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# Feminist Economist, World Bank Consultant to Deliver Eckley Lecture

Jan. 20, 2017

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— A feminist economist who regularly consults for the World Bank and the United Nations will present the Eckley Lecture in [Economics](#) Feb. 8 at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Yana van der Meulen Rodgers, professor of women's and gender studies at Rutgers University, will use a global perspective to discuss women's empowerment in the labor market at 7 p.m. Feb. 8 in the Hansen Student Center (300 Beecher St., Bloomington). Her presentation will focus on successful strategies for empowering women in the labor market and the benefits not just to women, but also to their families and to economies as a whole.

"In the era of smart phones and smart cars, empowering women can be a 'gender-smart' way to achieve economy-wide gains," Rodgers said.

An expert on East and South Asian economies, Rodgers has traveled to and lived in Asia to conduct her research, which focuses on feminist economics, labor studies, economics of the family, development economics, and nutrition and food policy. She is the author of *Maternal Employment and Child Health: Global Issues and Policy Solutions* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011), an empirical study of the relationship between the employment of mothers and three aspects of malnutrition among children under five in several Asian countries including India, Pakistan and the Philippines. She has also published numerous articles in refereed economics journals.

In addition to working regularly as a consultant for the World Bank, the United Nations and the Asian Development Bank, Rodgers has served as an associate editor for the journal *Feminist Economics* for more than a decade. She was president of the International Association for Feminist Economics in 2013-2014. Rodgers earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Cornell University and holds a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University.

Ilaria Ossella-Durbal, chair and associate professor of economics, said Rodgers is a prolific researcher whose interests include the impact of public policy and labor laws on women's employment and wages, how ownership rights and access to resources for women can not only improve their children's welfare but also reduce their household poverty level, and how gender disparity, growth and development are all interconnected.

"Economics of gender is an area of economics that our students are generally not exposed to, so it is our honor to have such a distinguished scholar in this field provide us with her insights," said Ossella-Durbal.

The Eckley Lecture in Economics was made possible by a gift to Illinois Wesleyan from President Emeritus Robert S. Eckley, his wife Nell, and the Eckley Family Foundation shortly before President Eckley passed away in 2012. Prior to his 18-year tenure as Illinois Wesleyan's president, Eckley was considered one of the nation's top business economists and was Caterpillar Inc.'s first professional economist. Eckley earned a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University.

Rodgers' visit to Illinois Wesleyan is also a part of the co-curricular programming surrounding the University's annual theme ["Women's Power, Women's Justice."](#) Her lecture is free and open to the public.



Yana van der Meulen Rodgers