

# Welcome

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# Improving Employment Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities

## Presenters

Arif Mamun, Mathematica Policy Research

Kelli Crane, TransCen, Inc.

Lori Timmins, Mathematica Policy Research

## Discussant

Jamie Kendall, Administration for Community Living

Washington, DC

May 12, 2015

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**STUDYING DISABILITY POLICY**

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# Welcome

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**Moderator**

**Thomas Fraker**

**Mathematica Policy Research**

# About CSDP

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**The Center for Studying Disability Policy (CSDP) was established by Mathematica in 2007 to provide the nation's leaders with the data they need to shape disability policy and programs that fully meet the needs of all Americans with disabilities.**

# Today's Speakers

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**Arif Mamun**  
Mathematica



**Kelli Crane**  
TransCen



**Lori Timmins**  
Mathematica



**Jamie Kendall**  
Administration for  
Community Living

# **Social Security Administration's (SSA's) Youth Transition Demonstration: Three-Year Impacts**

**Arif Mamun**

**Presented at the Mathematica Forum on Improving  
Employment Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities**

**Washington, DC**

**May 12, 2015**

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# SSA's Youth Transition Demonstration (YTD)

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- **Target population**
  - Youth ages 14–25
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients (or those at risk)
- **Goals**
  - Improve employment and other outcomes
  - Reduce dependency on SSI in the long term
- **Timing**
  - Services: 2006–2012
  - Final evaluation report now available (three-year impacts)

# YTD Program Model

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- Based on *Guideposts for Success* by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
- Key components of the YTD interventions
  - Individualized work experiences
  - SSA waivers and benefits counseling
  - Family involvement and support
  - Youth empowerment
  - System linkages

*Guideposts* is available at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.

# YTD Evaluation Sites

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- **Bronx County, NY (Bronx)**
- **Four counties in Colorado (CO)**
- **Erie County, NY (Erie)**
- **Miami-Dade County, FL (Miami)**
- **Montgomery County, MD (Mont.)**
- **19 counties in West Virginia (WV)**

# Key Baseline Characteristics of Youth in the YTD Evaluation (1)

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- **Five sites served youth who were disability beneficiaries and primarily on SSI**
  - At Mont. site, only 22% were beneficiaries
- **Most enrollees had mental illness, intellectual/developmental disabilities, or learning disabilities/ADD**
  - About 15–20% had physical disabilities
  - About 5–10% had sensory impairments
  - Mont. site served students with severe emotional disturbances

# Key Baseline Characteristics (2)

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- **Youth's school enrollment varied by site**
  - In the Bronx, only 6% were not in school
  - In CO, Erie, and WV, over half were not in school
- **Across five sites, 42% to 68% of youth had never worked for pay at baseline**
  - In Mont., only 26% had never worked for pay
- **In each site, over two-thirds of the youth expected to live independently in five years**

# Random Assignment of Youth

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- Individual-level random assignment
- **Mathematica:**
  - Recruited over 800 youth per site into the evaluation
  - Randomly assigned recruits to treatment or control groups
- Each YTD project enrolled about 400 treatment youth in project services

# Types and Intensity of YTD Employment Services

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- **Key employment services included:**
  - Support for resume preparation and job searches
  - Job development (outreach to employers)
  - Job placement
  - Post-placement support
  - Benefits counseling

<b>Outcome measure</b>	<b>Bronx</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>Erie</b>	<b>Miami</b>	<b>Mont.</b>	<b>WV</b>
Hours of employment services	21	4	6	22	11	27
Total hours of services	43	7	13	29	29	34

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# Promising One-Year Impacts

- All projects increased youth's receipt of employment services
- Three sites also increased youth's paid employment during the first year

Outcome measure	Bronx	CO	Erie	Miami	Mont.	WV
Used any employment service	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Had a paid job in the first year	+++	0	0	+++	0	+++

+/+ +/+ + + Impact estimate is positive and statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level.

-/- -/- - - Impact estimate is negative and statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level.

0 Impact estimate is not statistically different from zero at the .10 level.

# Three-Year Impact Analysis

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- **Impacts on outcomes in five domains**
  - Paid employment and earnings
  - Youth income
  - Participation in productive activities
  - Contact with the justice system
  - Self-determination
- **In each domain, we had one or two primary and several supplementary outcomes**
- **Principal findings were based on estimated impacts on the primary outcomes**

