

Scientists in State Politics

Join us and a panel of scientists and physicians who are also public policy-makers for a discussion of their career paths from their medical or scientific commitments to their added additional roles at the State House. We'll also discuss challenges and barriers to entry to politics as well as transferrable skills in using evidence in policymaking.



**Representative
Jasmine Clark**
PhD (D-GA)



**Senator
Sam Thompson**
PhD (R-NJ)



**Assemblyman
Bill Quirk**
PhD (D-CA)



**Senator
Andrew Zwicker**
PhD (D-NJ)

Tuesday, December 6, 2022
at 1pm via Zoom

Register:
eagleton.rutgers.edu/events

EAGLETON SCIENCE AND POLITICS WORKSHOP

Scientists in State Politics

December 6th, 2022

AGENDA

Welcome	John Weingart Associate Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics
Introduction	Anna Dulencin, PhD Director, Science and Politics Program, EIP
Panel Discussion	Representative Jasmine Clark, PhD Senator Sam Thompson, PhD Assemblyman Bill Quirk, PhD Senator Andrew Zwicker, PhD
Q&A	Anna Dulencin, PhD
Conclusion	John Weingart

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ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University — New Brunswick studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve, and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education, and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice.

SCIENCE & POLITICS PROGRAM

The Eagleton Science and Politics Program explores how science, technology, and American politics intersect; the political systems that connect them; and how deeper understanding and clearer communication within and across these disciplines can benefit policymakers, scientists, and the larger public. The Program administers the Eagleton Science and Politics Fellowship which places doctoral-level scientists, engineers and healthcare professionals into New Jersey state government as full-time in-house science advisors for one year. The Program also maintains the *Scientists in State Politics* database which inventories all scientists, engineers and healthcare professionals who serve as elected members of state legislatures in all 50 U.S. states.

The Eagleton Science and Politics Workshop series is offered in collaboration with the following partners: The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities; Rutgers Biomedical & Health Sciences; Departments of Neuroscience & Cell Biology and Pediatrics; Division of Life Sciences; Graduate School-New Brunswick; Office of the Executive Dean, Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences; The Rutgers University iJOBS program; Rutgers Brain Health Institute; Science Policy and Advocacy at Rutgers (SPAR), a graduate student organization; Institute of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences; Rutgers Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy; and Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

For more information about the Eagleton Science and Politics Workshop, including how to become a campus collaborator, contact Anna Dulencin, PhD at anna.dulencin@eagleton.rutgers.edu or 848-932-8309.

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EAGLETON SCIENCE AND POLITICS WORKSHOP STEERING COMMITTEE

Janet Alder, PhD

Associate Professor and Assistant Dean,
Graduate Academic and Student Affairs
Rutgers School of Graduate Studies

Megan Anderson Brooks, PhD

Principal, Innovation Policy Solutions LLC
Eagleton Fellow, 2013

Emanuel DiCicco-Bloom, MD

Professor, Neuroscience & Cell Biology and
Pediatrics
Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Anna Dulencin, PhD

Director
Eagleton Science and Politics Program

Jeanne Herb

Executive Director
Environmental Analysis and Communications
Group
Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Policy,
Rutgers University

Robert Kopp, PhD

Co-Director, University Office of Climate Action
Professor, Department of Earth & Planetary
Sciences

James H. Millonig, PhD

Associate Professor and Senior Associate Dean
Rutgers School of Graduate Studies

John Weingart

Associate Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics
Director, Eagleton Center on the American
Governor

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SPEAKERS

Representative Jasmine Clark, PhD

Dr. Jasmine Clark was born in Atlanta, GA, in December of 1982. At a very young age, Jasmine realized her passion for the sciences and aspired to follow in the footsteps of her father and one day be a doctor. She received her Bachelors of Science in Biological Sciences with a concentration in microbiology from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 2005. In 2013, she received her doctoral degree from Emory University's Laney Graduate School in microbiology and molecular genetics after publishing her work on retroviral particle tracking using live cell imaging microscopy. Subsequently, she completed a postdoctoral project at Emory University, studying high-throughput sequencing of HIV patient samples. Jasmine currently serves as a lecturer of microbiology and human anatomy and physiology at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University. As the field of science requires strategic planning, problem solving, and attention to detail, in 2018, Jasmine Clark ran on the platform that her scientific background could add a unique and refreshing perspective to legislating in GA. On November 6, 2018, Jasmine Clark was elected to the Georgia State House of Representatives, where she currently serves as the Representative to House District 108, covering the Lilburn and Mountain Park areas of Gwinnett County.

Along with her academic and professional accomplishments, Jasmine is a mother of two currently residing in the Lilburn/Tucker area of Gwinnett County. Jasmine has been involved in community organizing and activism. She served as the director of the March for Science held in Atlanta in April 2017. She then continued to work with other groups, including the Georgia Alliance for Social Justice, on advocating for social justice issues and causes. She believes that an inclusive Georgia is a thriving Georgia, and that there is no place for divisive rhetoric and discriminatory practices in Georgia's future.

