

Badger Institute: Adds managing editor, three visiting fellows

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July 12, 2022 — The Badger Institute continues to develop its reporting capacity and grow its research team with the hiring of seasoned journalist Mark Lisher as full-time managing editor and the addition of another visiting fellow who will contribute to the institute's [Mandate for Madison](#).

Mark Lisher, an award-winning journalist with a long reporting and editing history in both Wisconsin and Texas, is joining the Badger Institute team as full-time managing editor.

Benita Cotton-Orr, a new Badger Institute visiting fellow who conducted research and served on the leadership team of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation for 19 years, will co-author a report examining more efficient ways to fund the construction and maintenance of Wisconsin highways.

The Institute this month is also extending fellowships with two more long-time policy experts who will also contribute to the Mandate:

Eloise Anderson, an internationally recognized leader on welfare- and workforce-related policies, will contribute a chapter on the importance of civil society in addressing economic and cultural challenges.

Andrew Hanson, economist and associate professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will author a Wisconsin report assessing the Badger State's economic standing in relation to its neighbors and states with comparable populations.

"We're fortunate to have the combined expertise of these accomplished writers and researchers as we create Wisconsin's public policy agenda for 2023 and beyond," said President Mike Nichols. "Bringing Mark on board to write, edit and investigate

full time will result in more quality reporting for our readers. Eloise, Andrew and Benita will provide policymakers and others with research and recommendations that will shape policy reforms and improve the lives of millions of Wisconsinites.”

Lisheron has been editing the Institute’s magazine, Diggings, for several years and has spearheaded the “Tracking the Trillions” project – an investigation of the misspending of federal grants flowing to Wisconsin during the pandemic. He will now lead both initiatives on a full-time basis and continue to write and edit many other stories.

Lisheron was a founder of The Texas Monitor, a small-government, free-market news website based in Austin. He previously served as the managing editor for Reason Magazine’s website. Prior to that, he was national deputy editor for Watchdog.org, coordinating editors and investigative reporters in more than two dozen state bureaus across the country.

Over a more than 40-year career in journalism, 30 of them in newspapers, Lisheron was nominated three times for the Pulitzer Prize. He is the winner of the Stanley Walker Award, the highest award for journalism presented by The Texas Institute of Letters, the First Amendment Award from the Society of Professional Journalists in Texas, and several national and state awards from Associated Press and United Press International.

The Institute now has a total of eight visiting fellows. Previous press releases have identified other elements of the Mandate they will be authoring.

Ike Brannon, president of Capital Policy Analytics, has written a [policy brief](#) examining whether federal unemployment insurance benefits slowed employment growth in Wisconsin, and recommending ways to restructure benefits so people are able to more quickly rejoin the labor force.

Scott Niederjohn, economist and director of the Free Enterprise Center at Concordia University Wisconsin joins **Dan Sem**, director of the Rx Think Tank at Concordia, on crafting [A Roadmap for Healthcare Reform](#), a series of reports on ways to control costs and increase transparency in health care.

Angela Rachidi, senior fellow and Rowe Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, will examine effective early learning frameworks for children, especially those living in poverty. She will also research antipoverty approaches that focus on

helping families escape poverty and achieve self-reliance.

Other contributors to the Mandate include **Katherine Loughead**, senior policy analyst at the Tax Foundation; **Jeremiah Mosteller**, Americans for Prosperity Senior Policy Analyst; **Sean Kennedy**, visiting fellow at the Maryland Public Policy Institute; and **David Balat**, director of the Right on Healthcare initiative at the Texas Public Policy Foundation.

In the area of K-12 school reform, the Badger Institute has partnerships with School Choice Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, AFP-Wisconsin, the American Federation for Children and others.