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An Exploratory Analysis of Participant Employment Outcomes in a Pennsylvania Welfare-to-Work Program, 2013-2016

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An Exploratory Analysis of Participant Employment Outcomes in a Pennsylvania
Welfare-to-Work Program, 2013-2016
by

Harvey L. Nicholson Jr.

A Thesis

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

Of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts

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Thesis is accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology.

An Exploratory Analysis of Participant Employment Outcomes in a Pennsylvania Welfare-to-Work Program, 2013-2016

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	vi
List of Tables.....	vii
Abstract.....	1
Introduction.....	3
The Current State of Welfare in Pennsylvania.....	7
Data.....	13
Explanation and Justification of Indicators Related to Differences Between Participant Employment Outcomes (Independent Variables).....	14
Measures of Employment Outcomes (Dependent Variables)	19
Descriptive Statistics.....	25
Results.....	30
Conclusion.....	45
Discussion.....	48
References.....	53
APPENDIX 1: IRB APPROVAL.....	59
Vita.....	60

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.....	29
Figure 2.....	39

LIST OF TABLE

Table 1	10
Table 2.....	12
Table 3.....	22
Table 4.....	26
Table 5.....	27
Table 6.....	28
Table 7.....	32
Table 8.....	34
Table 9.....	36
Table 10.....	38
Table 11.....	41
Table 12.....	44
Table 13.....	45

ABSTRACT

Previous studies on employment outcomes of welfare recipients partaking in welfare-to-work (WTW) programs regularly overlook essential elements highly pertinent to job outcomes of such individuals. Based on demographic characteristics of participants within WTW programs, little research has analyzed how employment outcomes vary across program enrollees. Additionally, only a small share of past inquiries on WTW programs have taken into account the question of whether employment outcomes of welfare recipients offer wages enough to reach self-sufficiency within specific geographical locations. Using three years of participant data (2013 - 2016) taken from “FINDWORK”, a Pennsylvania WTW program located in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton Pennsylvania-New Jersey (ABE PA-NJ) metropolitan area, this exploratory analysis examined employment outcomes of welfare recipients previously enrolled in this service. Assessments of employment outcomes focused on the employment statuses, hourly wages, total weekly wages, living wage statuses and occupation types attained by FINDWORK participants. Additionally, to gauge whether program enrollees achieved employment adequate to reach self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan region, this study deployed geographic specific living wage results for this area derived from Glasmeier’s (2014) “Living Wage Calculator” (LWC). The results of this exploratory study ascertained that women, the less educated, long-term welfare recipients, and Spanish-speaking participants all experienced significantly inferior employment outcomes compared to their group counterpart. This study also revealed the need to strengthen the educational attainment levels of future FINDWORK participants,

including the need to ensure women share equal opportunities as men to obtain employment across a wide array of jobs within private labor markets.

Key Words: Welfare-to-work, TANF, welfare, employment outcomes, living wage, geography

Introduction

The implementation of the 1996 welfare reform bill: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, i.e. cash assistance for impoverished individuals) brought sweeping changes toward the overall design and systematic structure of welfare in the United States. Unlike the former welfare program: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), TANF has implemented numerous policy changes over eligibility requirements for welfare receipt, and has introduced various modifications concerning how recipients can remain on cash assistance. Contrary to AFDC, society's most impoverished citizens are no longer guaranteed cash assistance under TANF; instead, TANF has taken a "work first" approach toward the distribution of cash assistance to the poor. "Work First" refers to the dominant service provision method and ideology now central in the process by which the delivery of TANF services transpires (Kissane 2008). Mainly referred to as "work, not welfare" or "work first" schemes—designs which presently comprise a significant portion of the service operation processes within the TANF system—primarily focus on helping welfare recipients achieve self-sufficiency and personal responsibility through stressing the acquirement of immediate employment and discouraging welfare receipt among both future and current recipients. To remain eligible to receive and sustain cash assistance, TANF currently requires all able-bodied welfare recipients to attend various workfare (i.e. work-related activities); these tasks mainly occur within the confines of employment-oriented training services operated via welfare programs. Inside the governing systems of TANF, workfare has become widely referred to as "welfare to work" (WTW) activities. WTW programs mainly emphasize labor force attachment (LFA) skills in aims to keep welfare recipients in the labor market;

LFA exercises ordinarily include “soft-skills” courses such as those in punctuality, budgeting, resume writing, and life learning (Fisher 1999).

Before the implementation of TANF, political advocates across both the Democratic and Republican party considered work requirements as a way to push welfare recipients to become self-sufficient and empower them to adopt a mindset of “personal responsibility” (Hancock 2004). Routinely invoked during the debate over whether or not to reform the former welfare program: AFDC in the mid-1990’s, federal legislators had preached that welfare recipients would eventually reach personal responsibility and self-sufficiency through continuously attending job-training programs aimed to expedite the process from welfare to unsubsidized employment (Gilens 1999). Through recipient’s continued involvements in work first activities, policymakers believed that recipients would soon precipitously leave welfare rolls and subsequently terminate needs for cash assistance (Kissane 2008; Ridizi 2006).

Earlier examinations on employment outcomes of welfare recipients enrolled in state WTW programs have been plentiful. Previous studies have determined both positive and negative results of several service delivery approaches utilized by state WTW programs in attempts to produce self-sufficiency and personal responsibility among welfare recipients (Hamilton 2002; Hendra et al. 2010; Fein and Beecroft 2006). However, the latter gives credence to only a few results germane to employment outcomes of welfare recipients partaking in WTW services such as the recipient’s total weekly earnings. Important, but often overlooked results of employment outcomes of WTW participants consist of the types of occupations in which they transition into via the program, the living wage status of their hourly pay rate, and whether the hourly wage is

enough to secure self-sufficiency within specific geographical locations. As for whether or not participants have truly experienced living wage job outcomes within their immediate locality, only a small number of studies concentrate on this particular issue. Consequently, it is important for research on employment outcomes of WTW participants to investigate whether jobs achieved by welfare recipients involved in WTW training programs pay appropriate wages permitting both self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.

The purpose of this research was to conduct a descriptive analysis of the first and second employment outcomes of WTW participants who had previously partaken in the state of Pennsylvania's WTW program: "FINDWORK"¹ from 2013 to 2016.

FINDWORK presently serves as the primary WTW service provider for all 67 counties across the state and currently has a location in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton PA-NJ (ABE PA-NJ) region of Pennsylvania. This investigation focused on the FINDWORK program now overseeing the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area. Furthermore, in efforts to measure the first and second employment outcomes of participants, this study takes into consideration participant's employment statuses; hourly wages; total weekly wages; occupational types; work hours by career sector and living wage statuses. The ABE PA-NJ region's living wage requirement for one adult with no children were determined using area specific living wage calculations derived from the "Living Wage Calculator" (LWC) created by Dr. Amy Glasmeier (2014) of the University of Massachusetts of Technology. "The living wage model is an alternative measure of basic needs. It is a

¹ "FINDWORK" is not the actual name of Pennsylvania's WTW program; FINDWORK is a pseudonym used to protect the privacy of Pennsylvania's WTW program.

market-based approach that draws upon geographically specific expenditure data related to a family's likely minimum food, child care, health insurance, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities (e.g. clothing, personal care items, etc.) costs" (Glasmeier 2014). To the best of my knowledge, no previous study of WTW programs has utilized LWC as a measure to assess whether hourly wages obtained by WTW participants indeed adhere to what one would need to reach self-sufficiency within a given geographical setting. The most recent figure on the living wage requirement for the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area necessary for a childless adult to achieve self-sufficiency currently stands at \$10.79 (Glasmeier 2014).

This study performed an exploratory analysis of several key areas of FINDWORK participant employment outcomes. These important but frequently discounted areas of inquiry in other studies of WTW programs include the occupational types of participant outcomes, and the living wage statuses of their hourly pay rates. To parse out variations on such issues, as well as to detect disparities on the aforementioned outcome metrics, this research used demographic-level (i.e. individual-level) data drawn from participants previously enrolled at FINDWORK as indicator variables for the statistical models utilized for this analysis. Individual-level information consisted of each participant's age, race, and educational attainment level, length of welfare receipt, Spanish-speaking status, and gender. Moreover, Gooden's (2000) descriptive analysis of racial differences in employment outcomes within a Virginia WTW program deploys a similar approach to this study. Gooden's research on employment outcomes of WTW participants focused on variations across occupational types gained among black and white participants; however, she does not utilize gender to examine differences across

employment outcomes, since her investigation concentrated only on women. In addition, although past examinations on employment outcomes of welfare recipients enrolled in WTW programs examine financial earnings of such participants (Ricco and Bloom 2003), none deploy the results of LWC to fully grasp whether or not participant pay rates were enough to match the hourly wage needed to attain self-sufficiency within a specified geographical location. This paper continues onward through the following six step approach (1) offering a report on Pennsylvania's current welfare system and funding streams for the state's TANF program; (2) offering an explanation about the data deployed for this inquiry; (3) providing justification for the specification of the statistical models used for this study; (4) presenting a discussion of the results of the analysis; (5) giving a summary of the main findings of the analysis, and (6) presenting a discussion on the implications of the results of this examination.

