

Innovation in Higher Education: How Data & Evidence Can Improve Student Outcomes

Thursday, March 22, 2018
Capitol Visitors Center
SVC Room 212-210
9:00 a.m. — 10:30 a.m.

A college degree remains one of the best tickets for social mobility. But, as higher education has grown more important, cost has risen and attainment levels have stagnated. The result is that millions of students lack the skills and credentials they need for good jobs. And yet, some colleges and universities have gotten better results – helping students learn more and graduate more quickly. The challenge is to find ways to scale these results. Join us to discuss how federal policy can support innovative and evidence-based approaches to improving student outcomes, including those outlined in the recent bipartisan report, “[Moneyball for Higher Education](#).” Given Congress is currently working on reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, this discussion will be timely and relevant.

Agenda

- 8:45 a.m. *Coffee, Tea, and Breakfast Refreshments Served*
- 9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions**
Jeremy Ayers, Vice President of Policy, Results for America
Nicole Truhe, Government Affairs Director, America Forward
- 9:05 a.m. **Remarks: “Why Evidence and Innovation Matter for Higher Education”**
The Hon. Grace Meng, U.S. Representative (D-NY)
- 9:15 a.m. **Video: CUNY ASAP: An Evidence-Based Approach to Improve Outcomes**
- 9:25 a.m. **Panel Discussion: “Promoting Innovation in the *Higher Education Act*:
Using Data and Evidence to Improve Student Outcomes”**
 - Greg Johnson, CEO, Bottom Line
 - James Kvaal, President, The Institute for College Access and Success
 - Michael Weiss, Senior Associate, MDRC
 - Lanae Erickson Hatalsky, Vice President of Social Policy & Politics, Third Way (moderator)
- 10:10 a.m. **Audience Q&A**
- 10:25 a.m. **Closing Comments**
Nicole Truhe, Government Affairs Director, America Forward
- 10:30 a.m. **Adjourn**

Featured speakers biographies

U.S. Representative Grace Meng (D-NY-6)

U.S. Congresswoman Grace Meng is serving her third term in the United States House of Representatives. Grace represents the Sixth Congressional District of New York encompassing the New York City borough of Queens, including west, central and northeast Queens.

Grace is the first Asian American Member of Congress from New York State, and the only Congressmember of Asian descent in the entire Northeast. She is also the first female Member of Congress from Queens since former Vice Presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro.

Grace is a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee and its Subcommittees on State and Foreign Operations, and Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies. The Appropriations Committee is responsible for funding every federal agency, program, and project within the United States government.

Previously, Grace served on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Small Business Committee.

Grace is also a Senior Whip and Regional Whip for New York, and a founder and Co-Chair of the Kids' Safety Caucus, the first bipartisan coalition in the House that promotes child-safety issues. She helped create and serves as a founding member and former Co-Chair of the Quiet Skies Caucus which works to mitigate excessive aircraft noise that adversely affects communities.

Grace has passed several pieces of legislation in law. These include laws about religious freedom, making Queens historic sites part of the National Parks Service, striking "Oriental" from federal law and protecting public housing residents from insufficient heat. Also signed into law were her measures that assist veterans and members of the military, as well as legislation to combat flood damage, strengthen anti-terror initiatives and improve the safety of school buses and child car seats.

In addition, Grace helped obtain increased funding for Israel's defense systems, acquired additional resources for small businesses, improved access to feminine hygiene products and worked to create New York City school holidays for Lunar New Year and Eid. Further, she helped improve mail delivery, secured resources to combat airplane noise, advocated for the new ban on African Elephant Ivory and the slaughter of "downer" calves, and obtained a probe that outlined needed improvements to local railroad safety.

Born in Elmhurst, Queens, and raised in the Bayside and Flushing sections of the borough, Grace attended local schools, and graduated from Stuyvesant High School and the University of Michigan. She then earned a law degree from Yeshiva University's Benjamin Cardozo School of Law.

Prior to serving in Congress, Grace was a member of the New York State Assembly. Before entering public service, she worked as a public-interest lawyer.

Grace resides in Queens with her husband, Wayne, two sons – Tyler and Brandon – and her dog, Bounce.

Lanae Erickson Hatalsky, Vice President of Social Policy & Politics, Third Way

In the fifth grade, Lanae Erickson Hatalsky voted for Ross Perot in the mock election held by her class. Since then, she has continued to look beyond conventional political views in order to understand diverse perspectives and bridge divides.

A true believer in listening to all sides of an argument, Lanae draws on her extensive background in Constitutional and civil rights law to promote a moderate approach to social issues at Third Way. Lanae loves working on the hardest and most divisive subjects, and as Vice President for Social Policy & Politics, she does just that, tackling hot-button issues like marriage for gay couples, immigration, abortion, religious liberty, and guns. Lanae spearheaded Third Way's Commitment Campaign, which mobilized moderate Americans to support marriage for gay couples by changing the conversation from legal rights

and benefits to the importance of making a lifetime commitment in front of family and friends. This is an issue particularly close to Lanae's heart—she married her wife in April 2012, and just four days after their honeymoon, President Obama became the first president to voice his support for marriage, saying he didn't want to deny committed couples the ability to make that promise to take care of one another for a lifetime.

Lanae served as a member of President Obama's third Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Before coming to Third Way, she was Legislative Counsel at Alliance for Justice, where she investigated the backgrounds of federal judicial nominees on civil and human rights and advocated for progressive policies on issues from detention and interrogation policy to equal pay. Before that, she was a "real" lawyer at the Legal Rights Center and the Center for Victims of Torture. Lanae's commentary has been featured in a variety of news outlets, including The Washington Post, The New York Times, USA Today, Politico, The New Yorker, and PBS News Hour. She has also appeared on NPR, Fox News, CSPAN's Washington Journal, CNN, Bloomberg Television, Air America, and Minnesota Public Radio.

