



for

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

# Women's Policy Research

## IWPR Launches New National Work on the Status of Women in the States

By Cynthia Hess, Ph.D.

IWPR recently launched new work on its Status of Women in the States project, an influential series of research reports and data analyses that has provided reliable data on the economic, social, health, and political status of women for nearly two decades. With partial support from the Ford Foundation, IWPR is developing a national report with state-level data on the status of women, a report on the status of women in the U.S. South (including eleven Southern states and the District of Columbia), and fact sheets on the status of women, one each for the 50 states and Washington, DC. This work will expand on IWPR's long-running series: to date, IWPR has produced more than 100 Status of Women in the States publications, including comprehensive reports on each U.S. state and the District of Columbia, several city/area reports, and a series of reports and a toolkit on women in the Middle East and North Africa.

Developed in partnership with an expert advisory committee, IWPR's forthcoming reports will provide disaggregated data to explore how contextual factors such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation correlate with higher or lower status on a range of indicators. Following the methodology developed by IWPR in the mid-1990s, the reports will provide a composite index for each of the main topical areas covered—employment and earnings, social and economic autonomy,

health and well-being, reproductive rights, and political participation—and assign letter grades and rankings that reflect each state's performance in these areas. IWPR will also develop new chapters for the national and Southern states reports on work-family issues and violence against women. The reports will be released in 2015.

In the initial project phase, IWPR has established advisory committees for the national and Southern states reports consisting of researchers, advocates, service providers, business and labor

leaders, media and communications experts, philanthropists, and policymakers. In later phases IWPR will enhance outreach and dissemination through website development and online engagement. The project expects to develop interactive charts and maps, downloadable data tables, and other data visualizations that will all be available on the website. These visualizations will make the findings more user-friendly and communicate information about the status of women in an engaging and succinct way. *(continued on p. 4)*



Dr. Heidi Hartmann introduces briefing panelists. From left: Shawn Fremstad, Robert Cherry, Isabel Sawhill, Elaine Maag, Heidi Hartmann, and Congressman Thomas E. Petri.

## Briefing Explores Tax Credits and Marriage Penalties Among Low-income Americans

By Susan Andrzejewski and Mary Sykes, Research Intern

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit for low-income working individuals and families that provides critical assistance to millions of working people. Although many people benefit from the EITC, the program has gaps and some potential weaknesses. For example, the EITC provides little assistance to low-income workers without children. Further, it puts couples who marry at risk of losing or incurring a substantial reduction in their EITC benefits. To explore policy implications of the current system and ideas to improve it, IWPR, working with

Congressman Thomas E. Petri (WI-06), held a congressional briefing, "Improving Tax Credits for New Mothers and Reducing Marriage Penalties for Low-Income Americans," on March 27, 2013 on Capitol Hill.

In his opening remarks, Congressman Petri expressed his concerns about the reduction of marriage in the United States. Currently under the EITC, if two people with low-incomes marry, they may lose some or all of their EITC benefits depending on the size of their combined income. To address this issue, the Congressman recently co-sponsored a bill with *(continued on p.4)*

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**HAPPENING NOW**  
 IWPR President Heidi Hartmann (right) with President Barack Obama at the White House on Equal Pay Day, April 8, 2014.

Equal Pay Day 2014 was marked by President Obama issuing an executive order requiring businesses that hold contracts with the federal government not to retaliate against workers who share pay information with each other. A survey of 2,700 adults by IWPR a few years ago found that about 62 percent of female private sector workers, and 60 percent of male private sector workers, are discouraged or prohibited by their employers from discussing wage information. Famously, Lilly Ledbetter claims that she would be fired instantly if she ever discussed her pay. I had the privilege of being invited on stage with the President and Ms. Ledbetter when the President announced and signed Executive Order #13665 on April 8, 2014, at the White House. Where pay secrecy is not practiced (most public sector jobs for instance), pay between women and men is more equal.

As Steven Pearlstein wrote recently in the business section of *The Washington Post*, such sharing of information among workers for the purposes of bettering their working conditions has been protected by federal law for decades but that hasn't stopped some employers from attempting to discourage that and other protected worker efforts to improve their lot—for example, by choosing a union to represent them in negotiations.

