

Amanda Spishak-Thomas

Rutgers Center for State Health Policy
112 Paterson Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

aspishakthomas.com
a.spishak.thomas@ifh.rutgers.edu
(714) 343-7566

Academic Positions

- 2024 – present **Assistant Research Professor**
Rutgers Center for State Health Policy
Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research
- 2023 – 2024 **Post-Doctoral Medicaid Research Scholar**
Rutgers Center for State Health Policy
Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research

Education

- 2023 **Columbia School of Social Work, New York, NY**
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Concentration: Social Policy and Policy Analysis, Economics
- Dissertation: *Grave Robbers: Medicaid Estate Recovery and its (Un)intended Consequences on Low-Income Families*
- Committee Members: *Heidi Allen (Sponsor), Jane Waldfogel (Chair), Julien Teitler, Sarah Cohodes, Emma Sandoe*
- 2020 **Columbia School of Social Work, New York, NY**
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- 2013 **Columbia School of Social Work, New York, NY**
Master of Science in Social Work (M.S.S.W.) – Advanced Clinical Practice, Health, Mental Health, & Disabilities
- 2012 **Seattle University, Seattle, WA**
Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.) – Departmental Honors & Nonprofit Leadership, *Magna Cum Laude*

Professional Licensure

Licensed Clinical Social Worker, State of California (license #73927)

Fellowships and Honors

- 2023 **Best of AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting (ARM)**, for: *When the Bough Breaks: Financial Burdens in the Postpartum Period by Insurance Type*
- 2023 **Commencement Student Speaker**, Columbia School of Social Work
- 2022-2023 **Horowitz Foundation Award**, Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy (\$7,500)
- 2022-2023 **Ruth Fizdale Dissertation Support Program**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$5,000)
- 2022 **Student Award for Leadership and Service**, Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (\$1,500)
- 2019-2023 **Doctoral Student Travel Grant**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$1,000 annually)
- 2019-2022 **Doctoral Summer Research Funding**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$7,500 annually)
- 2018-2023 **Doctoral Fellowship**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$32,000 annually)

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Spishak-Thomas, A. Slopen, M., Daw, J., Liu, C., Underhill, K., Allen, H. “Time to Recover and Bond: The Relationship Between State PFL Policies and Postpartum Leave Taking” (*Forthcoming*)

McGovern, M.E., Treglia, D., Eliason, E.L., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Cantor, J.C. (2024). Homelessness and Maternal and Infant Health. *JAMA Network Open*, 7(11). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.42596>

Allen, H., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Underhill, K., Liu, C., Daw, J. (2024). When the Bough Breaks: The Financial Burden of Childbirth and Postpartum Care by Insurance Type. *The Milbank Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.12721>

Spishak-Thomas, A. (2024). Medicaid Enrollment and Intergenerational Transfers of Wealth among Older Adults. *The Gerontologist*, 64(7). <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnae074>

Eliason, E.L., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Steenland, M. (2022). Association of the Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansions with Postpartum Contraceptive Use and Early Postpartum Pregnancy. *Contraception*, 113, 42-48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.contraception.2022.02.012>

Kaplan, D. B., Silverstone, B., Chan, K., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Herman, C., Zlotnik, J. L. (2022). NASW's Supervisory Leaders in Aging: One-Year Practice Change Outcomes of an Innovative Training Program for Social Work Supervisors. *Gerontology and Geriatrics Education*, 44(3), 364-379. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701960.2022.2028260>

Manuscripts Under Review

Spishak-Thomas, A., Eliason, E.L. "Barriers and Needs for Postpartum Contraception: A Mixed Methods Study"

Manuscripts in Preparation

Spishak-Thomas, A., Sandoe, E., Howard, H. "30 Years of Medicaid Estate Recovery"

Spishak-Thomas, A., Sandoe, E., Howard, H. "Understanding Medicaid Estate Recovery: The Experience of North Carolina and Policy Implications for Future Reforms"

Spishak-Thomas, A., Greenhalgh-Stanley, N. "The Association of Medicaid Estate Recovery with Homeownership and Medicaid Enrollment"

Invited and Peer-Reviewed Presentations

Spishak-Thomas, A., Eliason, E.L. Barriers and Needs for Postpartum Contraception during COVID-19: A Mixed Methods Study. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, National Harbor, MD, 2024.

