

Contact: Mark Primoff
845-758-7412
primoff@levy.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LEVY INSTITUTE CONFERENCE GATHERS LEADING ECONOMISTS,
SOCIAL SCIENTISTS, AND OTHER ANALYSTS TO EXPLORE THE
DISTRIBUTIONAL EFFECTS OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND TAXATION**

**Two-Day Conference Will Explore Impact of Spending and Taxation Policies
in the United States and Other Advanced Industrialized Countries**

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, N.Y.—As policymakers approach the issue of the soaring federal budget deficit, their attention often turns to the merits of continuing the Bush administration's tax cuts and the impact of cutting various spending programs. As the debate over these issues intensifies, it is critical to explore the distributional consequences of taxation and spending programs in the United States.

On **October 15-16**, **The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College** will host a conference, **The Distributional Effects of Government Spending and Taxation**, focusing on the effects of government spending and taxation policies on families and individuals, and exploring questions such as who benefits from government expenditures, such as schooling, highways, and police and fire protection. Who are the beneficiaries of government transfer programs, such as Social Security and other public welfare programs? Who bears the tax burden? The conference will gather leading economists, social scientists, and other analysts to discuss these issues. Among those attending are David Cay Johnston, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the *New York Times*; Howard M. Iams, director, Division of Policy Evaluation, U.S. Social Security Administration; and Amy Ellen Schwartz, professor of public policy, New York University.

The conference, organized by Edward N. Wolff, senior scholar at the Levy Institute and a professor of economics at New York University, will focus on the American system, though comparative studies of other countries will also be presented.

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The conference will be webcast live at www.levy.org.

Program:

The Distributional Effects of Government Spending and Taxation

The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College

Friday, October 15

8:30–9:00 a.m.

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION

9:00–9:15 a.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dimitri B. Papadimitriou, president, *Levy Institute*

9:15–11:00 a.m.

SESSION 1. International Comparisons

CHAIR: **Dimitri B. Papadimitriou**, president, *Levy Institute*
Michael Foerster, *European Centre, Vienna* and *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* and **Pierre Pestieau**, *University of Liege*, and *Center for Operations Research and Econometrics* and *Centre for Economic Policy Research*, and *Delta*

“The Generosity of the Welfare State toward the Elderly”

Jonathan Schwabish and **Timothy Smeeding**, *Maxwell School, Syracuse University*, **Lars Osberg**, *Dalhousie University*, **Michael Eriksen** and **Joseph T. Marchand**, *Maxwell School, Syracuse University*

“Income Distribution and Social Expenditures: A Cross-national Perspective”

DISCUSSANT: **Amy Ellen Schwartz**, professor of public policy, *New York University*

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

SESSION 2. Cross-national Comparisons within Europe

CHAIR: **Edward N. Wolff**, senior scholar, *Levy Institute* and *New York University*

Holly Sutherland, *University of Cambridge*, *University of Essex* and *DIW Berlin*

“The Effects of Taxes and Transfers on Household Incomes in the European Union”

Irwin Garfinkel, *Columbia University*, **Lee Rainwater**, *Harvard University*, and **Timothy Smeeding**, *Maxwell School, Syracuse University*

“Patterns of Economic Well-being: Full Income Distribution and Income Packages in Rich Countries”

DISCUSSANT: **Marc Lee**, research economist, *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*

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1:00–2:30 p.m.

LUNCH

2:30–4:00 p.m.

SESSION 3. Distributional Effects of Taxes and Government Spending in the United States

CHAIR: **Asena Caner**, research scholar, *Levy Institute*

Edward N. Wolff, senior scholar, *Levy Institute* and *New York University* and **Ajit Zacharias**, research scholar, *Levy Institute*

“An Overall Assessment of the Distributional Consequences of Government Spending and Taxation in the U.S., 1989 and 2000”

Leonard E. Burman, *Urban Institute*, **William G. Gale**, and **Peter R. Orszag**, *The Brookings Institution*

“Distributional Effects of Tax Incentives for Saving”

DISCUSSANT: **Sourushe Zandvakili**, *University of Cincinnati*

4:30–6:00 p.m.

SESSION 4. Distributional Effects in Other Countries I

CHAIR: **Ajit Zacharias**, research scholar, *Levy Institute*

Ann Harding, **Rachel Lloyd**, and **Neil Warren**, *National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling*, Canberra, Australia

“The Distribution of Taxes and Government Benefits in Australia”

Kwang Soo Cheong, *Johns Hopkins University*

“Distributional Effects of Personal Income Taxation in Korea”

DISCUSSANT: **Lars Osberg**, *Dalhousie University*

6:00–9:00 p.m.

RECEPTION AND DINNER

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: **David Cay Johnston**, *New York Times*

“The Stealth Tax”

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

8:30–9:15 a.m.

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:15–11:00 a.m.

SESSION 5. Distributional Effects in Other Countries II

CHAIR: TBA

Leon Podkaminer, *The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW)*

“Distributional Effects of Evolving Spending and Tax Policies in Post-Socialist Poland”

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Markus Jäntti, *Abo Akademi University, Finland*
“The Distribution of the Tax Burden in Finland, 1985-2001”

DISCUSSANT: **Steve Davies**, *Colorado State University*

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

SESSION 6. Distributional Effects at the Sub-national Level

CHAIR: TBA

Harvey Cutler, *Colorado State University*

“The Impact of Local Government Decisions on the Distribution of Income”

Howard Chernick and **Paul Sturm**, *Hunter College, CUNY*

“Explaining State/Local Fiscal Redistribution”

DISCUSSANT: **Elissa Braunstein**, *Political Economy Research Institute (PERI), University of Massachusetts*

1:00–2:30 p.m.

LUNCH

2:30–4:00 p.m.

SESSION 7. Distributional Effects of Public Education and Social Security

CHAIR: TBA

William R. Johnson, *University of Virginia*

“Are Public Subsidies to Higher Education Regressive?”

Barbara A. Butrica, *Urban Institute*, **Howard M. Iams**, *Social Security Administration*, and **Karen E. Smith**, *Urban Institute*

“The Changing Impact of Social Security on Retirement Income in the U.S.”

DISCUSSANT: **Teresa Ghilarducci**, *University of Notre Dame*

4:00 p.m.

RECEPTION

The conference will take place at The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. To register for attendance, call 845-758-7700; e-mail info@levy.org; or register online on the Levy Institute’s website: www.levy.org.

PRESS REGISTRATIONS SHOULD BE MADE BY CALLING MARK PRIMOFF AT 845-758-7412 OR SENDING E-MAIL TO primoff@levy.org.

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