



CONSORTIUM ON  
CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
URBAN EDUCATION INSTITUTE

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## **Consortium on Chicago School Research names education policy expert, foundation leader as new executive director**

The University of Chicago has selected Paul Goren, senior vice president of the Spencer Foundation and a national leader in education research, policy and practice, as the new executive director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR), which has become a national model for conducting research on urban public education systems.

The Chicago-based Spencer Foundation is the nation's only philanthropic organization dedicated exclusively to education research. In his new position, Goren will serve as the Lewis-Sebring Director of CCSR.

CCSR is part of the university's Urban Education Institute, which in addition to conducting studies to inform policy and practice in Chicago Public Schools, also operates four South Side public charter schools and a teacher training program dedicated to preparing teachers for the special needs of urban classrooms.

"We are thrilled," UEI John Dewey Director Timothy Knowles said. "Paul understands that creating reliably excellent schools for children growing up in urban America depends on good evidence—for teachers, for school and district leaders and for the public. Paul brings national perspective, a deep knowledge base, and an appetite to ask hard questions. UEI is enormously fortunate to have drawn Paul to our midst."

A Chicago native and product of the Chicago Public Schools, Goren has worked closely with CCSR during his tenure at Spencer. "It is a tremendous honor to be chosen to lead an organization I have long admired," he said. "The Consortium and the Urban Education Institute reflect the university's commitment to improving urban education by actually working on the front-lines of urban education."

With research organizations modeled after CCSR proliferating in school districts, cities and states nationwide, Goren said he looks forward to managing CCSR's growing national influence while maintaining its primary focus on the Chicago Public Schools. "The new CPS administration is using data and information as the cornerstone of its decision making. This provides the Consortium with obvious opportunities to continue to be of assistance as an independent lens on CPS."

Goren succeeds John Q. Easton, who led CCSR from 2002 until May 2009, when he accepted an appointment from President Obama to run the Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education.

“Paul's experiences working in large urban school districts and with policy makers and top researchers across the country make him the perfect person to lead CCSR," Easton said. "I expect Paul will expand CCSR's national presence, maintain the highest quality research, and work closely to inform new initiatives in Chicago Public Schools.”

Goren has spent the past 25 years at the intersection of education research, policy and practice. He began his career as a middle school teacher and went on to train as an education policy analyst and school administrator. He has served as director of the Education Policy Studies Division of the National Governors' Association; Executive Director of Policy and Strategic Services for the Minneapolis Public Schools; and director of Child and Youth Development for the Program on Human and Community Development at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, where he was responsible for grants that included support for Chicago school reform.

Most recently, through the Ian Axford Fellowship program of Fulbright New Zealand, he served on special assignment to the New Zealand Ministry of Education, studying how their policies to improve outcomes for Maori students have been enacted in practice. In each of these stops, Paul helped translate education research for practitioners and policymakers, an exercise that is at the heart of CCSR's work.

Michael McPherson, president of the Spencer Foundation, noted that Goren's new post will allow him to continue to advance the goals that motivate both the Spencer Foundation and the University of Chicago.

“We will miss him greatly at Spencer, but we are glad to know he will continue to serve the city that he and we love,” McPherson said. “Paul Goren is a superb choice to lead the Consortium. He knows the issues very well and he knows Chicago. He is a wonderful, generous human being who believes deeply in making education work for all Americans.”

University President Robert Zimmer also expressed enthusiastic support for the pick. “The Urban Education Institute is an essential part of the University's effort to create knowledge to improve lives,” Zimmer said. “We are extremely pleased the Consortium will have such a well-regarded leader at the helm.”

Goren holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University, a master of public affairs degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, and a B.A. from Williams College. Goren is married to Gwen Macsai, a writer and public radio producer. They live in the Chicago area with their three school-age children.