



Wisconsin Public Utility Institute

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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Diana Hernández is an associate professor of sociomedical sciences in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University where she has researched and taught for over 15 years. Diana conducts research at the intersection of energy, equity, housing, and health. A sociologist by training, her work examines the social and environmental determinants of health and has studied the impacts of policy and place-based interventions on the health and well-being of socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. Her foundational research on energy insecurity – defined as the inability to adequately meet household energy needs – has explored the multiple dimensions of this phenomenon identifying sociodemographic disparities, adverse consequences, and promising interventions toward energy equity and justice. She teaches graduate level courses on qualitative research methods, design and analysis, public health leadership, and energy justice. Her additional roles at Columbia include faculty affiliate and co-director of the Energy Opportunity Lab in the Center on Global Energy Policy, faculty affiliate of the Population Research Center, and deputy director of the NIEHS Center for Environmental Health and Justice in Northern Manhattan (housed in the Mailman School). Her work has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and various foundations including Freedom Together (formerly JPB), Robert Wood Johnson, and Alfred P. Sloan. She is a mayoral appointee to New York City's Environmental Justice Advisory Board. Much of her community-oriented research has been done in collaboration with community groups and government agencies around the country, including in the South Bronx, where she has led small-scale housing redevelopment projects. She has published more than 75 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in leading academic journals including *Social Science & Medicine*, *Journal of Urban Health*, and *Energy Policy*. She published *Powerless: The People's Struggle for Energy* in April 2025 and has written for and been featured in various media outlets including the NY Times, USA Today, BBC, NY Daily News, and CityLab. Previously, she was a Roosevelt Institute Fellow, and currently she is a fellow with the JPB Environmental Health Fellows Program. Diana received a BA from Hunter College, City University of New York, and a Ph.D. from Cornell University.