The Current State of Welfare in Pennsylvania

The state of Pennsylvania first established its major welfare reform overhaul shortly after the United States federal government's implementation of TANF in 1996. The PA TANF program encompasses several initiatives for individuals attempting to apply for welfare assistance, including one-time lump sum diversionary payments (used to deter welfare usage and discourage dependency on cash assistance); family caps on welfare benefits; and requirements for school attendance for children within the age range of primary and secondary school (Pennsylvania Department of Human Services 2015). According to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS), "The Department of Human Services is dedicated to helping low-income families become independent while they receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF,

benefits. TANF is also referred to as "cash assistance"; The TANF program provides money to help: Pregnant women, Dependent children and their parents who live with them, and Dependent children and other relatives who live with them and care for them” (Pennsylvania Department of Human Services 2015). In its entirety, the state of Pennsylvania’s TANF program overwhelmingly promotes self-sustainability, work, marriage and personal responsibility among all potential and current welfare recipients.

In Pennsylvania, individuals seeking to obtain cash assistance must first meet with a county assistance office (CAO) caseworker to explore any possible options to receive benefits. In the initial meeting with a CAO caseworker, participants must adhere to the subsequent instructions to possibly qualify for cash assistance (Pennsylvania Department of Human Services 2015):

1. Provide documentation proving s/he is a citizen of the United States of America and a resident of Pennsylvania.
2. Provide social security data for all family members.
3. Actively look for unsubsidized employment, and accept any genuine job offer of employment.
4. Complete an Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR).
5. Report any outside sources of income unrelated to support garnered from public services.

The PA TANF system has also implemented a work component as mandated by the United States federal government. Established shortly after federal welfare reform of AFDC in 1996, The Road to Economic Self-Sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) now stands as one of the primary programs aiming to assist

individuals on cash assistance. RESET, instituted by Act 35 on May 6, 1996, states that “recipients of TANF in Pennsylvania are enrolled in an employment and training program known as RESET to enable them to obtain employment and become self-sufficient” (The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare 2014). Prior to RESET, the state of Pennsylvania instituted the FINDWORK program in 1987². Designed as a subset of the RESET program, FINDWORK now stands as the main developer of work-related strategies; its fundamental goal is to assist in the transfer of persons on cash assistance into unsubsidized employment. It is also the primary facilitator of the distribution of job-preparedness services to welfare recipients in Pennsylvania. FINDWORK acts to provide welfare recipients the necessary skills to become self-sufficient through providing job-related services. These resources allocated to welfare recipients include assistance with job search, job placement, individualized case management, and job retention.

FINDWORK has dedicated itself toward the delivery of employment-ready workers to private employers within each service environment across the state of Pennsylvania. The program also regularly communicates with potential employers in the area of each specific service environment, and relies on the service setting’s private labor market to supply enough employment outcomes for individuals who participate in the program.

As Table 1 indicates, welfare recipients in Pennsylvania must partake in work-related activities within no later than seven calendar days after qualifying for cash benefits. Recipients can participate in either one or a combination of several work-related tasks such as unsubsidized employment, job-search, community service, or job-readiness

² FINDWORK is currently the main program in charge of addressing the employment-training needs of welfare recipients in Pennsylvania, and is the welfare service initiative examined in this analysis.

training. In Pennsylvania, participation in work-related tasks while on cash assistance is mandatory for all abled-bodied welfare recipients between the ages of 18 and 59. Individuals under the age of 16, and full-time students below the age of 19 are exempt from participating in employment-related activities. Meanwhile, recipients who continuously fail to adhere to the work requirements created under the PA TANF policy are subject to benefit termination. Furthermore, other central components of TANF service provision in PA include five-year time limits on cash assistance; infant child exemptions; AMR plans, and supplementary support services meant to enable recipients to transition off welfare. Additional supportive amenities consist of help with childcare; transportation; and health insurance, including education and training services (see Table 1 for full description of Pennsylvania’s WTW service plan).

Table 1: TANF Welfare-to-Work Service Plan in Pennsylvania

TANF Welfare-to-Work Service Plan in Pennsylvania (2014)	
Provision	PA TANF
Time Limits	Five-year lifetime limit on assistance with some exceptions
Work Requirements	Must start within seven calendar days after welfare assistance authorized;
Infant Child Exemptions	Individuals with child under age of 6 whom has no alternative caretaker; or individuals caring for child under 12 months are exempt
Agreement of Personal Responsibility (AMR)	Yes; must develop plan with county assistance office worker to address how self-sufficiency will be attained; work hour requirements are established
Support Services (child care, Medicaid, transportation)	Yes
Education and Training	Yes; after 12 months of vocational training, recipient may continue education or training but must partake in another work activity

Note: Data obtained from The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (2014)

Prior to the implementation of TANF in 1996, government officials in both the House and Senate argued for the need to decentralize the entire welfare system. This process refers to the devolution of federal government services. Devolution materializes

when the federal government willingly transfers management and distributional powers of federally operated systems such as a social welfare program to state and local municipalities (Ochs 2015). Political actors in both the House and Senate believed shifting control over welfare dollars through the utilization of block grants (i.e. federal dollars allocated to fund TANF programs) to the state would offer states greater flexibility in the use of TANF dollars (Fording et al. 2007). Through increasing the autonomy of state administrations, proponents of block grants argued state governments could then shift and make funds available once families transitioned from welfare to employment for other needed supportive services such as childcare and added work-related assistance (Brodkin et al. 2006). After the implementation of TANF in 1996, the use of block grants was authorized; however, this took place in a booming economy. Welfare caseloads soon began to shrink due to the newly redesigned welfare system mandating work for welfare recipients. Welfare reform was then deemed a “success” by its backers in an economy full of low-wage job opportunities for recipients now obligated to seek employment. However, following the Great Recession of 2008, states have mostly reauthorized block grants to pay for budget deficits; states and local regimes have also used block grants as proxies for state spending (Schott et. al 2012). Since 2008, many states overwhelmingly have been unable or have refused to restore cuts in work-related welfare services, and some states have continued to reduce the amount of funds allocated for WTW programs (Schott et al. 2012).

Table 2: Share of Total TANF Dollars Spent on Work First Strategies in Pennsylvania

	Percentage %
Service	
Transportation	3.2
Education and Training	0.6
Work Subsidies	0.6
Other Work Expenses	12.5

Note: Table adapted from *Privatizing the Policy* (Ochs 2015); Ochs collected these percentages from the Center for Law and Social Policy.

Table 2 shows the ways in which TANF block grants provided by the U.S. federal government had diffused across four major welfare service areas in Pennsylvania in 2009. The basic TANF block grant given to each state consists of approximately \$16.5 billion in federal support per year; in addition to the block grant, states must also contribute a minimum of \$10.4 million of their own funds to support the TANF program (Falk 2012). However, in 2009, only approximately 3.2% of TANF funds in Pennsylvania went toward assisting welfare recipients with transportation issues (i.e. allowances for car repairs and purchases). Additionally, less than 1% of the grant funneled into educational and training supportive services meant to improve the human capital levels of participants involved in TANF’s work-related programs; education and training programs include GED/diploma, vocational and post-secondary learning services. Moreover, only 0.6% of funds targeted work-related subsidies primarily used to enable recipients to participate in subsidized work activities such as community service or private sector employment. Furthermore, as displayed in Table 2, the majority of TANF dollars trickled down to fund other work-related expenses such as expenditures germane to the purchasing of work-appropriate clothing, childcare, and driver’s licenses

for welfare recipients. Therefore, despite the state of Pennsylvania's ability to transfer funds without substantial federal oversight over the state's distribution of TANF dollars permitted via the devolution process, only slight portions of block grant funds were used for educational and training purposes. According to Piven and Cloward (1971), welfare programs have historically withheld proper funding support for such programs, especially during times of economic booms and during periods of conservative administrations. Thus, due to the lack of funding streams for education and training services in Pennsylvania, it is plausible to assume employment outcomes of participants within WTW programs who have limited educational attainment, may not receive the necessary training to secure self-sufficient employment.

Data

In the pursuance of analyzing employment outcomes of welfare recipients in a Pennsylvania WTW program, this study utilized three years of participant (i.e. administrative) data (2013 - 2016) taken from one of FINDWORK's service locations. In this study, the data came from a program located in the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area. Administrative data deployed for this research consisted of welfare recipients referred and subsequently enrolled into FINDWORK through the discretion of a CAO caseworker. As required by PADHS, FINDWORK consistently monitors participant's basic demographic data and information on participant employment outcomes (wages, expected weekly work hours, weekly wages, and occupation types). Furthermore, the dataset gathered from FINDWORK contained 1,471 observations. However, each observation involved within the administrative data used for this study does not always denote a different individual participant. In the administrative data, some participant

observations may refer to individuals that had successfully found employment, exited the program, and then re-entered the agency due to either a loss of a job or failure to meet the mandated work hours outlined within their AMR contract with the CAO. As a result, there are some observations with multiple entries referring to the same participant. Nevertheless, no similar cases that provide analogous information on the variables analyzed for this evaluation are present. Only a small portion of this study includes repeated observations of the same participant identification number. In addition, although a few participants had worked more than two jobs during an enrollment period, only a limited number of participants had reached more than two outcomes. From 2013 to 2016, less than 15% of participants in FINDWORK experienced more than two jobs within an enrollment phase. This provides further justification as for why this study chose to include only the first and second employment outcomes obtained by participants in FINDWORK. Participants who held either only one or two jobs comprised approximately 85% of participants enrolled in the program from June 2013 (month/year program was initiated in ABE PA-NJ area) March 2016 (month/year data was collected).

