

Taxpayers Regional Forum

Bangkok, December 8-10th, 2017

Speakers



Samta Arora

Associate Director, Centre for Civil Society

Samta Arora currently heads CCS Academy, the training and outreach vertical of Centre for Civil Society, as an Associate Director. Her focus is on strategic implementation and scaling up of academic programs, and cultivating relationships with the top academic institutions, faculty, industry experts and policy stalwarts in the country across disciplines, to ensure impactful outreach of ideas. She has previously been engaged in the communications space at the Centre and other organizations prior to that, where she was responsible for developing strategy to strengthen relationships with stakeholders and garner support for core public policy issues that are the focus of the organization, handling public relations and media, and providing technical and strategic support for internal messaging, communication and outreach activities. Her core skills include development and strategy, program management, communications, content creation and development, stakeholder engagement and brand-building for NGOs. She is an Honors Graduate from Lady Sri Ram College of Women, Delhi University.



Christopher Butler

Executive Director, Americans for Tax Reform (ATR)

Christopher Butler is Executive Director of Americans for Tax Reform (ATR), where he manages all of the organization's day-to-day activities, and sets priorities and policy positions for ATR and its affiliated groups. Founded in 1985, ATR has grown far beyond its original marquee project, the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Today, ATR is a broad, influential free-market activist organization operating in a dozen issue areas at the state, federal, and—increasingly—international level to promote free and open markets and economic liberty.

In cooperation with Lorenzo Montanari, Mr. Butler directs the Property Rights Alliance, which is well known for its annual International Property Rights Index and coalition work on behalf of intellectual property rights. Mr. Butler additionally directs ATR's other international work, including the Taxpayer Leaders Forum and the Coalition Leaders Forum which promote the establishment of advocacy organizations and formal coalitions across the globe.

Mr. Butler for the past several years has played a key role in organizational outreach to European Parliamentary groups. He has trained activists in communications, fundraising, and political organizing in Ukraine, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France, New Zealand, Ireland, Belgium, Malaysia and elsewhere in Europe and

Asia. Through his roles with ATR and affiliated groups, he has helped to launch activist organizations in Ukraine, Kuala Lumpur, Ireland and India.

Mr. Butler also has a role in managing other special projects of ATR including the Center for Worker Freedom, which promotes free labor markets; Digital Liberty, which promotes freedom in electronic media; and the Cost of Government Center, which promotes restraint in spending and regulation.

Mr. Butler has appeared in national media outlets such as FOX News, NPR, Newsday, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post. His background prior to his leadership at ATR was in communications and public relations and his work has included roles with parties, campaigns, and polling.

Mr. Butler is on the Board of Directors of the World Taxpayers Associations, which connects taxpayer protection groups from over 60 countries in order to share best practices and to create opportunities for collaboration.



Scott Hennig

Vice President, Canadian Taxpayers Federation

A long-time CTF supporter, Scott worked as a speechwriter and public policy researcher with the Government Members' Research Branch in Edmonton before becoming the Alberta director. He served as the CTF's Alberta director from 2005 until 2012 when he was promoted to Vice President, Communications. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics.

Scott previously served on the Fort Saskatchewan Minor Hockey Association Executive and the Fort Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce Student Work Program Committee and is a founding and current member of the Fort Saskatchewan Urban Forest Committee. During the winter, Scott referees hockey in the Edmonton area.

Scott enjoys running, playing basketball, slo-pitch and golf, despite not being very good at any of them. Scott and his wife Stacey have two children and live in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta.



Scott A. Hodge

President, Tax Foundation

Scott A. Hodge is president of the Tax Foundation in Washington, D.C., one of the most influential organizations on tax policy in Washington and in state capitals. During his 17 years leading the Tax Foundation, he has built the Tax Foundation's Taxes and Growth (TAG) Dynamic Modeling program which has normalized dynamic scoring as an accepted tool for analyzing tax policy. He also spearheaded the creation of the Tax Foundation's Center for State Tax Policy and the State Business Tax Climate Index, two programs that have spurred tax reform in dozens of states.

