



The Newsletter of the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources

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**In the News**

**Christopher King Quoted in Austin American-Statesman**

The growing population and economy of Texas received attention in the Austin American-Statesman on July 23rd. Ray Marshall Center Director Dr. Chris King was featured for his take on what it means for workforce training and

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**Daniel Schroeder to Leave Texas but Not Ray Marshall Center**

Research Scientist **Dr. Daniel Schroeder** will be moving to New Hampshire, where his wife, Dr. Alicia Betsinger, recently became the Vice-provost for Institutional Research at Dartmouth College. Dr. Schroeder first joined the center staff in the mid-1990s after working for several state agencies. During his time at the center, he has evaluated numerous studies and conducted research in human services areas, including child support, unemployment insurance, workforce development, and child care subsidies, among others.

Dr. Schroeder will remain electronically connected to his team at the RMC, and will return periodically for meetings with project sponsors and for strategic planning meetings. Schroeder cites the rich research opportunities provided by the RMC's access to state administrative data and his devotion to projects he's cultivated over years as strong incentives to remain engaged with the RMC. "There are projects that I care about,...and a lot of history built up here."



**Christopher King discusses the Tulsa CareerAdvance® Program on NPR**

RMC Director **Dr. Chris King** appeared on the April 23rd airing of National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" program and the April 26th airing of "All Things Considered," along with Tulsa Community Action Program Director Steven Dow, to discuss the benefits of CareerAdvance®, a "dual-generation" approach to simultaneously helping parents and their children succeed. Along with representatives from the Aspen Institute's 'Ascend' program, which has become a hub for dual-generation strategies that has received national attention for its successes in tackling poverty, Dr. King discussed the strategy of 'thinking about parents and kids at the same time.' This strategy is characterized by its ability to improve the educational and labor market outcomes for participants, as well as to reduce the likelihood that families return to public assistance.

adult education programs. For the complete story by Dan Zehr, see **Workforce training deserves higher priority in Texas.**

### Upcoming Events

#### Tara Smith Will Travel to Segovia, Spain in September for the APPAM International Conference

Research Associate Tara Smith will attend the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) International Conference in Segovia, Spain this September. The conference, which attracts researchers from around the world, accepted one of Smith's papers featuring two-generation work at the Ray Marshall Center. For more information about the conference, see [APPAM.org](http://APPAM.org).

In recent weeks, Dr. King has shared results from the RMC's research into dual-generation strategies with attendees at an Ascend conference in Aspen, as well as at the Working Poor Families Project's Policy Academy, hosted by the Joyce Foundation in Chicago. While it is too soon to capture measurable impacts from dual-generation '2.0' efforts, early outcomes from CareerAdvance® are on the right track, says King.

#### Center Researchers Traveled to Washington, DC for APPAM Conference

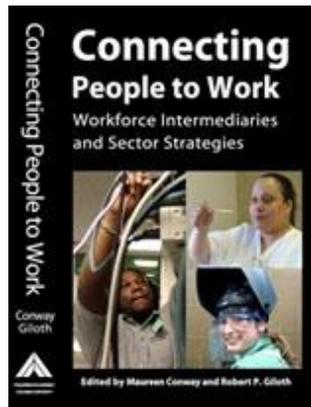


Washington, DC. Photo credit: Trevor Udwin

On June 2nd, Research Associate **Tara Smith** was invited to present research findings from the ongoing evaluation of Tulsa's CareerAdvance® Program at the *Bridging Policies for Young Children and Families: Two-generation Policy Strategies to Support Vulnerable Families Conference* in Washington, DC.

Convened by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, the Alliance for Early Success, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the meeting brought together experts, policy makers, and researchers to explore the opportunities for state programs to better target support services to whole families. Ms. Smith highlighted many positive results from the program including participants' appreciation, pride, and lasting changes for themselves and their families as a result of their participation in CareerAdvance®. For more information about CareerAdvance®, see [CAPTulsa.org](http://CAPTulsa.org).

#### Christopher King Participates in Aspen Institute Book Launch



On Thursday June 12th, Dr. Christopher King participated in the launch of the book *Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies*, discussing his chapter and related policy implications. The event, which was moderated and introduced by co-editors Maureen Conway of the Aspen Institute and Bob Giloth of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, highlighted the evolution of successful workforce strategies over the past decade and how it has impacted research, philanthropy, public and private investments as well as policy

decisions.

King's chapter, *Sectoral Workforce and Related Strategies: What We Know... and What We Need to Know*, discusses the effects of sector

and related strategies. Working closely with the Aspen Institute's Workforce Strategies Initiative over the past four years, King discusses the quantity and quality of experimental and quasi-experimental sectoral, career-pathway, and bridge programs today. While the number of federal- and foundation-funded workforce programs has increased in the past decade, rigorous evidence on regional and long-term impacts as well as scalability and sustainability remains too thin. King is optimistic about ongoing and newly funded studies that may provide more insight into how workforce and career-advancement programs may improve patterns of educational attainment in both parents and children, employment, health and well-being. More information about the event can be found at [AspenInstitute.org](https://www.aspeninstitute.org).

