Pioneering Research on the Costs and Benefits of Paid Family Leave

By Jeff Hayes, Ph.D.

Since its founding, IWPR has studied the costs and benefits of American workers’ access to leave for childbirth, personal health needs, or family caregiving. IWPR’s inaugural publication, Unnecessary Losses: Costs to Americans of the Lack of Family and Medical Leave (IWPR #A101) showed that by not recognizing the need for work-life balance, established policies not only failed to support workers and their families, but were costly to taxpayers. The study’s findings informed the passage of job-protected, unpaid leave in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Expanding beyond unpaid leave, IWPR studied the possibility of providing paid family leave by enhancing Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) programs operating in California, Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island in a fact sheet (IWPR #A118, 1996) describing the program and in a paper (IWPR #A117) presented at the American Economic Association in 1995. Since that time, three states—California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island—have implemented paid family leave expansions.

More recently, IWPR worked in conjunction with the Labor Resource Center (LRC) at the University of Massachusetts–Boston to develop a flexible econometric model for estimating the costs and benefits of paid family and medical leave insurance proposals. The original IWPR/LRC Family and Medical Leave Cost Simulation Model used data from the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) 2000 FMLA survey and the March Current Population Survey (CPS), and incorporates the unique features of various proposed programs, from waiting periods to eligibility criteria. This IWPR/LRC model has been used to estimate the costs and benefits of proposed paid family leave legislation in several states: Massachusetts, New Mexico, Maine, Maryland, Illinois, Minnesota, and Washington.

This year, the model was used by IWPR to study the costs and benefits of paid leave in the District of Columbia in collaboration (continued on p.4)
It has been a great year for IWPR. Among many report releases, strong press coverage, and great exposure in the popular media, I want to particularly share with you my excitement at the new era that has begun in the struggle to attain paid parental leave in the United States. From President Obama’s 2015 State of the Union speech to the 2016 presidential candidates from both parties, the call for paid parental leave has come to the fore. While one candidate attacked the need for any legislation guaranteeing such policies (claiming that employers that find it important to their business will do it on their own), many candidates have supported the call for paid parental leave policy at the federal level, although most have not yet issued detailed plans. Never before has paid family leave been addressed so prominently in these venues.

I am very proud to say that IWPR’s dogged work since the mid-1990s to present paid family leave as a realistic option for the United States is finally paying off. As noted in Jeff Hayes’ opening article in this newsletter, IWPR first highlighted the use of state Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) programs—which already covered recovery—as vehicles for paid family leave policy at the federal level, although most have not yet issued detailed plans. Never before has paid family leave been addressed so prominently in these venues.

Currently, the District of Columbia is one of several local and state jurisdictions that is actively exploring how to establish a new paid leave program without a TDI system to build upon. The District won one of four competitive grants offered by the Women’s Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, to enable research on feasibility, and the District contracted with IWPR for assistance with its analysis. This year, the Women’s Bureau awarded eight grants and IWPR is expecting to work with four of the winning jurisdictions.

The Women’s Bureau grants seemed to have started an avalanche as several other states are spending their own funds on feasibility studies for paid family leave. For sure, an avalanche began in the tech industry as firms competed with one another to offer family leave. As reported by Elle, Netflix started it by offering up to one year paid leave; Microsoft then offered 12 paid weeks for family care, in addition to 8 for maternity disability. Adobe Systems then announced an expansion of maternity leave from 17 to 26 weeks and a doubling of fathers’ time off from 2 weeks to 4 weeks. Amazon responded to all this with 20 weeks off for pregnancy including 4 weeks prepartum and up to 6 weeks off for fathers. Finally, Spotify now gives up to 6 month off with pay anywhere from 2 months before birth to a child’s third birthday. Of course, firms with highly skilled talent are more likely to make such an investment, but Facebook also requires its contracting firms (providing services such as food and cleaning among other services) to provide parental leave or a lump sum of $4,000 in lieu of paid leave. Mark Zuckerberg, founder and CEO of Facebook, is currently taking a two-month leave after the birth of his family’s first child. Policies and practices such as these dramatically change the climate in favor of change at a national level. It is an international embarrassment that 183 countries have paid parental leave and only the US—along with Papua New Guinea—does not (according to the International Labour Organization). Should the current discussion on national security leave any room and the issue of family leave reverberate in the presidential election in 2016, change could happen much more quickly than is commonly expected. IWPR’s work will be central to the action! Stay tuned.
Hackathon on Status of Women in the States Dataset Reveals New Insights

By Jennifer Clark

Capital One’s Small Business Decision Sciences team hosted a ‘hackathon’ at the bank’s headquarters in McLean, VA, on September 9, using data from IWPR’s Status of Women in the States: 2015 project. A hackathon allows groups of analysts to spend a focused amount of time analyzing and visualizing data in different ways to reveal new insights or answer specific problem statements, such as, “What explains state-by-state differences in the gender wage gap?”