# Data Sources

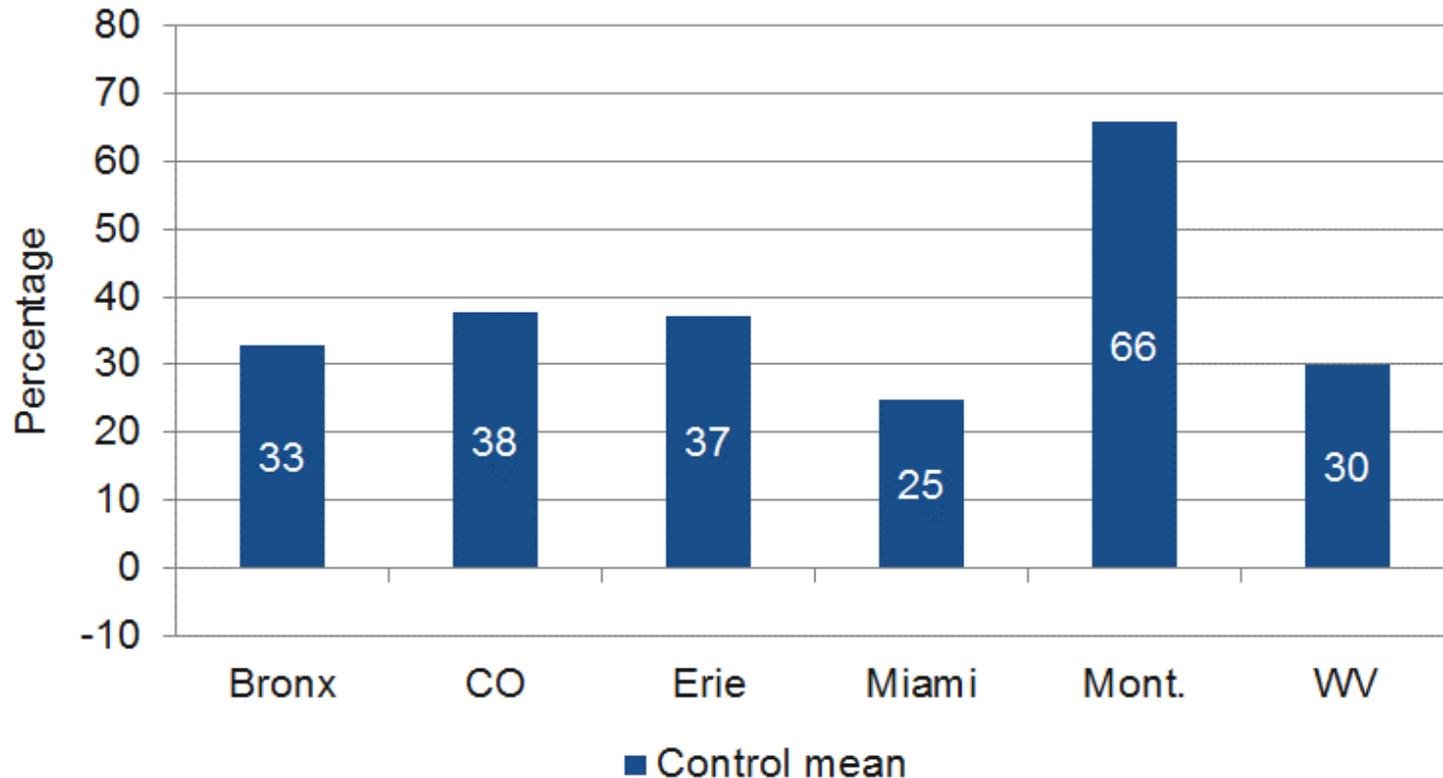
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- **YTD surveys**
  - **Baseline survey**
  - **36-month follow-up survey**
- **Administrative records**
  - **SSA benefits data**
  - **IRS earnings records**

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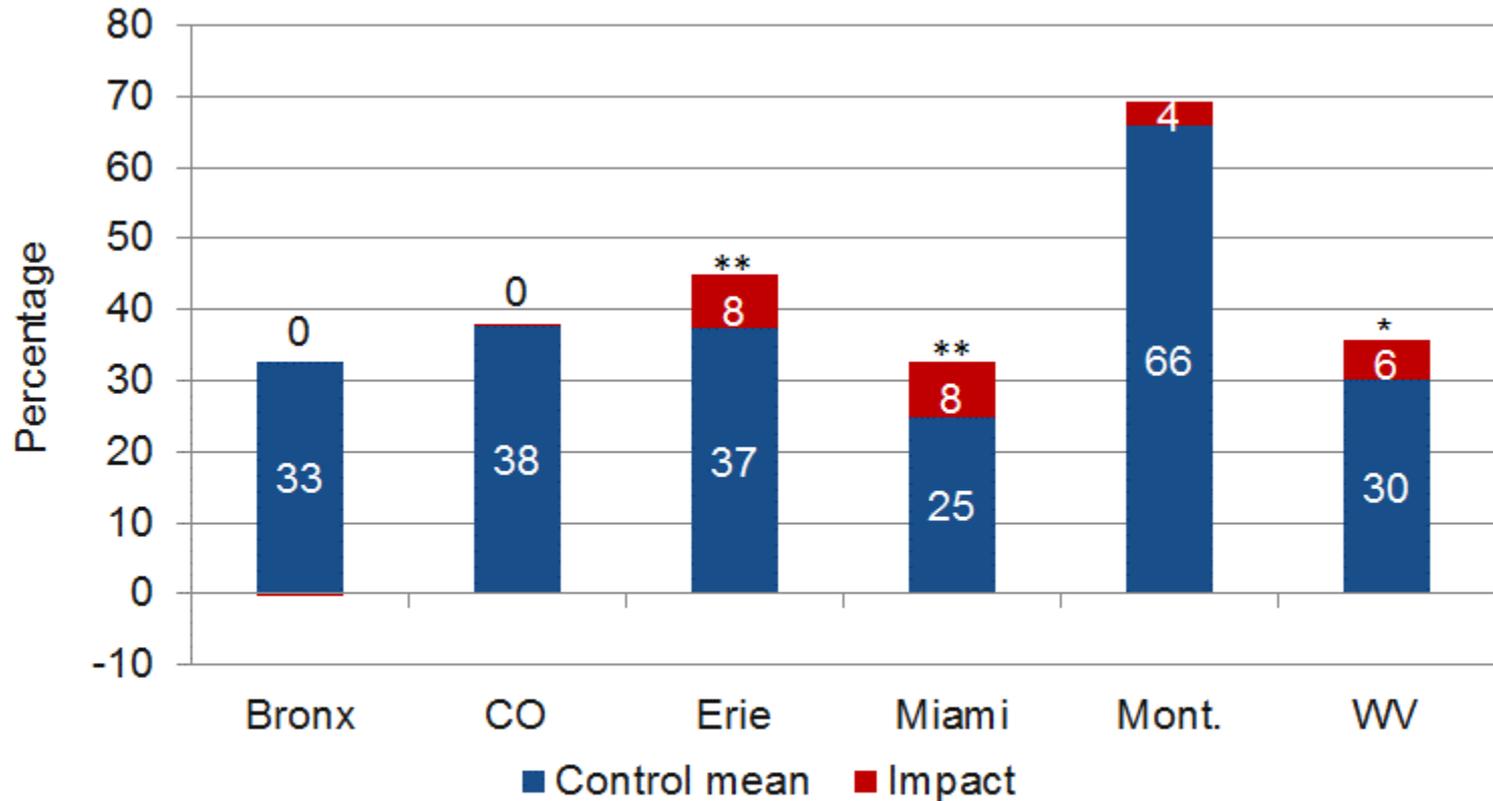
# Estimated Impacts in the Third Year Following Enrollment

