



## for QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Women's Policy Research

### IWPR Commemorates the 50th Anniversary of President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women Report

by Jessica Milli, Ph.D.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of 1963's *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women*, the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor sponsored a series of Scholars' Papers. As part of this effort, IWPR prepared papers on parental leave and on occupational segregation and the wage gap.

*Paid Parental Leave in the United States* reviews research and data sources on paid leave for family related purposes. Despite the recommendation in the 1963 report that paid maternity leave be provided for female workers, it took another thirty years' for the passage of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) to provide at least unpaid job protected maternity and paternity leave. Due to the structure of the FMLA, as of 2012, only 59 percent of workers were eligible for FMLA leave. With the exception of a few states with more generous family leave policies, FMLA leave is unpaid, and many families cannot afford to use it as much as they would like.

The IWPR paper also details previous research on the economic and health benefits of paid family leave. Paid family leave can improve the labor force attachment of workers, improve employee morale and productivity, reduce worker turnover, and positively impact economic

growth. Such benefits to firms may help offset the costs of implementing paid leave policies. Research further suggests that expanding paid leave is likely to have economy-wide benefits such as reduced spending on public assistance programs and increased labor force participation. Access to leave, whether it is paid

or not, can increase breastfeeding rates and duration, reduce the risk of infant mortality, and increase the likelihood of infants receiving well-baby care and vaccinations.

The paper also reviews federal data sources on paid and unpaid leave and highlights gaps and (*continued on p. 3*)



IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault, Ph.D. (center) participates in the Lumina Foundation Ideas Summit on college affordability.

### IWPR Expands College Affordability Debate to Include Student Parents

By Lindsey Reichlin

IWPR's report, *College Affordability for Low-Income Students: Improving the Returns on Investment for Families and Society*, was prepared as part of a series of papers on defining college affordability sponsored by the Lumina Foundation. The series was released at the "Lumina Ideas Summit: New Models of Student Financial Support," held at the Newseum in April 2014, where IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault, Ph.D., spoke on a panel about the needs of low-income students in college and the barriers they face.

Part of IWPR's larger body of work on improving college access and success among low-income communities, *College Affordability for Low-Income Students* examines how the experiences and circumstances of low-income adults,

students of color, and students raising children can inform financial aid and other efforts to make college education more affordable. Low-income students are more likely to be financially independent, to be first generation students, to be students of color, and to be parents. They have greater time constraints; less access to information about enrollment, careers, and financial aid; more unmet need; more health challenges; a higher likelihood of serious material scarcity, such as food insecurity and difficulty paying bills; and poorer labor market outcomes following graduation. IWPR's report discusses these issues in depth and considers how a new conception of college affordability—one that considers the full range of circumstances that may impact low-income students—could help students enter and complete college.

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IWPR, an independent, non-profit, scientific research organization, works in affiliation with the graduate programs in women's studies and public policy and public administration at **The George Washington University.**



## President's Message

family trajectories. The women interviewed do not all view their political office holding as a career, since many came to politics to advance specific issues such as good government, improved education, community development, or civil and human rights. But all show enormous dedication and perseverance in working for the public good, sometimes enduring sexual harassment from their male colleagues, voters, or members of the public. Several suggested that young women should get involved early and plan their lives around a career in politics, for example, developing a profession, such as law, that is compatible with office holding and can provide a source of income between offices.

The Hunt Alternatives Fund provided funding for IWPR's study as well as a companion survey of state legislators done by Lake Research Partners and Chesapeake Beach Consulting and used the image of a driver on the road to higher office, asking if the problem is more the driver (ambition, lack of preparation) or the road (road blocks such as lack of funding and party support). The IWPR study comes down on the side of the road and the various barriers in women's way. The IWPR report suggests a number of ways to break down those barriers, particularly calling upon women's organizations to get more involved in electoral politics and in supporting candidates through providing real resources, like funds, foot soldiers, and telephone canvassers. In addition, the IWPR report suggests that networks be formed for women across political office level, so that women at local levels can develop mentoring relationships with women in higher level offices.