Hodge has appeared on over 600 radio and television programs—including NBC Nightly News, CBS Nightly News, CNN, Fox Network, Fox Business, and CNBC—and is frequently quoted in the print press by *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and numerous regional papers. He has edited three books on federal spending, published over 100 studies on a wide range of tax and budget issues, and authored dozens of op-eds for publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and the *New York Post*.

JiYun Kim

Manager, Korea Taxpayers Association

KIM JIYUN is the manager of KTA's Strategic and Planning Team, Kim Jiyun was recently tasked with developing and launching KTA's first international research institute in Stockholm, Sweden, which is expected to be completed in early 2018. Ms. Kim earned her Bachelor and Masters degree in Berlin, majoring in political science and international law. She is fluent in German, as well as English.



SunTaek Kim

President, Korea Taxpayers Association

KIM SUN TAEK is the president of Korea Taxpayers Association, as well as a board member of World Taxpayers Associations.

He worked in corporate Korea for just over a decade and did a short stint as a lecturer on Corporate Income Tax Law before joining KTA in 2001, where he quickly applied his passion for government policy and human rights, and his expertise in tax law and business into an impressive list of aggressive taxpayer rights campaigns. As a result, KTA has grown into one of the largest NGOs in South Korea, with a record of not only influencing new laws and policies in South Korea, but also helping educate Korean media about major tax concerns, and raise taxpayers' awareness and understanding of Korea's tax system.

In 2003, Mr. Kim served on the Ministry of Finance and Economy's Committee of Income Tax Law, and in 2008, he served on the Presidential Advisory Committee for Advanced National Tax Administration.

Mr. Kim has written three (Korean language) publications on taxation:

* Practice of Non-business Real Estate, Taxes and Local Tax Law. (1998, Samil Publications; Seoul)

* An Analysis of Corporate Income Tax Law (1999, Samil Publications; Seoul)

* How to Avoid National Payroll Tax Without Violating Tax Laws (2004, HangbokhanChekilgi; Seoul)



Troy Lanigan

President, Canadian Taxpayers Federation

Troy Lanigan was appointed president and CEO of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation January 1, 2009, after serving the organization in various capacities since 1992 including British Columbia spokesperson from 1993-1999.

Prior to the CTF, Troy worked for an educational foundation in the United States and experimented with – but never inhaled – partisan politics on both sides of the border.

To earn his degree in economics from the University of Victoria Troy spent summers working at the Kokanee beer plant in his home town of Creston, BC. When he wasn't on the bottle line he could be heard in the lunchroom arguing politics with his father who headed the union.

As organization president he has stepped back from media commentary but still writes and speaks at conferences at home and abroad. Troy is author of the 2015 released [Fighting for Taxpayers: Battles Fought and Battles Ahead](#) a book that chronicles campaigns led by the CTF over its 25 year history and highlights the public policy issues that will matter most to taxpayers going forward.

Since 2009 Troy has served on the board of the Stockholm Sweden-based [World Taxpayers Associations](#). In March 2016 Troy was elected Chairman of WTA for a three-year term by WTA members at the World Taxpayers Conference hosted in Berlin, Germany.

Troy enjoys travel, attempting to golf, [playing guitar](#) and participating in various athletic endeavours. Troy has completed six marathons and is a two-time finisher of Ironman Canada but more recently has taken up Crossfit as his current addiction. He and his wife Erika make their home in Victoria, they have four children.



Christopher Lingle

Professor of Economics, Universidad Francisco Marroquin

Christopher LINGLE earned a doctorate in economics from the University of Georgia in 1977. Since then, he has been employed at universities in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and USA.

He is a passionate supporter of human creativity and volunteer actions that lead to social harmony. To this end, he travels relentlessly to anywhere in the globe to engage in discussions on the merits of institutions and public policy with respect to their impact on human liberty and personal dignity.