Spishak-Thomas, A., Sandoe, E., Howard, H. Understanding Medicaid Estate Recovery: The Experience of North Carolina and Policy Implications for Future Reforms. Poster Presentation. AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Baltimore, MD, 2024.

Spishak-Thomas, A. Medicaid Enrollment and Intergenerational Transfers of Wealth among Older Adults. Poster Presentation. Population Association of America, Columbus, OH, 2024.

Spishak-Thomas, A., Slopen, M., Allen, H., Daw, J., Underhill, K. The Role of State PFML Policies in Determining Length and Composition of Parental Leave. Society for Social Work and Research, Washington, D.C., 2024.

Allen, H., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Liu, C., Underhill, K., Daw, J. When the Bough Breaks: Financial Burdens in the Postpartum Period by Insurance Type. AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2023.

Spishak-Thomas, A., Toppenberg, L., Sonsteng-Person, M., Lob, S., Bonilla, P. Can't Fight Poverty in Poverty: Organizing for Equity in Social Work. Roundtable. Society for Social Work and Research, Phoenix, AZ, 2023.

Spishak-Thomas, A. Grave Robbers: Medicaid Estate Recovery and Wealth Disparities in Intergenerational Financial Health. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., 2022.

Spishak-Thomas, A., Allen, H. The Association of the Medicaid Estate Recovery Program with Homeownership. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Austin, TX, 2022.

Eliason, E.L., **Spishak-Thomas, A.** Impacts of the Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansions on Closely Spaced Pregnancies and Postpartum Contraceptive Use. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Austin, TX, 2022.

Eliason, E.L., **Spishak-Thomas, A.** Association Between Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansions and Breastfeeding among Low-Income Women. Poster Presentation. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 2021 (online).

Spishak-Thomas, A., Aivadyan, C. 'So many disincentives to take care of ourselves': A Photovoice Study on Graduate Student Workers' Health Care Experiences. Poster Presentation. Society for Social Work and Research, San Francisco, CA, 2021 (online).

Spishak-Thomas, A., Slopen, M. Making Work Pay (the Rent): Does the Earned Income Tax Credit Affect Housing Mobility among Low Income Workers. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., 2020 (online).

Kaplan, D.B., Silverstone, B., Chan, K., **Spishak-Thomas, A.** NASW's Supervisory Leaders in Aging: One-year Practice Change Outcomes of an Innovative Training Program for Social Work Supervisors. Gerontological Society of America, Philadelphia, PA, 2020 (online).

Allen, H., Zhang, Y., Eliason, E.L., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Frankel, C. Adverse Childhood Experiences and their Relationship with Depression among Adults in a Low-Income Uninsured Population. Society for Social Work and Research, Washington, D.C., 2020.

Price E., Garg M., **Spishak-Thomas A.**, Crevensten H., Ranji, S. "Doctor, Your Patient Wants to Leave": Navigating Elopement Risk in Patients Who Lack Decision Making Capacity. Workshop at Society of Hospital Medicine National Meeting, Orlando, FL, 2018.

Review Experience

Conference Abstract Review

03/2021 Council on Social Work Education 67th Annual Program Meeting

Peer-Reviewed Journal Review

11/2024	BMC Public Health
09/2024	Families in Society
03/2024	The Milbank Quarterly
06/2023	Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved
03/2023	The Gerontologist
02/2023	Journal of Women's Health

Research Experience

2020 – 2023 **Doctoral Research Assistant**, Columbia World Projects
Leveraging Medicaid in the "Fourth Trimester": A Path to Averting Maternal Mortality and Morbidity in the U.S.
PIs: Heidi Allen, Jamie Daw, Kristen Underhill

2021 **Doctoral Research Assistant**, Columbia School of Social Work
Elective Deliveries
PIs: Julien Teitler, Nancy Reichman