IWPR also analyzed women's share of seats in Congress from 1960 to 2013, and our projection found that, at the current rate, it will take Congress until the year 2121 to reach political parity. *TIME*, *Slate*, *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, and many others ran stories on this projection, wondering why it would take so long to reach parity in the United States, and often citing our report, *Building Women's Political Careers: Strengthening the Pipeline to Higher Office*, as well.

Denise Bear and I were delighted to participate with the Hunt Alternatives Fund, Celinda Lake, and others to share findings from these important studies. Bottom line: Get involved and remember to vote in November.

*Heidi Hartmann*

As we near the final round in this year's elections, much hangs in the balance. What will it take to get more women to run, more women to vote, more women to actively engage in the election process by donating funds, making phone calls, and canvassing in neighborhoods, and more candidates to speak to the issues that matter most to women.

A recent study by the Center for Responsive Politics of the largest givers to the Democratic and Republican parties and candidates using 2014 donations to Federal campaigns and committees shows that the top 20 male donors gave nearly six times as much as the top female donors over the same time period (\$62.6 million for men versus \$11.2 million for women).

This lack of giving by women is one roadblock for women officeholders seeking to move up to national office as a member of Congress, a senator, or in another statewide office such as governor or attorney general. In an IWPR study led by Denise Baer, Ph.D., in-depth interviews identified several barriers that women candidates face.

These experienced women political leaders recognize that fundraising for Congress or state-wide office is an order of magnitude above what they need to raise for state or local office. Media exposure is similarly ramped up with a run for higher-level office, especially if the race attracts national political attention as each party seeks to gain dominance in the House, the Senate, or the governors' mansions.

While these issues face male candidates as well, they seem to affect women more, many of the women interviewed believe. Several women reported that the media mainly focused on their appearance and family situation rather than their stance on issues. And women lack access to high donor networks and the mentors and sponsors who could make the needed introductions.

Some political scientists and other observers argue that women lack ambition for higher office, but the IWPR study suggests that women officeholders and would-be candidates make strategic decisions about the opportunity structure of available higher offices, the costs and benefits of running for higher office, and the appropriate timing—in general they look for races where the political opportunity is good and the requirements of office will mesh with their career and

# IWPR Report Finds Strong Consensus on Improving Social Security Benefits Despite Party Differences

By Elyse Shaw and Jennifer Clark

Social Security cuts and expansions have long been debated by policymakers in Congress, researchers in think-tanks, leaders in the Administration, and advocates. The current economic climate and the negative effects of the recession on long-term economic security, the decades-long growth in women's labor force participation, the aging of the population, and the Board of Trustees' projection that the system's Trust Fund will be exhausted in 2033 have led to a consensus among experts and policymakers that some sort of reform of the Social Security system will be needed to maintain solvency and improve the effectiveness and fairness of the system.

A new report by IWPR President Heidi Hartmann, Ph.D., *Enhancing Social Security for Women and other Vulnerable Americans: What the Experts Say*, sheds new light on expert and lawmaker perspectives on the prospect of Social Security reform. Based on inter-



views, which Hartmann conducted five years ago with Social Security experts and lawmakers representing a range of ideological perspectives, the report reviews experts' expectations for Social Security reform five years out noting which proposals had bipartisan support at the time of the interviews. Interviewees on the conservative end were less supportive of increasing the payroll tax base or tax rate as a means to address solvency. Instead, they preferred to restrain benefit growth for high earners and to make benefits more generous only for those with low incomes, with the exception of treating homemakers, working wives, and widows more fairly. Policy experts on the more progressive end were almost unanimously supportive of increasing revenues by lifting the payroll tax cap on high earners and enhancing benefits to a broader range of recipients.

The study finds the following areas of consensus on Social Security reform:

- Most experts and policymakers, on both ends of the political spectrum, are open to modernizing the system to account for changes in women's lives. A bipartisan majority expressed support for a proposal like caregiving credits, and there is strong bipartisan support

for expanding disability eligibility to homemakers.