We are seeing a new wave of worker and public activism around the country as such issues as equal pay, low pay, paid sick days, and paid family leave are taken up in many cities and states. Last year, Boston set the goal of becoming the first city in the nation to eradicate the gender pay gap. Seattle recently formed a Gender Equity in Pay Task Force to study wage inequity within city government; the City Council has approved an expenditure of \$1.4 million to strengthen the City's personnel and equal employment offices and has also initiated a study of how to provide paid parental leave to city employees. Vermont and Minnesota have passed comprehensive programs to improve women's pay through the right to request flexibility and improved pay transparency.

## President's Message

The District of Columbia and 21 states have set their minimum wages above the federal minimum wage, and 12 states and DC have tied their wage increases to the increases in the cost of living. In 7 states (mostly in the West), the tipped minimum wage is set at the same level as the overall minimum wage (in contrast to the federal government minimum wage for tipped workers which is set at \$2.13 per hour, compared with \$7.25 for all workers). In 25 states, the tipped minimum wage is set above the federal tipped minimum wage. Activists in several states and cities are working to put minimum wage initiatives on the ballot this election season.

In the past several years, seven cities and one state have enacted paid sick days, some through ballot initiatives. In these jurisdictions (including the state of Connecticut and the cities of Seattle, San Francisco, New York, Newark and Jersey City, NJ, Portland, OR, and Washington, DC), workers who become ill are guaranteed access to a minimum number of paid sick days by their employers. Legislative campaigns are ongoing in more than one-third of the states as well as several cities, such as Chicago and Philadelphia; a few jurisdictions may see initiatives on the ballot this fall.

With a new program implemented in January 2014, which more than 1,000 workers have already accessed, Rhode Island became the third state in the United States (following California and New Jersey) to provide up to six weeks of paid family care leave to virtually all employees in the state. Currently, these programs, which are extensions of these states' existing Temporary Disability Insurance plans, are funded entirely by workers. A proposed national plan, the FAMILY Act, which is also based on the Temporary Disability Insurance model—but paid for by both workers and employers, was introduced in Congress in December 2013.

The tide is turning as worker and public activism succeeds in strengthening labor standards and the quality of life for millions of Americans. Businesses that understand how having basic worker protections can improve the bottom line are on board as well. In all these efforts, women are among the leadership, and IWPR's data and analysis played a key role.

*Heidi Hartmann*

# Informing Policies to Expand Sick Days Coverage to More U.S. Workers

By Jeff Hayes, Ph.D.

Recent IWPR estimates show that nearly 40 percent of workers report that they do not have paid time off when they are sick. In an effort to address this disparity, many states and local communities continue to debate and pass laws to expand access to earned sick time in the workplace. It has been eight years since San Francisco passed the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance making it the first city in the country to guarantee paid sick time to all workers. That ordinance allows workers to accrue one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked up to a maximum of 40 hours for small employers (fewer than 10 employees) and 72 hours for larger employers. Similar laws have been passed in Washington, DC, Connecticut, and Seattle, WA.

The momentum does not appear to be slowing. Since the start of 2013, laws allowing many more workers to earn paid time off for their own health needs or to care for family members passed in Portland, OR; New York City, NY; Jersey City, NJ; Newark, NJ; and Seattle, WA. In addition, Washington, DC, expanded its 2008 law to include tipped workers

and reduce the tenure requirements so workers begin accruing time immediately, which they can use after 90 days on the job.

In addition to momentum on paid sick days, some states are implementing state-wide policies on paid family leave. In 2013, Rhode Island became the third state to provide paid family leave for workers providing care when family members are sick or bonding with a new child. Like similar programs in California and New Jersey, Rhode Island was able to expand an existing state-required temporary disability insurance (TDI) program to provide insurance for these other family needs. Since the law took effect on January 5, 2014, more than a thousand workers have applied for up to four weeks of wage replacement benefits.

Local coalitions continue to support earned sick time in many states and municipalities — sometimes simultaneously. For example, many of the same organizations that advocated for the law in Portland, OR, are working to pass similar bills in Eugene, OR, as well as statewide.

Similarly, earned sick time bills have been introduced in Chicago and at the state level for Illinois. In some places, such as Oakland, CA, and Massachusetts, broader coalitions have formed to work for passage of both earned sick time and increased minimum wage bills as was successful in Seattle, WA.

IWPR continues to produce timely estimates of the costs and benefits of proposed paid sick days laws and estimates of access to paid sick days, informing policies at the state and local level. Most recently, IWPR prepared estimates of paid sick days access rates in Oakland, CA. In addition, IWPR and other research organizations have been tracking the implementation and impact of these laws. So far, in San Francisco, DC, New Jersey, California, and Connecticut employers interviewed report few problems administering policies to provide workers with paid time off and only small, if any, increases in the costs of doing business.

