

From the Chair

Linda Tesar

I wrote my doctoral dissertation in the late 1980s when the debate about whether women could “have it all” raged at full throttle. Media offered women advice for managing a life with “it all,” ranging from trivial lifestyle tips (learn to do two things at once, like blow drying your hair while your letting your nail polish dry—as if....) to the serious demands for reasonable parental leave and affordable daycare. My own father expressed his doubts that I could have a successful career and raise a family, as this was something completely outside of his own experience. I am happy to say that his views shifted over time as he took pride in how my three sons *and* my CV grew over time.

This issue, guest-edited by Caitlin Myers, offers a set of essays on the deeply personal choices about career and family made by five women economists. Their experiences range from raising a large family, to adopting, to pursuing infertility treatment, to choosing a life without children. While women have gained more autonomy over our fertility choices in the last few decades, the difficulties in balancing the needs of a family and the “greedy”

demands of a career in economics remain. I am profoundly grateful to these women for sharing their stories and their advice.

I am delighted to announce that CSWEP is inaugurating a new prize, the Janet Yellen award for exceptional public service. The first recipient is none other than Janet herself, who truly exemplifies someone who has done it all. I hope that you can join us in celebrating with Janet at the AEA meetings in Philadelphia. To celebrate this new award, CSWEP will host a reception. We will present the award, along with the Carolyn Shaw Bell award and the Elaine Bennet Research Prize during our business luncheon. Information about these events (and others that CSWEP supports—like a room for nursing mothers) can be found in the [Events section of this newsletter](#) on page 17.

CSWEP News Staff

Linda Tesar, Editor
Gina Pieters, Oversight Editor

Caitlin Myers, Co-editor
Leda Black, **Graphic Designer**

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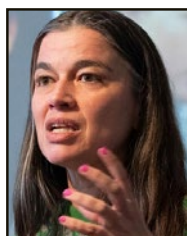
Contributors

Linda Tesar, Senior Faculty
Advisor to the Dean
on Strategic Budgetary
Affairs, Alan V. Deardorff
Professor of Economics,
University of Michigan



Caitlin Myers, John G.
McCullough Professor of
Economics, Middlebury College

Sarah Baird, Professor of
Global Health and Economics,
George Washington University



Sarah Hamersma, O'Hanley Family
Faculty Scholar and Associate
Professor of Public Administration
and International Affairs, Syracuse
University

Kelly Jones, Associate
Professor of Economics,
American University



Kosali Simon,
Distinguished Professor,
Indiana University

Jialan Wang, Associate
Professor of Finance,
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign



Introduction: Focus on Fertility

Caitlin Myers

As co-director of the CSWEP CeMENT workshop, I often hear young women ask their senior colleagues for guidance on whether and when to start a family. It is a question weighted with urgent, life-defining choices made under uncertainty.

At the time she receives her economics doctorate, the median woman in our field is 31. Most are childless—only about 13 percent have children—and stand on the cusp of a biological transition (NCSES, 2025). Fertility rates begin to decline around age 32, just as many women enter the tenure track, and assisted reproductive technologies have far lower success rates than they might imagine. For those who want children, professional and biological clocks often tick in unison, creating pressure to navigate two demanding timelines at once.

The contributors to this newsletter reflect on how they experienced and responded to that pressure in very different ways. Their stories range from parenting six children to adopting, pursuing fertility treatments, confronting pregnancy complications, or choosing to live child-free. Across their contributions, several themes emerge: the value of knowing what you want, the agency to pursue it, the need to adapt when even the best-laid plans go awry, and the benefits of sharing perspectives openly to build a more supportive profession. Our contributors—Sarah Baird, Sarah Hamersma, Kelly Jones, Kosali Simon, and Jialan Wang—practice what they preach, generously sharing their stories and hard-won wisdom.

As I read their contributions, I found myself recognizing much of what they said about the planned and the unplanned. Atypically for most women in our profession, I married young and began trying for a baby at age 23, while still in graduate school. Unfortunately, my plans for young motherhood were met with setbacks as my husband and I endured years of miscarriages and failed fertility treatments that left us in debt—before a frozen embryo transfer resulted in the birth of our first son when I was 29. At that point I was in my second year as an assistant professor, not when I had imagined becoming a parent. But after years of infertility, I welcomed motherhood whenever and however it might come. Our second son, a miraculous surprise, arrived two years and two days later. Two years after that, fate threw us another curveball when my husband was killed in a car accident, leaving me widowed with a two- and four-year-old. I had never imagined becoming a single parent to preschool-aged children while pre-tenure and living more than a thousand miles from family. What carried me through was love for my children and grace from my community, which offered countless ordinary acts of kindness that kept me afloat when I felt I might sink. In time, life shifted again: after tenure I remarried and added two more children to our blended family.

I don't claim silver linings to tragedy. But I will say this about the two births and one death that marked my pre-tenure years: I learned to set priorities with less guilt—whether that

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meant pursuing a research project simply because it interested me, skipping a conference to be home with my kids, or later ramping my work hours back up as they got older. I see this focus on agency and adaptability echoed in all of our contributors' essays. My hope is that their stories provide useful examples for younger readers and inspiration for us all. Together, we can keep building a profession that supports economists in pursuing the lives they choose while responding to the unplanned along the way.

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(NCSES) National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics. (2025, August 28). Doctorate Recipients from U.S. Universities: 2024 Data Tables (NSF 25-349). U.S. National Science Foundation.

Join the CSWEP Liaison Network!

Are you interested in connecting with others to improve the status of women in the economics profession? Consider becoming a CSWEP liaison. We are searching for liaisons who are in academic departments (both economics departments and others), government, business, and non-profit organizations in the United States and around the world. CSWEP liaisons have three responsibilities. They are 1: Distributing the CSWEP (electronic) newsletter four times a year to interested parties, and 2: Forwarding periodic emails from CSWEP about mentoring activities, conference opportunities, etc., and 3: (for those in economics departments) making sure that the department answers the annual CSWEP survey.

To see if your institution has a liaison, **take a look at the list** of over 300 amazing people at <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/participate/liaison-network>

Parenting, Academia, and Perspective

Kosali Simon

When my husband and I got engaged in graduate school, children were the furthest thing from my mind. Looking back, that seems almost irresponsible. We had one conversation on the subject shortly before we got married; I learned that he very much hoped to have several kids, while I wasn't sure I wanted any. For the next few years we didn't revisit the subject—our early careers consumed our energy and we lived in different states.

Four years later, when we finally landed assistant professor jobs at the same university, we reopened the conversation. I remember thinking, *why not?* The next year, our first child was born.

Having a baby as an assistant professor, 23 years ago

At that time, my department had a woman assistant professor with an infant, and just her presence made all the difference. She had carefully timed a summer birth. I, by contrast, had not thought that far ahead, and realized I was due at the start of a semester.

Back then, my university offered no parental leave. The only option was state-mandated disability leave, and I was fortunate not to need it. A colleague guest lectured for me while I was in labor on Thursday; I was back in the classroom by Tuesday. It sounds medieval now, but I didn't know any different, and it seemed fine at the time. My husband's office was nearby, so he would bring our son to me just after class.