- Benefit adequacy was deemed an important policy priority by virtually all interviewed and there was widespread support for an increase in the minimum benefit. Yet, virtually everyone interviewed agreed that there is not likely to be any consideration of benefit increases unless there is also a solution to the long-term funding gap.

- Several respondents on both sides of the aisle pointed out that an increase in the retirement age is not likely, not only because it is very unpopular, but also because older people can see that there are simply not enough employers willing and able to provide jobs to older workers.

In the years since the interviews were conducted, Congress has only become increasingly partisan and a 'grand bargain,' in which increased benefits in some areas of Social Security might be offset by cuts in other areas, seems more remote. While public opinion surveys show strong support for maintaining Social Security without any cuts and increasing revenues to solve the funding gap, the failure to achieve any bipartisan reform to date suggests that Social Security remains a third rail in American politics.

## Commemorate, continued from p. 1

inconsistencies in the information available. The paper argues for a more systematic federal effort to improve the data infrastructure on this important benefit for working families.

*Occupational Segregation and the Gender Wage Gap* documents changes since the 1960s in the types of jobs that men and women perform and links those trends with recent lack of change in the gender wage gap. Women have made large strides toward equality in the labor force, including increasing their representation in occupations that have traditionally been dominated by men—such as management, accounting, and law. However, not all occupations have seen increased integration over the years,

and many remain heavily male- or female-dominated. The paper documents that progress has stalled, pointing out that both progress in improving occupational integration and progress in closing the gender wage gap stalled at the beginning of the last decade. This relationship suggests that occupational segregation should be a priority of policy efforts to address the wage gap, either by focusing on encouraging women to enter more integrated or male-dominated occupations, or by improving earnings in female-dominated occupations, or both.

The papers are available on the Women's Bureau website and on IWPR's website.

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- Stay informed on policy issues that affect women.
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*Thanks to everyone who helped IWPR reach the first year fundraising goal for the Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellowship Challenge Grant. We are a third of the way there.*

### In Honor/Memorial

Carol Mukhopadhyay made a gift in memory of Rose Z. Chapnick.

# Meet Our Summer 2014 Interns: Why IWPR?

By Mary Byrne, Communications Intern

**Anna Barber**  
M.A., Leadership and Public Policy  
University of Virginia, 2015

“For my summer internship, I wanted to gain substantive experience doing research on public policy. As I am passionate about women’s issues, IWPR was a perfect fit! I have loved being able to work at IWPR and produce work on public policy with a specific eye towards how these policies affect women.”

**Mary Byrne**  
B.A., Political Science and Sexuality, Women’s, and Gender Studies  
Amherst College, 2015

“I’ve always been interested in public policy and passionate about women’s issues, so IWPR was ideal. As an intern in the communications department, I hoped to learn more about the creation, dissemination, and reach of feminist public policy and research. My internship has both allowed me to work to further issues I care about and gain a better understanding of how research is used to ignite activism and change.”

**Micaela Deitch**  
B.A., Economics  
Georgetown University, 2015

“I’d always been interested in the intersection of economics and gender, so when I heard about IWPR’s work, I knew it was an organization I’d feel passionate about. By consistently producing original research on the status of women in America, IWPR has shed light on the antiquated policies and practices that keep women from achieving political and economic parity. I feel lucky to work for an organization that has enacted real, tangible change in the lives of so many women and families.”

**Taylor Fugere**  
B.A., Political Science and Social Welfare  
University of California, Berkeley, 2015

“I wanted to intern at IWPR because policies should not hurt people because of their gender. As a daughter of a single mother, I understand the unique challenges American women face in the job market while being expected to raise healthy families. I think it is everyone’s responsibility to do what we can to improve the lives and well-being of women in the future. I hope to continue to work on these issues for years to come.”