Currently, he is Visiting Professor of Economics in the Escuela de Negocios at Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala (since 1998), Adjunct Scholar at the Centre for Independent Studies (Sydney), Research Scholar at the Centre for Civil Society (New Delhi), International Political Economic Advisor for the Asian

Institute for Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDIA – Kathmandu) and Member of the Academic Advisory Council of the Globalization Institute (Brussels).

Previous academic positions include: Visiting Fellow in the Department of Management of City University in Hong Kong (February to March 2010); Visiting Professor at Institute of International Studies, Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok (2008 to 2009); Adjunct Professor of Economics, Georgetown University (July 2004); Visiting Associate Professor of Economics, Case Western Reserve University (1996 to 1998); Visiting Scholar—Emory University & Adjunct Professor of Economics—Georgia State University (January 1995 to August 1996); Senior Fellow, European Studies Program, National University of Singapore (September 1993 to November 1994); Associate Professor of Economics, Loyola University (New Orleans); Associate Professor of Economics, Miami University, European Center, Luxembourg and Oxford, Ohio (1981 to 1984 and 1989 to 1991), Adjunct Professor, *Departement de Droit et des Sciences économiques, Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg* (1989-91); Visiting Foreign Expert in Economics, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (February to May 1987); Lecturer and Senior Lecturer—University of Natal, South Africa (1984-90); Assistant Professor of Economics, Auburn University (1978); Assistant Professor of Economics, West Georgia College (1977).

Dr. LINGLE's research interests are in the areas of Political Economy and International Economics with a focus on emerging market economies and public policy reform in East and Central Europe, East Asia, Latin America, and Southern Africa. His work has appeared as chapters in books, the international media, and scholarly journals, including the *American Economic Review*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Journal for Studies in Economics and Econometrics*, *Kyklos*, and *Pacific Review*.

His book on the political economy of Singapore's development was entitled, ***Singapore's Authoritarian Capitalism: Asian Values, Free Market Illusions, and Political Dependency*** (1996). He is widely credited with anticipating the turmoil in the East Asian economies that began in 1997 (***The Rise and Decline of the 'Asian Century': False Starts on the Road to the 'Global Millennium'***, May 1997).



Lorenzo Montanari

Director of the International Advocacy & Affairs at the Americans for Tax Reform (ATR)

Lorenzo Montanari is also Executive Director of the **Property Rights Alliance** (PRA) an advocacy group affiliated with ATR for the protection of physical and intellectual property rights, both domestically and internationally.

On the international stage, PRA works closely with famed property rights champion and President of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD) in Lima, Peru, Hernando de Soto and other 91 think tanks.

At Property Rights Alliance, he is in charge of publishing the [International Property Rights Index](#), an international

comparative study focus on intellectual and physical property rights. He is also Private Chair at the International Relations Task Force at the **Americans Legislative Exchange Council** (ALEC).

Previously, Montanari worked for a public affairs firm and for the international department of the [GSPM/George Washington University](#) in Washington, DC as well as a political analyst and electoral observer in Latin America. Montanari holds a BA in Political Science, a MA in International Relations from the University of Bologna and MA in Political Management from the George Washington University. He collaborates with The Daily Caller and Forbes.



John O'Connell

Chief Executive, Taxpayers' Alliance

John O'Connell joined the TPA as an intern in 2009. Since then he has worked at every level of the organisation which made him uniquely qualified to become Chief Executive beginning August 2016.

As a researcher, and later Research Director, he wrote major reports for the TPA on quangos, government capital procurement, regional business policy and local government pensions. He co-authored the influential paper *How to Save £50 Billion: reducing spending for sustainable public finances*, released in conjunction with the Institute of Directors. He also uncovered how local councils were spending Preventing Violent Extremism grants, finding more detailed information than could be gathered by Parliamentary Questions.