# Ever Employed in a Paid Job in the Past Year (1)



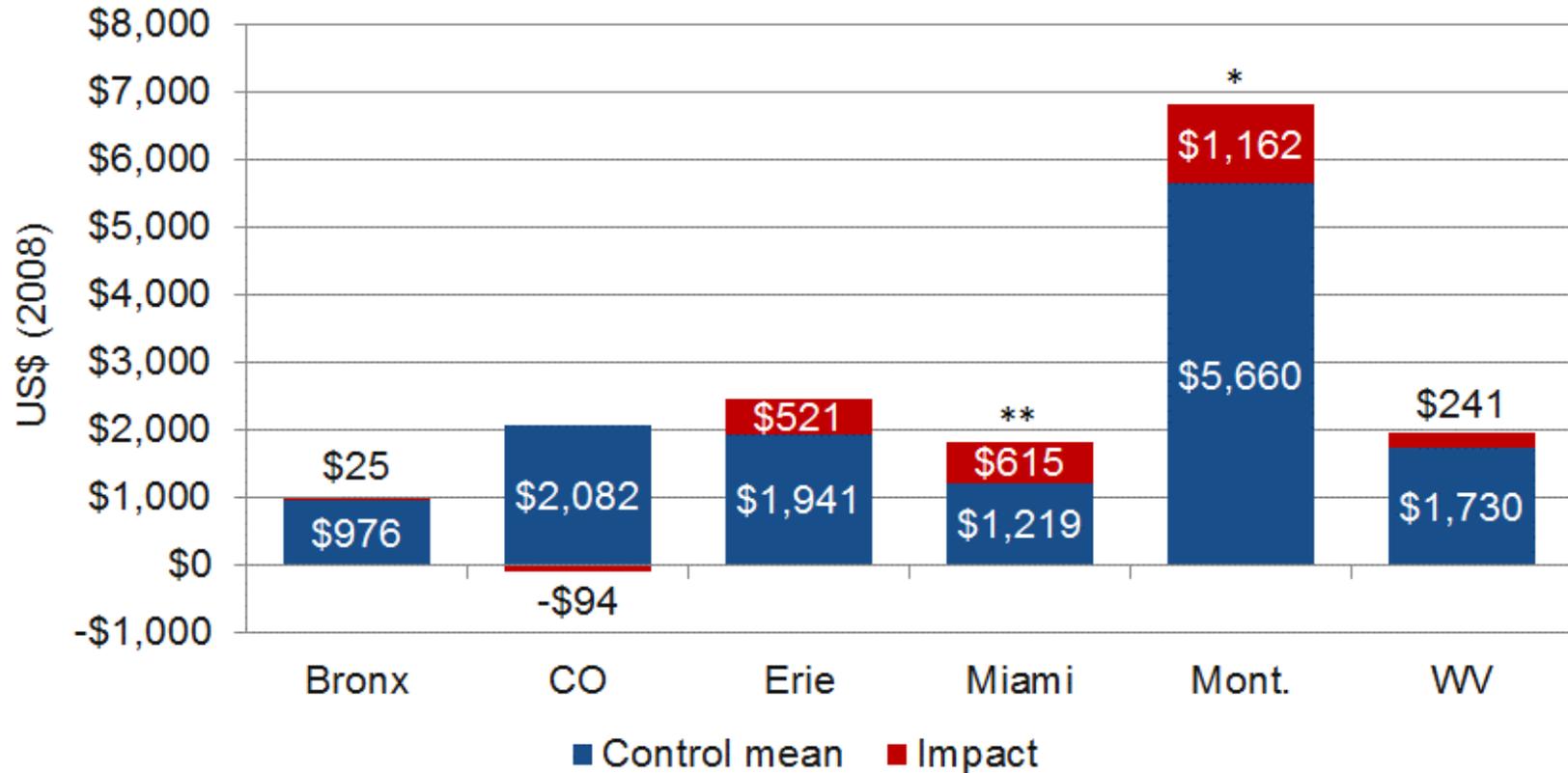
*\*/\*\*/\*\*\** Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Ever Employed in a Paid Job in the Past Year (2)