IWPR’s data on the status of women, all available for reference and download at statusofwomendata.org, is one of the most comprehensive sources of information on women in the United States, with national and state-level data on women covering a range of topics, including Political Participation, Employment & Earnings, Work & Family, Poverty & Opportunity, Reproductive Rights, Health & Well-Being, and Violence & Safety. The Status of Women in the States: 2015 report and website include additional data on Millennials, older women, immigrant women, women in unions, and women in same-sex households. The interactive website also includes detailed breakdowns by race and ethnicity by state, making it the most accessible, comprehensive source for data on women of color in the United States.

The depth and breadth of information available made IWPR’s Status of Women in the States dataset an ideal focus of the hackathon’s energies. Over 30 of Capital One’s data scientists and analysts split into five teams, each focusing on a particular area of data with related research questions to investigate, or ‘hack’ through. Team 1 focused on women in STEM fields, looking into why some states have a higher share of women working in STEM than other states; team 2 tackled women’s social status, exploring correlations between different indicators on Poverty & Opportunity and Violence & Safety indices; teams 3 and 4 both attempted to unpack the differences in women’s and men’s earnings by state, with team 3 aiming to isolate the key contributing factor to a wider wage gap, and team 4 identifying correlations between low and high earnings with other factors, such as the state’s political leanings; and team 5 investigated trends in women’s business ownership in the states over the last two decades.

At the conclusion of the hackathon, a panel of judges, including IWPR President Heidi Hartmann, Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault and senior Capital One leadership, judged presentations of each group’s findings based on key criteria, including analysis and insight generation, presentation and visualization, and innovation and originality of ideas. The winning team was team 4, which presented compelling evidence of the characteristics of states that have high and low earnings for women. The results from the hackathon will be included in a future IWPR publication. For more on IWPR’s Status of Women in the States: 2015, visit www.statusofwomendata.org.

Examining the Intersections Between Gender, Urbanization, and Democratic Governance

By Haley Nolan and Lindsey Reichlin

With two-thirds of the world’s population predicted to live in urban areas by the year 2050, the global landscape is changing rapidly. Reviewing existing literature and data across a range of fields, authors Lindsey Reichlin, IWPR Research Associate and Program Manager, and Elyse Shaw, IWPR Research Associate, examined the experiences of women in urban settings in Gender, Urbanization, and Democratic Governance, a white paper commissioned by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and released in June 2015. The paper, which incorporates feedback from an expert roundtable of former policymakers, development practitioners, academics, and researchers, explores the gendered experiences of city inhabitants and discusses how increasing women’s voice and agency in urban governance, policymaking, and planning can help distribute the benefits of urban living more equitably.

IWPR’s research found that urbanization, while associated with increased access to social, economic, and political opportunities, is also characterized by persistent gender norms and lacking social infrastructure to support women’s needs. Urban women face distinct challenges from those faced by their male counterparts, including unequal access to education, vulnerability to gender-based violence, deficient labor and legal protections, constrained urban mobility, and a division of labor which holds women responsible for the majority of unpaid domestic work and family care. These challenges contribute to the persistent exclusion of women from urban decision-making processes and political inner circles.

The white paper emphasizes the importance of increasing women’s representation in urban decision making, highlighting the utility of mechanisms such as labor unions, grassroots women’s movements, digital technologies and social media, voter engagement, and gender quotas for bringing women’s issues and women’s voices into the spotlight. The paper also highlights the need for improved and expanded sex-disaggregated data that can better inform city development.

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Spotlight: Student Parents in the News

By Rachel Linn

Student parents have been gaining visibility in recent months among the media, funders, and policymakers. In August, presidential candidate Hillary Clinton released her higher education proposal, which highlighted the importance of child care for student parent success, and included a significant increase in funding for the Child Care Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program. IWPR's fact sheets—"4.8 Million College Students are Raising Children" and "Campus Child Care Declining Even As Growing Numbers of Parents Attend College"—have been cited in coverage of the proposal. News outlets used IWPR research and interviewed experts to draw attention to the "invisible population" of college students with children, particularly the need for accessible and affordable childcare options. Social media was also buzzing with the topic of student parents, as IWPR partnered with the Young Invincibles to host a tweet chat about the barriers these students face and policy solutions that encourage postsecondary success as part of Young Invincibles' popular #MillennialMon series.

