

**Promise Research Bibliography – by outcome area**  
**W.E. Upjohn Institute**  
**August 2021**

This list represents scholarly research into the impacts of place-based scholarship or “Promise” programs across the three outcome areas of K-12 education, post-secondary education, and community/economic development.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis is on studies that use a methodology that can assign causation; other information about program outcomes may come from administrative data, descriptive studies, policy papers, institutional research units, or dashboards compiled by Promise programs or outside evaluators. Most of the research listed here focuses on locally based Promise programs, but some general literature is included.

***General***

Andrews, Rodney J. 2013. [The Promise of "Promise" Programs](#). Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, June 24.

Delaney, Jennifer A., and Elaine Leigh. 2019. “A promising trend? An event history analysis of factors associated with establishing single-institution college promise programs.” In L.W. Perna & E.J. Smith. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs*.

Iriti, Jennifer and Michelle Miller-Adams. 2015. [Promise Monitoring and Evaluation Framework](#). Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Jones, Tiffany and Katie Berger. 2018. [A promise fulfilled: A framework for equitable free college programs](#). The Education Trust.

Miller-Adams, Michelle. 2021. [The Path to Free College: In Pursuit of Access, Equity, and Prosperity](#). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Miller-Adams, Michelle. 2015. [Promise Nation: Transforming Communities through Place-Based Scholarships](#). Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Miller-Adams, Michelle. 2009. [The Power of a Promise: Education and Economic Renewal in Kalamazoo](#). Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Mishory, Jen. 2018. [The Future of Statewide College Promise Programs](#). The Century Foundation. March 6.

Perna, Laura W. 2016, [Understanding College Promise Programs](#). Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy (Penn AHEAD), June 28.

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<sup>1</sup> **Note to researchers:** If you have carried out or know of research that should be a part of this bibliography, please send bibliographic information to miller-adams@upjohn.org.

Perna, Laura W., Jeremy Wright-Kim, and Elaine W. Leigh. 2021. [Will college promise programs improve or reduce equity? Understanding the contextual conditions that influence program implementation.](#) *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 29(26).

Perna, Laura W., Jeremy Wright-Kim, and Elaine W. Leigh. 2020. [Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency.](#) *AERA Open*, Volume 6, Issue 4.

Perna, Laura W. and Edward J. Smith, editors. 2019. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs*. American Educational Research Association.

Swanson, Elise, Angela Watson, Gary Ritter, and Malachi Nichols. 2016. [Promises Fulfilled? A Systematic Review of the Impacts of Promise Programs.](#) University of Arkansas Department of Education Reform (EDRE) Working Paper. EDRE WP 2016-16. October 4.

### ***Impacts on K-12 Education***

Ash, Jennifer W. 2015. [A Promise Kept in El Dorado? An Evaluation of the Impact of a Universal, Place-Based College Scholarship on K-12 Achievement and High School Graduation.](#) Theses and Dissertations. 1175.

Ash, Jennifer W. and Gary W. Ritter. 2014. [Early Impacts of the El Dorado Promise on Enrollment and Achievement.](#) *Arkansas Education Report*, Volume 11, Issue 1, University of Arkansas Office of Education Policy, April 23.

Bartik, Timothy J., and Marta Lachowska. 2013. [The Short-Term Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship on Student Outcomes.](#) In *New Analyses of Worker Well-Being, Research in Labor Economics*, Volume 38, Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 37-76. Also available as a [working paper](#) and [article](#).

Bartik, Timothy J., Randall Eberts, and Wei-Jang Huang. [The Kalamazoo Promise, and Enrollment and Achievement Trends in Kalamazoo Public Schools.](#) Presented at the PromiseNet 2010 Conference, June 16-18, Kalamazoo, MI.

Bifulco, Robert, Ross Rubenstein, Hosung Sohn and Jud Murchie. 2017. ["Third-Year Report: Evaluating the Effects of the Say Yes to Education Program in Buffalo, NY."](#) Prepared for the Say Yes to Education Foundation, January 31.

Doleac, Jennifer L. and Chloe R. Gibbs. 2016. [A Promising Alternative: How Making College Free Affects Teens' Risky Behaviors.](#) Unpublished manuscript, Department of Economics, Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia.

Elliott, William, Chowa, G., Ellis, J., Chen, Z., & O'Brien, M. 2019. [Combining children's savings account programs with scholarship programs: Effects on math and reading scores.](#) *Children and Youth Services Review*, 102, 7-17.

