

Melanie A. (Zilora) Zaber

The RAND Corporation
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EMPLOYMENT

Full Economist, The RAND Corporation, 2021-present
Codirector, RAND Lowy Family Middle-Class Pathways Center, 2020-present
Associate Economist, The RAND Corporation, 2017-2021

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University, 2017
M. Phil. Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University, 2015
M.S. Economics, Carnegie Mellon University, 2014
B.S. Economics, Syracuse University, 2011
B.A. Policy Studies, Syracuse University, 2011

RESEARCH FIELDS

Postsecondary education, STEM workforce, economic mobility, military personnel, civil justice

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Haller, Melissa, Jeffrey B. Wenger, **Melanie A. Zaber**, and George W. Zuo. "A Consumption-Based Definition of the Middle Class." *Social Indicators Research* (2022): 1-22.

Rennane, Stephanie, Acheson-Field, Hannah, Edwards, Kathryn A., Gahlon, Grace, and **Melanie A. Zaber**. Leak or link? The overrepresentation of women in non-tenure-track academic positions in STEM. *PLOS ONE* (2022).

Baird, Matthew D., Bozick, Robert and **Zaber, Melanie A.** "Beyond traditional academic degrees: The labor market returns to occupational credentials in the United States" *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, vol.11, no.1, 2022.

Karney, Benjamin R., Wenger, Jeffrey B., **Zaber, Melanie A.**, and Thomas N. Bradbury. "Effects of State Minimum Wage Increases on Family Formation." *Journal of Marriage and Family* (2022).

Doss, Christopher, **Melanie A. Zaber**, Benjamin K. Master, Susan M. Gates, and Laura Hamilton. "The Relationship Between Measures of Preservice Principal Practice and Future Principal Job Performance." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* (2021).

Epple, Dennis; Romano, Richard; Sarpaça, Sinan; Sieg, Holger; and **Melanie Zaber**, "Estimating a Model of College Choice and Financial Aid." *RAND Journal of Economics* (2019).

Black, Dan; Taylor, Lowell; and **Melanie Zaber**, "Empirical Evidence in the Study of Labor Markets: Opportunities and Challenges for a New Household Survey." *Journal of Economic Analysis and Social Measurement* (2015).

Rohlf, Chris, and **Melanie Zilora**. "Estimating Parents' Valuations of Class Size Reductions Using Attrition in the Tennessee STAR Experiment." *The BE Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy* (2014): 1-36.

OTHER PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Edwards, Kathryn A., **Melanie A. Zaber**, and Daniel Schwam, What Are the Skills Required to Obtain a Good Job? An Analysis of Labor Markets, Occupational Features, and Skill Training for the Youth ChalleNGe Program. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2022. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR271-3.html. Also available in print form.
- Anderson, Drew M. and **Melanie A. Zaber**, The Future of New Jersey's Tuition Aid Grant: A Review of Options and Evidence. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR101-2.html
- Anderson, Drew N. and **Zaber, Melanie A.** (2021), "Cutting the College Price TAG: The Effects of New Jersey's Tuition Aid Grant on College Persistence and Completion," RRA101-1. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RBA101-1.html
- Baird, Matthew D., **Melanie A. Zaber**, Andrew W. Dick, Chloe E. Bird, Annie Chen, Molly Waymouth, Grace Gahlon, Denise D. Quigley, Hamad Al-Ibrahim, and Lori Frank, Societal Impact of Research Funding for Women's Health in Alzheimer's Disease and Alzheimer's Disease-Related Dementias. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR708-1.html
- Baird, Matthew D., **Melanie A. Zaber**, Andrew W. Dick, Chloe E. Bird, Annie Chen, Molly Waymouth, Grace Gahlon, Denise D. Quigley, Hamad Al-Ibrahim, and Lori Frank, Societal Impact of Research Funding for Women's Health in Coronary Artery Disease. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR708-2.html
- Gonzalez, Gabriella C.; Edwards, Kathryn; **Zaber, Melanie A.**; Andrew, Megan; Strong, Aaron; and Craig Bond (2020), "Supporting a 21st Century Workforce in Puerto Rico: Challenges and Options for Improving Puerto Rico's Workforce System Following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017," RR-2856-DHS.
- Bond, Craig A.; Strong, Aaron; Smith, Troy D.; ... & **Zaber, Melanie A.** (2020). Challenges and opportunities for the Puerto Rico economy: a review of evidence and options following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, RR-2600-DHS.
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Laura S. Hamilton (2020). Teacher and Principal Perspectives on Supports for Students' College and Career Pathways, RR-4344-BMGF.
- Gates, Susan. M., Baird, Matthew. D., Doss, Christopher. J., Hamilton, Laura. S., Opper, Isaac. M., Master, Benjamin. K., ... & **Zaber, Melanie. A.** (2019). Preparing School Leaders for Success. RAND Corporation.
- Zaber, Melanie A.**, Karoly, Lynn A., and Katie Whipkey (2019). Reimagining Education and Work for the 21st Century and Beyond. RAND Corporation.