That set the tone for the years that followed: imperfect, improvised, but it worked out. I took our son (and subsequent kids) to seminars and conferences because I loved the networking our profession offers and was determined not to miss out; often I used a local babysitter recommended by friends when I travelled. Over time, I started to use online caregiving platforms (like [care.com](https://www.care.com)); I would often take the youngest with me while my husband took care of the older kids at home. And there were many role models of other mothers who were professional. What could have felt isolating instead felt manageable—largely because I knew I wasn't the only one doing it.

From one child to six

We wanted our son to have a sibling, so three years later we had another boy. Watching them interact was magical. With two, I began to see the joy of sibling companionship. We decided to keep going.

Child three was born another three years later, another boy, and the older two doted on him. With three kids, our house was already full of toys and chaos, so what was one more? We hoped for a girl, but three years later, we welcomed a fourth boy into the “band of brothers.”

We felt more experienced as parents. We decided the marginal cost of more children was now low and the marginal benefit high! So we continued. Three years later, when that early prenatal visit showed that child five was another boy, we

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[care.com](https://www.care.com) <https://www.care.com>

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were delighted—and also began to imagine a daughter. Adoption gave us that chance. Around the same time I gave birth to our fifth son, our first and only daughter was born and joined our family through adoption. The symmetry felt right: six children, and a minivan filled to capacity.

The convenience of small-town life

Another thing that made parenting and academia compatible for me was location. Like many academics, we lived in a small college town, which turned out to be a gift for raising a large family. Everything was close—the office, the schools, the baseball fields, the grocery store—and my husband and I could move quickly between campus and home. If a child got sick at school, we could be there in minutes. Houses were affordable, giving us space for six kids and all their toys. Day-care centers attached to the university, reliable public schools, and the whole community were woven together in ways that made family life easier—neighbors carpooled, coworkers lived nearby, and children could safely bike to school.

In retrospect, I realize how much these practical conveniences eased the juggling act. If we had been in a big city with long commutes, expensive housing, or fragmented neighborhoods, our choices might have looked very different.

Perspective matters

Through it all, I often reminded myself how much easier my circumstances were than those of mothers historically, or mothers in less resourced settings today. Technology, flexible academic schedules, and the ability to work while rocking kids or work from anywhere and at any odd hour meant I could combine professional life and family life in ways earlier generations could not.

I thought of stories from my mother-in-law, a professor who recalled raised eyebrows when she showed up pregnant to a conference in the 1960s. By contrast,

I was surrounded by role models who showed that it was possible to be both a professor and a mother. That visibility made it feel less unusual, less awkward.

Of course, there were difficult moments, like many months of morning sickness over and over again. Late nights working after the kids went to bed, nagging doubts about whether I was shortchanging either my research or my family, the constant tradeoffs of time, deciding whether to take on another work trip. But perspective helped. Compared to mothers toiling in fields, or women without support systems, resources, or flexible careers, my challenges felt far lighter.

What made it possible

Three things sustained me. First, my good fortune at having a supportive spouse. Second, I was lucky to have good health through pregnancies and beyond. Third, academia as a profession, despite its intensity, affords more flexibility than many careers. I could write and code at flexible hours, I could bring my children along on work travels as infants, and over time, as teens.

The added convenience of a small-town environment amplified that flexibility. Academia often places us in communities where work and family can fit together in practical ways, and I came to appreciate that very much.

Looking back

I never had a master plan for family and career. With each new child, the joy outweighed the disruption. I have never regretted embracing both—a large family and an academic career.

The truth is, I began unsure whether I wanted to be a mother at all. Now, six children later, I can't imagine life otherwise. The path wasn't perfectly smooth, but it was deeply fulfilling, made possible by a supportive life partner, perspective, and the conveniences of small-town academic life.

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The Miracles and Challenges of Assistive Reproductive Therapies

Kelly M. Jones

Pregnancy After 35

When I was a graduate student, I had an advisor who told everyone that grad school was the best time to become a parent—“You will never again have as much free time as you do right now!” he would say. Despite his good nature, many of us did not follow his advice. Instead, starting a family after age 30 has become the norm among those with graduate degrees. In the U.S., the mean age at first birth for women with a Ph.D. is 33 (Westrick-Payne & Manning, 2025). Delaying parenthood gives you time to establish your career, it gives you maturity as a parent, and it gives you more resources for those expensive little munchkins. These are the important benefits that people talk about. What people talk about less are the challenges.

Most people know that a woman’s fertility begins a gradual decline around age 25 and declines rapidly after 35 (ACOG, 2020). Yet, in academia, we are surrounded by women giving birth after 35, suggesting that modern medicine has circumvented this problem. When your colleague gets pregnant at 38, you congratulate her and perhaps she shares her joy with you, but what she often does not share are the struggles and disappointments that may have preceded that success. Certainly, some people begin childbearing after 30 with little or no trouble, but the challenges that many do face often go unmentioned.

As a society, we generally treat fertility challenges as unmentionable. At least 1 in 6 women have had a miscarriage of a known pregnancy (Bardos et al., 2015; Quenby et al., 2021), a prevalence comparable to that of migraines or diabetes (CDC, 2024b; Cohen et al., 2024)

and twice that of asthma (CDC, 2024a). But you can likely name more people you know who have migraines than people you know to have had a miscarriage—because most people don’t talk about their miscarriage. Such a loss can be incredibly difficult and is understandably private, but there are downsides to silence. Keeping this secret can make one feel isolated in the experience of loss, and without disclosure one cannot take appropriate leave from work to recover physically and emotionally. The silence also means young women underestimate how common miscarriage is and, by extension, the challenges of getting pregnant at older ages.

The Realities of Assistive Reproductive Therapies (ART)

Assistive reproductive therapies (ART) are miraculous in many ways, but they cannot guarantee an easy path to pregnancy for everyone.

- First, common ART approaches have high failure rates for those over 30, with intrauterine insemination (IUI) at 90% and in-vitro fertilization (IVF) at 60% per cycle (CDC, 2024d; Schorsch et al., 2013). After 40, failure of IVF increases to 70%. Failure can arise from insufficient eggs, non-viable embryos, embryo implantation failure, or miscarriage.
- Second, such statistics are not fully informative about one’s journey to success. Procedures with a 60% chance of failure can seem to have a small chance of failure if repeated three times (21.6%)—but this is misleading, as these trials are not independent. The chance of failure conditional on previous failures, which is higher due to individual

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factors, is not often provided to patients (though some information on this can be gleaned from the CDC's success estimator (CDC, 2024c))

- Finally, while researchers understand far more about human reproduction today than they did at the dawn of IVF in 1978, countless mysteries remain. There are many answers that doctors cannot give us because there is so much they still do not know. For example, despite mountains of research on egg quality, there is scant research on the uterine environment. So, while preimplantation genetic testing (PGT) of embryos can reduce IVF failure rates for those over 35 (Harris et al., 2025) no one can say why a chromosomally normal embryo transferred to a hormonally-prepared uterus might fail to implant, or what this portends for future transfer attempts.