In addition to increased visibility in the media, two new major campaigns have recently been launched by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Lumina Foundation, both with a strong emphasis on supporting low-income parents in college. With a total investment of $11.6 million, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation launched two new pilot programs—Supporting Transitions to Employment for Parents (STEPS) and Mobility and Opportunity for Valuable Employment by Upskilling Parents (MOVE UP)—to help families across the United States increase workforce mobility and achieve economic security.

The Lumina Foundation’s Today’s College Op-Ed Project, which features IWPR’s research on student parents, targets credential attainment among all students, including students that may be older, enrolled in alternative educational options, or have limited time due to employment or dependent children. IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault spoke on a panel at the release event for the Foundation’s campaign, held in the U.S. Senate on September 17.

Press highlights on student parents:

- IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault authored an op-ed published by The Council for Advancement and Support of Education, about the importance of child care to student parents as part of her Public Voices Fellowship with The OpEd Project (September 18, 2015).

- Danielle Paquette from The Washington Post cited IWPR’s research on student parents and interviewed Research Associate Lindsey Reichlin in “This simple addition to college campuses could cut costs for a quarter of undergrads” (August 10, 2015).

- Politico cited IWPR Status of Women in the States research on proportion of family income spent on child care in “Clinton Wants to Expand Grants, Services for Parents Who Attend College” (August 14, 2015).


- National Journal cited IWPR research on student parents and quotes Research Associate Lindsey Reichlin in “Why Hillary Clinton Faces Steep Hurdles in Helping Student Parents” (August 20, 2015).

- Today cited IWPR research on the number of college campuses with child care in “Should Babies be in the Classroom? One Mom’s Fight to Bring Her Daughter to Class” (September 24, 2015).

Paid Family Leave continued from cover

with D.C.’s Department of Employment Services. The analysis was part of a recent family of studies funded by the Women’s Bureau at the U.S. DOL to inform the development or implementation of paid family and medical leave programs at the state level. The research continues to show that providing leave benefits under alternative policy designs could provide substantial benefits at relatively low cost. Early results were used by members of the D.C. City Council for a proposal to provide up to 16 weeks of partially paid leave for employees of private employers in the District of Columbia and allow DC residents working for the federal government or employers outside of the District to opt in. The legislation, if it passes, could be the most generous paid leave policy in the country.

Beginning in 2014, IWPR and IMPAQ International have been working under contract with the Department of Labor’s Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Chief Evaluation Office to update the IWPR/LRC simulation model to base leave-taking behaviors on the 2012 FMLA survey and the American Community Survey (ACS) for local labor force estimates. The larger sample size in the ACS provides greater geographic detail than what is available in the CPS for studying family and medical leave proposals in states, counties, or cities. Furthermore, the additional data available in the ACS on place of work allows for greater focus on the analysis of costs and benefits to employers in local areas considering policy changes.

Moving forward, IWPR, under federal and state research contracts, will be using the updated Family and Medical Leave Cost Simulation Model to study leave policies in Minnesota, New Hampshire, Montgomery County, MD, and the expansion of Rhode Island’s Temporary Caregiver plan.

For more IWPR research on paid family leave visit: http://www.iwpr.org/initiatives/family-leave-paid-sick-days
IWPR General and Project Support

IWPR Project Support
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In Honor/Memorial
• Barbara Effron made a gift in honor of Heidi Hartmann.
• Maria Floro made a gift in memory of Barbara B, Gigi Francisco, Teodora F.

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Contact Rachel Eichhorn, IWPR Development Coordinator, with any inquiries about supporting IWPR research at eichhorn@iwpr.org.
Family Leave and Paid Sick Days

The Boston Globe editorial board cited IWPR research on paid sick leave in an editorial, "Paid sick leave: a good law and a good process" (June 23, 2015).

MarketWatch cited IWPR’s research on paid parental leave in the U.S. in “Nearly two-thirds of American workers don’t take paid parental leave” (July 31, 2015).

The Guardian links to IWPR research on parental leave access and usage in “Men Need Parental Leave Just as Much as Women and Kids do” (August 27, 2015).

