

# Amanda Spishak-Thomas

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## Education

- 05/2023 Columbia School of Social Work, New York, NY  
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)  
Concentration: Social Policy and Policy Analysis, Economics  
  
Dissertation Title: Grave Robbers: Medicaid Estate Recovery and its (Un)intended Consequences on Low-Income Families  
  
Dissertation Committee Members: Heidi Allen (Sponsor), Jane Waldfogel (Chair), Julien Teitler, Sarah Cohodes, Emma Sandoe
- 10/2020 Columbia School of Social Work, New York, NY  
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- 05/2013 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
- 06/2012 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

- 2022-2023 **Horowitz Foundation Award**, Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy (\$7,500)  
2022-2023 **Ruth Fizedale 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)  
2018-2023 **Doctoral Fellowship**, Columbia School of Social Work, (\$32,000 annually)  
2019-2022 **Doctoral Summer Research Funding**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$7,500 annually)  
2019-2023 **Doctoral Student Travel Grant**, Columbia School of Social Work (\$1,000 annually)

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

Eliason, E., **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*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701960.2022.2028260>

## Working Papers

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

**Spishak-Thomas, A.** "Medicaid Enrollment and Intergenerational Transfers of Wealth among Older Adults"

**Spishak-Thomas, A.,** Sandoe, E. “Understanding Medicaid Estate Recovery: The Experience of North Carolina”

**Spishak-Thomas, A.,** Eliason, E. “Reasons Underlying Family Planning Actions in the Postpartum Period”

### **Works in Progress**

**Spishak-Thomas, A.,** Eliason, E. “Exploring Preconception Family Planning Use and Pregnancy Intention among Women with a Live Birth”

### **Invited and Peer-Reviewed Presentations**

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., **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., **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., 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., **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.

### **Research**

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  
Instructor**

05/2021 – 07/2021      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Instructor** – Advocacy: Decolonizing Mezzo- and Macro-practice in Social Work

**Guest Lecturer**

11/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Guest Lecturer** – Social Welfare Policy, “U.S. Health Policy”

11/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Guest Lecturer** – Human Behavior in the Social Environment, “Social Ties, Social Support, and  
Behavior”

06/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Guest Lecturer** – Program Evaluation in Social Services, “Dissemination and Sustainability”

07/2019      Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work  
**Guest Lecturer** – Seminar in Social Welfare Policy II: Health and Mental Health Systems,  
“Health Policy Advocacy and Political Social Work”

**Teaching Associate**

09/2020 – 12/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Teaching Associate** – Human Behavior in the Social Environment

09/2020 – 12/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Teaching Associate** – Social Welfare Policy

**Teaching Assistant**

01/2020 – 05/2020      Columbia School of Social Work  
**Graduate Teaching Assistant** – Seminar on Policy Practice II

**Teaching Fellowships**

06/2019 – 08/2019      Columbia University Irving Medical Center  
**Senior Teaching Mentor** – Summer Health Profession Education Program (SHPEP)

**Teaching Trainings**

03/2019 – 06/2019      Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning  
Inclusive Teaching Training

## **Review Experience**

### **Conference Abstract Review**

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

### **Peer-Reviewed Journal Review**

02/2023 Journal of Women's Health

03/2023 The Gerontologist

06/2023 Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved

## **Clinical 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**

## **University Service and Policy Practice**

2022 – Present **Brooklyn Community Board 6 Member**, New York City Community Board

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