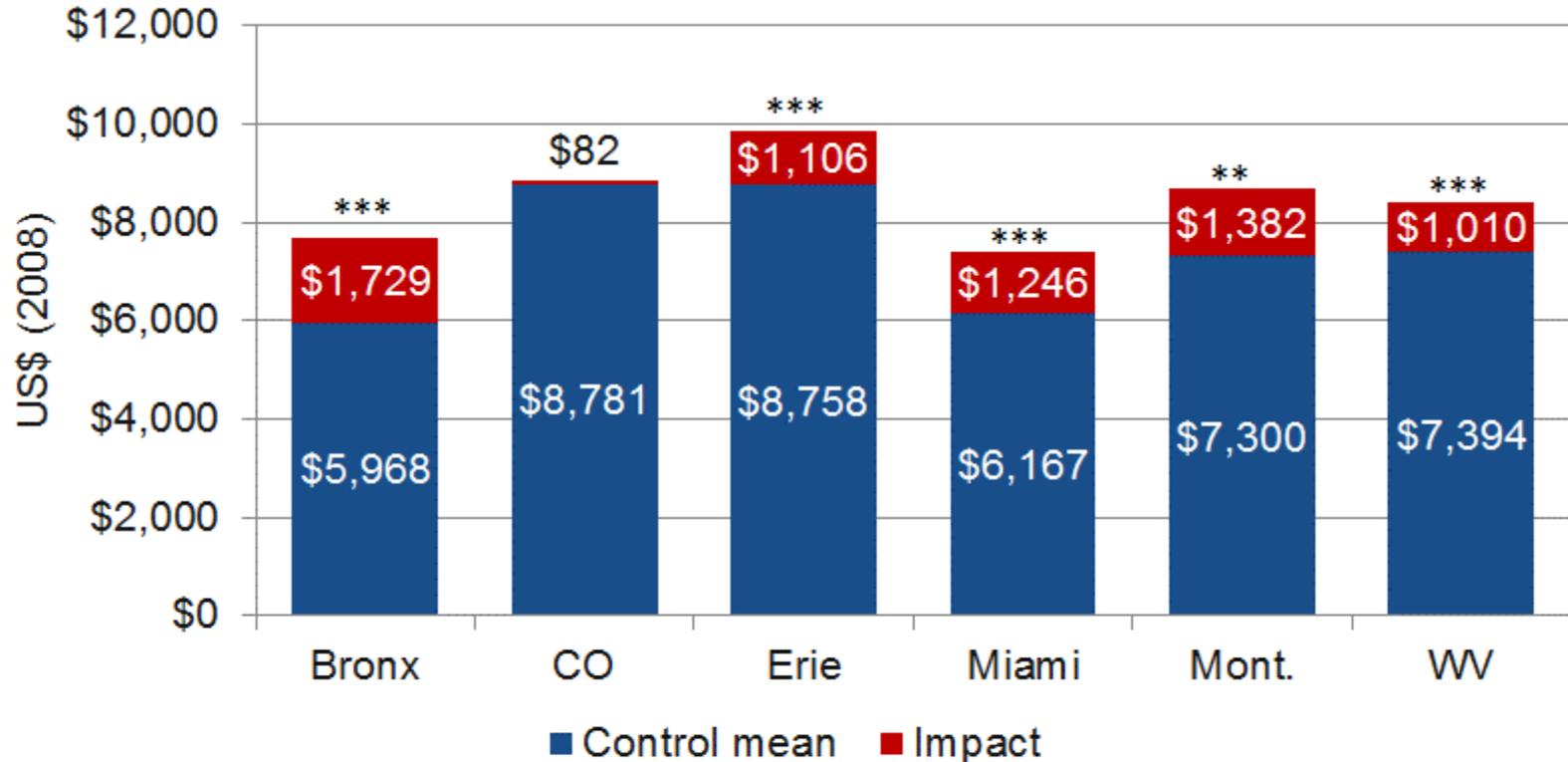
*\*/\*\*/\*\*\** Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Earnings in the Past Year