She earned her J.D. magna cum laude from the University of Minnesota, and her Bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke College. Originally from the beautiful Land of 10,000 Lakes (which actually has significantly more than 10,000 lakes), Lanae now lives in Washington, D.C., with her wife. She has played violin since the first grade and is the principal second violinist in Washington's Capital City Symphony.

Greg Johnson, CEO, Bottom Line

During his time as CEO, Greg has transformed Bottom Line from a single site non-profit with a small staff working with a couple hundred students into a multi-state operation serving nearly 7,000 students annually supported by an engaged National Board of Directors and donor community. Prior to Bottom Line's national expansion and the creation of the CEO role, Greg served as Bottom Line's Executive Director in Boston from 2003 to 2011, engineering a process mapping and codification plan that solidified a highly successful curriculum and prepared the organization for multi-state expansion.

Greg is an active member and leader in the education and non-profit space. He is a member of the National College Access Network (NCAN) and Bottom Line was honored by winning their College Access Awards of Excellence in 2010 & 2011 and in 2015. He was an inaugural member of Success Boston, an initiative led by Mayor Menino to double the college graduation rate of high school graduates across the city. He has also spoken and written on a variety of topics including Managing Non-Profit Growth, Using Data to Improve Performance and Developing Bottom Line's DEAL Program Model for College Success. In 1994 he received his B.A. from Brown University and in 2008 completed Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Non-Profit Management. When not at Bottom Line, he enjoys running, having completed the Boston Marathon in 2010, as well as spending time with his very active daughters.

James Kvaal, President, The Institute for College Access and Success

James Kvaal is the president of the Institute for College Access & Success. He previously served as the deputy domestic policy adviser at the White House, where he worked on a range of issues related to economic opportunity. His work on higher education included initiatives to make college tuition more affordable, protect students from unaffordable loans, and help many more students graduate from college. Over the course of his career, he has also served in senior roles at the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. He has taught at the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy and attended Stanford University and Harvard Law School.

Michael J. Weiss, Senior Associate, MDRC

Weiss's work focuses on evaluating programs designed to improve community college students' chances of achieving academic success. He is also deeply involved in methodological projects intended to improve the quality of random assignment evaluations.

Weiss has led multiple randomized controlled trials in postsecondary education, serving as principal investigator or co-principal investigator on four Institute of Education Sciences (IES)-funded randomized

controlled trials of five postsecondary programs: the Learning Communities Demonstration, a student success course, the Developmental Education Acceleration Project, the evaluation of City University of New York (CUNY) Start, and CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP). Weiss has authored multiple reports and peer-review journal articles on the effectiveness of higher education programs.

In his methodological work, Weiss is currently the principal investigator on an IES methods grant on issues of program effect variation. His methodological work, which has been featured in peer-reviewed journals, includes articles on teacher effects in experiments, measuring school performance, the uncertainty of effect estimators in individually randomized trials, and a conceptual framework for understanding the sources of variation in program effects. Weiss has served as the methods section chair at the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness.

Weiss has been invited to give presentations at numerous conferences and organizations, including the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and the U.S. Department of Labor. He holds a BS and a master's degree in applied statistics from Cornell University and a doctorate in education policy from the University of Pennsylvania.

Nicole Truhe, Director, Government Affairs, America Forward

As the Director of Government Affairs for America Forward, Nicole represents the policy and funding priorities of the over 75 innovative and high performing organizations that are a part of the America Forward Coalition to members of Congress, the Federal Administration and other like-minded coalitions. America Forward is New Profit's nonpartisan initiative that brings together policymakers, national leaders, and social entrepreneurs across sectors and unites public and private resources to increase the impact of social innovation.

Nicole's passion for this work comes from two places. She feels everyone should be given the opportunity to engage their government and those who are both elected and appointed to represent them and their interests. She is also passionate about the work that America Forward's coalition members do and in particular the impact they are making every day on the lives of those they serve.

Nicole spent much of her career at Youth Villages, an America Forward Coalition member. After receiving her BA in Political Science and Master's in Public Administration, she had the opportunity to develop and implement a government relations and public policy strategy for that organization. In that capacity, she advocated for policy and funding changes in the child welfare, juvenile justice, children's mental health, and innovative financing policy areas. For America Forward, she leads the development and execution of advocacy efforts focused on workforce development, social innovation, and Pay for Success/Evidence-Based related policies.

In her spare time, Nicole is an exercise enthusiast and avid runner. She is also passionate about abandoned and abused animals and has an adorable Dachshund, Labrador mix dog that she rescued named Hannah.

Jeremy Ayers, Vice President of Policy, Results for America

Jeremy is the Vice President of Policy at Results for America. He previously served as Education Policy Advisor for the U.S. House Committee on Education & the Workforce. In this role he provided legislative and policy support on K-12 issues including accountability, assessment, school improvement, education research, and oversight of ESEA waivers. Prior to joining the Committee Jeremy was Associate Director of Federal Education Programs at the Center for American Progress, a classroom teacher in Florida, and a policy analyst for the Alliance for Excellent Education, a national high school reform organization. He got his start in education working for the Family Resource Center, a small nonprofit serving rural North Carolina children and families. Jeremy holds a master's degree from Duke University and a bachelor's degree from McMurry University in his home state of Texas.