Explanation and Justification of Indicators Related to Differences Between Participant Employment Outcomes (Independent Variables)

Gender

The sociological literature has long advocated the importance of the inclusion of gender when analyzing any social phenomena. As for gender's influence on employment outcomes, it is vital to examine gender differences among men and women. In the United States, men have historically experienced higher levels of human capital attainment when compared to women. Inequities in human capital levels between men and women

routinely result from gender discrimination in employment, education, and financial earnings, and such disparities by gender are also largely a direct consequence of prejudicial treatment frequently experienced by women within the workplace (Feldberg and Glenn 1979). Also, in the aggregate, men tend to hold occupations with superior financial earnings, work more hours, and do so within significantly different job sectors compared to women. In addition, within private industries, occupations consisting of more women workers have been found to pay workers—both men and women—less in hourly wages (Reskin and Biebly 2005). Moreover, within the TANF system, the overwhelming majority of recipients participating in WTW training programs consist of women (Office of Family Assistance 2015). For these reason, it is important to discern employment outcomes of women enrolled in WTW programs by comparing them to employment outcomes of men. This will enable this analysis to ascertain whether both groups had equal chances to transition off welfare and into self-sufficient wage outcomes.

Race

In the United States, race continues to be on the forefront of research related to social stratification. In the welfare system, race has historically played a significant factor in the experiences of welfare recipients, particularly among African-American and Hispanic populations (Schram et al. 2010). Numerous studies examining the influence of race in WTW services have found African-Americans and Hispanic recipients routinely report unfair treatment, and they also receive significantly lower financial earnings when compared to whites (Gooden 2000; Bonds 2006). In addition, race generally tends to negatively affect the employability of racial minorities as a result of racist and discriminatory workplace environments. Compared to whites, racial minorities are less

likely to hold occupations that pay sufficient wages, as the marginalization of blacks, Hispanics, and other non-white racial groups to lower-level professions largely exists in labor markets (Maume 1999). Therefore, to understand whether race continues to contribute to disparities in employment outcomes between racial minorities and white welfare recipients partaking in WTW service environments, race was included in this analysis as an additional independent variable. In this analysis, the racial variable consisted of four specific groups: white, black, mixed-race, and refused. However, due to the limited number of participants who solely described themselves as Hispanic, this study was unable to designate a racial category for this particular group. In the participant administrative data, many individuals disclosed themselves as being of multiple races such as Hispanic, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Islander; consequently, such participants encompassed the mixed race category. In addition, a substantial number of participants in the program declined to provide their racial identity to the program at the time of their enrollment; such participants fell into the refused category.

English Proficiency: Spanish-Speaking Participants

Although no official language exists in the United States, proficiency in the English language is by and large an essential requirement for any potential job applicant to obtain satisfactory, i.e. living wage employment across a majority of occupations. Correspondingly, English competency is crucial toward an individual's ability to receive self-sufficient wages in an economy and society predominately communicating its business operations through the practice of the English language. Individuals who lack in this capacity may be at a disadvantage when it comes to obtaining self-sufficient

employment outcomes. For instance, foreign-born, including Spanish-speaking persons employed in the United States are significantly more likely to work in low-wage and low-skill occupations (Capps et al. 2003). Additionally, insufficient knowledge of the English language and limited connections to others with proficient English capabilities who could help such individuals build upon their ability to communicate more efficiently has been cited as a few of the numerous reasons for poor wage outcomes (Capps et al. 2003). Moreover, within the ABE PA-NJ area, a significant share of the population consists of those of Hispanic origins. In 2014, approximately 14.1% of the total population in the ABE PA-NJ region included Hispanic individuals (U.S. Census Bureau Intercensal Population Estimates 2014). Consequently, to determine whether Spanish-speaking participants experienced significantly different employment outcomes than non-Spanish-speakers, a variable that indicated if a participant either had or had not reported himself or herself as Spanish-speaking encompassed this analysis.

Age

Over an individual's life course, employment opportunities and abilities to secure self-sufficient wages fluctuate significantly, mainly because of changes in human capital attainment and physical capabilities. For instance, younger individuals between the ages of 18 to 24 are not likely to have gained significant work experience, causing wages to be rather small compared to older individuals. As younger persons grow older and obtain increases in education and job experience, wages generally rise. Although, increases in wages normally diminish as people reach retirement age because of physical ailments and, or, reductions in the number of hours worked (Johnson and Neumark 1996). Therefore, to comprehend the importance of age among employment outcomes of

FINDWORK participants, this analysis incorporated age as an additional independent variable. Ages of participants were recoded from a continuous variable into three distinct groups 18 to 24; 25 to 44; 45 and older.

Extended TANF

Welfare recipients who have remained on cash assistance over the five-year lifetime limit established via the federal TANF policy frequently face insurmountable barriers to achieving positive employment outcomes. Long-term welfare recipients mostly suffer from a number of impediments to employment such as mental, physical health and domestic violence issues (Kissane 2008; Gooden 2004; Lee and Vinokur 2007). Individuals with prolonged stays on TANF over the five-year time limit take the name “Extended TANF” (ETANF) recipients. In Pennsylvania, “ETANF gives families the ability to receive cash assistance contingent upon participation in employment or other work activities designed to move them toward economic independence” (The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare 2014). Within the FINDWORK program, it is crucial to discern the employment outcomes those on the support of ETANF. As a result, a binary variable for the ETANF and non-ETANF status of FINDWORK participants encompassed this analysis.

Educational Attainment

Earlier studies of welfare recipients involved in WTW programs suggest that higher educational attainment levels are consistent with employment outcomes that produce both greater hourly and aggregated incomes. Welfare recipients enrolled in WTW programs with a minimum of a GED or high school diploma are likely to achieve superior financial earnings (Bloom and Riccio 2003). Alternatively, welfare recipients

without at least a GED or high school diploma tend to hold insufficient wage outcomes that fail to enable self-sufficiency (Danziger et al. 2002). In the United States, the traditional assumption is that growths in human capital such as increases in educational attainment levels will eventually lead to advances in incomes as well as allow for more employability across a variety of occupational sectors (Becker 1993). Through this idea, many believe regardless of societal structures and external factors outside of the individual such as gender or racial discrimination will not significantly hinder one's ability to succeed economically. Therefore, to understand the importance of education on employment outcomes of FINDWORK participants, this study used a binary variable for education: GED/diploma and no GED/diploma.

Measures of Employment Outcomes (Dependent Variables)

Dependent variables used for this analysis of FINDWORK participant's first and second employment outcomes consisted of living wage statuses; employment statuses; hourly wages; total weekly wages; occupation types, and expected weekly work hours by occupations.

Living Wage

In order to measure whether or not employment outcomes of FINDWORK participants met the living wage standard required for at least one adult to reach self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ area, this study utilized the results of LWC. First developed by Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2004, LWC is a comprehensive analysis of the cost-of-living standards accounting for 366 metropolitan statistical areas and counties across the United States. LWC is one of the few all-inclusive studies on the living wage taking into account both citywide and

statistical geographic area data to determine hourly wages needed to reach self-sufficiency. She defines a living wage “as the wage needed to cover basic family expenses” (Glasmeier 2014). LWC computes area specific living wage standards through consideration of the hourly wage an individual working a full-time 40-hour workweek (2080 hours per year) must have to achieve self-sufficiency using the following calculations:

$$\text{Basic needs budget} = \text{Food cost} + \text{child care cost} + (\text{insurance premiums} + \text{health care costs}) + \text{housing cost (Fair Market Rent (FMR) from Housing of Urban Development (HUD))} + \text{transportation cost} + \text{other necessities cost}$$

$$\text{Living wage} = \text{Basic needs budget} + (\text{Basic need budget} * \text{tax rate})$$

Aside from Glasmeier’s LWC, alternative studies on living wage requirements do exist. For instance, the Universal Living Wage Formula (ULW) focuses heavily on the minimum wage a worker would need in order to afford specific bedroom sized apartments, starting at the efficiency-level. ULW computes living wage requirements through consideration of both the total monthly income and overall expenditures of an individual working a full-time 40-hour work week (2080 hours per year) utilizing the following formula:

$$\text{Total Monthly Income} = \text{Fair Market Rent (FMR) divided by } .3 = \$(B) \text{_____ monthly gross income necessarily to afford basic housing. Total Gross Monthly Income of } \$(B) \text{_____ X 12 months} = \$(C) \text{_____}. \$(C) \text{_____}. \$(C) \text{_____} \text{divided by 2080 hours per year } \$ \text{_____ per hour. New hourly wage is } \text{_____ per hour.}$$

$$\text{Total Monthly Expenditures} = \$(B) \text{_____ total gross monthly income minus } \$(D) \text{ Federal taxes, Social Security, Medicare supplement minus } \$(A) \text{_____ housing costs} = \text{=====}$$

\$_____ remaining for medical, clothing, food, transportation and telephone.” (Universal Living Wage 2015).