Regardless of statistics, pursuing pregnancy at older ages and navigating the world of ART can be a heart-breaking and lonely process. Most people pursuing ART have a deep desire to have a child. They endure endless appointments, many needles, and some awkwardly timed procedures, wait two endless but hopeful weeks, and hang their hearts on one little test. After this, a negative pregnancy test can be as devastating as a miscarriage. And most people on the ART journey will repeat this emotional rollercoaster many times before experiencing success. The difficulty is multiplied by the cloak of secrecy surrounding the process. Sudden absences from work for procedures must be somehow explained and the pain of loss must be hidden. The majority of people in your life have no idea what you are going through. More than once, I forced happy responses to colleagues' pregnancy news—complete with ultrasound photos—while I was secretly mourning yet another ART failure.

Yet the challenges described here are the purview of the lucky ones—the ones who have access to ART. A single cycle of basic IVF (including medications) costs

as much as \$20,000 (Conrad & Grifo, 2023). Patients over 35 often need PGT and embryo storage, adding \$5,000 to \$7,000, and sometimes donor eggs—another \$10,000 to \$20,000 (*ibid*). The average patient needs multiple cycles, so the average ART cost per birth runs \$60,000 to \$80,000 (Weigel et al., 2020). Coverage of IVF by private, employer-sponsored insurance has risen substantially in recent years, from 22% of large employers in 2022 to 47% in 2024 (Bower, 2025). Such coverage is often partial, with strict eligibility criteria and cycle limits, and many who have “IVF coverage” find it woefully insufficient. And even among Americans with private insurance from large companies, still more than 50% have no IVF coverage at all. In the absence of sufficient insurance coverage, even families with high incomes can find this exorbitant price tag out of reach.

While freezing eggs early can improve later success, it is not a certain cost-saver. The upfront cost of egg retrieval is around \$10,000 (Snider, 2019). But the full process involves later embryo transfer(s), plus annual storage costs, so the total price is comparable to later IVF. The degree to which using one's own previously-frozen eggs increases success rates for pregnancy after 35 depends very much on the age at which the eggs were retrieved. However, recent evidence shows that upwards of 90% of women who freeze eggs before age 35 never use them (Lee et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2022), suggesting that, unless it is covered by insurance, the average return on this investment is quite low. Unfortunately, coverage rates for egg freezing by employer-provided insurance plans remains low (14% outside of high-tech companies) (Andrews, 2014).

The Promise of Assistive Reproductive Therapies

Though I have laid bare the challenges of ART, do not misunderstand my position: I deeply value ART, which is truly a miracle of modern medicine, and I strongly

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... we should normalize talking about fertility challenges and failures.

support expanding access. The reality of the motherhood penalty—to which academics are not immune—means that parenthood at a younger age may be incompatible with career desires. And no one should feel pressured to begin parenthood before they are ready just because achieving pregnancy after 35 can be challenging.

The absence of wanted children is a void in one's life that cannot otherwise be filled. The ability to achieve medically what nature cannot is a most valuable achievement of scientific research. Parenthood is one of the greatest joys in my life and would not have been possible without ART. All the challenges, pain, secrecy, and loss were unquestionably worth it. I write about them here because I think my journey might have been easier if I had known what it would be like, and if I had known that I was not alone in it. I talk about these challenges and these losses because the secrecy makes them harder. And I talk about these challenges to my graduate students and junior colleagues who ask because—just like in research—it is important to know not only of others' successes, but also of their failures and challenges. And I talk about them because making an informed decision about the timing of parenthood requires full information on ART—a pathway to parenthood that is a lifeline for some, but might not be the first choice for others, if given full information.

In a future world, a reduced motherhood penalty and improved ART may ease the process of parental decision-making and the experience of achieving later parenthood if wanted. Until that time comes, there are steps we can take as a community to support potential and prospective parents.

First, we should normalize talking about fertility challenges and failures. Though privacy is always a person's prerogative, and no one should ever be questioned about personal matters, those who are open to sharing in the spirit of helping others should not be afraid to do so. Understanding the challenges of later

fertility—and their prevalence—might impact a person's ideal timing.

Second, we should support individuals in their fertility journeys. Short-notice leave is often required for procedures. Medical (or bereavement) leave for miscarriages or ART failures should not be an exception nor a cause for shame. Support also comes from the openness of others sharing their experiences, which reduces the loneliness of the journey.

Finally, we should celebrate the magnitude of what ART can achieve—and what it has allowed women to achieve—and ensure that access is not restricted to a lucky few. Everyone should have access to the miracles of ART, and everyone should know the difficulties of that journey before they decide to take it.

If you have questions about my fertility journey (or yours), or if I can provide any support to you in this regard, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at km-jones@american.edu.

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On Being a Christian Economist Adoptive Special-Needs Mom

Sarah Hamersma

A youthful dream, realized

There was never a time when I didn't want to be a mom. As a small child, I would play a game I made up called "having babies," in which I stuffed a doll in the top of my tights to walk around "pregnant" and then—*ta-da!*—a new baby would appear. (My poor grandmother cringed at this game.) When I was a little older, I wanted to be a mom so badly that I remember praying to God that he would make me a mother immediately—I knew he could orchestrate a virgin birth if he wanted to. He mercifully said "no."

I found myself praying the same prayer many years later—I was married, in grad school, and ready to lean in and have it all. Alas, the answer was still "no," and so I focused on my training to be an economics professor. Early in my career, instead of the challenges of pregnancy, I endured the challenges of international adoption while on the tenure track. A process we were told would take about 9 months took 2.5 years. We brought home our 1-year-old daughter to a university with poor formal parent support policies—but an economics department full of adoring fans (mostly grandpas). I fortunately got a one-semester break from teaching due to a pilot program whose funding had been awarded based on the university's poor track record with parental accommodation.

I distinctly remember wondering whether, once I was a mother, I would lose interest in my career—I had seen this happen before. But I need not have worried. It wasn't long before I had a playpen in my office full of plastic balls. These served a dual purpose. First, I would put my daughter in there and in the time it took her to throw out every ball, one by one, I could get an email

sent. Second, I would use them to teach sampling with replacement when we went through bootstrapping in the Ph.D. methods course I taught. I loved my child and I still loved my students. I had enough love to go around.

We adopted our second child domestically a couple years later, and then I was in the full throes of parenting small children while trying to meet tenure requirements. I had two children who were not only unrelated biologically, but who seemed to be designed to drive each other crazy. Our amazing daughter had been a micropreemie (born around 25 weeks). She spent her first year in the hospital and then in a baby home with 120 kids under the age of 3 before we adopted her. She had extreme sensitivity to loud sounds and liked things to be predictable. Our son, who we adopted at birth, was our agent of chaos! He shrieked when he was happy. He shrieked when he was sad. He tried to jump out of your arms. He refused to eat or sleep at his first (short-lived) child-care arrangement at a friend's house, so we had to have someone come to us who could go with his flow. My husband and I alternated sleeping in our own bed so we wouldn't *both* have to wake up to replace the pacifier several times a night (well into the second year). We had thought our house was "child-proofed" after the first child, not realizing what could be possible for an energetic toddler with no fear.