### **Heath Prince Presents Research on Sub-Saharan Africa**

RMC Associate Director, **Dr. Heath Prince**, presented his research on multidimensional poverty measurement in Sub-Saharan Africa at the African Evaluation Association's 7th Biennial Conference on March 4th in Yaounde, Cameroon. The conference, entitled "Evaluation for Development: From Analysis to Impact," was sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the United Nations Development Program, USAID, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, and a host of international financial institutions, bi-lateral aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations, and was attended by monitoring and evaluation professionals from a wide range of developing and Western countries. Dr. Prince's presentation included findings from his research into factors driving change in an index of poverty, exclusive of income poverty, providing an alternative perspective on state level policy interventions for bringing about improvements in well-being for the multidimensionally poor.

## Project Updates

### **Workforce Data Quality Initiative Comes to an End after Three and a Half Years**

In June, Ray Marshall Center researchers wrapped-up three and a half years of work on the Texas Workforce Data Quality Initiative. The Center's work on this project, funded by the Texas Workforce Commission through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment & Training Administration, demonstrated the breadth of policy-relevant research made possible through the availability of linked, longitudinal data on students and workers, such as the data maintained in the Texas Education Research Centers (ERCs). Several publications from this work have been posted to the Center's website. These include the following:

#### *The Impact of Exit Exams on Long-Term Student Outcomes in Texas*

Using Texas ERC data, this study examined the effects of state-mandated high school exit exams on students within five points of passing or failing the exam. The findings showed that there was an

insignificant impact on receipt of a high-school diploma, post-secondary education, and labor force outcomes for those within the five-point threshold. These results suggest that failing a high school exit exam does not have a negative impact on students' future opportunities. The full report is available [here](#).

*Work-Study Financial Aid and Student Outcomes: Evidence from Community Colleges in Texas*

The Federal Work-Study Program helps students pay for their education as well as colleges fill jobs at lower costs to the institution by subsidizing the wages of students who qualify for need-based grants. However, the difference in work-study programs from other aid packages has received little attention from policy makers, such as the behavioral impact it can have on participants. Using ERC data on community colleges in Texas, the study found that though working any job can lower the probability of a student's continuing education, having a work-study job is associated with an increased probability of persisting to a second year of community college as well as transferring to a four-year college. The full report is available [here](#).

*The Effects of Institutional Inputs on Time to Degree for Traditional and Nontraditional Students*

This study analyzed the student and institutional factors that include the length of time it takes for students to earn a college degree. Using Texas ERC data, the study found that the average time to degree for students who entered postsecondary education in 2004 or 2005 was 59 months. Time to degree varied significantly depending on student characteristics (income, race/ethnicity, academic preparation, and parents' education level) as well as institutional factors such as full-time faculty to student ratios. The full report is available [here](#).

*Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for 2008 and 2009 Central Texas High School Graduates*

This study extended the center's long-standing Central Texas Student Futures Project to examine postsecondary pathways for 2008 and 2009 Central Texas high school graduates from ten independent school districts through December 2012. Using National Student Clearinghouse and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board data, researchers determined that approximately 75% of these graduates had enrolled in at least one semester of college during the time period examined, with 20% of 2008 graduates and 3% of 2009 graduates earning a degree in that time. More than 80% had been employed in Texas in at least one quarter since their high school graduation. The study also examined characteristics of students who persisted in college for four years or graduated, as well as those who were continuously or intermittently employed. Each school district received a brief outlining the postsecondary outcomes and pathways for their graduates. The summary findings for Central Texas are presented in Research Brief 7, available [here](#).

Two additional studies from the Texas WDQI project are in final review and will be posted to the Center's website upon completion. These are:

1. A Regional (at the Workforce Development Area Level) and Statewide Analysis of Postsecondary Outcomes for 2008 and 2009 Texas High School Graduates
2. Findings from a Pilot Survey of Employers to Determine Occupational Outcomes for Graduates of Texas Job Training and Postsecondary Education Systems

**Ray Marshall Center Awarded IES Grant to Continue Summer Melt Program**

Earlier this year, the Ray Marshall Center was awarded a federal grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to continue its involvement in the **Summer Melt** program in Central Texas. The Summer Melt program is an intervention for students that have been accepted to college but likely will not enroll in the fall. Following a random selection of students for two years, the program offers counseling to those students by reminding them of important deadlines and applications specific to their college via an automated text messaging service. Recent results regarding the new texting intervention provided evidence to the IES to continue funding the local project. So far, RMC has provided data management and processing for the larger effort to reduce summer melt drop off and results are expected in three to four years.

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