

# Danielle Lowry

Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC) at the University of Pittsburgh  
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## PROFILE

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I am an equity-focused education evaluation and research professional committed to applied research and data-driven decision-making. As part of the Evaluation for Learning group, we approach research and evaluation with an intentional focus on equity and diversity. I regularly collaborate with school districts and community-based organizations to co-develop evaluations, implement improvement strategies, and inform programming that serves historically underserved students. These projects frequently result in actionable next steps that are shared with partners through reports, data briefs, and presentations. My work supports program, school, and district decision-making and aims to build capacity within these institutions to sustain equity-focused change. I am especially passionate about creating learning experiences that help young people recognize the value of education and envision new possibilities for their futures.

## EDUCATION

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**University of Pittsburgh**, Pittsburgh, PA, December 2021

Ph.D., Administrative and Policy Studies

Specialization: Quantitative Research Methods

Dissertation Title: Three essays on the Pittsburgh Promise

Dissertation Advisor: Lindsay Page

**Ohio State University**, Columbus, OH

M.P.A. Public Administration, 2014

**Kent State University**, Kent, OH

B.A.S. History, 2012

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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**University of Pittsburgh**, 2022-Present

*Research Associate (Formerly Post-Doctoral Researcher) – Evaluation for Learning*

- Lead evaluations for new and ongoing initiatives, including the Pittsburgh Promise Coaching Initiative, the City Charter High School partnership, and the Institute of Politics' Equity in Dual Enrollment study.
- Partner with school districts, nonprofits, and community organizations to identify equity gaps and use evaluation findings to inform inclusive programming and policy changes.
- Collaborate with a team using mixed methods approaches to provide evidence-based support that strengthens decision-making by education leaders, practitioners, and policy makers.
- Conduct detailed analysis of administrative data from public schools, education nonprofits, and the National Student Clearinghouse.

- Present visualizations of complex, longitudinal data to stakeholders to guide strategic decisions.
- Design and refine data collection instruments, including interview and focus group protocols, to capture diverse stakeholder perspectives.
- Observe and evaluate out-of-school time programming, tracking quality over time and documenting findings in written reports.
- Co-develop evaluation reports that emphasize equity and highlight both program successes and areas for improvement.

*Research Associate (Formerly Post-Doctoral Researcher) – Partners for Network Improvement*

- Serve on the knowledge management team for the NSF-funded STEM PUSH Network, a networked improvement community focused on broadening participation of Black, Latiné, and Indigenous high school students in STEM.
- Co-facilitate improvement groups supporting nonprofit leaders in using: National Student Clearinghouse data to inform recruitment and student support strategies; community asset mapping to improve capacity-building; and college transition and admissions surveys to collect data on student postsecondary decision-making.
- Develop and analyze surveys to gather member feedback and guide network priorities.
- Propose and create a centralized resource library to improve access to tools and shared knowledge across programs.
- Lead the development of an annual data collection process to monitor improvement progress and track key STEM program indicators for each pre-college STEM program in the network.
- Conduct social network analysis to assess and strengthen engagement and collaboration within the network.
- Co-developed a survey to study institutional partnerships and admissions pipelines among network programs.

**University of Pittsburgh, 2019-2021**

*Research Assistant to Jen Iriti*

- Analyzed school district and scholarship nonprofit administrative files for report disseminated to grant-funding institutions and the public.
- Presented results of data analysis to relevant stakeholders.
- Created clear and concise data visuals of student progress from complex administrative data.
- Produced literature review on college coaching initiatives for use in the design and implementation of a district-wide college coaching program.

**University of Pittsburgh, 2014-2019**

*Research Assistant to Lindsay C. Page*

- Collaborated with colleagues to evaluate the impact of the Pittsburgh Promise on college access and early college persistence using causal inference methods.
- Collated research on merit scholarships for comprehensive literature review.
- Designed study to investigate potential decreases in institutional aid generosity at local colleges in response to a place-based scholarship.

- Assisted team with the cleaning of school district administrative files and National Student Clearinghouse data from a randomized controlled trial testing the effectiveness of text messages on student FAFSA completion and college enrollment.
- Produced maps and used spatial analysis to analyze higher education markets and the prevalence of higher education deserts.

***The Pittsburgh Promise*, 2018-2019**

*Contract Researcher*

- Assembled descriptive statistics and reports for Pittsburgh Public Schools, grant foundations, and other stakeholders detailing Promise-eligible student college persistence, retention, and graduation rates.
- Used Stata and ArcGIS to produce data visualizations of Promise Scholar progress to and through college.

***National College Access Network (NCAN)*, 2016-2019**

*Graduate Fellow*

- Developed reports on FAFSA submission and completion trends using publicly available data; produced deliverables geared toward higher education policy audience.
- Contributed to NCAN blog and Success Digest on relevant financial aid topics.
- Reproduced National Student Clearinghouse graphics tracing student progress through postsecondary for NCAN members and their student data.
- Researched the history and intricacies of FAFSA verification; research used for NCAN white paper on the detriments of FAFSA verification on college access.

*Contract Researcher*

- Examined relationship between school district poverty levels and FAFSA completion and compiled findings into report published on NCAN website; findings utilized for public outreach campaign to increase FAFSA filing in low-filing school districts.
- Presented research findings at college access event for policymakers and practitioners in DC.