When expending ULW’s formula to discern the hourly wage an individual with no children would need to obtain to have affordable housing and become self-sufficient in the ABE PA-NJ area, it finds that one would need to acquire employment paying a minimum of \$11.85 per hour (Universal Living Wage 2015). Although the living wage calculations from both LWC and ULW deploy similar calculation strategies, the results of LWC produce estimates significantly more conservative than ULW. As a result, to avoid overestimation of the living wage standard for childless adults residing in the ABE PA-NJ region, the calculation derived from LWC seemed best to conduct a more accurate and cautious assessment of FINDWORK participant employment outcomes. Moreover, according to Glasmeier’s computations depicted in Table 3 on the required wages needed for one adult with no children to achieve self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ region, one would need to earn at least \$10.79 per hour. As shown in Table 3, this figure is significantly higher than the state of Pennsylvania’s 2016 minimum wage: \$7.25. This difference between the state of Pennsylvania’s minimum wage and the living wage compulsory for one person to become self-sufficient currently stands at \$3.54. For families consisting of one or two children with one adult provider, LWC determined that the necessary wage to reach self-sufficiency grows significantly higher (see Table 3). Hence, in order to fully fulfill the primary TANF goal of self-sufficiency, hourly wages of participants in FINDWORK should at least adhere to Glasmeier’s latest calculations of \$10.79 per hour. Achieving adequate hourly wage employment outcomes can enable welfare recipients to fully transition off cash assistance. Although, living wage

employment usually requires competency in a variety of “hard skills” such as computer, math, reading, and writing abilities, which many welfare recipients have yet to gain prior to entering WTW programs (Johnson and Corcoran 2003). As a result, to discern how different participant characteristics influenced varying living wage employment outcomes, a binary variable denoting the living wage status of participants was included into the analysis. This variable indicates whether a participant had attained an hourly wage at or above \$10.79, or below \$10.79.

Table 3: Living Wage Requirement for the ABE PA-NJ Region

Living Wage Requirement for the ABE PA-NJ Region (2014)			
Wage Types	1 Adult, no children	1 Adult, 1 child	1 Adult, 2 Children
Living Wage (Hourly)	\$10.79	\$22.50	\$27.54
Poverty Wage (Hourly)	\$5.00	\$7.00	\$9.00
PA Minimum Wage (Hourly)	7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25

Note: For full description of living wage standards in the ABE PA-NJ area, refer to the *Living Wage Calculator* (Glasmeier 2014)

Hourly Wages

Analogous to living wages are the hourly wages obtained by FINDWORK participants. Although welfare recipients may reach an employment outcome, sufficient hourly wages are an essential component toward enabling recipients to stay off welfare. Previous studies indicate that even after transitioning from welfare to employment, hourly wages received by women frequently fail to provide financial stability because of inconsistent hours and low-wage jobs (Cancian and Meyer 2000). In addition, human capital investments as such the achievement of higher levels of educational attainment can help to produce adequate hourly wages for welfare recipients who exit cash

assistance (Danziger et al. 2002). However, without sufficient hourly wages, welfare recipients will ultimately be unable to meet the goals of the TANF system, and will most likely remain considerably below the federal poverty level (Gooden 2000). In addition, ETANF recipients, who regularly face multiple barriers to employment, will probably find it difficult to get a job paying significantly above the PA minimum wage of \$7.25. Hence, in efforts to reveal variations on the financial earnings of FINDWORK participants, this study used hourly wages obtained by participant employment outcomes as an additional dependent measure.

Total Weekly Wage

In this study, the total weekly wage of participant's employment outcomes takes into consideration the hourly pay rate multiplied by the expected aggregated hours worked per week. However, it is important to note that large total weekly incomes do not always represent higher hourly wages among FINDWORK participants; it is possible for an individual to earn a small hourly wage, but have a superior total weekly income to another person who may have had a greater hourly pay but worked less overall hours during a given week. Moreover, within the welfare system, many recipients who obtain employment in the private sector do not have consistent work hours, which tend to lead to reductions in total weekly income. And based on individual characteristics of FINDWORK participants, differences in total weekly incomes may be present. For example, participants with higher educational attainment and those without significant barriers to adequate employment outcomes are likely to secure jobs offering loftier pay along with more promised work hours from their employer. Although, some studies have found even after obtaining private sector employment, in the aggregate, welfare

recipients generally work longer hours for less overall pay (Ochs 2015). Therefore, to discern differences in total weekly wages of employment outcomes of FINDWORK participants, this analysis deployed overall weekly incomes as a key dependent variable.

Occupation Types and Expected Weekly Work Hours by Occupation

Disparities in employment types attained by individuals are largely a consequence of societal structures and less a result of personal characteristics. However, given the limited participant data provided by FINDWORK, this analysis can only speculate how forces external and, or, internal to the program contributed to occupational differences of participants. Furthermore, variations in occupation types can produce variations in hourly and total wages. Previous studies of work-related welfare programs reveal that workers assigned to occupations such as in food service, nurse's aide, and clerical positions earn significantly less in hourly wages, work fewer hours per week, and experience lower overall wages compared to higher paying white-collar professions (Gooden 2000; Cancian and Meyer 2000). Women, Spanish-speakers, and racial minorities mostly occupy low-wage employment, often times because of wage and hiring discrimination and a lack of equal educational advancement opportunities (Capps et al. 2003; Schiller 1995). As a result, occupation types and expected weekly work hours for each occupational sector take the shape of additional dependent variables in this analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of welfare recipients who participated in FINDWORK from 2013 to 2016. As evident in the table, approximately 12% of participants were men, and 88% were women. As for the racial composition of participants, 35.8% were white, 25.5% were black, 18.5% identified themselves as mixed race, and about 20.2% of participants refused to disclose their racial identity. Most participants were in the age range of 25 to 44 (74%) while about 17% were 18 to 24 and only 9% fell under the 45 or older category. In addition, 95% participants classified themselves as non-Spanish speaking (95%). Since only 5% of participants were Spanish speaking, this analysis does not view any significant results for this group as particularly noteworthy. Furthermore, 92% of participants did not fall under the classification of ETANF recipients, and nearly 86% of participants held at least a GED/diploma at the time of their enrollment at FINDWORK.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of FINDWORK Participants

Descriptive Statistics of FINDWORK Participants	
	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Men	12.0
Women	87.9
Race	
White	35.8
Black	25.5
Mixed Race	18.5
Refused	20.2
Age	
18-24	17.4
25-44	73.6
45-older	9.0
Spanish Speaking	
Yes	5.0
No	95.0
Extended TANF	
Yes	8.0
No	92.0
GED/Diploma	
Yes	86.0
No	14.0

Note: N=1,471; p<0.05, * p<0.01, **, p<0.001, ***

Table 5 shows descriptive statistics of the first and second employment status of participants of FINDWORK. The data shows approximately 58.9% of participants reached a first employment outcome. The mean expected work hours for the first employment outcome was slightly over 29 hours per week with a range from 2 to 53 hours. Participants that occupied a second job worked an average of 29 hours each week with a range from 2 to 50 hours. In addition, approximately 22% of participants held a second employment outcome. Second job outcomes result from participants either failing

to meet number of work hours outlined in their AMR contract with the CAO, or due to termination from their first employment outcome. In addition, during the first employment outcome, the mean hourly wage was \$10.16 with a range from \$7.25 to \$63.40 among all employed FINDWORK participants. Among participants that experienced a second job outcome, the mean hourly wage was \$10.15 with a range from \$7.25 to \$34.90. Finally, the average total weekly income of participants during the first outcome was \$306.77; this figure was approximately \$305.14 among participants assigned to a second job outcome. In addition to this information, it is important to note that the overall average hourly wages of participant outcomes did not meet the living wage standard of \$10.79 per hour required for one adult with no children to achieve self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ region.

Table 5: Employment Status at First and Second Outcome

<u>Employment Status At First and Second Outcome</u>	
	Percentages (%)
First Outcome	
Employed	58.9
Second Outcome	
Employed	22.3
Living Wage Status at First Outcome	
At or above \$10.79	28.0
Living Wage Status at Second Outcome	
At or above \$10.79	29.7

Note: N=874 for first outcome; N=329 for second outcome; Second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

Table 6: Occupation Types of Employed FINDWORK Participants

Occupation Types of Employed FINDWORK Participants		
Employment Sector	Percentage (%)	
	First Job	Second Job
Caring/Medical	19.1	21.6
Administrative/Customer Service	44.9	39.2
Warehouse/Construction	31.8	36.2
IT/Security	1.0	1.2
Transportation	2.6	1.8

Note: N=874 for first outcome; N=329 for second outcome; standard deviations in parentheses; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

Table 6 displays occupational types obtained by participants during both the first and second outcomes. The data indicates that the majority of participants held employment in administrative/customer service oriented fields during the first and second job (44.9%/39.2%). Warehouse/construction job outcomes were the second most popular occupation among participants. About 31.8% of participants worked in warehouse/construction positions at the time of their first outcome, including 36.2% of participants that worked a second job. Furthermore, approximately 19.1% and 21.6% of participants worked in caring/medical professions during their first and second outcomes. Additionally, only a rather small percentage of participants experienced employment outcomes within IT/security and transportation fields.