Jasmine Clark's legislative agenda has been focused on education, voting rights, reproductive rights, environmental protection, common sense gun reform, criminal justice and healthcare. During her first term, Jasmine Clark was the primary sponsor on HB 133, which seeks medically accurate sex education that includes accurate information regarding HIV prevention. She was also a top sponsor of dozens of bills that reflect constituent issues and concerns, her legislative agenda, as well as her core values. In the 2021-2022 session, Jasmine Clark plans to continue the work of being a science voice in the GA State legislature, and an advocate and voice for her constituency in House District 108. In the 2021-2022 session, she also serves as the Vice Chair of the Gwinnett State House delegation and as the Secretary on the Executive Board of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus.

When she is not teaching at Emory or legislating at the State Capitol, you can usually find her at one of her kid's soccer games, basketball games or track meets, or with a microphone in her hand singing karaoke. Her personal philosophy can be summed up in this quote by the late Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Senator Sam Thompson, PhD

Senator Samuel (Sam) D. Thompson has been a member of the New Jersey Legislature since 1998. He served in the General Assembly until January 2012, when he was sworn in as the Senator for the 12th Legislative District.

Areas of particular interest to Dr. Thompson include healthcare, senior citizen issues, education, tax relief and transportation. He was prime sponsor of legislation that created the NJ Kid Care and NJ Family Care programs which provided health insurance for low income working families. Assemblyman Thompson sponsored the NJ SAVER property tax rebate program and a measure that doubled the income eligibility levels for seniors to qualify for a freeze on their property taxes.

Senator Thompson received his BS degree with majors in chemistry and math from the University of Arkansas (Little Rock) and his doctorate in physical chemistry from Louisiana State University. He was employed as a research scientist for six years by DuPont and J.P. Stevens prior to 22 years with the NJ Department of Health. During this period, he also served for 10 years as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces Epidemiological Board.

Subsequently, Senator Thompson was employed for three years by the NJ Turnpike Authority as Director of Planning, Analysis and Government Relations and later as director of Communications and Government Relations. Today, Dr. Thompson is a full-time legislator.

Assemblyman Bill Quirk, PhD

Assemblymember Bill Quirk has an undergraduate degree in engineering and applied physics and a PhD in astrophysics, both from Columbia University. He had a 35 year career as a computational hydrodynamicist. He was the first person to develop a computer model of galactic evolution from a cloud of gas to a spiral galaxy. This thesis is still reference in scientific papers today. After a postdoctoral fellowship at CalTech, he went to NASA Goddard, where he developed one of the first Global 3-dimensional model of the earth's climate. He joined the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in 1979 and while he continued his work on climate, Bill eventually became the country's expert on foreign nuclear weapons. While at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, he was instrumental in the successful negotiations for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. He retired from Lawrence Lab in June 2005. Bill was elected to the California State Assembly in November 2012. Since then he has worked on issues addressing energy, climate change, transportation and public safety. He is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials (ESTM). As the only scientist in the Legislature, data and research play a major role in his approach to legislation. Since becoming Chair of ESTM, Bill has authored legislation on lead in children, recycled water, contaminants of emerging concern in drinking water and harmful algal blooms.

Senator Andrew Zwicker, PhD

Senator Andrew Zwicker is a physicist and a member of the New Jersey Senate representing the 16th Legislative District, which includes parts of Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset counties. He serves on the budget and appropriations, higher education, labor, and military and veterans' affairs

committees. Additionally, he is a member of the manufacturing caucus, the disability caucus, the NJ Commission on science, innovation, and technology, and was vice-chair of the NJ Biotechnology Task Force.

A lifelong New Jersey resident, Andrew is head of Communications and Public Outreach at Princeton University's Plasma Physics Laboratory, a world leader in developing an advanced form of energy known as fusion. He has taught classes in bioethics and writing, and led plasma physics workshops for faculty and students. The American Association of Physics Teachers named him as one of the 75 leading contributors to physics education in the U.S.

Andrew was raised in Englewood, NJ, where his love of learning and passion for science came from his mother, a public school English teacher, and father, a chemical engineer. Andrew earned a bachelor's degree in physics from Bard College and a master's and Ph.D. in physics from Johns Hopkins University.

Andrew and his wife Barbara, an elementary school educator in Hillsborough, live in Kingston, where they raised three children and one pitbull-boxer mix named Rocky.

John Weingart

Associate Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics

John Weingart has been Associate Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics since 2000. Prior to that, he held several posts designing and implementing state policy on environmental protection and land use including serving as Assistant Commissioner of the NJ DEP. He is the author of *Waste Is A Terrible Thing To Mind: Risk, Radiation and Distrust of Government*.

Anna Dulencin, PhD

Director, Science and Politics Program, Eagleton Institute of Politics

Anna Dulencin develops the Institute's Science and Politics Program which includes the Eagleton Science and Politics Workshop and the Institute's latest project, the Eagleton Science and Politics Fellowship for PhD-level scientists in New Jersey government. A scientist herself, Dulencin served as a biomedical research consultant at the New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence Coordinating Center prior to joining Eagleton.