Things Get Hard

During that second year, the wheels started to come off a bit for me. My father and father-in-law both had major medical emergencies with permanent consequences, and I was still on the tenure track, not getting enough

I have persevered. I have been scrappy and flexible and I refuse to give up

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sleep, wondering when things would calm down. I started zoning out in the afternoons, unable to get any real work done, and asked my doctor, “Can you just shut down like this from prolonged stress?” The answer was “yes”—so I was off to a counselor. I am not sure she was super effective, but I remember learning two things from her. First, that it can be good to say no; she helped me realize that missing a conference presentation would not stop the world from turning. Second, she said that even though my son was a real challenge, he would soon grow out of the phase where having the *idea* to do a thing meant *immediately doing* the thing.

On that second one, she was unfortunately wrong. As we worked with therapists of various types to help our daughter progress with her speech and motor skills, our son maintained his penchant for impulsivity. By the time he was in preschool, we were working with physical and occupational therapists for both kids. Our daughter learned to chew her food sufficiently to prevent choking, and eventually to jump! And she began to read and write, which helped her to ask for what she wanted when anxiety rendered her mute. Our son showed intellectual sharpness that could best be accessed if we swung him upside down like a pendulum for several minutes before he entered his classroom. His teacher reported that he sneakily adjusted the board that assigned kids to “stations” (building, play-doh, etc.) so that he could keep going to the ones he liked. Both kids loved our morning routine where they got under a giant beanbag—just heads sticking out—and I sat on them!

The importance of support

The kids are teens now, which brings its own joys and challenges, and there have been a number of times I’ve wondered if I could keep up with my career. My daughter received an autism diagnosis, and my son’s symptoms were finally (and almost completely) explained by the discovery of not just ADHD but also fetal alcohol syndrome. Having explanations helps a lot, but the

day-to-day challenges are still real. In online support groups when people are asked what they’ve given up for their kids who need extra help, the most common answer I see is “I’ve given up my job.” Several things have made it possible for me to keep mine, which I don’t take for granted.

First and most obviously is my husband, who is a very involved dad and also supportive of my work. He is the most important reason I am still a professor. We have alternated work schedules, home-schooled as a team during COVID, and even as recently as last year he went to 80% time so that he could manage more of the therapy appointments and early school pickups related to behavior or anxiety.

Second, I love my students and colleagues. My workplace is significantly less stressful than my home, and it helps keep me sane. My mother always reminds me of this when I worry that I can’t manage it all. Speaking of my mother, she is the next reason; my parents moved across the country to be near us, and my mom comes with a career full of experience working with adults with disabilities. She is a grandma with *skills*—and a servant’s heart!

Finally, my faith community and God himself have kept me motivated to bring my unique gifts to my family and academia. When I feel I wouldn’t be missed, a colleague at another institution tells me I am putting my faith into practice in my work with Ph.D. students. When I feel like I am failing at parenting and maybe shouldn’t have become a mother, a friend from church reminds me how I can know that God wanted me to be a mother (her case: the fact that my kids are mine is *itself* the proof—it means God has entrusted them to me, and will carry us through).

A new narrative of self

For a long time, I maintained an image of myself as barely scraping by, both professionally and as a mother. My career development has been on a slower track than many in my cohort. Watching me in public with

my kids, especially in the midst of conflict (which is common), is *not* inspiring. At some point I asked myself if I was even a worthy role model for the Ph.D. students I love to mentor.

But lately I have been trying out a new narrative: I have persevered. I have been scrappy and flexible and I refuse to give up. I have been creative—embarking on a new research agenda around maternal and infant health that leverages my experience with kids who had a rough *in-utero* experience that follows them through life. I have been bold, willing to disagree with the majority of my colleagues in public and private when it comes to how health economics thinks about the unborn. I have been a committed teacher; what I lack in cutting-edge updated courses and technology, I make up for in relational learning and helping students build strong intellectual foundations. I am a team player in my department and I believe in what we do together.

I think the new narrative is working.



It's All About Choice.

Sarah Baird

Part of not wanting children has always been the certainty that I didn't have the energy for it...I've always known my limitations. I lacked the units of energy, and the energy I had, I wanted to spend on my work.
—Anne Patchett, *These Precious Days*

As a development economist I think a lot about women's empowerment, a dynamic process through which women, previously denied choice, gain the ability to make strategic life choices (Kabeer 1999). Lately, I have also been thinking a lot about agency, the crucial element that allows women to use resources to realize their aspirations (Kabeer, 1999) While agency is often considered an individual capability, it is ultimately constrained by the rules, norms, and available resources in the environment in which the individual lives (GAGE consortium, 2019). So, when I think about my choices over my professional and personal life, including the decision not to have children, the term that comes to my mind is *unconstrained agency*.

I started thinking about what agency really means during some recent work I conducted on young first-time mothers in Bangladesh, a country with highly restrictive sexual and reproductive health norms, and Tanzania, where norms are less restrictive (Cook et al. 2025). We found a puzzle: despite the more restrictive norms, young first-time mothers in Bangladesh reported substantially higher reproductive agency than those in Tanzania (64% vs. 27%). Our interpretation is that, in Bangladesh, young mothers had internalized the restrictive gender norms surrounding them and thus perceived they had the appropriate amount of control over their choices. In Tanzania, on the other hand, the young mothers' recognized the constraints they faced, so instead felt disempowered.

Relating this back to my personal journey, I realized in writing this piece that I have been unconstrained in my ability to exercise choice. I have been privileged to grow-up with sufficient resources and under nurturing societal rules and norms, the conditions that promote "human flourishing" (Crisp, 2021), that have allowed for *unconstrained agency*, I felt supported by my family, peers, and society as a whole regardless of whether I decided to engage in paid work or not, whether I decided to have children or not, and whether I decided to get married or not.

Ultimately, I approached my decision about whether or not to have children no differently than how I more broadly make decisions about my life. Having children had never been something that I had actively desired, but also was not a complete deal breaker in my relationships. In true economics fashion my partner and I hashed out the pros and cons at a pub in Galway while in the region for the 2015 Rugby World Cup, and came to the conclusion that neither of us had a sufficiently high desire to have children, which outweighed the costs.

From a professional life perspective, my research kept me busy with global travel and frequent engagement with international collaborators, which inevitably means many early morning and late night calls. For me, being in "the field" was what made my work fulfilling, and limitations on travel were not something I was willing to accept. Similarly, as both an Assistant and Associate Professor, the opportunities felt endless, and creating a professional network felt fundamental to work satisfaction and success—it was a time in my career where saying "yes" to any work opportunity was

For me, being in "the field" was what made my work fulfilling, and limitations on travel were not something I was willing to accept.

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exciting and felt necessary to get where I wanted to go in my career.

