hard. No one has it easy. But the coming together to make each day just a little bit better for each other gives me hope and fills me with gratitude.

What do you most enjoy about the work you do?

Thinking about how I can contribute to the lives of others by helping to facilitate the access to effective services. It really makes my day/year when I get an email or call from an organization letting me know my scholarship has made a difference in how they do their work. What a privilege it is to serve others in this way.

Who or what inspired you to work in public service?

I have always had an instinctive orientation toward government service. When I was in 1st grade I made a chart for my mother of what I would do in my career. While it was a bit unrealistic, as these things go when you are 6 or 7, my objective was to work in a Federal agency (Dept. of State, to be precise). And while my focus and trajectory has changed a bit (state and local level, domestic, health and human services for the most part), it has always been centered on public service. I have never considered a pathway outside of public service.

What advice can you give to folks beginning careers in public service?

It is difficult some days, challenging most days, and worth it every day. Keep your eye on the prize.