John oversaw the work of the 2020 Tax Commission. He also wrote and edited several sections of its final report, *The Single Income Tax*, which won the Templeton Freedom Award from the Atlas Network.

John frequently represents the TPA on television and radio, including prominent appearances on flagship broadcast programmes and documentaries. He also regularly speaks for the TPA at events, delivering speeches on the TPA's campaigns and research. In April 2012 John completed the Think Tank MBA in America, an intensive training course offered by the Atlas Network. He has a BA from Nottingham Trent University and an MSc from University College London.



Bienvenido "Nonoy" Oplas, Jr.

President, Minimal Government Thinkers

Bienvenido "Nonoy" Oplas, Jr. is the founder and President of [Minimal Government Thinkers](#), a free market think tank in Manila. He is also a columnist in [BusinessWorld](#), the Philippines' premier business newspaper, under "My Cup of Liberty" column for more than two years now.

He graduated from the University of the Philippines School of Economics (UPSE), AB Economics in 1985 and Diploma in

Development Economics in 1998. He is also a Fellow of the Stratbase-Albert del Rosario Institute (ADRI), another think tank in Manila. In 2005-2006, he briefly served as Sec-Gen of the Philippine Taxpayers Union (PTU). He participated in APTU meeting in Seoul in 2006, small meeting in Atlanta in 2008 after the Atlas Liberty Forum, then in Singapore in 2009 after the Pacific Rim Policy Exchange.

He has published two books, [Health Choices and Responsibilities](#) in 2011, and [Liberalism, Rule of Law and Civil Society](#) in 2014.



Georgia Scott

International Communications Manager, Korea Taxpayers Association

As a visual journalist, Georgia Scott is a writer, editor and graphic designer. She worked in the editorial art department at The New York Times for 15 years, as an adjunct professor at universities in New York and Hawaii for three years, and as a consultant on international standards of page design, writing and social media for American embassies in Burma, Ecuador and South Korea. Georgia was also a Knight Fellow in Indonesia and China for the International Center for Journalists, and even owned her own coffeehouse and bookstore for three years in New York City. Georgia is the author of four illustrated children's books and two non-fiction titles.



Björn Tarras-Wahlberg

Chairman, Asia-Pacific Taxpayers Union

During his 16 years as President for the Swedish Taxpayers Association, Björn Tarras-Wahlberg managed to mobilize the broad masses in Sweden AGAINST the highest income tax in the world (84%) and FOR the introduction of 50% maximum marginal income tax in 1991. ("Hälften Kvar", "Half Left", "Hälfte Genug"); abolish a devastating property tax; and reach the historic top figure of 186,000 members (in a country with 8 million people). He successfully focused on singular issues and organised huge campaigns ("Half Left" and "Abolish Property Tax") that recruited 100 new members every day, with the side effect that the socialists twice lost power (in 1991 and 2006).

He founded the World Taxpayers Associations, WTA, in 1988 with the purpose of stopping the steady growth of taxation around the world. In 2000 he left the national scene and became full time President and Secretary General for the World Taxpayers Associations. His aim has been to increase the number of taxpayers associations and also introduce flat income taxes around the world. When he started only Hong Kong had a flat tax, today the flat tax exists in 30 countries, 20 in Europe and 11 countries with as low income tax as 10%.

The WTA has grown considerably with 70 member associations in 60 countries today – a united force for lower taxes, less waste, budget discipline, accountable government and taxpayers rights all over the world.

For 10 years he was chief lobbyist for the Swedish Business Community, SAF, and had economic support from this sector for the campaigning against the very high income taxes.

He has written 350 articles and 11 books, including "Taxpayers Revolution - how to Start and Operate a Taxpayers Association", which is his testimony after many years for lower taxes and more individual freedom.

He is married to a well known Thai TV-reporter Panchanok and has homes in Sweden, Switzerland and Thailand. And has two daughter 25 and 29 in his former marriage with Elisabeth, Marchal of the Royal Court in Sweden, director of Information and speech writer to the King of Sweden.