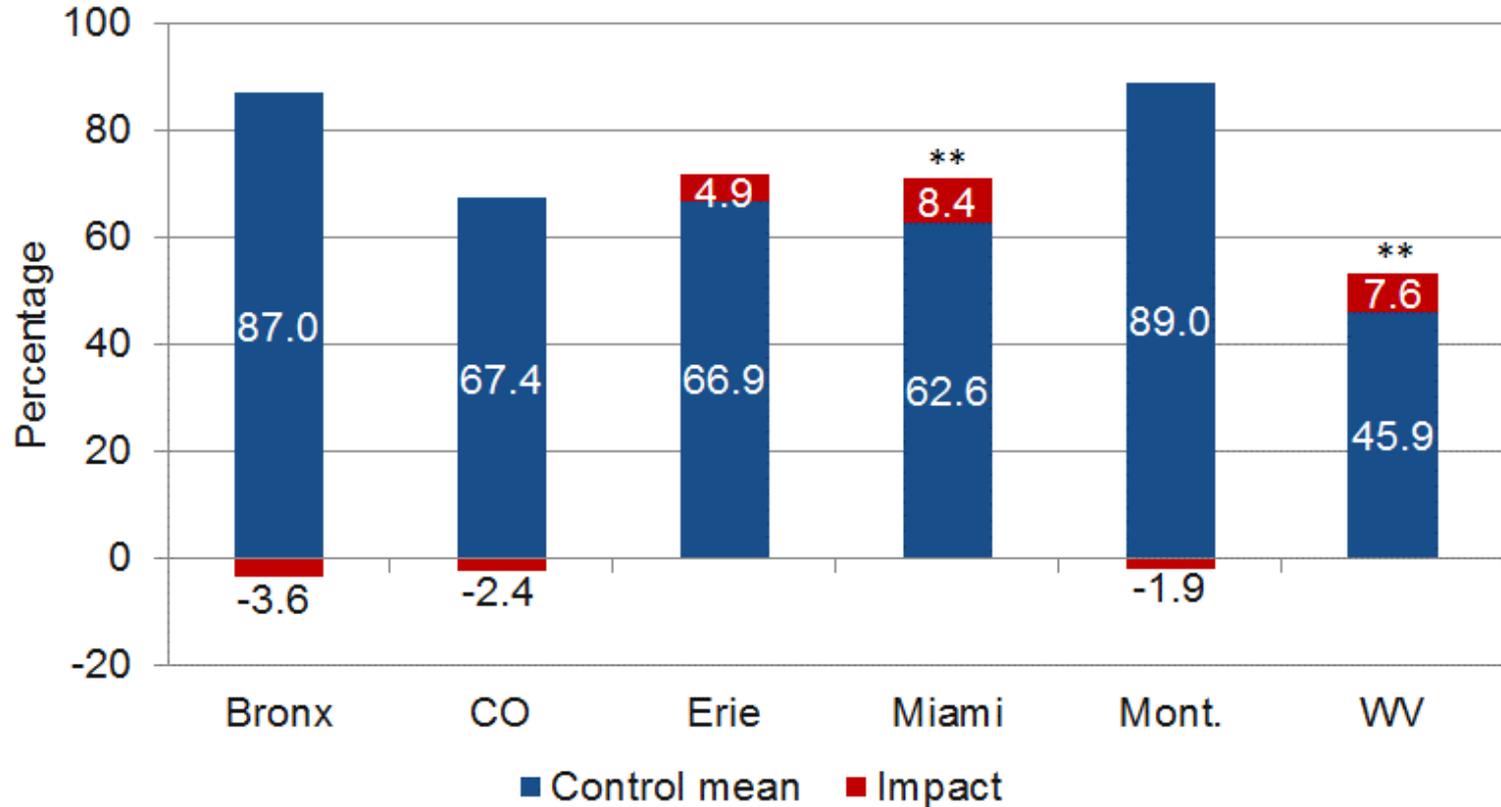
\*/\*\*/\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Youth Total Income from Earnings and SSA Benefits



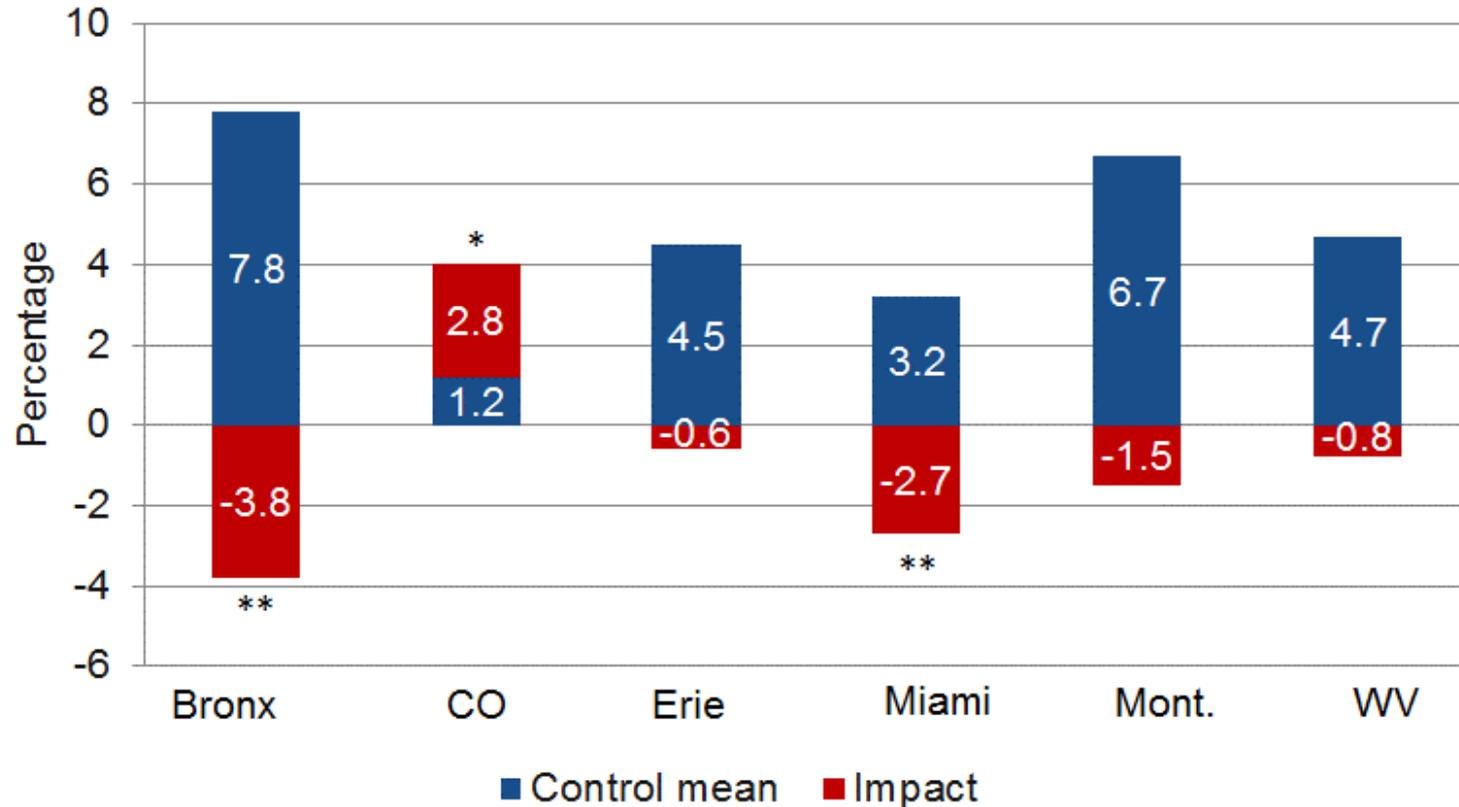
\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Participation in Any Productive Activities