*IWPR interns pose with President Heidi Hartmann, Ph.D. (center) at the summer intern party. Each year, IWPR’s interns organize an event to celebrate the accomplishments of their fellow Washington, D.C., summer colleagues. L to R: Barber, Tulachan, Sacco-Calderone, Byrne, Wilson, Hartmann, O’Connor, Fugere, Jabouin, and Reynolds.*

**Sheya Isabelle Jabouin**  
B.A., Government and French  
Dartmouth College, 2015

“I decided to intern at IWPR in order to gain some experience working for a think tank. It’s always something I’ve wanted to try, so my interest in policy affecting women’s rights made an internship at IWPR seem like the perfect fit. Though I’ve always been interested in policy, a lot of my studies in college have focused on theory, law, and qualitative research. I hoped that through an internship at IWPR, I would learn about the different ways theory could be used to identify relevant variables to be then applied to quantitative research for policy reform.”

**Rachel O’Connor**  
Ph.D., Social and Personality Psychology  
Michigan State University, 2015

“I found IWPR while looking for opportunities to gain experience with applied policy research to supplement my academic training. My research in psychology focuses on prejudice, discrimination, and the experiences of stigmatized groups, such as women and racial/ethnic minorities. IWPR’s mission of conducting research in the service of helping women matches closely with my personal philosophy of science as a tool for social change.”

**Elizabeth Reynolds**  
B.A., Politics  
Ursinus College, 2015

“The Institute of Women’s Policy Research offered opportunities to explore new aspects of education policy and engage in research that can affect people’s lives. I’ve always been interested in women’s policy issues, and was looking to explore how research can contribute to greater gender equity and education opportunities.”

**Bianca Sacco-Calderone**  
B.A., Politics and Italian Studies  
The Catholic University of America, 2014

“I chose interning at IWPR because I thought it would be a great experience for me while trying to navigate the job search. Interning at IWPR has allowed me to experience a more research-centric atmosphere compared to other internships I have had in the past, which revolved more around campaigns and elections.”

**Salina Tulachan**  
B.A., Economics and Mathematics  
Randolph College, 2014

“I am very interested in issues relating to women, and I believe in equality and empowerment of every group of people. IWPR seemed like the perfect place where I could apply my passion for research work to help create outcomes which could potentially result in positive impacts in society. I felt that this internship would both help me obtain valuable skills and significant exposure to the field of my interest and make contributions to inspire changes for the groups of people I wish to work for in the future.”

**Skye Wilson**  
M.A., American Government  
Georgetown University, 2014

“Coming from a primarily legislative background, I chose to intern at IWPR because I wanted to gain insight into the research and formulation of women’s policy from one of the leading think tanks in the country. I was involved with advocacy on women’s issues throughout high school and college and have long been passionate about the issues. I came to IWPR hoping to get a deeper understanding of these policies. Spending my semester here has made me a more knowledgeable and effective advocate for the issues I care about.”

**Paid Sick Days**

*The American Prospect* cites IWPR research on the costs and benefits of paid sick days in New York City in a longform piece, “Get Sick, Get Fired: America’s Low-Wage Workers Push Back” (June 23, 2014).

*The Washington Post* cited IWPR research on workers’ access to paid sick days in “Sick? Now You Can Stay Home” (July 28, 2014).

*The Washington Post* highlights IWPR’s research on paid sick days in California in “Nearly half of workers in California don’t get paid sick days, analysis finds” (August 26, 2014).

**Pay Equity and the Gender Wage Gap**

*The Wall Street Journal* quoted IWPR President Heidi Hartmann in “Female CEOs Make Strides, but Pay Gap Persists” (May 28, 2014).

*TIME* mentions IWPR research on the persistence of the gender gap, even in female dominated occupations, in “Millennial Women Are Still Getting Paid Less Than Men” (June 13, 2014).

A *Washington Post* article highlights “Five Myths about the Gender Pay Gap” and cites IWPR projection for how long it will take to for women to receive equal pay (July 25, 2014).

*The Atlantic* quotes IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch and cites IWPR research on pay secrecy and wage discrimination in, “When the Boss Says, ‘Don’t Tell Your Coworkers How Much You Get Paid’” (July 15, 2014).