Figure 1: Hourly Wage Distribution during the First and Second Outcomes

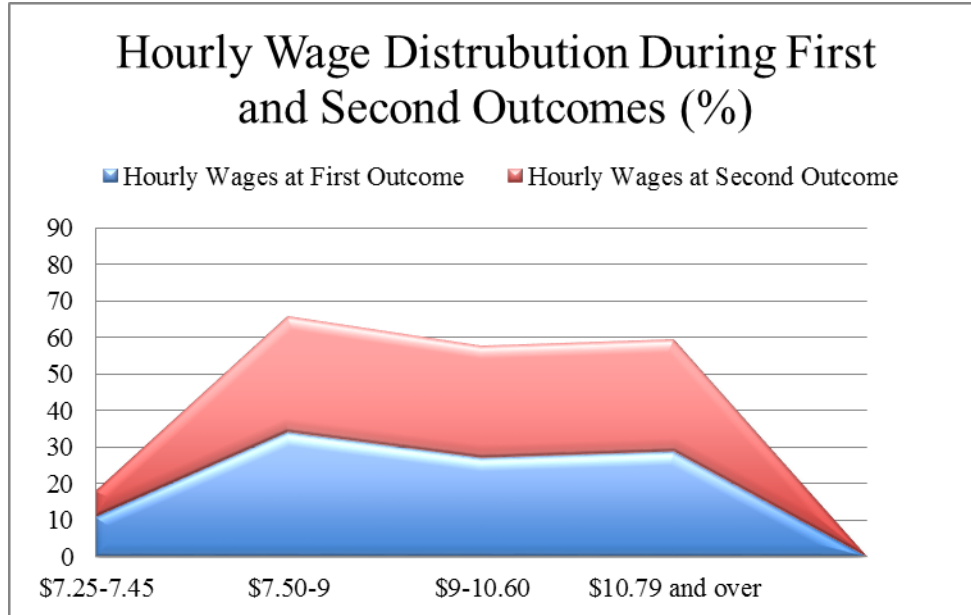


Figure 1 demonstrates the distribution of hourly wages of the overall employment outcomes of FINDWORK participants. As indicated in Figure 1, at the time of the first employment outcome, approximately 11% of participants had employment that paid within the \$7.25 to \$7.45 an hour pay range. During the second employment outcome, around 7% of hourly wages fell into this category. Moreover, the majority of participant hourly pay rates fell within the range of \$7.50 to \$9 during both job outcomes. In addition, at the first employment outcome, about 27% of hourly wages were in the range of \$9 to \$10.60 an hour; among those employed in a second job, 31% of participant's hourly wages were in the same category. Also, as for hourly wages within the range of the living wage standard for one adult to attain self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area, only a small percentage of participants experienced living wage employment outcomes compared to the previously mentioned hourly wages. Participants with hourly pay rates between \$10.79 and up consisted of less than one-third of the

employment outcomes. During the first outcome, approximately 29% of participants had an hourly wage either at or above the \$10.79 living wage standard of the ABE PA-NJ area. Moreover, among individuals who worked a second job, about 30% of hourly wages adhered to the region's living wage requirement. As a whole, the distribution of participant's hourly wages during the first and second employment outcome suggests that most individuals did not attain sufficient hourly pay rates that would allow them to reach self-sufficiency within the ABE PA-NJ region.

Results

This analysis deployed chi-square tests to compare the educational attainment levels, living wage statuses, and occupational sector outcomes experienced by participants. To detect any differences on such variables, this assessment used individual-level participant data of FINDWORK enrollees such as gender, race, age, ETANF, education level, and Spanish speaking status. All 6 variables take the form of indicator variables for this study. In addition, this examination utilized both independent t-tests and ANOVA to determine whether variations existed in hourly wages and total weekly incomes. Each statistical technique exercised in this study intended to explain, locate, and compare any distinctions between the employment outcomes of participants across numerous backgrounds and human capital levels. This analysis for independent observations presumed that these measurements were normally distributed and differences of observations were the same.

Human Capital Findings

As reported in Table 7 on the findings of the chi-square analysis on disparities in educational attainment levels of FINDWORK participants, significant variations were present among men and women. The tests also revealed significant differences between the educational attainment levels of ETANF and non-ETANF participants. Overall, women were more likely to have obtained at least a GED or high school diploma compared to men ($p=0.03^{**}$). In addition, the analysis indicates participants on ETANF support were significantly less likely to have completed at least a GED or high school diploma than participants that did not yet exceed the five-year limit of TANF assistance ($p=0.04^{**}$). Furthermore, the chi-square analysis detected no substantial differences between race and educational attainment levels, as well as no noteworthy variations between Spanish speaking and non-Spanish speaking participants.

Table 7: Educational Attainment Level of FINDWORK Participants

Education Attainment Level of FINDWORK Participants	
	Has GED/Diploma
Gender	
Men	81.9
Women	87.5**
Race	
White	88.3
Black	83.5
Mixed	85.5
Refused	88.8
Age	
18-24	89.1
25-44	85.9
45-older	90.2
Spanish Speaking	
No	87.1
Yes	80.9
Extended TANF	
No	87.3**
Yes	80.9

Note: N=1,471; Pearson's Chi-Square;
 p<0.05, * p<0.01, **, p<0.001, ***;
 percentages reported

Employment Outcomes

In the chi-square analysis regarding differences in the educational attainment levels of participants, women were significantly more likely to hold at least a GED/diploma in comparison to men. It also determined no significant disparities between the educational status among Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking program enrollees. Consequently, it is reasonable to suspect for both women and Spanish-speaking participants to have experienced equal chances to achieve comparable employment outcomes to men and non-Spanish speakers. This should have occurred if each group

held the ability to pursue and obtain private, unsubsidized employment across a wide array of employment sectors that provided living wages, and if FINDWORK had equally endured to transition all types of participants into employment sectors that offered self-sufficient wages.

1. *Employment Status.* This measure depicts whether participants held either one or two employment outcomes. As illustrated in Table 8, the results of the chi-square analysis found no significant associations in employment statuses across categories of gender, race, ETANF, age, and Spanish-speaking/non-Spanish speaking participants. However, significant associations were present for employment status across different levels of education among participants who occupied a subsequent job outcome. Participants with at least a GED/diploma were more likely to work a second job compared to less-educated individuals ($p=0.01^{**}$).

Table 8: Employment Status by Participant Characteristic

Employment Status by Participant Characteristic		
	Employed in One Job	Employed In Second Job
Gender		
Men	59.9	19.8
Women	58.8	22.6
Race		
White	61.2	22.3
Black	56.5	23.2
Mixed Race	54.9	19.9
Refused	62.6	23.5
Age		
18-24	58.6	26.9
25-44	58.8	20.7
45-older	60.9	26.3
Spanish Speaking		
Yes	57.4	25.0
No	59.0	22.2
Extended TANF		
Yes	54.8	18.3
No	59.3	22.6
GED/Diploma		
Yes	59.4	23.3**
No	56.2	15.5

Note: N=874 for first job; N=329 for second job; p<0.05, * p<0.01, **, p<0.001, ***; Second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

2. *Hourly Wages.* Table 9 explicates the t-test results on the comparison of mean differences between hourly wages of participant's first and second employment outcome. The table also deploys ANOVA tests to indicate mean differences of participant hourly wages for race and age. The data shows women earned significantly less per hour than men did. During the first employment outcome,

the mean hourly wage of women was \$9.98, whereas men made \$11.52 an hour, or a difference of \$1.54 in favor of men. In addition, hourly wage disparities were evident during the second employment outcome between men and women. On average, women earned \$10.05 an hour, while the mean hourly pay of men was slightly under \$11, and this gap in hourly pay rates was significant. In addition, by GED/diploma status, substantial differences in hourly wages were present. During the first employment outcome, participants with at least a high school degree earned a higher hourly wage than those with less education. More educated participants made an average of \$10.29 an hour, whereas participants without a high school degree earned a mean average of \$9.23, or a difference of \$1.06 on the side of participants with more schooling. Furthermore, significant variations of hourly wages were determined after comparing Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking participants. The t-test determined during the first and second employment outcomes, Spanish-speaking participants made considerably less an hour than non-Spanish speaking participants. Participants who classified themselves as Spanish-speaking earned \$1.44 less at the first job, and \$1.40 less in hourly wages during the second employment outcome. Moreover, Table 9 also illustrates the results of the ANOVA tests on the mean hourly pay rates by age and race. The data displayed in this table suggests no significant differences in hourly wages were present in the analysis for neither race nor age.

Table 9: Mean Comparison of Hourly Wages by Participant Characteristic

Mean Comparison of Hourly Wage by Participant Characteristic		
	First Job	Second Job
Gender		
Men	11.52***(6.2)	10.99** (2.3)
Women	9.98(2.6)	10.05 (2.5)
GED/Diploma		
No	9.32 (2.0)	9.75 (2.3)
Yes	10.29***(3.4)	10.19 (2.5)
Spanish Speaking		
No	10.23*** (3.4)	10.22***(2.5)
Yes	8.79(1.0)	8.82(1.3)
Extended TANF		
No	10.20(3.4)	10.18(2.5)
Yes	9.65(2.8)	9.71(1.8)
Race		
White	10.32(4.1)	10.36(3.3)
Black	10.15(2.6)	10.04(1.9)
Mixed Race	10.20(3.0)	10.33(1.9)
Refused	9.84(2.4)	9.85(1.8)
Age		
18-24	9.92(2.7)	10.64(3.5)
25-44	10.22(3.5)	9.97(2.11)
45-older	10.16(2.9)	10.36(2.08)

Note: N=874 first job; N=329 second job; T-test and ANOVA comparison of group means; $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.01$, **, $p < 0.001$, ***; wages are reported in U.S. Dollars; standard deviations in parentheses; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

3. *Total Weekly Wages.* This measure takes into account the hourly wage multiplied by the expected work hours of each participant's job outcome. The findings of the t-test shown in Table 10 on the mean combined weekly incomes of participants during the first and second employment outcomes indicated results similar to Table 9. At the first employment outcome, Table 10 shows on average women took home \$297.29 in total weekly income, or approximately \$79 less than the total income of men; this difference in total weekly income was statistically significant. Additionally, participants with a GED/high school diploma garnered significantly more in total weekly wages compared to less educated individuals. Participants with a high school diploma earned \$40 more when juxtaposed to those with lower levels of educational attainment during the first employment outcome (\$311.72); this analysis determined this relationship to be significant. Among Spanish-speaking participants, the results indicated that in contrast to the average weekly incomes of non-Spanish speakers, the amassed weekly incomes of Spanish-speakers were significantly less during the first employment outcome. Spanish-speaking participants brought home an average of only \$227.79 per week compared to the average weekly incomes of non-Spanish speakers (\$310.56). Furthermore, significant variations of the overall weekly incomes among non-ETANF and ETANF participants were present between second jobholders. The average weekly income of non-ETANF participants was \$303.39, whereas ETANF participants earned only \$245.46 during the second job. Lastly, statistically significant associations between average total weekly wages by race and age were non-existent in the analysis.