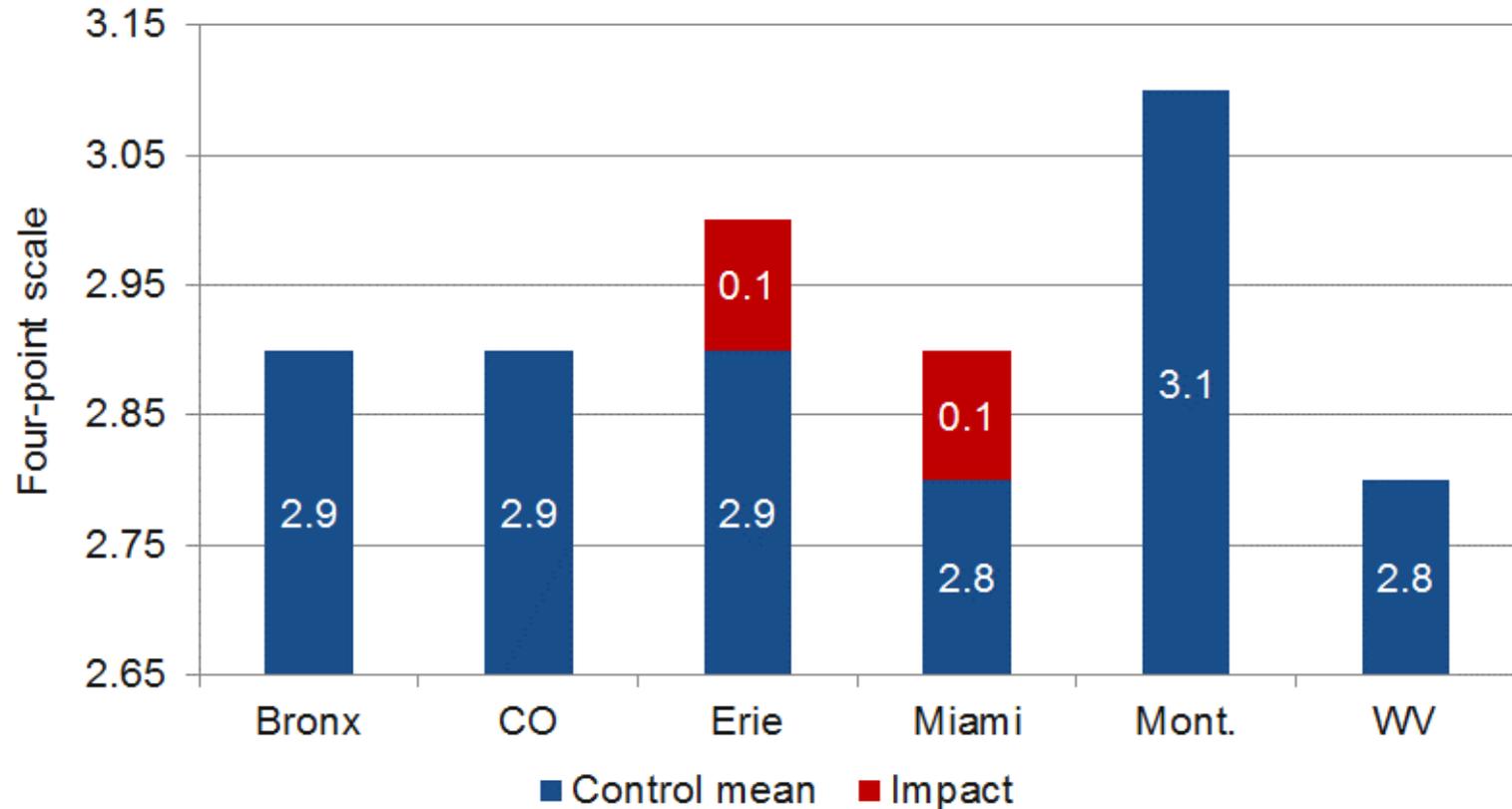
\*/\*\*/\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Arrested or Charged with Delinquency/Criminal Complaint