**For more on IWPR's research on paid sick days and family leave, visit: <http://www.iwpr.org/initiatives/family-leave-paid-sick-days>**

## Capturing Women's Community College Experiences in Mississippi

by Sylvia Krohn, Research Intern

With support from the Women's Foundation of Mississippi, IWPR recently conducted a survey of approximately 550 female students in the Mississippi community college system. Designed as part of IWPR's Student Parent

The survey shows that women who enroll in Mississippi's fifteen community colleges often do so to support their families and set a positive example for their children. More than half of all students said being in school made them more optimistic about their career prospects, and nearly two-thirds of student parents said their school participation has led their children to express greater interest in attending college. For many students, however—particularly those with children—the community college experience also includes long commuting times to classes, one or two jobs in addition to schoolwork, and significant stress, often stemming from financial worries and the demands of balancing work, school, and family life. The survey explores which supports students find most helpful in fulfilling these multiple responsibilities and identifies additional supports that may be needed.

“College has opened a vision of the world outside of the life I had known before.” -Survey Respondent

Success Initiative, the survey captures the distinctive experiences of women students in community colleges, both those who are parents and those who are not.

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**(Briefing continued from p. 1)**

Congresswoman Niki Tsongas to create a high-level commission to investigate social safety net programs and their potential effects on marriage.

Three speakers discussed their own proposals for revising the EITC. Elaine Maag, a Senior Research Associate at the Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, offered a proposal that would restructure the EITC to separate a worker credit (based on individual earnings, but phased out according to joint income) from a child credit. These two credits are structured in such a way as to increase benefits for childless workers and to reduce marriage penalties.

Isabel Sawhill, the Co-Director of the Center on Children and Families and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, also proposes to create a worker credit based on individual, not family, earnings, which would help to eliminate any marriage penalties. She also proposes to increase the EITC credit for parents of young children and limit

worker credits to those between the ages of 21 and 39. In costing out her proposal, she assumes an increase in the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour, which reduces the cost of the expansions she proposes. On net, her proposed expansion of the EITC would cost the government an additional \$10 billion, but the increase in the minimum wage would enhance payroll and income tax receipts, making her plan revenue neutral.

Robert Cherry, a Professor of Economics at the Graduate Center and Brooklyn College, CUNY, discussed his New Mothers Tax Relief proposal which leaves the structure of the EITC untouched but adds new benefits for parents of young children. His proposal also extends EITC benefits to the lower-middle class. Under Cherry's proposal, marriage penalties are greatly diminished for families with young children and in some instances, a marriage benefit is provided (that is, the credit is larger than it would be if the new parents remained single). And, families that earn between

approximately \$40,000 and \$60,000 would receive an EITC of up to \$2,000.

Shawn Fremstad, a Senior Research Associate at the Center for Economic and Policy Research and the Center for American Progress, shared his overall responses to the "carefully crafted, and thoughtful proposals." Mr. Fremstad encouraged further discussion about the EITC especially how it can be structured to include people with disabilities who are more likely to work in low income jobs and less likely to be married or have children.

IWPR President Heidi Hartmann then guided a Q & A session, which raised new questions and concerns for future study. The briefing, made possible through the generous support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provided a space to highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in the EITC.

**For upcoming IWPR events, visit:**  
<http://www.iwpr.org/events>

## Improving Tax Credits for New Mothers and Reducing Marriage Penalties for Low-Income Americans



*Congressman Thomas Petri (WI-06) gives opening remarks.*



*Briefing attendees participate in a substantive Q & A session.*



*Shawn Fremstad (left) shares his thoughts about panelists' proposals and ideas.*



*Isabel Sawhill responds to questions about the EITC. (Elaine Maag pictured on the right).*

**(Status of Women continued from p. 1)**

This phase of IWPR work on the Status of Women in the States marks an exciting new chapter in the Institute's ongoing efforts to provide reliable information that can serve as a catalyst for positive changes for women and their families.

For nearly two decades, state and federal policymakers, journalists, advocates, and community leaders have used IWPR's Status of Women in the States reports to

make the case for improved programs and public policies. The project's many outcomes include strengthening the case for millions of dollars in additional state and local funding for services that benefit women; strengthening or creating organizations, councils, or task forces on women; informing the economic agendas of local, state, and federal policymakers; and determining programmatic

investments. IWPR looks forward to continuing to provide targeted state and national data to organizations seeking to strengthen local communities and society as a whole by improving the status of women.

