

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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NAME: Romich, Jennifer L.

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): JROMICH

POSITION TITLE: Professor

EDUCATION/TRAINING (*Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.*)

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
Swarthmore College, Swarthmore PA	B.A.	06/1994	Economics
Northwestern University, Evanston IL	M.A.	06/2000	Economics
Northwestern University, Evanston IL	Ph.D.	12/2002	Human Development & Social Policy

A. Personal Statement

My research career focuses on the role of resources in families, with a particular focus on how social policy shapes the lives of low-income American workers and their children. As the current director and a founding affiliate of the West Coast Poverty Center (WCPC), I have brought together local practitioners, policymakers, and faculty to discuss anti-poverty topics and evaluate practical solutions. I have also personally connected research with policymakers to implement programs that reduce poverty. My research on labor rights expansion has informed similar efforts in other cities and states. My former students and advisees have also gone on to positions that create positive social change. As a senior scholar, I am at the career stage at which most of my work is focused on mentoring students and creating opportunities for other scholars. The following articles are exemplary of my recent work. All include students or former students as co-authors (indicated by +).

- a) Chang, Yu-Ling+, Jennifer Romich, and Marci Ybarra. 2021. Major Means-tested and Income Support Programs for the Working Class, 2009-2019. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 695:1, 242-259.
- b) Long, Mark C., Elizabeth Pelletier+, and Jennifer Romich. 2022. Constructing Monthly Residential Locations of Adults Using Merged State Administrative Data. *Population Studies* 76:2, 253-272.
- c) Romich, Jennifer, and Maria Y. Rodriguez+. 2021. There and Back Again: A Commentary on Social Welfare Policy in the Wake of 2020. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* 12:1, 1-10.

My current work is focused on developing WashPop, a full-population data repository based on administrative records from Washington state agencies. WashPop will provide numerous opportunities for pre-doctoral students to participate in team science approaches for record linkages and estimating population level estimates of economic and social well-being, including health. This combination of leadership skills, research expertise, and mentorship capability makes me qualified to assume the role of Senior Training Faculty on this grant. As economic inequality is linked to poor health outcomes for both children and adults, social policy's impact on low-income families is truly a public health concern.

B. Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors

Positions and Employment

- 2002- Assistant (2002-2009), Associate (2009-2020), Professor (2020-), School of Social Work, Adjunct Professor, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- 2003- Faculty Affiliate, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology
- 2004- Faculty Affiliate, Center for Statistics in the Social Sciences, University of Washington, WA
- 2012- Director, West Coast Poverty Center, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- 2007- Consultant on applied policy matters, contracts include MDRC, Center for Financial Service Innovation, Korean Institute for Health and Social Affairs

Other Experience and Professional Memberships

- 2005- Research Affiliate, National Poverty Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
- 2006 Visiting Scholar, University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, Lexington, KY
- 2007- Community Advisory Board Member, Washington State Budget and Policy Center, Seattle, WA
- 2008-2009 Member, Economic Services Advisory Council Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington
- 2011- Steering Committee, Employment Instability, Family Well-being, and Social Policy Network, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2013-2016 Member, Community Survey Advisory Committee, City of Seattle Race & Social Justice Initiative, Seattle, WA
- 2013-2018 Scholar, Family Self-Sufficiency Scholars Network, US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
- 2016- Faculty Affiliate, Institute for Poverty Research, Madison, WI
- 2016- Faculty Affiliate, Economic Self-Sufficiency Policy Research Institute, Irvine, CA

Honors

- 2007-2008 Early Career Work and Family Scholar, Sloan Foundation, New York, NY
- 2008 Excellence in Research Award, Society for Social Work and Research, Fairfax, VA
- 2018 Fellow, Society for Social Work and Research, Fairfax, VA

C. Contributions to Science

1. One focus of my work has been the effects of **tax and transfer policy on low-income American workers**. More specifically, I have documented the importance of means-tested benefits and tax credits to low-income families' budgets and documented their side effects, high effective marginal tax rates. Through a number of studies, I have demonstrated that means-tested benefit schedules substantially increase the effective marginal tax rates on earned income for households between 100 percent and 250 percent of the federal poverty threshold. This increased tax liability can dis-incentivize low-income workers from pursuing better-paying work and can erode the benefit of higher wages mandated minimum wage laws.
 - a. Smeeding, Timothy, Jennifer Romich, and Michael Strain. 2021. The Long Recovery from the Great Recession. Introduction to issue on "What Has Happened to the American Working Class since the Great Recession?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 695:1, 8-26.
 - b. Romich, Jennifer L. and Heather D. Hill. 2018. Coupling a federal minimum wage hike with public investments to make work pay and reduce poverty. *Russell Sage Journal of the Social Sciences* 4(3): 22-43.
 - c. Hall, Crystal C. & Romich, Jennifer L. 2016. Low and moderate-income tax filers underestimate tax returns. *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning*. 27(1): 36-46.
 - d. Romich, Jennifer L. 2006. Difficult calculations: Low-income workers and marginal tax rates. *Social Service Review* 80(1): 27-66.
 - e. Romich, Jennifer L. & Thomas Weisner. 2000. How families view and use the EITC: Advance payment versus lump sum delivery. *The National Tax Journal* 53(4 part 2): 1245-1265.