WORKING PAPERS

- Armour, Phil and **Melanie Zaber**. "Does Student Loan Forgiveness Drive Disability Application?" NBER working paper no. 26787, <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26787>
- Edwards, Kathryn, Acheson-Field, Hannah, Rennane, Stephanie and **Zaber, Melanie**, Pipers, Droppers, Nevers, and Hoppers: Observed Career Pathways Among STEM Ph.D. Scientists (October 8, 2021). <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3939090>

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Edwards, Kathryn, **Melanie Zaber**, and Daniel Schwam. Six Skills for Success: How the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program Can Support Participants in Developing Portable Skills That Employers Value, 2022.

- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Elizabeth D. Steiner, Are Income Share Agreements Fair? A Close Look at the Potential Risks and Benefits of an Emerging Financial Aid Option. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1141-12.html>
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Jeffrey B. Wenger, Limited Opportunity: Changes in Employment and the American Middle Class. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1141-8.html>
- Wenger, Jeffrey B. and **Melanie A. Zaber**, Who Is Middle Class?. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1141-3.html> Reprinted by *ProMarket*, <https://promarket.org/2021/05/12/who-is-middle-class-america-shrink-explainer/>
- Zaber, Melanie A.**, and Karoly, Lynn A. (2021). “Reimagining the workforce development and employment system.” Testimony presented before the Florida House of Representatives Education & Employment Committee on January 26, 2021, CT-A1168-1.
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Edwards, Kathryn A. (2021). “Supporting Working Parents Could Accelerate Recovery,” RAND Blog <https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/01/supporting-working-parents-could-accelerate-recovery.html> Reprinted by *Ms. Magazine*, <https://msmagazine.com/2021/02/24/supporting-working-parents-moms-child-care-covid-recovery/>
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Edwards, Kathryn A. (2020). “Working Moms at Risk of Being Left Behind in Economic Recovery,” United Press International, https://www.upi.com/Top_News/Voices/2020/06/11/Working-moms-at-risk-of-being-left-behind-in-economic-recovery/9951591876971/
- Bird, Chloe E.; Frank, Lori; Dick, Andrew W.; **Zaber, Melanie A.**; Quigley, Denise D.; Jayasuriya, Anula (2020). “Women and COVID-19: Studying the Impact of Sex and Gender,” RAND Blog, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/04/women-and-covid-19-studying-the-impact-of-sex-and-gender.html>
- Edwards, Kathryn A.; **Zaber, Melanie A.**; Girven, Richard S. (2020). “Should the Federal Workforce Stay Remote? Planning for After the Crisis.” RAND Blog, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/04/should-the-federal-workforce-stay-remote-planning-for.html>
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Hamilton, Laura S. (2020). “Navigating College and Career Readiness in a Time of Uncertainty.” RAND Blog, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/03/navigating-college-and-career-readiness-in-a-time-of.html>
- Zaber, Melanie A.** and Edwards, Kathryn A. (2019). “Income Share Agreements: What’s Risky, What’s Promising, and What We Still Need to Know.” RAND Blog, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/06/income-share-agreements-isas-whats-risky-whats-promising.html>