**For a full project description, visit:**  
<http://tiny.cc/SWS-project-description>

# IWPR President Heidi Hartmann Recognized as a 2014 American Academy of Political and Social Sciences Fellow

By Mallory Mpare

IWPR is proud to announce that Founding President Heidi Hartmann, Ph.D., has been named a 2014 American Academy of Political and Social Sciences Fellow. Each year, Fellows are elected in recognition of their contributions to improving society through research and public policy.

Reflecting the wide-ranging and interdisciplinary nature of the Academy, this year's Fellows include economists and psychologists as well as professionals in communications, education, and public policy. Dr. Hartmann shares this honor with several notable thought leaders, including Greg Duncan of the University of California, Irvine

and Kathryn Edin of Johns Hopkins University.

Each fellowship is named after a distinguished scholar or civic leader who has contributed to *The Annals*, the journal published by the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. Dr. Hartmann has been named the 2014 Charlotte Perkins Gilman Fellow, an appropriate distinction: Gilman was a self-taught economist, who wrote several books on women, including, *Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution*, at the turn of the twentieth century. There have been five other Charlotte Perkins Gilman

fellows, including a winner of the Nobel Prize. Dr. Hartmann was inducted as a fellow on May 8, 2014, at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.



IWPR President and AAPSS Fellow, Heidi Hartmann presents at the 2014 NAFE Top Companies for Executive Women Roundtable. (Photo courtesy of Twitter user @CarolEvansWM).

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- Mary Young in memory of Marianne Ferber.
- Blu Greenberg in memory of JJ Greenberg.
- Martha Mednick in memory of Sandra S. Tangri.
- Joyce Thornhill and Ann Snitow made a gift in honor of Heidi Hartmann and IWPR's 25th Anniversary.
- Ann Snitow made a gift in honor of Heidi Hartmann.
- Sally Bould in memory of Dan Schaffer.
- Carol Mukhopadhyay in memory of Rose Z. Chapnick.
- Deborah Porter made a gift in memory of Florence Hochman.

**Paid Sick Days**

*ThinkProgress* reported on IWPR paid sick days findings by race and ethnicity (March 4, 2014).

*The New York Times* featured IWPR's research on San Francisco sick day laws in their article, "Despite Business Fears, Sick-Day Laws Like New York's Work Well Elsewhere" (January 26, 2014).

**Pay Equity and the Gender Wage Gap**

IWPR President Heidi Hartmann joined MSNBC's *Rachel Maddow Show* to discuss the gender wage gap (April 8, 2014).

IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch appeared on *PBS Newshour* to discuss factors contributing to pay inequity (April 8, 2014).

IWPR President Heidi Hartmann appeared on C-SPAN's *Washington Journal* to discuss the gender wage gap (March 22, 2014).

*The Washington Post* explored why the gender wage gap has stagnated over the last decade, quoting Heidi Hartmann (March 17, 2014).

**Women, Jobs, and the Economy**

*CNN Money* quoted IWPR President Heidi Hartmann in "2013 Ends with Weakest Job Growth in Years" (January 10, 2014).

IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch appeared on an NPR radio segment "Economic Recovery: Women Bouncing Back Quicker Than Men?" (November 19, 2013).

*TIME* magazine cited findings from IWPR's analysis showing that women have regained all of the jobs they lost during the recession, bringing the number of employed women to its highest level ever (November 11, 2013).

*Bloomberg Businessweek* quoted Study Director Ariane Hegewisch in "Worsening Divorce Rate Points to Improving U.S. Growth Outlook" (February 18, 2014).

**Education**

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* quoted Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault on college affordability (April 15, 2014).

*NBC* quoted Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault on two-generation approaches to education (January 13, 2014).

An *NPR* segment on Morning Edition, "Financial Benefits of a College Degree Accumulate," featured IWPR President Heidi Hartmann discussing findings from an IWPR report on the impact of education on older Americans (January 6, 2014).

**Women in STEM**

*Nature* highlighted findings from IWPR's report on Women Faculty of color in STEM in "Inequalities at Work" (December 4, 2013).

*U.S. News and World Report* cited IWPR's report on women faculty of color in STEM (November 27, 2013).

