

FHFA Econ Summit

Bringing together housing industry practitioners, policy makers, & researchers



Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Speaker Profiles – Industry Panel

Cristian deRitis

Cristian deRitis is Deputy Chief Economist at Moody's Analytics, where he specializes in analysis of current and future economic conditions, housing markets, and consumer credit. He has over 25 years of experience managing risk, building consumer credit-performance models and systems, and contributing to internal and external publications. Named on two U.S. patents for credit modeling, he has created loss forecasting and stress-testing systems for financial institutions.

Cristian joined Moody's in 2008, after serving as a Director with Fannie Mae. He also served as an adjunct professor of economics at Johns Hopkins University. He holds a B.A. in Economics from Michigan State University, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Economics from The Johns Hopkins University. He is a RIMS-Certified Risk Management Professional and holds a Certified Business Economist® (CBE) designation.



Charlie Dougherty

As a Director and Senior Economist with Wells Fargo's Corporate and Investment Bank in New York City, Charlie Dougherty provides analysis on the U.S. economy, commercial real estate, housing, construction, and regional sectors. His commentaries and reports are featured in the Wells-Fargo Weekly Economic & Financial Commentary as well as media outlets such as the CBS Evening News, Bloomberg, National Public Radio, and The Washington Post.

Before joining Wells Fargo in 2017, Charlie worked as a regional economist and consultant for IHS Markit and, more recently, for CertainTeed, one of the largest building product manufacturers in North America. Charlie holds B.A. and B.S. degrees in Economics and Finance from the University of Pittsburgh, and an M.A. in Economics from Temple University.



Leonard Kiefer

Len Kiefer is Deputy Chief Economist at Freddie Mac, where he oversees development and deployment of forecasting models of trends in the U.S. economy and housing markets. Len joined Freddie Mac in 2009 and has served as Deputy Chief Economist since December 2012.

Prior to joining Freddie Mac, Len was an assistant professor at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas where he conducted research on macroeconomics and monetary policy. He has also taught economics at The Ohio State University and finance at George Mason University.

Kiefer holds a B.A. in economics from the University of Kentucky, and PhD from The Ohio State University. Len is a member of the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association (AREUEA) and the National Association for Business Economics (NABE).



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Odeta Kushi

Odeta Kushi is Deputy Chief Economist for First American Financial Corporation. From that seat she monitors and analyzes trends in the real estate and mortgage markets, and conducts research around demographic trends, millennials, and homeownership. Her insights and perspectives have been featured on such national business-media outlets as CNBC, Yahoo! Finance, and Reuters TV. Odeta's research has been published in leading business and industry trade publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Business Insider*, *Housing Wire* and *Inman News*.

Odeta holds a B.A. in Economics from St. John Fisher College, and a master's degree in Applied Economics from Northeastern University. She currently is finishing her Ph.D. in Economics at George Mason University. A native of Albania, Odeta now lives and works in the Washington, D.C. area.



Speaker Profiles – Research Presentations

Wenli Li

Wenli Li is a Senior Economic Advisor and Economist in the Department of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Before joining the Philadelphia Fed, she was an Economist at both the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and Federal Reserve Board of Governors. She was a visiting lecturer at Princeton University from 2015 to 2016. Wenli's recent research sheds light on bankruptcy, credit access, mortgage defaults/foreclosures, and how these impact the broader economy. She has published in top economic journals, including *American Economic Review*, *Journal Monetary Economics*, and *International Economic Review*.

Wenli holds a B.S. in Management Information Systems from Tsinghua University and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Minnesota.



Mark Palim

Mark Palim is Deputy Chief Economist and Vice President at Fannie Mae. There he is responsible for overseeing the corporate-level macroeconomic and housing forecasting functions. In addition, he manages multi-disciplinary partnerships across the company to address specific business issues facing Fannie Mae. Mark is a key spokesperson on economic and housing market trends and a frequent speaker at national mortgage finance and housing industry conferences. Prior to joining Fannie Mae in 2009, he was a Principal at LECG and a Director at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Mark holds a B.A. in International Studies from The Johns Hopkins University and a Ph.D. in Economics from George Mason University. He also is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA).



Susan Wachter

Susan Wachter is a legend in the fields of housing, housing finance, and housing policy, with accolades too numerous to list. She currently is the Albert Sussman Professor of Real Estate at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, where she has held numerous positions of leadership and responsibility over many decades. Her academic credentials are highlighted not only by her own seminal research publications, but by forming new generations of researchers through a myriad of co-authored works. Susan's policy *bona fides* are highlighted by her serving as Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the Obama Administration.