This attitude toward my work is also linked to how I value my personal life and the importance of work-life balance to my overall happiness. I remember as a graduate student in Agriculture and Resource Economics at UC Berkeley in the early 2000s my cohort referred to itself as the “not so smart but fun” cohort. This felt right to me—I like my work, I can be successful at it, but I also love everything else life has to offer. Core to this is spending time with my partner, dogs, family and friends, whether travelling the world, attending sporting events, eating epic vegan meals, or taking long hikes. It is also about solitary time—and quietly sitting with a novel without interruption for a couple hours on a Sunday afternoon, or that satisfying nap on a weekday afternoon.

The choice not to have children was also driven by what I saw as my optimal “adult” life. As a perimenopausal female Professor in my mid-40s I now live on a 10-acre lifestyle block in rural New Zealand with my partner, two rescue sheep and two rescue dogs. While I remain employed as a full-time Professor at George Washington University with colleagues living and working across the globe, I try and spend my days living more locally, growing my own vegetables, riding my electric lawn mower, and going on long runs with the dogs. Not having to worry about the costs and responsibilities of raising a child also minimizes the financial pressure to keep working—I continue to work because I enjoy it, or at least most of it!

This is not to say that the choice not to have children doesn't have implications for professional life in economics. Especially when I was earlier in my career, I felt like I should be the one putting my hand up for things happening outside of regular hours, whether teaching evening classes or attending an orientation on a weekend. I did not feel that being tired and wanting to stay at home and have a quiet day with my dogs and

partner was sufficiently worthy of saying no to these things.

Pregnancy and parental leave also shifts workload pressure on others, and this is exacerbated if you have ongoing data collection and are working in large collaborative teams—and as a female without children this frequently fell on me. This leave is an essential support structure for the health and wellbeing of the parents and the child, and policies like those in Sweden—16 months per child shared between the parents, most of which is at full pay—are what we should be striving for globally. But many of the academic systems, particularly around grant-funded research, don't seem to acknowledge this reality. For example, in 2025 one of my main collaborators went on maternity leave—much earlier than expected—so suddenly that the collaborative work she was leading on became my responsibility. There were not any apparent mechanisms to either bring in additional support or adjust deadlines to react to this new reality. There was even pressure from a family-planning donor to meet previously agreed upon deadlines—not seeming to recognize the irony in this. This was bad both for the colleague on maternity leave as she was bothered with apologetic WhatsApp work questions, and me, as I fell further behind in my To Do list. If I was still more junior in my career this would have all felt impossible, but I am now wise enough to know most deadlines are flexible, so I could focus on what really needed to get done, letting the rest slide, and maintaining my work-life balance. In fact, I think I was probably too successful in this as when my colleague returned she joked that it seemed like things were still where they left off!

In the end, for me, the decision about whether or not to have children was about how I wanted to spend my limited “units of energy” and that was on professional work, dogs, books, food and naps—long naps! I had the unconstrained agency to make this choice, and so... I did!

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Lessons from Almost Dying in Childbirth at Conference

Jialan Wang

Parenthood on and off the tenure track

They say there is no perfect time to have a child. For me, there was. As a career economist at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), I had the equivalent of tenure when I had my first child. I recall being disappointed that at that time the CFPB offered only the minimum parental leave benefits required by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which granted only up to 12 weeks unpaid leave. Even so, I found that the government lived up to its reputation as a family-friendly and flexible place to work while raising a young family. My boss and colleagues were kind and supportive, and I didn't feel a sense of stigma or retaliation for taking time off or working part-time after giving birth.

My experience having my second child while on tenure track at the University of Illinois could not have been more different. FMLA covers universities, and some employers offer additional benefits on top of their federal obligations. But neither our employment practices nor our cultural norms in academia make space for the complications and changing priorities that often accompany parenthood. Even though I almost died during the birth of my second child—and key leaders in my department and in the profession knew about my situation—I felt a relentless pressure to increase my productivity during and after my ordeal and suffered negative consequences for not meeting unrealistic expectations.

I was mid-way through my tenure clock when I had my second child. I was suffering from severe pain prior to a scheduled presentation at the NBER Summer Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The doctors advised me that the pain was not worrisome or life-threatening,

so I decided to go ahead with the presentation and traveled a thousand miles from my home in Illinois.

I emerged from my hotel room for a couple of hours at a time to present at the conference, while trying to convince myself and others that I was ok (one example of the pressure to perform!). Things took a predictable turn for the worse before the conference was over, and I headed to the emergency room. It was not until the emergency c-section that doctors discovered I had been suffering from an undiagnosed burst appendix for over a month. My baby weighed less than two pounds when she was born prematurely, and we moved to Boston to support her monthslong NICU and outpatient journey. I also embarked on my own physical and mental recovery, and what would turn out to be a long battle with human resources (HR) over notice and utilization of employee benefits. Because my ordeal played out publicly and dramatically, many people have shared their own stories of pregnancy and parenthood in academia with me.

Tips for utilizing employee benefits

Below are some practical tips based on my experiences and those shared with me. Not everyone needs to go through these steps exhaustively. But there may come a time when you need to navigate an unexpected family or medical crisis. I want you to be more equipped than I was if that time comes. Obviously, none of this should be construed as legal or financial advice.

1. Get nationwide insurance coverage. When I knew I was pregnant, I spent hours poring through my health insurance options to make sure I chose one with a

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Brag Box

"We need every day to herald some woman's achievements . . . go ahead and boast!"
—Carolyn Shaw Bell

If you have an item for a future Brag Box, please submit it to info@cswep.org. We want to hear from you!

nationwide network of providers. Academia is a travel-heavy career, and many of us feel pressured or choose to travel during pregnancy. I have heard enough anecdotes to believe that pregnancy complications during professional travel are not exceedingly rare. My out-of-state expenses totalled over a million dollars, and spending the effort to switch insurance plans was one of the best financial decisions of my life.

2. Know your employee rights. Read about the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) from the [Department of Labor](#) and other government websites. Keep in mind that you can get FMLA not only for childbirth, but for other medical issues that may occur alongside pregnancy. These apply not only to yourself, but for taking care of family members such as a premature baby. Your state (or non-U.S. country) may offer additional parental benefits.

A recent law called the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) went into effect in 2023, and offers additional protections above the FMLA and ADA. While your employer and outside sources can help you understand your rights, there is no substitute for doing your own research to make sure you receive the benefits you are entitled to by law.

3. Know your institutional policies. Read your employee handbook and any policy your department, college, and university has about pregnancy, childbirth, and medical leave. Institutional policies are just as important to understand as regulatory ones, and may offer benefits that exceed or are more specific than state and federal legal obligations. However, keep in mind that unlike the law, institutional policies may not be easy to find, consistent, or even exist at all! For example, by reading carefully and inquiring, I increased the generosity of our department's policy because it didn't match the university's. Do your own research and talk with both your department and outside offices. Engage with university-level HR experts whose job is to know about these policies, and ask them

about the procedures and deadlines for accessing your rights.

4. Ask around and negotiate. Many institutional policies are subject to negotiation, and some decisions, such as those around teaching assignments, are made on an ad hoc basis. Ask for what you need. My observation is that departmental leaders are generally more responsive to laws, policies, and precedents when negotiating benefits than they are to personal appeal, no matter how compelling your situation may be.