**Reports**

**College Affordability for Low-Income Adults: Improving Returns on Investment for Families and Society**

IWPR #C412, April 2014

**How Education Pays Off for Older Americans**

IWPR #C410, December 2013

**Briefing Papers**

**Valuing Good Health in Illinois: The Costs and Benefits of Earned Sick Time**

IWPR #B326, March 2014

**Valuing Good Health in Chicago: The Costs and Benefits of Earned Sick Time**

IWPR #B327, March 2014

**Access to Earned Sick Leave in San Diego**

IWPR #B325, February 2014

**How Equal Pay for Working Women would Reduce Poverty and Grow the American Economy**

IWPR #C411, January 2014

**Access to Earned Sick Days in Eugene, Oregon**

IWPR #B323, December 2013

**Valuing Good Health in Newark: The Costs and Benefits of Earned Sick Time**

IWPR #B324, December 2013

**Fact Sheets**

**The Gender Wage Gap by Occupation and by Race and Ethnicity, 2013**

IWPR #C414, April 2014

**The Gender Wage Gap: 2013; Differences by Race and Ethnicity, No Growth in Real Wages for Women**

IWPR #C413, March 2014

**Paid Sick Days in Chicago Would Lower Health Care Costs by Reducing Unnecessary Emergency Department Visits**

IWPR #B329, March 2014

**Paid Sick Days Access in the United States: Differences by Race/Ethnicity, Occupation, Earnings, and Work Schedule**

IWPR #B328, March 2014

**Quick Figures**

**Women Gained 99,000 Jobs in March**

IWPR #Q019, April 2014

**Pay Secrecy and Wage Discrimination**

IWPR #C382, January 2014

# IWPR Embarks on Borrego Foundation Challenge to Expand Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellowship Fund

by Jourdin Batchelor

Dr. Mariam K. Chamberlain, a founding member of IWPR, the founding president of the National Council for Research on Women, and a founding member of the International Association for Feminist Economics was the driving force behind the cultivation and sustainability of the women's studies field of academic research. Throughout her life, Dr. Chamberlain fought discrimination, established new roles for women, and championed the economic analysis of women's issues. She passed away in April 2013, following complications from heart surgery.

In memory of Dr. Chamberlain and her 95th birthday, IWPR has received a \$95,000 challenge grant from Mary Rubin and the Borrego Foundation to expand the Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellowship Fund. By contributing to the fund this year, you not only double your gift with this matching grant, but you help advance Dr. Chamberlain's legacy and support IWPR's Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellowship for Women in Public Policy, which prepares recent college graduates for successful careers in policy research through a gendered lens.

The fellowship was named in honor of Mariam K. Chamberlain in 2001, and she delighted in meeting these successful young scholars interested in pursuing careers in public policy, research, and analysis to better the lives of women.

**To contribute, please visit:**  
<http://www.iwpr.org/about/membership-giving> and select "MKC Fellowship Fund" from the Program Area field.

## Spotlight on Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellows: Where are they Now?

Profile



Claudia Williams, 2007–2008

After her fellowship ended, Claudia worked as a Research Analyst for IWPR, contributing to the Institute's work on paid leave through providing data analysis and testimony. During her time at the Institute, Claudia completed a M.A. in Public Policy with a concentration on Women Studies at the George Washington University. She recently accepted a position at the Washington Area Women's Foundation as their Research and Evaluation Program Officer.

After her fellowship, Allison became an IWPR Research Analyst, providing critical assistance in data collection, coding, and analysis primarily for the Institute's "Doubly Displaced: Women and Public Housing after Hurricane Katrina" project. Upon receiving her M.A. in Sociology from the George Washington University, she moved to Chicago to begin a Ph.D. program in Sociology at the University of Illinois at Chicago.



Allison Helmuth, 2008–2009

**"IWPR inspired me a lot. It was the first time I had seen the way policy gets made, hands on. More than anything I saw the effect of laws that really take into account people's wellbeing, and how trying to address their needs really does impact their lives."**

**—Rhiana Gunn-Wright**



Youngmin Yi, 2010-2011

After completing her fellowship, Min stayed on as the Research and Program Coordinator for IWPR. After contributing substantive research to the Institute's paid sick days, retirement security, and policy impacts on breastfeeding initiatives, as well as coordinating the Institute's internship and fellowship program, she moved to Ithaca, NY to begin a Ph.D. program in Sociology at Cornell University.

While at the Institute, Rhiana provided essential support to the Student Parent Success Initiative (SPSI). Upon finishing her stint as a Mariam K. Chamberlain Fellow, Rhiana was accepted as a 2013 Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, a first for fellowship alumni. Before moving to Oxford to study comparative social policy, she completed an internship in the Office of the First Lady at the White House.



Rhiana Gunn-Wright, 2011-2013

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