An Uneven Playing Field:
The Lack of Equal Pay for People with Disabilities

Michelle Yin
Senior Researcher
Co-authors: Dahlia Shaewitz and Mahlet Megra
People with disabilities have lower rates of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status by disability status</th>
<th>Without a disability</th>
<th>With a disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed, at work</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, with a job but not at work</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces, at work</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces, with a job but not at work</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in universe, missing</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in labor force</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People with disabilities have lower educational attainment

![Bar chart showing educational attainment by disability status.](chart.png)

- **No degree**: 35.3% (Without a Disability) vs. 33.4% (With a Disability)
- **High school or equal**: 19.5% vs. 30.9%
- **Some college**: 18.2% vs. 20.2%
- **Associate's degree**: 6.0% vs. 5.8%
- **Bachelor's degree**: 13.4% vs. 6.6%
- **Master's degree or higher**: 7.6% vs. 3.2%
Our research question

- Among similarly educated, full-time workers, do those with disabilities get paid the same as their colleagues?

Data:
- U.S. Census 2011 American Community Survey

Method:
- Income by disability status, educational attainment and state
- Forgone federal and state income tax
- Regression framework
Earnings and Earnings Differences by Disability Status and Ed. Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Without a Disability</th>
<th>With a Disability</th>
<th>Income Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school degree or equal</td>
<td>$6,505.00</td>
<td>$6,505.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>$4,615.00</td>
<td>$4,615.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's degree</td>
<td>$7,199.00</td>
<td>$7,199.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>$12,719.00</td>
<td>$12,719.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree or higher</td>
<td>$20,871.00</td>
<td>$20,871.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Earnings disparity is even higher in some states

- **High school diploma or equivalent**
  1. Vermont ($12,700)
  2. Connecticut ($12,000)
  3. Iowa ($10,000)

- **Bachelor’s degree**
  1. Washington, D.C. ($20,000)
  2. Minnesota ($18,000)
  3. Washington ($17,000)

- **Master’s degree and higher**
  1. Nevada ($38,700)
  2. Connecticut ($35,500)
  3. Hawaii ($33,800)
State and federal losses

- Individual loss adds up to $141 billion, or nearly 1% of GDP
- Total federal income tax loss was $25 billion
- Total state income tax loss was $6.5 billion
More questions remain…

- Why do these pay gaps exist?
- And what can we do to close them?
Michelle Yin
202-403-5000
myin@air.org

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW
Washington, DC 20007
TTY: 887-334-3499
www.air.org
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