***Center on Education and Training for Employment*, Columbus, OH, 2013-2014**

*Intern*

- Compiled existing research for the development and implementation of communities of practice for Ohio's system of adult education instructors.
- Assisted in the design of an evaluation plan for Ohio's community college student success initiative to increase student persistence from year one to year two.
- Synthesized GED student college persistence literature, created and disseminated student survey, and wrote paper detailing student persistence patterns in higher education.
- Utilized descriptive statistics for the presentation of adult education instructor surveys for publication in monthly statewide newsletter.
- Researched policies, programs, and strategies to increase adult student persistence, retention, achievement, and postsecondary and training transitions; research consolidated into documents disseminated to the field.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### **Ohio State University Arts and Sciences Career Services**, Columbus, OH, 2013-2014

#### *Career Advisor*

- Edited and critiqued undergraduate student resumes and cover letters during one-on-one walk-in sessions. Performed mock interviews with students, evaluated their performance, and provided feedback on successful interview methods. Counseled students on effective strategies regarding job searches and attending job fairs. Led job search information sessions.

### **GED Scholars Initiative**, Kent, OH, 2010-2012

#### *Project Assistant*

- Supported GED-holding students in the transition to post-secondary education. Provided career and program advising. Assisted GED Scholars with scholarship and class essays; served as mentor to GED Scholars; and provided information to criminally convicted GED graduates in need of explanation statements for college admittance. Maintained organization communications, including social media and weekly email updates.

## FELLOWSHIPS

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### **School of Education Quant Sequence**, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, 2016-2017

#### *Teaching Assistant*

- Assisted professors with grading of homework and term papers for the graduate-level quantitative methods course sequence. Held office hours and tutored students in regression analysis and data visualization. Responded to student questions and concerns in class sessions and via email.

## TECHNICAL REPORTS (*Available Upon Request*)

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Lowry, D., Iriti, J., & English, B. (2024). *Bridges to the Promise: Coaching Initiative Year 4 Evaluation Report*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Pittsburgh Promise.

Lowry, D., Iriti, J., & English, B. (2023). *Bridges to the Promise: Coaching Initiative Year 3 Evaluation Report*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Pittsburgh Promise.

Lowry, D., Iriti, J., & Page, L. (2023). *COVID-19 Pandemic : High School Graduation and Postsecondary Enrollment Impacts & Efficacy of the Pittsburgh Promise Emergency Funds*.

Iriti, J. & Lowry, D. (2022). *Pittsburgh Promise Annual Reporting: 2021 College Enrollment*.

Iriti, J., Lowry, D., & Page, L. (2022). *Bridges to the Promise: Coaching Initiative Year 2 Evaluation Report*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Pittsburgh Promise.

Iriti, J. & Lowry, D. (2022). *Pittsburgh Promise Annual Reporting: 2020 College Enrollment*.

Lowry, D. & Iriti, J. (2021). *End-of-Year Report: Year 1 of the Promise Coaching Initiative*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Pittsburgh Promise.

Lowry, D. J. (2018). *An analysis of the relationship between school district poverty and FAFSA completion*. Washington, D.C.: National College Access Network.

## PUBLICATIONS

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Lowry, D., Page, L. C., Nurshatayeva, A., & Iriti, J. (2024). Subtraction by addition: Do private scholarship awards lead to financial aid displacement?. *Economics of Education Review*, 99, 102517.

Page, L. C., Iriti, J. E., Lowry, D. J., & Anthony, A. M. (2020). The Promise of Place-Based Investment in Postsecondary Access and Success: Investigating the Impact of the Pittsburgh Promise. *Education Finance and Policy*.

## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

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Lowry, D. J., Page, L. C., Lin, Y. & Iriti, J. E. The promise of coaching: Evaluating the impact of a high school college and career coaching program.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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The *promise* of place-based investment in college access and success: Investigating the impact of the Pittsburgh Promise. Paper presented at:

- Association for Education Finance and Policy, Denver, CO, March 2016
- Annual Research Convocation on Place-Based Scholarships Sponsored by the Upjohn Institute, Kalamazoo, MI, November 2015
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA, October 2015

To supplement or supplant: Institutional responses in financial aid to the Pittsburgh Promise. Paper presented at:

- Association for Education Finance and Policy, Washington, DC, March 2017
- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Chicago, IL, November 2017

An analysis of the relationship between school district poverty and FAFSA completion. Paper presented at:

- National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs, Albuquerque, NM, October 2018.

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

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Quasi-Experimental Design and Analysis, The Institute of Education Sciences (70 hours) 2017

Cost-Effectiveness and Benefit-Cost Methods, The Institute of Education Sciences (35 hours) 2017

Financial Aid Bootcamp, The Postsecondary National Policy Institute (14 hours) 2018

Loan Servicing Bootcamp, The Postsecondary National Policy Institute (14 hours) 2019

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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American Educational Research Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy; Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Association for the Study of Higher Education

## SOFTWARE PROFICIENCY

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- **Quantitative Analysis and Data Visualization:** Stata, R, Excel, ArcGIS

- **Qualitative Analysis:** Interview coding, NVivo, Dedoose
- **Data Collection & Survey Tools:** Qualtrics, Google Forms