Table 10: Mean Comparison of Total Weekly Wages by Participant Characteristic

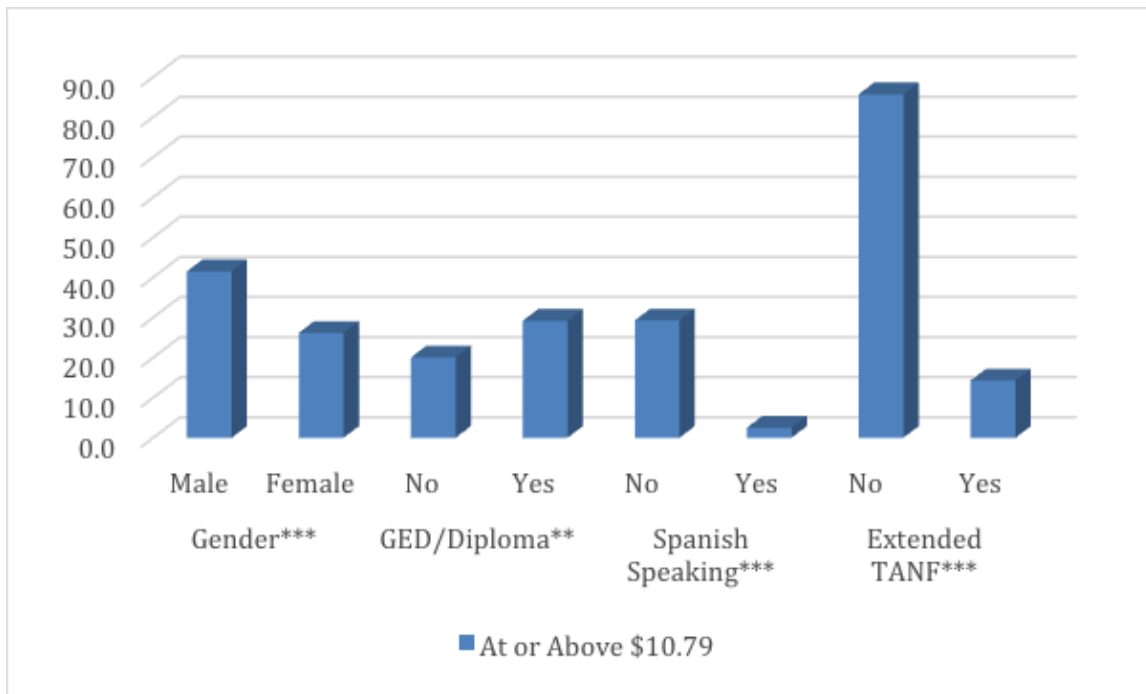
Mean Comparison of Total Weekly Wages by Participant Characteristic		
	First Job	Second Job
Gender		
Men	376.29***(348.81)	373.77(151.30)
Women	297.29(155.76)	295.97(151.20)
GED/Diploma		
No	272.38(124.21)	271.54(130.16)
Yes	311.72**(198.62)	308.62(154.83)
Spanish Speaking		
No	310.56***(193.96)	309.30(153.18)
Yes	227.79(92.42)	223.29(124.94)
Extended TANF		
No	309.67(193.74)	309.39**(154.17)
Yes	269.46(152.21)	245.46(121.4)
Race		
White	323.57(235.7)	326.65 (178.50)
Black	305.04(157.77)	290.33(135.61)
Mixed Race	298.89(165.80)	307.74 (135.33)
Refused	286.57(148.15)	287.72 (139.17)
Age		
18-24	283.58(149.12)	334.96 (189.51)
25-44	310.37(202.47)	294.14(142.25)
45 and older	322.07(167.33)	317.67(133.35)

Note: N=874 first job; N=329 second job; T-test and ANOVA comparison of group means; $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.01$, **, $p < 0.001$, ***; wages are reported in U.S. Dollars; standard deviations in parentheses; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

4. *Living Wage Status.* This assessment used the hourly wage standard required for at least one adult with no children to achieve self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area: \$10.79. This figure comes from Glasmeier's (2014) study of living wage requirements across a multitude of cities throughout the United States. Table 11 displays the results of the chi-square analysis of the living hourly wage statuses across participant characteristics during the first and second job

outcomes. Statistically significant associations were evident during the first employment outcome among the following participant variables: gender; Spanish-speakers and non-Spanish speakers; GED/diploma, and ETANF/non-ETANF (see Figure 2 for visual illustration).

Figure 2: Living Wage Status at First Employment Outcome: Gender, Education, Spanish-Speaking, and ETANF



Note: N=874 for first job; N=329 for second job Pearson's Chi-Square; $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.01$, **, $p < 0.001$, ***; percentages reported; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

Furthermore, no significant relationships appear after comparing the race and age of FINDWORK participants. Table 11 shows during the first employment outcome, approximately 73.8% of women had an hourly wage beneath \$10.79, while only around 58.5% of men's hourly pay rate did not adhere to such standards. Variations between these percentages were highly significant

($p=0.001$). Moreover, 80% of participants without at least a GED/diploma did not have a living wage compared to only 70.8% of participants with a minimum of 12 years of educational attainment; although, the significance level of this finding was rather marginal. Additionally, Spanish-speaking participants were significantly less likely to transition into a living wage job compared to non-Spanish speakers. During the first job outcome, 97.5% of Spanish-speakers had an hourly pay rate below \$10.79, whereas a mere 70.7% of non-Spanish speakers experienced a similar outcome; this difference was ascertained as highly significant ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, approximately 85.7% of participants on ETANF did not have a living wage compared to only 70.9% of shorter-term TANF recipients during the first employment outcome. Among those who held a second job, the analysis found no significant associations across each participant characteristic.

Table 11: Comparison of Living Wage Status by Participant Characteristic

Comparison of Living Wage Status by Participant Characteristic		
	Below \$10.79 at First Job	Below \$10.79 at Second Job
Gender		
Men	58.5	57.1
Women	73.8***	71.8
GED/Diploma		
No	80.0*	83.9
Yes	70.8	68.8
Race		
White	71.8	67.8
Black	67.8	73.3
Mixed Race	72.1	67.9
Refused	76.1	70.6
Spanish Speaking		
No	70.7	69.3
Yes	97.5***	87.5
Extended TANF		
No	70.9	70.0
Yes	85.7***	72.7
Age		
18 to 24	75.3	66.2
25 to 44	70.9	71.2
45 and older	74.4	71.4

Note: N=874 for first job; N=329 for second job
 Pearson's Chi-Square; p<0.05, * p<0.01, **, p<0.001, ***; percentages reported; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

5. *Occupation Types.* Table 12 displays the results of the chi-square analysis on the associations between occupational types of participants during their first and second job outcome. Occupation types experienced by participants derive from FINDWORK's employment descriptor codes. The descriptor codes signify the

kind of job a participant gained through their involvement in the program. Among the various descriptor codes, 39 different occupations were present. All 39 employment sectors were included in the analysis. However, to conduct a meaningful analysis of occupations, all 39 positions were condensed into the following five categories:

1. Medical/Caring (includes teacher's assistant; nurse's aide; child-care provider; phlebotomist; helper; social service; registered nurse; patient transporter)
2. Administrative/Customer Serve (includes food service; cosmetology; supervisor; clerical; server; telemarketer; business administrator; tax preparer; bartender; financial counselor; office operator)
3. Warehouse/Construction (includes packer; warehouse/production; light industrial; maintenance/housekeeping; stocker; machine operator; plumber; carpenter; electrician)
4. IT/Security (includes systems engineer; security)
5. Transportation (includes transportation; truck driver; driver)

Moreover, only a small percentage of participants moved into employment within IT/security and transportation fields; thus, this study does not view any significant results between these occupations as particularly noteworthy. Furthermore, table 12 illustrates significant associations for gender, Spanish-speaking/non-Spanish-speaking, age, and the ETANF variable. No significant relationships were determined for occupational types among participants with or without a GED/diploma; nor were any substantial associations revealed for the race of participants. In the first employment outcome, women were more involved in medical/caring (21.1%) and administrative/customer service (47.1%) professions. On the contrary, men largely were assigned to jobs related to warehouse/construction (53.8%), including transportation (7.6%). Significance levels for both the first and second outcomes for gender were high ($p=0.000$). Among men and women participants employed in a second job, the analysis reported similar findings as

the initial employment outcome. Additionally, the analysis indicated significant associations between Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish speaking participants and warehouse/construction jobs during both first and second outcomes. 62.5% of Spanish speakers transitioned into warehouse/construction occupations during the first outcome, and approximately 76.5% held a similar job during the second outcome. Furthermore, non-Spanish-speakers were predominately placed into administrative/customer and medical/caring fields at the time of their first and second placement outcomes.