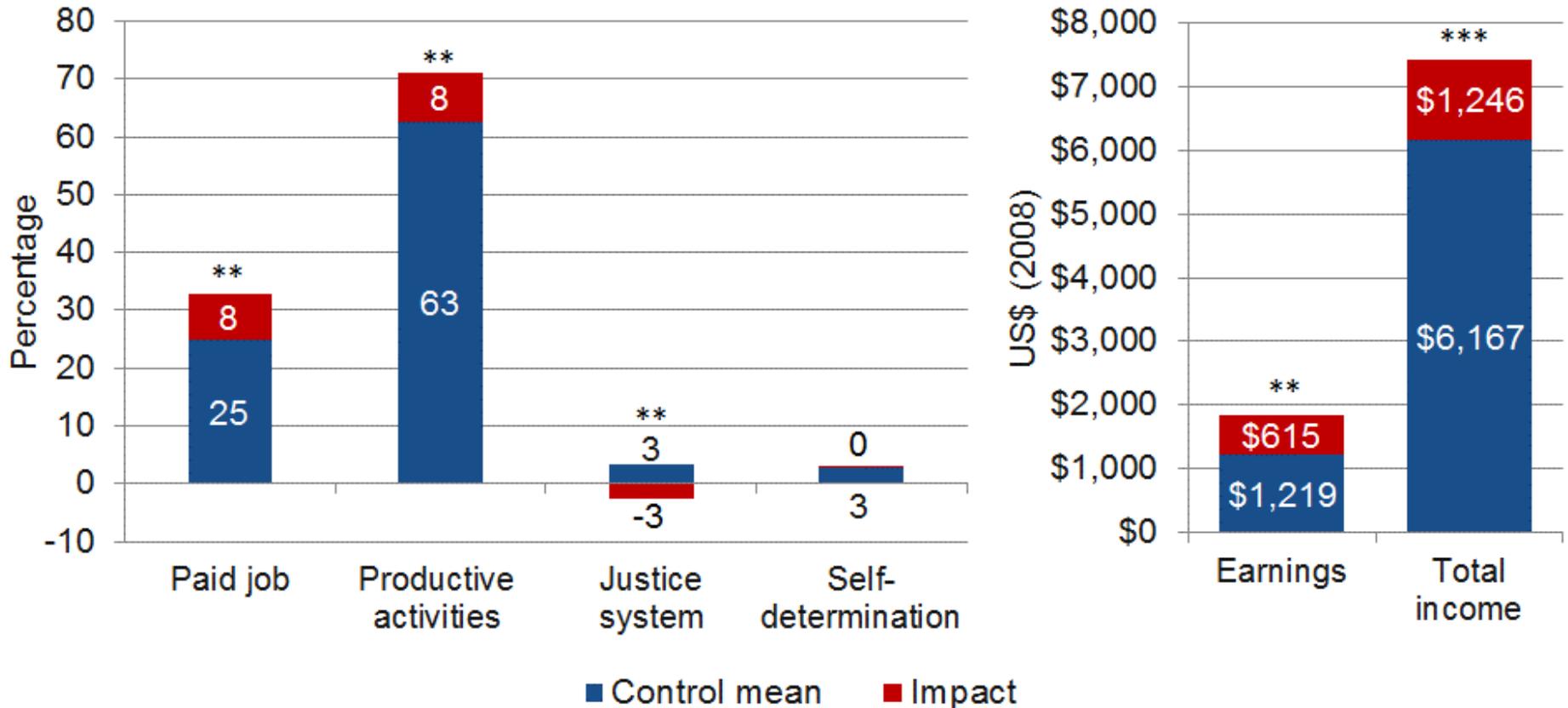
\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Measure of Youth Self-Determination



\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Impacts on All Primary Outcomes: Miami



\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Conclusions (1)

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- **Giving substantial doses of well-designed services to youth with disabilities can improve key transition outcomes in the medium term**
- **Technical assistance facilitated the delivery of employment services and helped maintain the projects' focus on employment**
- **Evidence was mixed on whether YTD impacts on paid employment and earnings are sustainable**

# Conclusions (2)

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- **We found no evidence of a reduction in the amount of disability benefits**
  - Not surprising given SSA's waivers for YTD
- **Transition services can affect contact with the justice system**

# For Details on the Findings

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- YTD final evaluation report

<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/final-report-on-the-youth-transition-demonstration-evaluation>

- YTD issue brief

<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/threeyear-impacts-of-services-and-work-incentives-on-youth-with-disabilities>

# Contact Information

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# YTD Implementation & Service Delivery: Miami-Dade County

Kelli Crane, Ph.D.  
Senior Research Associate  
TransCen, Inc.

# Broadened Horizons, Brighter Futures (BHBF)



# BHBF Objectives

Offered each YTD participant:

- Enhanced pre-employment preparation through a self-determination and customized employment process
- Meaningful real-work experiences
- Benefits management services

# BHBF Staff

- Project leadership (2)
  - Project director
  - MIS administrator
- Project manager (1)
- Customized employment specialists (5)
- Job developer (1–3)
- Benefits specialists (2)

# BHBF Intervention

- Individualized work experiences
  - Customized employment
- Person-centered planning
  - Self-determination and life skills
- Family engagement
- Connecting activities/system linkages
  - Transportation, health services, VR, workforce investment

# BHBF Intervention

- School-based activities (partner)
- Benefits management
  - Counseling, financial literacy
- Follow-along services
  - Job coaching

# TransCen's Role

- Assisted in the design of Miami's YTD intervention
- Provided ongoing TA in the implementation of the YTD intervention components
- Coordinated all TA activities with the evaluation team

# TA Modalities

- Training workshops and field-based support
- Peer-to-peer and across-site TA
- Just-in-time and in-the-field TA

# TA and Training Refined

- Findings from the three early sites show need for *sharper focus on paid employment*
- Worked with the Miami team to—
  - Deliver field-based TA directly to line staff
  - Set numeric goals for paid employment
  - Monitor staff efforts and progress toward goals through MIS
  - Develop project management structures that support employment placement services
  - Clearly define staff roles and responsibilities