Collect the anecdotes and peer policies you think would persuade your department leadership, and present your best case. Don't hesitate to escalate up the hierarchy and laterally to university-level HR when needed. You may get pushback (I was told that the University of Michigan was not a peer institution for Illinois), but citing external information can help. Unfortunately, there is no centralized database for university-specific parental benefits. Frustrated with this information vacuum, I crowdsourced a [Google doc](#) of teaching relief policies at different institutions, and I invite readers to view and contribute.

5. Keep your receipts. As you inquire, negotiate, and utilize your benefits, keep your receipts and document your reasoning. Leave a flawless paper trail, because you might need it later.

Full disclosure: I didn't know about and definitely didn't follow all of these tips when I was going through our family medical crisis. I want to share the full spectrum of resources that I have learned about in the years since, but I also advise you to be cautious about what you ask for. Unfortunately, women still face double standards and negative perceptions when we ask for things. But if we're denied tenure because we didn't ask for what we needed, we are blamed for not asking (use your receipts to show them that you did but were unfairly denied). There's nothing an individual can do to overcome this double bind. But every time someone asks for things, the stigma dies a little bit. If you want

Links in this Article

[Department of Labor](#)

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>

[Google doc](#)

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wlYatv2VALtIP9Xq8AF3KSLDnsRv4Vc5nhvScca7nsg/edit?usp=sharing>

I crowdsourced a Google doc of teaching relief policies at different institutions, and I invite readers to view and contribute.

to get tenure and stay in your department's good graces, the safe approach is to ask firmly and politely for what you need, and nothing more.

The bigger picture: making structural change

Following my ordeal, I thought a lot about how we talk about parenthood in economics, often framing it as women's "choice" to leave or stay in the workforce after childbirth. Given my experiences and those of other women faculty—who are among the most informed and privileged in society—I wondered whether we under-estimate the role of physical health shocks to women and babies in these choices.

I thought about how we study "life shocks" in general, as if they are independently and identically distributed. In reality, one major shock makes you vulnerable to others large and small that would never have thrown you off course otherwise, which tend to compound instead of mean revert. I wondered how families with fewer financial resources could have possibly survived what we did. Different perspectives and experiences of parenthood are so important to keep within the economics profession and policy discussion, but the system is designed to push these very perspectives out.

Nonetheless, I have seen positive change over the course of my career. And despite my challenging experiences, I think there are concrete ways we can continue making progress. Here are some ideas.

1. Share information. As described above, some of the challenges parents face in academia involve information barriers. This is a problem we know how to address! Have one-on-one conversations, form informal networks, or create structured events and databases to share information and experiences. Talking more openly also improves our culture by reducing stigma around parenting.

2. Use your voice. Not all of us will become parents or use parental leave benefits. But all of us vote on departmental policies, serve on hiring and promotion

committees, and engage in informal discussions where parenting-related issues come up. These are chances to use our voice. You don't have to stick your neck out or risk your career—but issues are much harder to ignore when supported by a chorus instead of an individual, and easy to ignore when no one puts them on the agenda at all.

3. Leverage your leadership. When it comes time to update institutional policies around pregnancy and parenting, there is no need to re-invent the wheel or make things up on the fly. Organizations like AFFECT (Academic Female Finance Committee) and the AEA have already put together [thoughtful sets of best practices](#). Integrating these best practices into our policies and culture will take leadership and legwork not just among those who are most committed to supporting parents (such as those reading this article)—but requires a broader base of support within each institution and each department. Use your social capital to build that support.

4. Lastly, we can leverage what we do best—research! AFFECT keeps a great [literature review](#) of academic studies that address parenting and related issues in academia, and both CSWEP and AFFECT conduct regular surveys of the professional climate. University leaders read and pay attention to these studies when setting policy, but they may be incentivized to minimize their findings when the evidence is weak. We can help fill these gaps by solidifying the evidentiary framework for how pregnancy and parenting impact academia and the labor market, and the interventions that work.

Looking forward

I think the social norms and employment practices around pregnancy and parenting in academia are improving gradually. And I am heartened to see people set boundaries and speak openly, even in small ways like setting email away messages. In my mind, there couldn't be a policy issue whose benefits are more

universally shared. Beyond parenthood, most of us need accommodation at some point during our work lives, whether it's for family care, personal illness or injury, or other "life shocks" that affect our ability to work. Insuring these shocks benefits employers and the economy. The economic case for insurance is well-established, and accommodations have been enshrined into laws and policies. But we aren't yet walking the walk when it comes to culture or practice in academia. I hope this article and issue are a step forward toward that goal.

Links in this Article

[thoughtful sets](#)

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/r9kcs7zxeaf7s6c-mbzt9c/Best-Practices-2016_posted-2022.pdf?rlkey=p8vx7q9b8wdeitaoorpbb4vi&e=r&dl=o

[best practices](#)

<https://www.aeaweb.org/resources/best-practices/leading-departments#p2>

[literature review](#)

<https://afajof.org/affect/academic-studies/>

Announcing the Janet L. Yellen Award for Excellence in Public Service

The Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) is establishing an annual award recognizing a senior economist for exemplary public service. The award honors leadership that advances the public good through service in government, university administration, or the private sector, and complements CSWEP's existing portfolio by recognizing contributions that extend beyond scholarly research.

The award is named in honor of Janet L. Yellen, Professor Emerita at the University of California, Berkeley, whose distinguished career includes service as Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, Chair of the Federal Reserve, and Secretary of the U.S. Treasury.

In recognition of her trailblazing career and lasting impact on the economics profession, the inaugural year of the prize will be given to Janet Yellen herself. A reception in her honor will be held at the AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 3, 2026, 6:30–8:00 PM ET, Philadelphia Marriott Downtown—Liberty Ballroom A & B. All wishing to attend this reception to honor Janet Yellen must register for the conference.

Details and updates regarding this event can be found [on our website](https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/participate/annual-meeting/reception): <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/participate/annual-meeting/reception>. Professor Yellen will also speak at the CSWEP Business Meeting and Award Luncheon on Sunday, January 4, 2026, 12:30–2:30 PM ET. Advanced registration is required.

Beginning with the 2027 award, CSWEP will open nominations for future recipients and convene a review committee in keeping with its established procedures.

Calls, Sessions, and Events at Upcoming Meetings

Summary

Call for Papers

1. 90th Annual Midwest Economics (MEA) Meetings.

