



Janet M. Currie Recipient of the 2015 Carolyn Shaw Bell Award

Janet M. Currie, the Henry Putnam Professor of Economics and Public Affairs, Chair of the Economics Department and Director of the Center for Health and Well-Being at Princeton University, is the recipient of the 2015 Carolyn Shaw Bell Award. Given annually since 1998 by the American Economic Association (AEA) Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP), the Bell Award recognizes and honors an individual who has furthered the status of women in the economics profession. Professor Currie will accept the award at the annual CSWEP business meeting held during the 2016 AEA Meeting in San Francisco.

Currie excels in her scholarship, in her teaching and advising, in mentoring, and in her service to the profession. She is an innovative and prolific scholar whose work spans labor, public and health economics. She has made fundamental contributions in many areas and is best known for her work on public policy issues affecting child health and wellbeing. Her work is notable for combining a focus on important, policy-relevant questions with unassailable objectivity and scrupulous attention to methodological detail. She has made important contributions to our understanding of the impact of early childhood intervention programs, including health insurance expansions, public housing provision, and nutrition programs. She has also been in the forefront of efforts to examine environmental threats to children's health. Currie's research has also illuminated important socioeconomic differences in child health, an issue of growing concern given the widening income inequality that the United States has experienced in recent decades. One theme of her research is that inequality begins before school age and indeed, before birth, and that large differences in health at birth have important consequences for future outcomes. The result has been an influential body of work that has greatly aided policymakers' decisions as they seek to improve children's outcomes. In the words of Jonathan Gruber, the Ford Professor of Economics at MIT:

Janet is truly a superstar. She has defined and led the field of Children's economics for years, while establishing herself as one of the very best microeconomists in the nation. And she has brought unprecedented attention to issues of women and children's health, while herself mentoring young women.

Currie is a knowledgeable and dedicated mentor to colleagues and students, both male and female. Anna Aizer, Associate Professor of Economics at Brown University, shared her experience as one of Currie's first graduate students at UCLA:

Janet's professionalism, intelligence, drive to advance economic science, work ethic, generosity and concern for the development of the next generation of economists is unparalleled. Upon graduation, Janet helped me to navigate the job market and my joint location problem (an issue for so many women in the profession). In a field in which all too often the female partner of a professional couple minimizes her ambition, Janet served as a model of how professional couples can and should approach the job market in a way that is equitable. Since graduating I have continued to rely on Janet's wisdom for issues big and small. She always finds the time to respond to my questions with advice that has never been anything but kind, sage and practical.

Her students have also been inspired by Currie's commitment to inform policy as well as academic circles. Pia Orrenius, a former graduate student of Currie's at UCLA and now Vice President and Senior Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, noted that: "Any Janet Currie student has a third slide in their presentation titled 'Why We Should Care.' It reflects her humility and core belief that we don't pursue research for purely academic reasons, but to add value and inform the world."

Currie's professional and public service has been outstanding, and includes her commitment to gender equity in economics, her work as department chair, and her service to the American Economic Association. She was Co-PI on the initial NSF grant that funded the CeMENT Mentoring Workshops and led the research team that produced the only rigorous scientific evidence for the efficacy of a mentoring program (Blau et al., "Can Mentoring Help Female Assistant Professors? Interim Results from a Randomized Trial," *American Economic Review*, May 2010: 352).

Currie currently serves on the editorial board for *Science* and recently stepped down after twenty years on the editorial board of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. In addition, Currie is the Director of the NBER Children's Program, President of the Society of Labor Economists, member of the National Academy of Medicine, and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, and the Econometric Society. She has been a Vice President of the American Economic Association and served on the CSWEP Board. Currie earned her BA and MA in Economics from the University of Toronto and her PhD in Economics from Princeton University.

Named after the first Chair of CSWEP, the Carolyn Shaw Bell Award was created as part of the 25th Anniversary celebration of the founding of CSWEP and is given annually to an individual who has furthered the status of women in the economics profession through example, achievements, increasing our understanding of how women can advance in the economics profession or mentoring others. Prior to her death in 2006, Bell was the Katharine Coman Chair Professor Emerita of Wellesley College. As she articulated in CSWEP's 25th Anniversary *Newsletter*:

We need every day to herald some woman's achievements, to tout a woman's book or painting or scholarly article, to brag about a promotion or prize and to show admiration for the efforts and influence of women, in their professional and technical and social and human endeavors of all kinds.

In the spirit of these words, the award requires that a traveling plaque listing all prior Bell Award Winners be displayed prominently in a public place in the winner's local area. From most recent to first, previous recipients of the Carolyn Shaw Bell Award are: Hilary W. Hoynes, Rachel McCulloch, Catherine C. Eckel, Sharon Oster, Elizabeth Hoffman, Elizabeth E. Bailey, Anne Carter, Olivia S. Mitchell, Barbara Fraumeni, Claudia Goldin, Barbara Bergmann, Robin L. Bartlett, Margaret Garritsen de Vries, Francine Blau, Marianne Ferber, Eva Mueller, Sandra Ohrn Moose, and Alice M. Rivlin.

A standing committee of the AEA, CSWEP is charged with promoting the careers and monitoring the progress of professional women economists. CSWEP programs annually provide mentoring for over 225 junior economists. Via CSWEP.org, free subscriptions to [CSWEP News](http://CSWEP.org) (particularly the announcements and Focus sections), and via a Network of Departmental Liaisons, CSWEP freely disseminates information on opportunities and how the profession works, most of which is useful to men as well as to women. By sponsoring six competitive-submission paper sessions at the AEA meeting leading to two sessions published in the May *AER*, CSWEP exposes women's research to a profession-wide audience. To monitor the progress of women, since 1972 CSWEP has surveyed U.S. departments of economics regarding the gender composition of their faculties and, in recent decades, regarding the gender composition of their undergraduate majors, graduate students, and job placements. The resulting data are unique in the social sciences and form the basis of CSWEP's [Annual Reports on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession](http://CSWEP.org).

For further information, contact: Marjorie McElroy, Chair of CSWEP (cswep@econ.duke.edu) or visit: <http://CSWEP.org>.