# What We Learned

- The significance of a well-defined and -delivered intervention
  - TA to help achieve program goals
  - Monitoring the fidelity of the intervention
- The efficacy of the *Guideposts* as a transition-services framework
  - Work experiences, youth empowerment, family engagement, system linkages, and benefits management
- The role of WORK as an intervention as well as an expected outcome

# **The Effect of Early Work Experience on Labor Market Success for Youth with Disabilities**

**Lori Timmins**

**Presented at the Mathematica Forum on Improving  
Employment Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities**

**Washington, DC**

**May 12, 2015**

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# Unique Employment Challenges

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- **The transition to employment can be especially difficult for youth receiving disability benefits**
  - They face unique challenges related to health, social isolation, service needs, and access to supports (Osgood et al. 2010)
- **Many youth with disabilities miss out on meaningful employment in their communities**
  - Estimated that <40% of young adults with disabilities were working after leaving high school (Newman et al. 2011)

# Current Thinking

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- **Research suggests that paid employment in the last years of high school is strongly correlated with post-school employment success**
  - e.g., Carter, Austin, and Trainor (2012); Benz, Lindstrom, and Yovanoff (2000); Wehman et al. (2014); Wagner, Newman, and Javitz (2014)
- **Recent policy initiatives focus on improving adult employment outcomes through early work experience**
  - e.g., YTD in 2003–2012; the PROMISE demonstration initiated in 2013

# This Study

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- **Much of the existing literature focuses on patterns of correlation**
- **Unobserved individual characteristics could lead to biased estimates of the effect of early employment on later work experience**
- **Study goal: to derive causal estimates of this important relationship**
  - **Exploit a rich data set**

# YTD Data

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- **Longitudinal data set**
  - Youth surveyed at baseline, one year later, and three years later
- **Demographic, health, education, employment, and family characteristics collected at each survey**
- **Employment: “Ever employed in a paid job within past year?”**
- **Sample: youth ages 16–20 at baseline receiving SSI benefits**

# Main Relationship of Interest

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- To what extent does earlier employment (one year after baseline) affect later employment (three years after baseline) for youth with disabilities?
- Multivariate analysis:

$$E_{i,3} = \theta E_{i,1} + \beta X_{i,3} + v_{i,3}$$

- $E_{i,3}$  : Employment at three years after baseline
- $E_{i,1}$  : Employment at one year after baseline
- $X_{i,3}$  : Other determinants of employment (observed)
- $v_{i,3}$  : Unobserved factors affecting employment

# Empirical Approach

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- **Exploit the panel dimension of our data set**
- **Use fixed-effects estimation**
  - **Unobserved factors (e.g., motivation, disability): accounts for fixed individual characteristics correlated with a youth's self-selection into both early and later employment**
  - **Observed factors (e.g., family background, race, YTD treatment status): include rich set of demographic, health, family background, and state controls**
- **Causal interpretation removes bias due to unobserved time-invariant factors**

# Descriptive Statistics on Employment Status

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	Baseline Age 16–20	Baseline Age 16–17	Baseline Age 18–20
<b>Employment status at three years</b>			
Overall	0.36	0.35	0.37
If employed at one year	0.59	0.52	0.65
If not employed at one year	0.26	0.29	0.23
<b>Sample size</b>	2,044	990	1,054

# Results

	Coefficient (SE in parentheses)		
	Baseline Age 16–20	Baseline Age 16–17	Baseline Age 18–20
<b>Naïve regression</b> (Not accounting for self-selection on unobserved characteristics)	0.27*** (0.02)	0.16** (0.05)	0.36*** (0.03)
<b>Fixed-effects regression</b> (Accounting for time-invariant characteristics and other factors)	<b>0.13*</b> (0.07)	0.08 (0.11)	<b>0.17**</b> (0.08)
<b>Sample size</b>	2,044	990	1,054

\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Variation Across YTD Sites, Age 18–20

	Coefficient (SE in parentheses)
Bronx County, NY	0.65*** (0.05)
Colorado	0.34*** (0.03)
Erie County, NY	0.36*** (0.02)
Miami-Dade County, FL	0.03*** (0.01)
Montgomery County, MD	0.12*** (0.01)
West Virginia	0.01 (0.02)
Sample size	1,054

\*/\*\*/\*\*\* Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# Summary of Results

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- Findings show that early work experience substantially increases employment among youth with disabilities receiving SSI
- For youth ages 18–20, paid employment one year after baseline increases the probability of paid employment at three years by 17 percentage points
- The size of the effect varies across YTD sites, but it is consistently positive and statistically significant for five of the six sites

# Discussion

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- **Study provides causal evidence that early work experience is a key determinant of labor market success for youth with disabilities**
  - **Effect is sizeable but smaller than naïve estimates**
- **Early work experience could help shape the trajectory of employment in young adulthood and perhaps beyond**
- **Findings support recent policy initiatives targeted at transition-age youth with disabilities**
  - **Department of Education’s PROMISE initiative will give participating youth a paid work experience**

# For More Information

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# Discussant

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**Jamie Kendall**

**Administration for Community Living**

# Audience Q&A

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# Upcoming Events

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**DRC Annual Research Meeting  
August 5–6, 2015  
National Press Club, Washington, DC**

**CSDP Disability Policy Forum about the  
Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work Policy Collaborative  
October 22, 2015**

# Contact Information

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