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation)	10/1/22-9/30/23
The Income Share Agreement Landscape	\$285,442
Role: Co-Principal Investigator	
Social Security Administration	10/1/22-9/30/23
The Income Share Agreement Landscape	\$100,000
Role: Principal Investigator	
Passport Academy (Richard King Mellon Foundation)	9/12/22-2/11/24

Building Career-Oriented Competencies at an Alternative High School Role: Co-Principal Investigator	\$220,000
National Endowment for Financial Education The Income Share Agreement Landscape Role: Principal Investigator	11/1/21-5/1/23 \$241,210
Richard King Mellon Foundation, Heinz Endowments, Henry C. Hillman Foundation, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation The Pittsburgh Science- and Technology-Focused Workforce Ecosystem Role: Principal Investigator	9/15/21-8/30/22 \$531,000
ECMC Foundation Equity and Allocation of Financial Aid in New Jersey Role: Co-Principal Investigator	2/1/19-9/30/21 \$209,401
Institute for Civil Justice The Impact of Access to Legal Services on Divorce Role: Principal Investigator	10/1/18-9/30/21 \$100,000
Social Security Administration Does Student Loan Forgiveness Drive Disability Application? Role: Co-Principal Investigator	9/30/18-9/29/19 \$95,000
National Science Foundation Novel Methods to Explore the Gender Composition of the STEM PhD Workforce Role: Principal Investigator	9/1/18-8/31/21 \$248,485
Security 2040 Board Citizenship, Gender and Service in 2040 Role: Co-Principal Investigator	12/1/17-9/30/19 \$90,000
National Security Research Division Communication and Deployment Outcomes Role: Principal Investigator	12/1/17-12/30/19 \$67,482
Institute for Civil Justice <i>Pro Se</i> Filing in Chapter 7 Bankruptcies: An Empirical Comparison of Outcomes Role: Principal Investigator	10/1/17-3/31/19 \$100,000

HONORS AND AWARDS

RAND Mentorship Award, October 2022
 RAND Innovation Spotlight Award, July 2020
 RAND Spotlight Award, April 2019
 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Heinz College, 2014 & 2016
 George Duncan Award for Best Research Paper, Heinz College, 2014

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

As Instructor

Economic Analysis (Undergraduate), Heinz College, Summer 2015-2016

As Teaching Assistant

Applied Economic Analysis (Masters), Heinz College, Fall 2012-2016

Regression Analysis (Undergraduate), Tepper School of Business, Spring 2015-2016

Financial Analysis (Masters), Heinz College, Spring 2013-2014

Professional Speaking (Masters), Heinz College, Summer 2013

PRESENTATIONS/INVITED PANELS

- 2022 Association for Education Finance and Policy
- 2021 RAND ICJ-UCLA Conference on Case Management
Chicago Club Economic Club
Richard King Mellon Foundation
Free the Facts (virtual)
Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (virtual)
Florida House of Representatives, Education & Employment Committee (virtual)
- 2020 Free the Facts (virtual)
Brookings Future of the Middle Class Initiative (virtual)
Association for Education Finance and Policy Annual Meetings (virtual)
Carnegie Mellon University
- 2019 Institute for Civil Justice Board Meeting
Social and Economic Wellbeing Board Meeting
Social Security Administration
- 2018 Midwest Economic Association Annual Meetings
- 2017 U.S. Census Bureau
The RAND Corporation
Federal Trade Commission
Center for Naval Analyses
Carnegie Mellon University
- 2016 Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings
Midwest Economic Association Annual Meetings
- 2014 Population Association of America Annual Meetings
- 2013 Population Association of America Annual Meetings
- 2011 Governmental Research Association Annual Meetings

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

CSWEP Liaison

Session Chair (MEA 2018)

Reviewer: *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, *Educational Researcher*

SKILLS & PROFICIENCIES

Languages: English (native), Spanish (conversational)

Mathematical and Statistical: STATA, R