

# Amanda Spishak-Thomas

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## 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

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>

Amanda Spishak-Thomas • *Curriculum Vitae*, November 2024

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.** 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"

**Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Eliason, E.L. "Barriers and Needs for Postpartum Contraception during COVID-19: A Mixed Methods Study"

### **Manuscripts in Preparation**

**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"

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

### **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 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Program Meeting

### Peer-Reviewed Journal Review

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