Gonzalez, Gabriella, C., R. Bozik, L. Daugherty, E. Scherer, R. Singh, M. Suárez, and S. Ryan. 2014. [Transforming an Urban School System: Progress of New Haven School Change and New Haven Promise Education Reforms \(2010-2013\)](#). Rand Corporation.

Gonzalez, Gabriella C., R. Bozik, S. Tharp-Taylor, and A. Phillips. 2011. [Fulfilling the Pittsburgh Promise: Early Progress of Pittsburgh's Postsecondary Scholarship Program](#). Rand Corporation.

Harris, Douglas N. 2013. [Is Traditional Financial Aid Too Little, Too Late to Help Youth Succeed in College? An Introduction to the Degree Project Promise Scholarship Experiment](#). *New Directions for Youth Development*, Number 140, Winter 2013, pp. 99-116.

Harris, Douglas N. and Larry L. Orr. 2012. [Testing the Promise: A Randomized Trial of a Promise College Scholarship for Urban Public School Students](#). Unpublished manuscript, Department of Economics, Tulane University.

Hodara, Michelle, J. Petrokubi, A. Pierson, M. Vazquez, and Sun Young Yoon. 2017. [Fulfilling the Promise? Early Findings on Oregon's New College Grant Program](#), Education Northwest.

Jones, Jeffrey N., Gary Miron, and Allison J. Kelaher-Young. 2012. [The Kalamazoo Promise and Perceived Changes in Teacher Beliefs, Expectations, and Behaviors](#). *The Journal of Education Research*, Volume 105, pp. 36-51.

Miron, Gary, J. Jones, and A. Kelaher-Young. 2011. [The Kalamazoo Promise and Perceived Changes in School Climate](#). *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, Volume 19, Number 17.

Miron, Gary, J. Jones, and A. Kelaher-Young. 2012. [The Impact of the Kalamazoo Promise on Student Attitudes, Goals, and Aspirations](#). *American Secondary Education*, Volume 40, Issue 2, pp. 5-27.

Ritter, Gary and Jennifer Ash. 2016. [The Promise of a College Scholarship Transforms a District](#). *Phi Delta Kappan*, Volume 97, Number 5, pp. 13-19.

### **Post-Secondary Impacts**

Andrews, Rodney J., Stephen DesJardins, and Vimal Ranchhod. 2010. [The Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise on College Choice](#). *Economics of Education Review*, Volume 29, Issue 5, October.

Ash, Jennifer, Elise Swanson, and Gary Ritter. 2020. [A promise kept? The impact of the El Dorado Promise scholarship on student achievement](#). *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Volume 43, Issue 1. pp.83-107. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373720970512>

Bartik, Timothy J., Brad Hershbein, and Marta Lachowska. 2019. [The effects of the Kalamazoo Promise scholarship on college enrollment and completion](#). *The Journal of Human Resources* (Online Pre-Print). Also available as a [working paper](#).

Bell, Elizabeth. 2018. *Estimating the impact of Tennessee Promise eligibility on tuition, fees, and enrollment* ([AEEP Working Paper](#)). Association for Education Finance and Policy.

Bell, Elizabeth. 2021. [Estimating the spillover effects of the Tennessee Promise: Exploring changes in tuition, fees, and enrollment](#). *Journal of Student Financial Aid*. (UPDATED)

Bell, Elizabeth and Denisa Gandara. 2021. [Can free community college close racial disparities in postsecondary attainment? How Tulsa achieves affects racially minoritized student outcomes](#). *American Educational Research Journal*.

Bifulco, Robert, Ross Rubenstein, and Hosung Sohn. 2019. [Evaluating the effects of universal place-based scholarships on student outcomes: The Buffalo "Say Yes to Education." Program](#). *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 38. 918-943.

Billings, Meredith S. 2018. [Free College for All: The Impact of Promise Programs on College Access and Success](#). University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation.

Bozick, Robert., Gonzalez, Gabriella., and Engberg, John. 2015. [Using a Merit-Based Scholarship Program to Increase Rates of College Enrollment in an Urban School District: The Case of the Pittsburgh Promise](#). *Journal of Student Financial Aid*, Volume 45, Issue 2, pp. 2-24.