Deadline: December 1, 2025

2. Eastern Economic Association Conference 2026.

Deadline: December 1, 2025

Call for Applications

1. Summer Economic Fellowship.
2. Mid-Career P2P Mentoring Program.

Deadline: Rolling

Upcoming CSWEP Sessions

1. 2026 ASSA Annual Meeting, January 3–5, Philadelphia, PA

Upcoming CSWEP Events

1. CSWEP Mentoring Breakfast for Junior Economists, January 3, 2026, 8:00AM–10:00AM
2. CSWEP Business Meeting & Award Ceremony, January 4, 2026, 12:30PM–2:15PM EST
3. Open Reunion: CeMENT Workshops, January 3, 2026, 3:00–5:00PM EST
4. CSWEP Reception to Honor the Inaugural Janet L. Yellen Award for Excellence in Public Service, January 3, 2026 from 6:30–8:00PM EST
5. Room for Nursing Mothers, January 3–5, 2026

Call for Papers @ 90th Annual Midwest Economics Meetings

March 20–22, 2026

Hyatt Centric Magnificent Mile, Chicago, IL

CSWEP Panels will be on Friday, March 20, 2026

DEADLINE: December 1, 2025

CSWEP is organizing two panels on topics related to career development at the **90th Annual Midwest Economics Association Meetings¹** in Chicago. The panels will be held on Friday, March 20, 2026. One panel will be geared to those looking for jobs (academic and nonacademic) and the other panel will focus on mid-career issues. Each panel will have four participants who will each speak for 15 minutes. The sessions are organized to allow for plenty of time for an active exchange of ideas and advice among the panelists and session attendees.

If you have specific suggestions regarding the topics to be covered or ideas for potential panelists (you can also suggest yourself), please submit them to Didem Tuzemen, CSWEP Midwest Representative, didem.tuzemen@coleridgeinitiative.org, no later than December 1, 2025. To foster the exchange of new ideas, we especially seek individuals who have not previously served as panelists.

Call for Sessions @ 2026 Eastern Economic Association Conference

May 6–9, 2026

*Secrets (Hyatt) La Romana Hotel,
La Romana, Dominican Republic*

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: December 1, 2025

¹ <https://mea.sites.grinnell.edu/>

CSWEP will sponsor a number of sessions at the annual meeting of the Eastern Economic Association.

Sessions are available for persons submitting an entire session (3 or 4 papers) or a complete panel on a specific topic in any area in economics, as well as topics related to career development. The organizer should prepare a proposal for a panel (including chair and participants) or session (including chair, abstracts, and discussants) and submit online following the instructions below. Please be sure to include the appropriate JEL code(s) and the names, affiliations, and emails of all participants.

Additional sessions will be organized by the CSWEP Eastern Representative. Abstracts for papers in the topic areas of **gender, health economics, labor economics and public economics** are particularly solicited, but abstracts in other areas are also encouraged. Abstracts should be approximately one page in length and include the paper title, appropriate JEL code(s), names of authors, affiliation and rank, and email contact information.

If you have questions, specific suggestions regarding career topics to be covered, potential panelists, or ideas on how CSWEP can offer resources in career development at the Eastern meetings, please contact CSWEP at info@csweb.org.

Call for Applications, Summer Economics Fellows Program **Deadline: February 1, 2026**

Sponsored by the American Economic Association and originally funded by a National Science Foundation grant, the Summer Economics Fellows Program is designed to increase the participation and advancement of women and under-

represented minorities in economics.

Fellows spend a summer in residence at a sponsoring research organization or public agency, such as a statistical agency or a Federal Reserve Bank. Summer economics fellowships are available to senior graduate students and junior faculty. Fellows are to be chosen by the program with the agreement of the sponsoring institution in line with the goal of advancing the participation of women and underrepresented minorities in the economics profession, the fit of a candidate with the activities of the research group at the sponsoring institution, and the value of the proposed research to advancing the sponsoring institution's own goals.

The application portal will open on December 1, 2025. Applications are due at 5 pm ET on February 1, 2026. Stay tuned for the Summer Fellows Application portal link to be announced. Send a note to info@csweb.org to receive these upcoming announcements.

Sponsors will receive all applications in mid-February. Sponsors are asked to make initial offers starting mid-March and hold offers through the end of April. Final notifications are anticipated by the end of May. (This timeline varies depending on each sponsor's hiring processes.) For more information, visit our website or contact Kristen Broady, Director of the AEA Summer Economics Fellows Program at sefp@aeaweb.org.

Call for Applications, Mid-Career Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program **Open Enrollment: Mid-Career Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program** CSWEP's Mid-Career P2P Mentoring

program aims to help mid-career economists find community, support, and mentoring. The first cohort launched in the fall of 2023, and a second round of rolling enrollment began in 2025, supported by a grant from the Co-Impact Foundation. A description of the program can be found on [page 14 in Issue III 2025](#).²

Participants form groups that meet regularly (typically virtually), and CSWEP provides a suggested curriculum and resources. The curriculum consists of five modules on topics like planning for promotion, productivity, and time management, with several alternative modules that can be substituted to meet the group's needs. The curriculum is designed with associate professors or equivalent non-academic or non-tenure-track positions in mind, but it is easily adaptable for full professors, administrators, managers, and others.

To learn more about P2P and to enroll your group in the program, visit csweb-mentoring.org.

CSWEP Sessions at ASSA 2026 Annual Meeting **January 3–5, 2026**

Marriott Philadelphia Downtown Philadelphia, PA

Gender Gaps in Economics: Trends, Perceptions, and Paths Forward

Chair: Donna Ginther

Pipelines or Pyramids: Unequal Progress and Barriers for Women in Economics
Ondine Berland, London School of Economics

Information Bias and Selection of Female Professors

Stephanie El Khoury, Arizona State University

Demographic Differences in Letters of Recommendation for Economics Ph.D. Students

Anna Kovner, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

Resistance to Feedback

Perihan Saygin, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*

Discussants: Donna Ginther, University of Kansas, Sarah Reber, Brookings, Evelyn Skoy, Hamilton College, Jennifer Pate, Loyola Marymount University

Gender, Working from Home and Female Labor Supply

Chair: Orgul Ozturk

Recent Trends in Labor Supply Decisions among Married Couples in the United States

Seonyoung Park, Colgate University

Breaking Barriers: How Policies, Norms, and Preferences Shape Women's Labor Force Participation

Zhixiu Yu,

Life-cycle Parental Occupational Choice and Child Development

Hyun Soo Suh, Washington University in St. Louis

Determinants of the Spousal Age Gap in India: Analysis of Indian Microdata

Praveen Praveen, Center of Policy Research and Governance (CPRG), New Delhi

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² <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=23379>

Discussants: Guillaume Vandenbroucke, St Louis FED, Orgul Ozturk, Emma Harrington, University of Virginia, Niels-Hugo Blunch, Washington and Lee

Global Economy: Financial and Real Linkages

Chair: Maria-Jose Carreras-Valle

Imperfect Exchange Rate Pass-through: Empirical Evidence and Monetary Policy Implications

Maryam Mirfatah, Kings College

Unconventional Monetary Policy Spillovers and the (In)convenience of Treasuries

Karlye Dilts Steadman, FRB Kansas City

Organizing Production Across Borders in a Time of Uncertainty

Haruka Takayama, SUNY Albany

From Ports to Prices: The Inflationary Effects of Global Supply Chain Disruption

Xinrui Zhou, Michigan

Discussants: Annie Lee, Johns Hopkins SA, Amy Huber, Wharton, Prakrati Thakur Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Camelia Minoiu, FRB Atlanta

Economic Theory

Chair: Aislinn Bohren

Statistics Speak, but Anecdotes Stick

Arjada Bardhi, New York University

Screening Knowledge with Verifiable Evidence

Sulagna Dasgupta, University of Bonn

Early Voting and Late-Election Information

Kayleigh McCrary, University of Richmond

Dynamic Disclosure with Timestamped Evidence

Beixi Zhou, University of Pittsburgh

Experimental Economics

Chair: Natalia Lazzati

How Do Groups Speak and How Are They Understood?