**Women, Jobs, and the Economy**

*CNN Money* quotes Study Director Ariane Hegewisch on the pace of men moving into female dominated fields in “Men Still Lag Behind in U.S. Jobs Recovery” (June 6, 2014).

*The New York Times* quotes Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault on the relationship between access to affordable child care and women’s workforce participation in “A Job Seeker’s Desperate Choice” (June 21, 2014).

*Mother Jones* uses IWPR analysis in a chart showing men’s pay exceeding women’s pay even in the same occupations in “Mitch McConnell Declares Workplace Sexism Over, Says Women Don’t Deserve ‘Preferential Treatment’” (July 15, 2014).

**Political Parity**

*Slate* (June 19, 2014) and *Jezebel* (June 20, 2014) both point to IWPR’s projection for reaching political parity in the year 2121 and delve into IWPR’s recent research on why women’s political progress has slowed.

*The Washington Post* cited an IWPR study on when women will reach parity on Congress in “Women Will Reach Political Parity in 2121. Why Will it Take so Long?” (May 22, 2014).

*PolicyMic* quotes IWPR President Heidi Hartmann on why fewer women choose to run for public office in “America is Finally Ready for a Woman in the White House” (July 24, 2014).

**Reports and Appendices**

**Enhancing Social Security for Women and other Vulnerable Americans: What the Experts Say**

IWPR #D504, July 2014

**Recently Proposed Legislation Affecting Social Security**

IWPR #D504a, July 2014 (Appendix to IWPR #D504)

**Occupational Segregation and the Gender Wage Gap: A Job Half Done**

IWPR #C419, June 2014

**Paid Parental Leave in the United States: What the Data Tell Us about Access, Usage, and Economic and Health Benefits**

IWPR #B334, June 2014

**Securing a Better Future: A Portrait of Female Students in Mississippi’s Community Colleges**

IWPR #C417, June 2014

**Building Women’s Political Careers: Strengthening the Pipeline to Higher Office**

IWPR #I926, May 2014

**Appendix E, Building Women’s Political Careers: Strengthening the Pipeline to Higher Office**

IWPR #I926e, May 2014

**Briefing Papers and Research-in-Briefs**

**Women in Construction and the Economic Recovery:**

**Results from 2013 IWPR Tradeswomen Survey**

IWPR #C416, August 2014

**Access to Paid Sick Days in San Jose**

IWPR #B331, August 2014

**As Foreign-Born Worker Population Grows, Many Lack Paid Sick Days**

IWPR #B336, July 2014

**Access to Paid Sick Leave in Oakland, California**

IWPR #B332, June 2014

**The Well-Being of Women in Utah: An Overview**

IWPR #R379, May 2014

**Fact Sheets**

**Access to Paid Sick Days in North Carolina**

IWPR #B338, August 2014

**Community College Students Need Fair Job Scheduling Practices**

IWPR #C420, July 2014

**Paid Sick Days Access Varies by Race/Ethnicity, and Job Characteristics**

IWPR #B337, July 2014

**Quick Figures**

**Washington, DC, Ranks Highest for Women’s Employment and Earnings; West Virginia Ranks Lowest**

IWPR #Q024, September 2014

**With Much-Needed Job Growth in July, Men Have Recovered 94% of Jobs They Lost in Recession**

IWPR #Q023, August 2014

**Testimonies**

**The Costs and Benefits of Paid Sick Days: Testimony of Jessica Milli, Ph.D. before the Mayor’s Task Force on Paid Sick Leave of Philadelphia**

IWPR #B340, August 2014

**Quality Jobs and Supports Build Strong Workplaces: Testimony of Barbara Gault, Ph.D. before the Joint Economic Committee**