Furthermore, marginal significance was present in the analysis for age and occupational types among those who reached a second employment outcome. 26.1% of participants between the ages of 18 to 24 experienced employment in medical/caring positions, and 37.7% of the latter age group held jobs in warehouse/construction fields. Also, over 50% of participants 45 and older transitioned into administrative/customer service positions, whereas only 27.5% of the youngest age group worked in similar occupations. Significant associations were also determined for the first occupation types of participants who received ETANF compared to participants who did not yet reach the five-year limit on cash assistance. When juxtaposed to ETANF recipients (18.2%), 31.8% of short-term recipients were transitioned into medical/caring related jobs; 46.7% of short-term recipients of TANF were moved into administrative/customer service oriented occupations, and 39.7% of ETANF recipients progressed into warehouse/construction positions compared to only 31.4% of short-term TANF recipients. These differences were significant at a p-value of 0.000.

Table 12: Comparison of Occupation Types by Participant Characteristic

Comparison of Occupation Types by Participant Characteristic										
	Medical/Caring		Administrative/ Customer Service		Warehouse/ Construction		IT/Security		Transportation	
	First Job	Second Job	First Job	Second Job	First Job	Second Job	First Job	Second Job	First Job	Second Job
Gender										
Men	5.7	11.4	31.1	20.0	53.8***	57.1***	1.9***	0.0	7.6***	11.4***
Women	21.1***	22.9***	47.1***	41.8***	28.9	33.3	0.9	1.4***	2.0	0.7
GED/Diploma										
No	14.6	19.4	43.6	35.5	38.2	41.9	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.2
Yes	19.9	21.9	45.4	39.9	31.1	35.2	1.2	1.3	2.5	1.7
Race										
White	19.1	28.8	42.6	35.6	35.1	33.9	0.9	0.9	2.2	0.9
Black	20.5	16.1	41.4	37.9	35.2	43.7	1.0	1.2	1.9	1.2
Mixed										
Race	15.8	18.9	49.3	37.7	28.8	37.7	2.1	1.9	4.1	3.8
Other	20.4	18.6	51.6	48.6	24.7	30.0	0.5	0.0	2.7	2.9
Spanish Speaking										
No	19.6***	22.2***	46.0***	41.0***	30.5	33.7	1.0***	1.3***	2.8***	1.9***
Yes	10.0	11.8	27.5	11.8	62.5***	76.5***	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Age										
18 to 24	21.3	26.1*	44.7	27.5	28.7	37.7*	1.3	2.9	4.0	5.8*
25 to 44	18.9	21.1	44.8	41.2	32.7	36.4	1.1	0.4	2.5	0.9
45 and older	17.3	17.1	49.4	51.4*	32.1	28.6	0.0	2.9*	1.2	0.0
Extended TANF										
No	18.2	21.0	46.7***	40.3	31.4	35.5	1.1***	1.3	2.6	1.9
Yes	31.8***	31.8	25.4	27.3	39.7***	40.9	0.0	0.0	3.2***	0.0

Note: N=874 for first job; N=329 for second job; Pearson's Chi-Square test; p<0.05, * p<0.01, **, p<0.001, ***; percentages reported; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

6. *Expected Weekly Hours by Occupational Sector.* Table 13 displays the results of the ANOVA analysis on variations in expected hours across the previously mentioned occupational sectors. The results of the analysis indicated substantially significant differences between expected weekly hours across three employment sectors during the participant's first and second job outcomes. These three occupational sectors included caring/medical (27.1/25.0); customer

service/administrative (28.0/29.8); warehouse/construction (31.9/31.2). Such significant variations in expected weekly hours across these occupations suggest participants placed into caring/medical and customer service/administrative fields, expected to work substantially fewer hours compared to participants transitioned into warehouse/construction positions. Lastly, the analysis found no significant differences for expected weekly hours within IT/security and transportation occupations.

Table 13: Mean Comparisons of Expected Weekly Hours by Occupational Sector

Mean Comparisons of Expected Weekly Work Hours by Occupational Sector		
	Job One Hours	Job Two Hours
Employment Type		
Caring/Medical	27.1***(10.1)	25.0***(11.8)
Customer Service/Administrative	28.0***(11)	29.8***(10.7)
Warehouse/Construction	31.9***(10.5)	31.2***(10.4)
IT/Security	32.8(6.6)	27.3(11.0)
Transportation	29.7(9.8)	33.0(10.4)

Note: ANOVA test of mean differences; $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.001$, ***; second outcome denotes job losses or failure to meet work hour requirements; percentages reported

Conclusion

This thesis provided a descriptive analysis of employment outcomes of welfare recipients who participated in FINDWORK from 2013 to 2016. The program is currently located in the ABE PA-NJ metropolitan area. The results showed although in general women had greater educational attainment levels compared to men, women still earned significantly less in both hourly and total weekly wages. Also, as a whole, women were

less likely to have obtained living wage employment when compared to men. Moreover, further significant results were evident after equating the employment outcomes of Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking participants. Although no significant differences were apparent over whether Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking participants had gained at least a GED/diploma before entering FINDWORK, the majority of Spanish-speaking participants were placed into employment outcomes with lower hourly and aggregated weekly incomes, and only a small share of Spanish-speaking participants experienced employment outcomes at a living wage. However, only 5% of participants reported themselves as Spanish-speakers, which limited the overall impact of this finding. Furthermore, the analysis found as a whole, ETANF recipients had less education when measured against non-ETANF beneficiaries. The examination also suggested that during the first employment outcome, approximately 87.5% of ETANF participants experienced an hourly wage below \$10.79 compared to short-term TANF recipients. Collectively, this analysis indicated that general increases in human capital did not lead to both higher hourly and weekly salaries for women, nor did it produce living wage outcomes for women enough to allow them to reach self-sufficiency in the ABE PA-NJ area. However, this analysis did find higher net positive earnings and superior likelihoods to achieve living wage outcomes among the overall population of participants with at least a GED/diploma. Participants with a minimum of a high school degree were more likely to attain living wage job outcomes to enable them to become self-sufficient in the ABE PA-NJ region. Conversely, approximately 80% of participants who lacked a high school diploma experienced an hourly wage below the \$10.79 living wage standard established by Glasmeier (2014) needed for one adult without children residing in the

ABE PA-NJ region to attain self-sufficiency. What is more, even if the \$11.89 figure calculated by ULW were used as the baseline value to assess living wage outcomes of participants at FINDWORK, fewer than approximately 30% of participant wages would have followed this measure. Despite using a more conservative indicator to evaluate living wage outcomes of participants at FINDWORK, only less than one-third of all jobs adhered to the standards of LWC.

This analysis also revealed that women, Spanish speaking, and ETANF recipients predominately experienced low-wage occupations with less expected weekly work hours. Frequent examples of low-wage jobs included in employment sectors offering minimal expected weekly hours consisted of food service; clerical work; childcare provider; packer; server, and stocking professions. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that women often transitioned into employment stereotypically perceived as women's work. On the contrary, men transitioned into warehouse/construction jobs that usually require less formal education, and generally, positions more likely to provide on-the-job-training. In addition, Spanish-speaking participants mostly moved into warehouse/construction occupations; this finding may be because, in such jobs, Spanish-speaking individuals would not be required to converse with other employees in English as much as they would in other fields mandating constant customer-employee interactions. However, once again, the significance of occupational outcomes experienced by Spanish-speaking participants in the analysis remained rather minimal as only 5% of participants disclosed themselves as Spanish-speakers. Nevertheless, the significant findings on employment types occupied by men and women participants signify larger societal issues beyond the immediate control of FINDWORK participants.

Discussion

According to Bielby and Baron (1986), women commonly hold employment within administrative and health-related fields, whereas men readily appear in warehouse and construction occupations. Bielby and Baron contribute this problem to a widely held, but fundamentally inaccurate sentiment among the majority of United States employers and citizens that overwhelmingly views women and men as prepared—both physically and mentally—to adapt to their “respective” work environments (1986). Likewise, according to an analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census data, similar findings appear among hourly wage differences between gender and occupational sectors. Miller (2009), reports regardless of occupational types held by women in the private sector, women more regularly experience hourly wages significantly lower than men. Moreover, several other analyses concur with Miller (2009) on the issue of occupational and sex stratification of wages, as several studies also suggest that employment sectors significantly held by women consist of lower wages (Bibb and Form 1977; Murphy and Oesch 2015). Furthermore, economic differences between job outcomes assigned to women and men FINDWORK participants may be a direct result of the structure of the welfare system. Rose (1993) states that wage gaps between men and women within welfare programs have essentially reached the point of institutionalization in the welfare system, and they have consequently hindered the actual ability of women on welfare to achieve self-sufficiency. Rose also notes that because women tend to hold low-wage employment, they must often seek financial support of a “male breadwinner,” which therefore disempowers women both personally and monetarily (1993). Also, according to

Anderson et al. (2004), women participating in WTW programs repeatedly return to welfare due to low hourly wages, limited benefits, and inconsistent childcare obtained after reaching an employment outcome. As a result, women have been found to frequently seek further support other government assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (i.e. food stamps) to aid in their transition off welfare (Acs 2007). Even if women are able to successfully move into full-time employment, low-wage jobs do not allow for self-sufficiency, which is the central goal of WTW and TANF programs. Several researches believe such problems puts into question as to whether or not welfare programs can effectively move welfare recipients into sustainable employment (Albelda 2001; Edin 1995). In agreement with such ideas, several other prominent studies of welfare programs have proposed that the overall configurations of the welfare system do not seek to end the impoverishment of marginalized individuals, but rather function to regulate persons on welfare into low-wage work to serve labor markets (Piven and Cloward 1971; Schram et al. 2010). These findings by in large point to larger structural issues completely out of the control of women seeking private, unsubsidized employment via the welfare system, in which increases human capital alone cannot always overcome the structural barriers that continually hinder the financial independence of millions of women on cash assistance. As a whole, the welfare system must immediately take into account the numerous problems women continue face in the TANF program and in the job market.