Paula Onuchic, London School of Economics

Designing Social Security Claiming Incentives: Experimental Evidence

Yue Li, SUNY Albany

Strategic Interactions and Peer Learning in Contests: Evidence from a Field Experiment

Esma Ozer, Penn State University

More information, more efficiency? Experimental Evidence

Nidhi Gyan Pandey, University of California Irvine

Discussants: TBD

Who's Earning Ph.D.'s in Economics and What Factors Contribute to Success in These Fields?

Joint Paper Session: with Chicago Fed to promote SEFP (Linda and Kristen Broady)

The Future of Research and Higher Education in a Shifting Policy Landscape

Panel Session- Linda Tesar/Donna Ginther (CSWEP/CPC)

CSWEP Events @ ASSA 2026 Annual Meeting

January 3–5, 2026

Marriott Philadelphia Downtown Philadelphia, PA

CSWEP Mentoring Breakfast for Junior Economists

Saturday, January 3, 2026
8:00AM–10:00AM

The 14 Annual Mentoring Breakfast for Junior Economists will be held in Liberty A&B, Marriott Philadelphia at the 2026 AEA Meetings in Philadelphia, PA. [Pre-registration](#)³ is required.

CSWEP Business Meeting & Award Ceremony

Sunday, January 4, 2026
12:30 PM–2:15 PM EST

The 2026 Business Meeting and Award Ceremony Luncheon will be held at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown in Liberty Ballroom A&B. [Pre-registration](#) is required.

Open Reunion: CeMENT Workshops

Saturday, January 3, 2026
3:00–5:00PM EST

CSWEP welcomes all past CeMENT participants reconnect and network at the ASSA Annual Meeting! No pre-registration required.

The 2026 open reunion for CeMENT Workshops will be held at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown in Liberty Ballroom A&B.

CSWEP Reception to Honor the Inaugural Janet L. Yellen Award for Excellence in Public Service

January 3, 2026,
6:30–8:00PM EST

Join CSWEP in honoring Janet Yellen who is receiving the inaugural award for excellence in public service in 2025. Join

³ <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cswep-2026-mentoring-breakfast-for-junior-economists-132026-tickets-1834992976389?aff=oddtcreator>

us January 3, 2026 from 6:30–8:00PM EST at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown in Liberty Ballroom A&B. All are welcome. No preregistration is required.

Room for Nursing Mothers January 3-5, 2026

CSWEP and the American Economic Association will be hosting a room for nursing mothers in the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown on the third floor in meeting room 301. There are also lactation pods available throughout the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Please [pre-register](#)⁴ for the space so we can manage attendance.



⁴ <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-aeacswep-nursing-mothers-room-tickets-1849014775969>

What is CSWEP?

CSWEP (the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession) is a standing committee of the American Economic Association charged with serving professional women economists in academia, government agencies and elsewhere by promoting their careers and monitoring their progress.

CSWEP activities endeavor to raise the awareness among men and women of the challenges that are unique to women's careers and can be addressed with a wide variety of actions, from inclusive searches to formal and informal mentoring activities. CSWEP freely disseminates information on how the profession works as well as advice to junior economists. We intend this information to be of value to all economists, male or female, minority or not.

Annually, CSWEP

- Organizes mentoring workshops, paper presentations sessions at the annual AEA Meetings, and professional development sessions at the annual meetings of the four regional economics associations (the Eastern, Mid-Western, Southern and Western);
- Conducts a survey and compiles a report on the gender composition of faculty and students in academic economics departments in the United States;
- Publishes four editions of the *CSWEP News*, containing a feature section written by senior economists that highlights career advice or other topics of interest to the economics profession; and
- Awards the Carolyn Shaw Bell Award, given to a person for their outstanding work to promote the careers of women economists as well as the Elaine Bennett Research Prize, given biennially to a young woman economist for fundamental contributions to academic economics, and the new Janet L. Yellen Award for Excellence in Public Service.

Our business meeting is held during the annual AEA Meetings and is open to all economists. It is a time for us to confer awards and celebrate recipients, present the Annual Report on Women in the Economics Profession and to hear your input on CSWEP's activities. The CSWEP Board meets three times yearly and we encourage you to attend our business meeting or contact a Board Member directly to convey your ideas for furthering CSWEP's mission.

Visit cswep.org for more information.

Directory of CSWEP Board Members

Linda Tesar, Chair

Alan V. Deardorff Collegiate Professor of Economics | Budget Advisor, LSA Dean's Office
University of Michigan
312 Lorch Hall
611 Tappan Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
ltesar@umich.edu

Olga Shurchkov, Assoc. Chair & Director of Mentoring

Professor, Department of Economics
Wellesley College
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02481
olga.shurchkov@wellesley.edu

Joanne Hsu, Assoc. Chair & Survey Director

Research Associate Professor, Institute for Social Research, Survey Research Center
University of Michigan
426 Thompson Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
jwhsu@umich.edu

Gina Pieters, Oversight Editor

Founder and Chief Economist
Digital Economy Research and Consulting
gcpeters@de-rc.com

Yana Rodgers, Eastern Representative

Professor in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations
Rutgers University
94 Rockefeller Road
Piscataway, NJ 08854
Yana.rodgers@rutgers.edu

Didem Tuzemen, Midwestern Representative

Vice President of Product and Development
Coleridge Initiative
Didem.Tuzemen@coleridgeinitiative.org

Orgul Ozturk, Southern Representative

Department Chair and Professor
Department of Economics
University of South Carolina
Darla Moore School of Business
odozturk@moore.sc.edu

Galina Hale, Western Representative

Professor of Economics and Coastal Science and Policy and Associate Faculty Director, Institute for Social Transformation
University of California at Santa Cruz
1156 High St, Santa Cruz, CA 95064
gbhale@ucsc.edu

Sarah Reber, DC Representative

Cabot Family Chair
Senior Fellow in Economic Studies
Brookings Institution
1775 Massachusetts Drive NW
Washington DC 20036
sreber@brookings.edu

Bart Lipman, At-Large

Professor, Department of Economics
Boston University
270 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215
Blipman@bu.edu

Usha Nair-Reichert, At-Large

Associate Professor, School of Economics
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA 30332
usha.nair@gatech.edu

Nitya Pandalai-Nayar, At-Large

Associate Professor, Department of Economics
University of Texas, Austin
2225 Speedway
Austin TX 78713
npnayar@utexas.edu

Danielle Sandler, At-Large

Principal Economist, Center for Economic Studies
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233
danielle.h.sandler@census.gov

Lori Beaman, Ex-Officio, CeMENT Director

Professor, Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive, Rm 3377
Evanston, Illinois 60208
l-beaman@northwestern.edu

Caitlin Myers, Ex-Officio, CeMENT Director

John G. McCullough Professor of Economics
Middlebury College
303 College Street
Middlebury, VT 05753
cmyers@middlebury.edu