A Marketplace article, “What We Know about Paid Sick Leave” quoted IWPR Study Director Jessica Milli on the impact of San Francisco’s paid sick leave law (September 8, 2015).

Fusion quoted Study Director Jessica Milli on workers hit hardest by lack of paid leave in “Obama Just Extended Paid Sick Leave to 300,000 Workers. Millions More Still Need It” (September 8, 2015).

The Huffington Post quoted IWPR Study Director Jeff Hayes in “Flu Rate Would Decline Significantly if the U.S. Mandated Paid Sick Leave” (October 6, 2015).

The Washington Post interviewed IWPR Study Director Jeff Hayes on a paid leave bill introduced to the DC City Council in “D.C.’s 16-week family leave plan would be most generous in U.S” (October 5, 2015). “It’s a very cost-effective program, it doesn’t require a lot of money to provide a whole lot of benefit” Jeff Hayes told the Post.

Slate cited IWPR as the co-architect of the DC City Council proposal for paid leave in “All Washington, D.C., Residents May Get 16 Weeks of Paid Family Leave” (October 6, 2015).

Status of Women in the States

The New York Times Upshot linked to IWPR’s Status of Women in the States interactive maps on Work & Family in “Stuff We Liked” (June 12, 2015).

Fortune created a graphic using IWPR’s Status of Women in the States data, and quotes Study Director Ariane Hegewisch in “The best and worst states for women’s careers” (June 23, 2015).

Fast Company cites IWPR's data on millennial women from the Status of Women in the States in “4 ways for Millennial women to prepare for leadership roles” (July 29, 2015).

IWPR Study Director Cynthia Hess authored an op-ed published in Quartz, “Instead of hoverboards and flying cars, real progress should mean solving inequality” (August 8, 2015).

Fortune quotes Heidi Hartmann on women’s political participation in “On our 95th Women’s Equality Day, Women are Still Waiting for Equal Treatment” (August 26, 2015).

Bloomberg Business cited IWPR’s research on Utah’s ranking on Work & Family in “Why Utah Can’t Afford to Keep Its 1970s Gender Gaps” (October 13, 2015).

Pacific Standard uses Status of Women in the States data to compare California, Alabama, & Mississippi in “How California Stacks Up Against the Worst States for Women Workers” (October 8, 2015).

Report on the Status of Women in Colorado released by IWPR and the Women’s Foundation of Colorado was covered by the Denver Post in “Persistent wage gap contributing to poverty among women” (October 27, 2015).

Girls and Women of Color

Governing Magazine quoted IWPR President Heidi Hartmann on the need for the White House to include both boys and girls when establishing policy priorities in “My Brother’s Keeper Is Great, But What About the Girls?” (May 15, 2015).

NBC News cited Status of Women in the States data on labor force participation by race/ethnicity in “Against All Odds: Economic Inequities for Black Women Cripple Communities” (July 8, 2015).

The Atlantic cited IWPR’s analysis and interviewed IWPR Postdoctoral Fellow Chandra Childers in “My Brother’s Keeper, but Maybe Not My Sister’s” (July 2, 2015).

Mother Jones featured IWPR's findings on the post-Katrina experiences of black women from New Orleans public housing in, “‘They Would Have Killed You All’” (August 28, 2015).


The Atlantic CityLab highlighted findings from IWPR “Get to the Bricks” report in “5 Ways That Black Women Suffered Due to Katrina” (August 28, 2015).

Women in Unions

The Wall Street Journal cites IWPR finding that women in unions have higher median weekly earnings that nonunion workers in “Are Women the New Face of Organized Labor?” (September 7, 2015)

Think Progress cites IWPR finding that women in unions have higher median weekly earnings that nonunion workers in “Why Union Members Are Better Off” (September 7, 2015)

Al Jazeera America cites IWPR findings that women in unions have higher median weekly earnings in “Unionization Found to Reduce Pay Discrimination” (September 7, 2015)

CBS Money Watch cites IWPR finding that women in unions have higher media weekly earnings in “Why Women May Be the New Face of Labor” (September 9, 2015).

Women and Overtime Pay

Al Jazeera America cites IWPR's report on changes to overtime rules in “Single mothers ‘most likely’ to benefit from paid overtime expansion” (August 11, 2015).