IWPR #B333, June 2014

# IWPR Survey Informs Programs to Support Women in Mississippi Community Colleges

by Lindsey Reichlin

A recent IWPR report, *Securing a Better Future: A Portrait of Female Students in Mississippi's Community Colleges*, uses survey responses and interviews to examine the experiences of college students. The survey, conducted by IWPR and commissioned by the Women's Foundation of Mississippi, was designed to identify supports and practices that can help women succeed in community college and attain economic security. To supplement the findings from the student survey, IWPR interviewed eight community college administrators about their perceptions of students' greatest unmet needs, the ways their schools strive to meet these needs, and additional services they believe would be useful to the students they serve. This project draws on insights from the Community College Completion Project, a study that examined the challenges and obstacles women students in Mississippi encounter in fulfilling their community college goals, which was conducted by the Social Science Research Center of Mississippi State University.

As a follow up to *Securing a Better Future*, and in light of grant-making funds that the WFM has made available to Mississippi community colleges to implement the report's recommendations, Dr. Barbara Gault and Lindsey Reichlin, IWPR researchers, traveled to Gulfport and Jackson, Mississippi, in June to join the WFM's workshops with Gulf Coast and Hinds community colleges. The goals of the workshops were to share IWPR's survey findings and recommendations with the schools' administrators and facilitate discussions among them about how each school's programs, policies, and practices can improve retention and success among their female students.

IWPR continues to expand its research in areas of particular interest and concern to low-income student parents and the institutions that work with and support them. Recently, IWPR was awarded a grant by the Kellogg Foundation to promote success among low-income community college students raising children. Specifically, IWPR will work with community colleges to help them integrate child care and other supports into bundled service programs with women's funds to help them promote two-generation community college strategies.

## Spotlight on IWPR's Pay Secrecy Work

By Jennifer Clark

As part of its 2010 Rockefeller survey of women and men following the Great Recession, IWPR found that more than half of working women, including 63 percent of single mothers, are discouraged or prohibited from discussing their pay at work. These data provided the first snapshot of how prevalent pay secrecy is at American workplaces. Pay secrecy makes it difficult for women and men to determine if they are paid fairly and undermines attempts to reduce the gender wage gap. The wage gap in the federal government, where there are high levels of pay transparency, is only 11 percent compared with 23 percent economy-wide. In April, President Obama signed an executive order requiring greater pay transparency among federal contractors. IWPR's data was frequently cited to highlight the need for such policies.

• **NPR's Morning Edition** interviewed IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch on pay secrecy in the segment, "It's Illegal But People Get Fired For Talking About Their Pay." (April 1, 2014)

• **The New York Times**, "As Obama Spotlights Gender Gap in Wages, His Own Payroll Draws Scrutiny" (April 7, 2014).

• IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch appeared on **PBS Newshour** to discuss occupational segregation, discrimination, and pay secrecy (April 8, 2014).

• IWPR President Heidi Hartmann joined **MSNBC's Rachel Maddow Show** to discuss pay transparency and what the data and social science literature show about the wage gap between men and women in America (April 8, 2014).



• **Fortune**, "Why We Should Openly Discuss Salaries at Work" (April 8, 2014).

• **TIME** published a piece by Jessica Bennett advocating for removing the stigma behind discussing pay in the article, "Stop Being Polite. Talk About Your Salary" (April 9, 2014).

• **The Nation** featured an IWPR graph on pay secrecy by employer type in "Why Do Bosses Want Their Employees' Salaries to Be Secret?" (April 11, 2014).

• **Marie Claire** cited IWPR's statistics on pay secrecy in, "Why We Need to Know Our Coworkers' Salaries" (May 9, 2014).

• **NPR** cited IWPR research on pay secrecy in "Pay Secrecy Policies at Work: Often Illegal and Misunderstood" (April 13, 2014).

• Pay secrecy findings from an IWPR survey were cited in a **Washington Post** column, "Steven Pearlstein: Want a Say on Pay? Tell Them What You Make" (May 23, 2014).

• **The Atlantic** quotes IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch and cites IWPR research on pay secrecy and wage discrimination in, "When the Boss Says, 'Don't Tell Your Coworkers How Much You Get Paid'" (July 15, 2014).

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