2018 – 2021 **Doctoral Research Assistant**, Columbia School of Social Work
The Earned Income Tax Credit and the Health of Adults without Dependent Children: A Randomized Controlled Trial
PIs: Heidi Allen, Peter Meunnig

- 2019 – 2020 **Doctoral Research Assistant**, Columbia School of Social Work
Evaluating the Health Effects of Insurance-Subsidized Health Foods at Walmart
PI: Heidi Allen
- 2018 – 2020 **Doctoral Research Assistant**, Adelphi University
Strengthening Social Work Leaderships and Gerontological Capacity on the Front Lines of
Service to Older Adults
PIs: Daniel Kaplan, Barbara Silverstone

Teaching Experience

- 05/2021 – 07/2021 **Instructor**, Columbia School of Social Work
Advocacy: Decolonizing Mezzo- and Macro-practice in Social Work
- 12/2023 **Guest lecturer**, Rutgers University Health Sciences
Introduction to Implementation Science and Program Evaluation, “Dissemination and Sustainability”
- 11/2020 **Guest lecturer**, Columbia School of Social Work
Social Welfare Policy, “U.S. Health Policy”
- 11/2020 **Guest lecturer**, Columbia School of Social Work
Human Behavior in the Social Environment, “Social Ties, Social Support, and Behavior”
- 06/2020 **Guest lecturer**, Columbia School of Social Work
Program Evaluation in Social Services, “Dissemination and Sustainability”
- 07/2019 **Guest lecturer**, Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work
Seminar in Social Welfare Policy II: Health and Mental Health Systems, “Health Policy Advocacy and Political Social Work”
- 09/2020 – 12/2020 **Teaching Associate**, Columbia School of Social Work
Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- 09/2020 – 12/2020 **Teaching Associate**, Columbia School of Social Work
Social Welfare Policy
- 01/2020 – 05/2020 **Teaching Assistant**, Columbia School of Social Work
Seminar on Policy Practice II
- 06/2019 – 08/2019 **Senior Teaching Mentor**, Columbia University Irving Medical Center
Summer Health Profession Education Program (SHPEP)
- 03/2019 – 06/2019 **Inclusive Teaching Training**, Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning

Clinical Social Work Experience

- 01/2015 – 08/2018 **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco, CA**
Inpatient Medical/Surgical and Oncology Social Worker
- 09/2013 – 01/2015 **CPMC Ray Dolby Brain Health Center, San Francisco, CA**
Family Care Specialist
- 09/2013 – 01/2015 **Alzheimer’s Association, San Jose, CA**
Family Care Specialist

Academic Service and Policy Practice

2023	Search Committee Member , Rutgers Center for State Health Policy
2023 – Present	Business Affairs and Licensing Committee Chair , Brooklyn Community Board 6, Office of the Brooklyn Borough President
2022 – Present	Appointed Member of Brooklyn Community Board 6 , Office of the Brooklyn Borough President
2021 – 2022	Bargaining Committee Representative , Student Workers of Columbia-UAW Local 2710
2021 – 2023	Social Work Representative , Columbia University PhD Council
2020 – 2023	Doctoral Student Peer Mentor , Peer-to-Peer Doctoral Student Mentoring Program, Columbia School of Social Work
2020 – Present	Support Group Facilitator , Alzheimer’s Association of New York City
2020 – 2021	Founding Member , Doctoral Student Task Force, Columbia School of Social Work
2020	Selected Student Representative , Doctoral Program Orientation, Columbia School of Social Work
2019 – 2022	Advocacy Collective , Planned Parenthood of Greater New York
2019	Political Boot Camp , Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy
2018 – 2023	Health Care Working Group , Student Workers of Columbia-UAW Local 2710
2016 – 2017	Leadership Development Institute , San Francisco Department of Veterans Affairs
2015 – 2018	Support Group Facilitator , Alzheimer’s Association of Northern California/Northern Nevada

Memberships

AcademyHealth
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Population Association of America
Society of Social Work and Research