Fortune cites IWPR’s report on changes
to overtime rules in “Women would be the biggest winners in an expansion of overtime laws” (August 12, 2015)


Hollywood and Equal Pay

On the April 28 episode of her Comedy Central show, Inside Amy Schumer, comedian Amy Schumer urged viewers to go to www.notcoolwithit.com to find out more information on the gender wage gap. The link redirects visitors to IWPR's Pay Equity & Discrimination page, which includes resources on equal pay, the gender wage gap, and occupational segregation. In the May 26 episode, Schumer asks viewers to visit www. sexyrodeos.com, which also redirects to IWPR's Pay Equity & Discrimination webpage. Jezebel featured the sketch in “SexyRodeos.com Is The Internet’s Best Troll” (May, 29, 2015). Screenshots from the segments featured below.


A Washington Post article, “Jennifer Lawrence: This is what men don’t think about when they negotiate their salary” cites IWPR’s equal pay projection (October 13, 2015).

Equal Pay & Women and Work

The Guardian quoted IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch on workplace discrimination in “Reddit's Ellen Pao is latest female CEO blamed for inherited woes, experts say” (July 11, 2015). IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault was quoted in a MarketWatch article, “How the Wage Gap Changes as Women Reach Childbearing Age” (August 9, 2015).

An article by President Heidi Hartmann and Research Associate Elyse Shaw titled “Equal Pay for Women Would Decrease US Poverty” was featured on the cover of the fall edition of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s Communities & Banking magazine (September 1, 2015).

IWPR President Heidi Hartmann was quoted in a Wall Street Journal article “Gender Wage Gap Smallest on Record, but Women Still Earn 21% Less Than Men” (September 16, 2015).

IWPR President Heidi Hartmann published an op-ed on how businesses and policymakers can address the stagnant gender wage gap in Fortune, “America’s Gender Pay Gap is at a Record Low, but Hold the Celebration” (September 22, 2015).

CityLab quoted Study Director Jessica Milli on women-owned small business in “Where Can Women Entrepreneurs Find the Most Success?” (September 29, 2015).


IWPR President Heidi Hartmann discussed educational attainment and the gender wage gap in a MarketWatch article “Women are More Likely Than Men To Go To College, But They Still Get Paid Less” (October 10, 2015).

IWPR Releases Report on the Economic Status of Women in Colorado

By Rachel Linn

Data from Status of Women in the States: 2015 is being used by advocates throughout the United States to promote the advancement of women in local communities. IWPR recently worked with the Women’s Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) to release a briefing paper, “Economic Status of Women in Colorado,” an in-depth look at women’s economic security in the state. The paper found that if current trends continue, women in Colorado will not see equal pay until 2057. Based on 2014 data, female workers earned the same as comparable men, the poverty rate for all working women would be cut in half and the state economy would grow by an additional $9.2 billion, or 3.0 percent of the state’s GDP in 2014.

Accompanying the release of the briefing paper, WFCO hosted a webinar to share the findings with state policymakers, advocates, grantees, and media representatives. The webinar featured IWPR Research Associate Julie Anderson, who outlined the major findings and fielded questions regarding the gender wage gap and women’s labor force participation, educational attainment, and business ownership, particularly highlighting the differences across age and racial and ethnic groups. WFCO used the webinar to kick-off additional outreach to raise awareness of the findings, highlight their grantmaking approach to address gender inequality in Colorado, and identify policy recommendations to improve the economic standing of women in the state.

How does your state measure up? Find our more on the interactive website: www.statusofwomendata.org
LATEST IWPR PUBLICATIONS

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- Reproductive Health and Women's Educational Attainment: Women's Funds' Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Women
  IWPR #R465, October 2015
- Get to the Bricks: The Experiences of Black Women from New Orleans Public Housing After Hurricane Katrina
  IWPR #506, August 2015

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- The Gender Wage Gap: 2015
  IWPR #C433, September 2015
- Access to Paid Sick Time in Prince George's County, Maryland
  IWPR #B355, September 2015

**Quick Figures**
- Men Gain Three Out of Four New Jobs in November — Overall Continued Strong Jobs Growth;

Women Gained Majority of Jobs in Past Year
IWPR #Q044, December 2015

Women's Median Earnings as a Percent of Men's Median Earnings, 1960-2014 (Full-time, Year-round Workers) with Projection for Pay Equity in 2059
IWPR #Q041, September 2015

Unemployment Rate for Women and Men of Color Remains Higher Than for White Women and Men
IWPR #Q040, September 2015

Nearly Half of Currently Exempt Women Workers Aged 18 to 34 Will Gain Coverage Under DOL's New Proposed Overtime Salary Threshold
IWPR #Q037, August 2015