

Domenico Parisi (Mimmo), Ph.D.



Domenico “Mimmo” Parisi is a leader in forging narrative-shifting and long-term economic and public policy change through research, academic, and economic development programs. He is often considered a “quiet power broker” in making societal shifts that impact long-term economic transitions. Best known for his work in equipping the state of Mississippi with a new economic focus in manufacturing, he has used his passion for understanding how and why race, socioeconomic status, and residence affect long-term societal outcomes.

A long-time Mississippi State University professor and one of America’s leading rural sociologists, Parisi has pioneered data science and AI to the forefront of research and economic development. With the founding of the National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center (NSPARC), Parisi launched to the front of the national conversation around how alternative data (workforce development, employment, and human services) affects strategic planning, grant reporting, and economic development.

By focusing on research data that informs a different view of what could be done between business, academic, and public sector partners, Parisi developed a workforce, economic, and academic framework that supports long-term change, gives smaller economies a competitive advantage, and ultimately betters people’s lives. His partnership with Mississippi’s educational, research, government, and business leaders led to multiple significant wins for what many consider the “last state in the U.S.”

Parisi played an instrumental role in creating the microeconomies surrounding major manufacturing wins for Mississippi, including the introduction of Toyota, Yokohama, and Continental facilities. He also advised two Mississippi governors on transforming the state’s many socioeconomic challenges around talent, workforce preparedness, childcare, and education with data, integrity, and respect for the individual.

At the national level, Parisi’s work is transforming the conversation on how the use of big data and digital technology can create both economic and social value. His work across the data science landscape is setting Mississippi State apart as a research and innovation center with initiatives that are gaining international attention, including advancing the university’s pledge to achieve the United Nations’ sustainability goals, establishing a data science student success plan for that spans research, experiential learning, and AI advances, and creating the university’s response to the explosion of AI tools.

Because of his economic development expertise, Parisi was invited to be a senior Italian government cabinet member and head a transformative national program aimed at integrating two million non-working citizens into the workforce for the first time ever. As the President and CEO of the National Agency for Labor Policies Development, he was the liaison between the central government and 21 regional governors and built international ties with other European Union member states. Parisi and his team helped 20-25% of never-employed citizens join the Italian economy.

Parisi earned his Ph.D. in rural sociology and Master of Rural Sociology from Pennsylvania State University. He is currently the Senior Advisor and Executive Director for Data Science Programs at Mississippi State University. He and his wife Michelle, CFO of Camgian – an AI technology solution provider – reside in Starkville, Mississippi.