Carruthers, Celeste K., William F. Fox, and Christopher Jepsen. 2020. [Promise Kept? Free community college, attainment, and earnings in Tennessee](#). Working paper.

Carruthers, Celeste K. and William F. Fox. 2016. [Aid for all: College coaching, financial aid, and post-secondary persistence in Tennessee](#). *Economics of Education Review*, 51, 97-112. Also available as a [working paper](#).

Collier, Daniel A., D. A. Houston, D. Fitzpatrick, and Eric Archer. 2020. [Bridge of Promise: Comparing the academic outcomes of Kalamazoo Promise to public school students in a 4-year institution](#). *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*.

Collier, Daniel A., Houston, D.A., & Fitzpatrick, D. 2019. *Bridge of Promise: Comparing the academic outcomes of Kalamazoo Promise to public school students in a 4-year institution* ([Working Paper No. 3290183](#)). Social Science Research Network.

Collier, Daniel A. and Isabel McMullen. 2020. [Sometimes a long winding road: An exploration of Kalamazoo Promise Stop Out and Reenrollment](#). *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*.

Collier, Daniel A. and Isabel McMullen. 2020. [Modeling first year stop out of Kalamazoo Promise Scholars: Mapping influences of socioeconomic advantage and pre-college performance to college performance](#). Presented at the 2020 Student Financial Aid Research Network (SFARN) national conference.

Collier, Daniel A., Isabel McMullen, and Brad Hershbein. 2021. *How college enrollment changed for Kalamazoo Promise students between Fall 2019 and Fall 2020*. (Policy Paper 2020-025). W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. [https://research.upjohn.org/up\\_policypapers/25/](https://research.upjohn.org/up_policypapers/25/)

Collier, Daniel A., & Parnter, C. 2018. [Conversing with Kalamazoo Promise scholars: An inquiry into the beliefs, motivations, and experiences of tuition-free college students](#). *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, & Practice* (Online Pre-Release).

Daugherty, Lindsay and Gabriella C. Gonzalez. 2016. [The Impact of the New Haven Promise Program on College Enrollment, Choice, and Persistence](#). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Delaney, Jennifer and Brad Hemenway. 2017. [Inside the Black Box: A difference-in-difference Analysis of Shifts in Postsecondary Institution Spending Patterns in Response to “Promise” Financial Aid Programs](#).” Manuscript delivered at the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Association of Education Finance and Policy Conference (Washington, D.C.)

Dynarski, Susan, Libassi, C.J., Michelmore, K., & Owen, S. 2018. *Closing the gap: The effect of a targeted, tuition-free promise on college choices of high-achieving low-income students* ([Working Paper No. 25349](#)). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Gandara, Denisa and Amy Li. 2020. [A promise for whom? “Free-college” programs and enrollments by race and gender classifications at public, 2-year college](#). *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Volume 42, Issue 4. pp. 603-627

Gonzalez, Gabriella C., R. Bozick, L. Daugherty, E. Scherer, R. Sing., M. Suarez, S. Ryan, and J. Schweig. 2014. [An Early Look at College Preparation, Access, and Enrollment of New Haven Public School Students \(2010-2013\)](#). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Gurantz, Oded. 2019. [What does free community college buy? Early impacts from the Oregon Promise](#). *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (forthcoming).

House, Emily A. 2017. [Finding the Best Fit: Exploring Postsecondary Undermatch in Tennessee](#). University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation.

House, Emily A. and Dell, M. 2019. Keeping the promise: Early outcomes of Tennessee’s tuition-free college initiative. In L.W. Perna & E.J. Smith. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs*. Association of Higher Education.

Iriti, Jennifer, Lindsay C. Page, and William E. Bickel. 2017. [Place-based Scholarships: Catalysts for Systems Reform to Improve Postsecondary Attainment](#). *International Journal of Educational Development*. Available online March 6.

Iriti, Jennifer, William Bickel, and Julie Kaufman. 2012. [Realizing "The Promise:" Scholar Retention and Persistence in Post-Secondary Education](#). Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research and Development Center. September 27.

Miller-Adams, Michelle and Bridget Timmeney. 2013. [The Impact of the Kalamazoo Promise on College Choice: An Analysis of Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center Graduates](#). Upjohn Institute Policy Paper 2013-014. February.

Odle, Taylor K., Jason C. Lee, & Steven P. Gentile. 2021. Do promise programs reduce student loans? Evidence from Tennessee Promise. *The Journal of Higher Education*. DOI: [10.1080/00221546.2021.1888674](#).