Welfare recipients who have participated in similar WTW environments to FINDWORK—excluding courses related to increasing educational attainment—were found to have preferred partaking in education building classes instead of courses mainly

highlighting job search and resume writing skills (Dias and Maynard-Moody 2007). Such emphasis on job-related courses within WTW programs is a direct consequence of the TANF policy's approach to welfare service provision. TANF's focus on the production of immediate employment for those on welfare is currently one of the fundamental components of the program. Also, FINDWORK's deployment of "work-first" strategies are a direct consequence of the state of Pennsylvania's decision to emphasize employment-readiness training such as job search and resume writing instead of education and vocational skills preparation. However, despite the programmatic designs of FINDWORK, it is still quite difficult for this analysis to contribute the financial pitfalls of women, ETANF recipients, and less-educated participants directly on the program's job-readiness curriculum. Nevertheless, there is at least some reason to assume that incorporating additional services related to building upon the educational abilities of participants could help to produce better life trajectories for future participants enrolled at FINDWORK. For instance, Dyke et al. (2006) report that WTW agencies offering intensive training aimed at increasing human capital levels of welfare recipients have the capacity to produce higher long-term monetary earnings. Likewise, Hamilton and Scrivener's (2012) note positive influences on welfare recipient's earnings among WTW programs offering postsecondary education and sector-based job training. Greater educational attainment is particularly crucial in a U.S. economy seeing a drastic reduction in quality wages among low-skilled occupations. Welfare recipients with limited education will likely find it difficult to obtain living wage employment in such unfavorable economic conditions (Blank and Holzer 1997). To make welfare reform a reality, recipients of welfare must now be proficient in "hard-skills" (i.e. computer-

training, basic math, vocational certification), as these abilities have become increasingly valued in labor markets (Johnson and Corcoran 2003). Greater utilization of education-building activities such as GED courses and professional skills training might be two ways to improve employment outcomes of future participants enrolled in FINDWORK and of those involved in other WTW programs. Likewise, past research on the continued usage of job-search among WTW participants note job-search activities among welfare recipients who have already gone through the process at least one time do nothing to improve employability, and that such enrollees stand to benefit more from long-term human capital augment tasks (Hsiao et al. 2008). However, to expand the usage of educational and vocational training programs, Pennsylvania must first use TANF block grants distributed via the federal government in a more appropriate manner.

As illustrated in Table 2, less than 1% of TANF funds in Pennsylvania went toward education and training resources for welfare recipients enrolled in work-related programs in 2009. The use of block grants as established by the federal TANF policy has authorized more autonomy to states over the distribution of financial support for welfare-related programs, which has resulted in a decreased amount of federal oversight over how states have managed TANF dollars. Consequently, across the United States, the total amount of state spending on work-related TANF programs has trended downwards since 2008. Various states similar to Pennsylvania have as well continued to designate little financial support to fund education and vocational training services for TANF recipients (Schott 2012). If participants within WTW programs and other members of the welfare population do not receive the necessary advanced training to increase their chance to secure living wage employment, it is likely many will remain on cash assistance. To

handle such problems, states across the nation must immediately address this severe lack of funding support for education and vocational skills resources. Addressing this situation through significantly increasing monetary assistance for such resources will likely help to support welfare recipient's transition off public assistance and into living wage employment.

A boost in the state of Pennsylvania's minimum wage to at least \$10.79 per hour (Glasmeier 2014), or to \$15 an hour, could also drastically help improve the livelihoods of individuals with limited education and low-income women living in the state. The implementation of hourly wage increases to up to at least \$15 an hour could potentially assist welfare recipient's transition toward self-sufficiency. Recently, a few studies have advocated for a \$15 national minimum wage. For instance, a recent examination of this issue determined pay increases to \$15 an hour could significantly reduce poverty levels among impoverished individuals, without pushing employers to pursue heavy job cuts to account for higher wages (Pollin and Wicks-Lim 2015).

In later studies, in order to facilitate a more comprehensive assessment of employment outcomes of participants, WTW facilities should adopt data collection techniques that act to identify which services each participant receives (Gooden 2000). Unfortunately, because of the limited information collected by FINDWORK on participant outcomes and service usage, this study is not able to fully offer a complete inquiry of employment outcomes. Forthcoming studies should utilize differences in services offered to individual participants as a measure to evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches toward WTW service delivery. This will allow researchers to discern which practices can produce increases in participant's human capital, which in turn could

act to produce a greater amount of living wage opportunities. Lastly, further research should strive to reveal additional information on employment outcomes of women, ETANF recipients, and less-educated persons partaking in WTW programs. Later research should also emphasize the importance of assessing whether or not employment outcomes of WTW enrollees actually adhere to living wage requirements within the participant's specific geographical region. These types of studies will help generate more knowledge about how to improve the overall job prospects of such groups participating in WTW environments.

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APPENDIX 1: IRB APPROVAL



DATE: March 2, 2016
TO: Yuping Zhang, PHD
FROM: Lehigh University Institutional Review Board
STUDY TITLE: [863490-2] A Comparative Examination of Performance vs. Non-Performance-Based Welfare to Work Programs
IRB REFERENCE #: 16/126 N
SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: February 26, 2016

Thank you for submitting materials for this research study. The IRB has reviewed the submission and determined that the research is exempt according to federal regulations in the exempt category listed below:

EXEMPT CATEGORY #4:

Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

All changes to the research design and any procedures described in the IRB-approved protocol (e.g. changes to the informed consent process or documents, recruitment, study instruments or measures, research personnel, etc.) must be submitted as a Modification package in IRBNet. Modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

A copy of this correspondence is on file in IRBNet

Please direct questions about this approval to Naomi Coll, Manager of Research Integrity, at 610-758-3021 or nac314@lehigh.edu. Please include the study title and reference number in all correspondence.

CURRICULUM VIATE

1. Start Date:

PERSONAL

2. Name: Harvey L. Nicholson Jr.

3. Current Academic Rank: M.A. student

4. Primary Department: Sociology

5. Secondary or Joint Appointments:

6. Citizenship: United States

7. Visa Type (if non-citizen):

HIGHER EDUCATION

8. Institutional (institution; degree; date conferred):

University of Central Florida; Ph.D. in Sociology; May of 2019

Lehigh University; Masters of the Arts in Sociology; May of 2016

West Chester University of Pennsylvania; Bachelors of the Arts in Sociology; 2014

Undergraduate Thesis:

Master's Thesis: An Exploratory Analysis of Participant Employment Outcomes in a
Pennsylvania Welfare-to-Work Program

9. Non-Institutional (description; dates):

10. Certification, licensure (description; board or agency; dates):

EXPERIENCE

11. Academic (institutions; rank/status; dates):

Lehigh University; Graduate Research Assistant; 05/15 to 09/15

12. Non-Academic (employers; title; responsibilities; dates):

CVS; Supervisor; Overseer of daily work procedures; 2011-2014

13. Military (branch; rank; responsibilities; dates):

PUBLICATIONS [author(s) (in actual precedence of authorship); title; publisher or journal name; date (current year first); page numbers]

14. Books and monographs published:

15. Juried or refereed journal articles and exhibitions:

16. Other works, publications and abstracts:

17. Other works accepted for publication:

PROFESSIONAL

18. Funded Research Performed (include all grants received in the last five years, identifying the principal investigator and the amounts and dates of the awards):

19. Editorial responsibilities:

20. Professional and Honorary Organizations (member; officer; date):

21. Honors and Awards:

Social Science Research Fellowship Award; Lehigh University Social Science Research Center; 2015

- Recipient of a \$1,075 fellowship grant to attend a mixed-methods research seminar held at the University of Arizona

Fairchild Fellowship Award; Lehigh University; 2014

- Awarded a \$9,750 stipend for the 2014-15 academic year for outstanding undergraduate achievements

Multicultural Achievement Award; West Chester University of Pennsylvania; 2013

- Granted certificate for maintaining above a 3.0 GPA during a semester

22. Post-Doctoral Fellowships:

23. Other Professional Activities (e.g., papers presented; performances; conference proceedings; seminar or conference panel member; catalogue work; etc.):

TEACHING

24. Teaching Awards Received:

25. Teaching Specialization

- Teaching Assistant; Lehigh University; Introduction to Sociology; 2015 to 2016
- Assistant Online Course Developer; Lehigh University; Introduction to Sociology; 2015

26. Thesis and Dissertation Advising/Post-doctoral student supervision (chairman or committee member; topic; student name; date):

SERVICE

27. University Committee and Administrative Responsibilities:

Sociology Department Ambassador; West Chester University; 2013 to 2014

28. Community Activities:

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

29. Introduction to Sociology; Research Methods; Social Problems; Social Welfare; Race and Ethnicity; Social Policy; Sociology of Families; Sociology of Gender

JOB-RELATED SKILLS

30. Proficient Skills: STATA, ATLAS.TI, Data Analysis, Survey Design, Data Collection, Qualitative Research

- Slight knowledge of SPSS, although I am trainable.

PROFESSIONAL REFEREES:

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- Dr. Yuping Zhang; Associate Professor of Sociology; Lehigh University;
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