2. Additionally, my research has explored the **nature and consequences of poverty and income instability**. This has included illuminating the extent of income instability with an early focus on the nature and impact of economic resources among families involved with the child welfare system. The 2016 and 2017 papers with Hook, Kang, Lee & Marcenko as co-authors used merged administrative data from Washington State that includes many of the elements that the WMLAD will include.
 - a. Hill, Heather D., Jennifer Romich, Marybeth J. Mattingly, Shomon Shamsuddin, and Hilary Wething. 2017. An introduction to household economic stability and social policy. *Social Service Review* 91(3): 371-389.
 - b. Lee, JoAnn, Jennifer L. Romich, JiYoung Kang, Jennifer L. Hook, & Maureen Marcenko. 2017. The impact of income on reunification among families with children in out-of-home care. *Children & Youth Services Review* 72(1): 91-99.
 - c. Kang, JiYoung, Jennifer L. Romich, Jennifer L. Hook, JoAnn Lee & Maureen Marcenko. 2016. Dual-system families: Cash assistance sequences of households involved with child welfare. *Journal of Public Child Welfare* 10(4): 352-375. PMID: 28265225
 - d. Hook, Jennifer L., Jennifer L. Romich, JoAnn Lee Maureen Marcenko & JiYoung Kang. 2016. Trajectories of economic disconnection among families in the child welfare system. *Social Problems* 63 (2): 161-179

3. My work has examined and informed **local policy interventions**, with a focus on impacts on economically poor and moderate-income households. I am co-leading a multi-method evaluation of the impact of the 2015 Seattle \$15 minimum wage ordinance, which phases fully in by 2021. This is a high-profile, high-quality study that will garner national attention. I also recently led all aspects of a evaluation of the implementation and early impacts of the City of Seattle Paid Sick and Safe Time Ordinance. Policy actors have cited evidence from this project's well-regarded final report in debates over similar proposals in Minneapolis, Maryland, Pittsburgh, and other locales. Finally, I contributed to a study exploring the effects of highway tolls on low-income and minority households in the Puget Sound region of Washington State. We examined car ownership and transportation patterns among low-income and non-low-income households and found that distributional analyses of tolls should estimate impacts on all households in the relevant region rather than only studying the impacts on just users of roads that are currently or likely to be tolled.
 - a. Romich, Jennifer, Scott W. Allard, Emmi E. Obara*, Anne K. Althausen, James H. Buszkiewicz. 2018. Employer Responses to a City-level Minimum Wage Mandate: Early Evidence from Seattle. *Urban Affairs Review*.
 - b. Romich, Jennifer L. 2017. Local mandate improves equity of paid sick leave coverage: Seattle's Experience. *BMC Public Health* 17:60. PMID: 28077115
 - c. Romich, Jennifer L. 2015. Paid leave mandates may fail to reach part-time workers (letter). *American Journal of Public Health* 105(5) e1. PMID:25713939
 - d. Plotnick, Robert, Jennifer L. Romich, Jennifer Thacker, & Matthew Dunbar. 2011. Analyzing the impact of highway tolls on low-income persons. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33(3): 345-355. PMID: 21818172

D. Research Support

Recent Research Support

- State of Washington
Establishing WashPop (Romich, PI) 7/1/24-6/30/26
State appropriation provided to establish a statewide integrated data repository for population and policy research on topics including criminal justice and safety, economic prosperity and equity, and health and social well-being.
- WorkRise (Romich, PI) 3/16/2022-6/30/24
“Disaggregating Minimum Wage Impacts: How do Young and Inexperienced Workers Fare?”
This award funds an examination of how the \$15 Seattle Minimum Wage affected the labor market entry and early employment trajectories of persons ages 16-24.
- City of Seattle 8/1/22-11/30/23
Comparable Worth Wage Analysis (Romich, PI)
This award funded a multi-part examination of the wages in the non-profit human services sector relative to wages in other parts of the economy.
- Washington Center for Equitable Growth (Romich, PI) 9/1/19-3/2/21
“Developing New Data to Examine Local Minimum Wage Laws.”
This award provided support for development of a merged longitudinal dataset constructed from state administrative records.
- Institute for Research on Poverty 7/1/19-8/30/21
JPB Foundation (Romich, PI)
“How Does Raising The Minimum Wage Affect Public Assistance Use?”
This award funds a partnership between the University of Washington and the state Department of Social and Health Services to examine questions of mutual interest, including the impact of the Seattle Minimum Wage on means-tested benefit use.
- Administration for Children and Families, US HHS
90PD0279 (Romich, PI) 09/30/13-09/30/18
Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Scholars Network
This award funds research on resources of families in the child welfare system; income instability and the safety net; and participation in the Family Self Sufficiency and Stability Consortium.