Page, Lindsay, Iriti, J. E., Lowry, D. J., & Anthony, A. M. 2018. [The promise of place-based investment in postsecondary access and success: Investigating the impact of the Pittsburgh Promise](#). *Education Finance and Policy*. January.

Page, Lindsay C. and Jennifer Iriti. 2016. "On Undermatch and College Cost: A Case Study of the Pittsburgh Promise," in Andrew P. Kelly et al., eds. [Matching Students to Opportunity: Expanding College Choice, Access, and Quality](#). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Perna, L. W. 2016. [Delivering on the promise: Structuring college promise programs to promote higher education attainment for students from underserved groups](#). Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy.

Pluhta, Elizabeth, A. and G. Richard Penny. 2013. [The Effect of a Community College Promise Scholarship on Access and Success](#). *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, Volume 37, Issue 10, pp. 723-734.

Ratledge, Alyssa, Colleen Sommo, Dan Cullinan, Rebekah O'Donoghue, Marco Lepe, and Jasmina Camo-Biogradlija. 2021. [Motor City Momentum: Three Years of the Detroit Promise Path Program for Community College Students](#). *MDRC Reports*.

Ratledge, Alyssa., R. O'Donoghue, D. Cullinan, & J. Camo-Biogradlija. 2019. [A path from access to success: Interim findings from the Detroit Promise path evaluation](#). MDRC.

Ruiz, Roman, E.W. Leigh, A. Napier., & M.S. Gonzalez Canche, 2019. "Community college promise programs and local impact: Aggregate effects of college attainment in three promise communities." In L.W. Perna & E.J. Smith. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs*.

Swanson, Elise and Gary Ritter. 2020. [Start to finish: Examining the impact of the El Dorado Promise program on postsecondary outcomes](#). *Journal of Student Financial Aid*: Volume 49, Issue 3.

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Taylor, Jason L. and Chuck W. Leper. 2018. [Designing the Promise: The Salt Lake Community College promise program](#). *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 42(11), 770-777.

### ***Community-level Impacts***

Bartik, Timothy J., Brad Hershbein, and Marta Lachowska. 2016. [The Merits of Universal Scholarships: Benefit-Cost Evidence from the Kalamazoo Promise](#). Upjohn Institute Working Paper 16-252. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Bartik, Timothy J., and Nathan Sotherland. 2015. [Migration and Housing Price Effects of Place-Based College Scholarships](#). Upjohn Institute Working Paper 15-245. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Bifulco, Robert, Ross Rubenstein, and Hosung Sohn. 2017. [Using Synthetic Controls to Evaluate the Effect of Unique Interventions: The Case of Say Yes to Education](#). *Evaluation Review*. November.

Carruthers, Celeste K., William F. Fox, and Christopher Jepsen. 2020. [Promise Kept? Free community college, attainment, and earnings in Tennessee](#). Working paper.

Hershbein, Brad J. 2013. [A Second Look at Enrollment Changes after the Kalamazoo Promise](#). Upjohn Institute Working Paper 13-200. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

LeGower, Michael, and Randall Walsh. 2017. [Promise Scholarship Programs as Place-Making Policy: Evidence from School Enrollment and Housing Prices](#). *Journal of Urban Economics*, Volume 101, September 2017, pp. 74-89.

Miller, Ashley. 2018. [College scholarships as a tool for community development?](#) Evidence from the Kalamazoo Promise. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 32(1), 3-17.

Miller-Adams, Michelle and Jenna Fiore. 2013. [The Kalamazoo Promise and Changing Perceptions of the Kalamazoo Public Schools](#). Upjohn Institute Policy Paper No. 2013-016. December.

Miller-Adams, Michelle and Edward Smith. 2018. [Promise scholarship programs and local prosperity](#) (Policy Paper No. 2018-019). W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Niemeyer, Arielle, [Place-based scholarship program design, context, and intergenerational mobility: A case study of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship program](#). Virginia Commonwealth University doctoral dissertation. 2015.

Sohn, Hosung, Ross Rubenstein, Judson Murchie, and Robert Bifulco. 2017. [Assessing the Effects of Place Based Scholarships on Urban Revitalization: The Case of Say Yes to Education](#). *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Volume 39, No. 2, June. pp. 198-222.