

# Amanda Spishak-Thomas

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## Current Appointment

07/2023 – Present      **Post-Doctoral Medicaid Research Scholar**  
Rutgers Center for State Health Policy  
Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research

## Education

05/2023      **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*

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

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)

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

**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., **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**

Allen, H., **Spishak-Thomas, A.**, Underhill, K., Liu, C., Daw, J. "When the Bough Breaks: The Financial Burden of Childbirth and Postpartum Care by Insurance Type"

**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"

### **Manuscripts in Preparation**

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

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

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	<b>Guest lecturer</b> , Rutgers University Health Sciences <i>Introduction to Implementation Science and Program Evaluation, “Dissemination and Sustainability”</i>
11/2020	<b>Guest lecturer</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Social Welfare Policy, “U.S. Health Policy”</i>
11/2020	<b>Guest lecturer</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Human Behavior in the Social Environment, “Social Ties, Social Support, and Behavior”</i>
06/2020	<b>Guest lecturer</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Program Evaluation in Social Services, “Dissemination and Sustainability”</i>
07/2019	<b>Guest lecturer</b> , Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work <i>Seminar in Social Welfare Policy II: Health and Mental Health Systems, “Health Policy Advocacy and Political Social Work”</i>
09/2020 – 12/2020	<b>Teaching Associate</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Human Behavior in the Social Environment</i>
09/2020 – 12/2020	<b>Teaching Associate</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Social Welfare Policy</i>
01/2020 – 05/2020	<b>Teaching Assistant</b> , Columbia School of Social Work <i>Seminar on Policy Practice II</i>
06/2019 – 08/2019	<b>Senior Teaching Mentor</b> , Columbia University Irving Medical Center <i>Summer Health Profession Education Program (SHPEP)</i>
03/2019 – 06/2019	<b>Inclusive Teaching Training</b> , Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning
<b>Clinical Social Work Experience</b>	
01/2015 – 08/2018	<b>U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, San Francisco, CA</b> Inpatient Medical/Surgical and Oncology Social Worker
09/2013 – 01/2015	<b>CPMC Ray Dolby Brain Health Center, San Francisco, CA</b> Family Care Specialist
09/2013 – 01/2015	<b>Alzheimer’s Association, San Jose, CA</b> Family Care Specialist
<b>Academic Service and Policy Practice</b>	
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