

JESSICA ROBLES

Summary of Professional Experience

Jessica Robles, a senior research associate in RTI International's Education and Workforce Development division, has extensive experience in educational research and program evaluation, with an emphasis in advanced qualitative methods. She specializes in evaluations that focus on addressing the multifaceted needs of underrepresented and at-risk students (both in K–12 and postsecondary schools); out-of-school-time evaluations; developmental and participatory evaluations; and evaluations of cross-sector collaborations. Dr. Robles has developed evaluation plans and data collection tools for schools, districts, and specialized education programs and has a strong track record of effective and equitable stakeholder engagement in the evaluation process. She has also led numerous studies with large-scale qualitative data collection, including classroom observations, interviews, and focus groups. Communicating complex findings well, facilitating sense-making sessions, and ensuring that evaluation deliverables are user focused and friendly are priorities in any evaluation she leads. Her most recent work includes serving as project director for the evaluations of the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity STEM Equity Pipeline Project, a Race to the Top District Grant for the Puget Sound Educational Service District, and Seattle's Ready to Work program.

Education

EdD, Educational Leadership for Change, Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA, 2016.
MA, Social Research Methodology for Education, University of California–Los Angeles, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Los Angeles, CA, 2009.
BA, Psychology, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA, 2005. Graduated cum laude and with departmental honors.

Certifications

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (with honors), Instituto Americano, Florence, Italy, 2006.

Selected Project Experience

Evaluation of the Parent Teacher Home Visit Program (2016 to date)—*Lead Qualitative Analyst*. RTI is conducting an evaluation of the Parent Home Teacher Visit Project (PTHV), funded by PTHV and the Flamboyant Foundation. The PTHV trains elementary and high school teachers to conduct annual home visits with their students in order to develop a strong relationship with the students and their families. Leads the analysis of qualitative interview and focus group data at 16 schools across four districts and supports the writing of interim and final reports.

Evaluation of the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) Social Enterprises (2016 to date)—*Evaluation Design and Analyst*. REDF is a nonprofit intermediary that provides funding and business advice to social enterprises that employ those who have to overcome formidable obstacles in order to get a job. With funding from a Social Innovation Fund grant, RTI is conducting an external evaluation of REDF's portfolio of 22 grantees across the United States, using a hybrid quasi-experimental and random

assignment study design. Contributes to study design and works closely with each of the social enterprises involved in the impact study to provide support and supervision of ongoing data collection.

Evaluation of the Race to the Top District Grant for Puget Sound Educational Service District (2014 to date)—*Project Director*. RTI is conducting an evaluation of Puget Sound’s Race to the Top Consortium award, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Broadly, the goal of Race to the Top is to close the achievement and opportunity gaps in Seattle in the highest-need elementary, middle, and high schools through a collective impact effort among school districts, community-based organizations, and the Education Service District. Directs the development of the research design and oversees qualitative data collection, analysis, and reporting from districts, schools, community-based organizations, and the Educational Service District. Also directs the quantitative outcome analysis and the reporting of survey results.

Evaluation of the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) STEM Equity Pipeline Project (2013 to date)—*Project Director*. Funded by the National Science Foundation, RTI is conducting an evaluation of NAPE’s STEM Equity Pipeline Project. NAPE works with state and local educators to increase equity in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs. The Pipeline Project espouses research-based strategies that support underrepresented groups in career cluster programs leading to high-wage, high-demand careers. Directs the formative and summative evaluation pieces, which includes research design, qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, writing interim and final reports, and presenting at NAPE’s annual project meeting in April.

Evaluation of Fort Wayne Community School’s Professional Learning System (2017 to 2018)—*Lead Quantitative Analyst and Qualitative Analyst*. Over the last 10 years, Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) implemented a new approach to professional learning by providing support and resources to all levels of the district (e.g., teachers, school principals, and central office administrators) to improve teaching and learning. With support from Learning Forward, FWCS has focused intensively on the capacity of leaders and practitioners across the district to continuously improve their practice to influence student learning using research-based strategies to implement the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning. Led the development, analysis, and reporting of surveys to teachers, coaches, and principals. Contributed to the analysis of interview and focus group data.

Climate Change Education Partnership (CEP) Program, Phase II (2011 to 2018)—*Lead analyst and Co-Facilitator*. The San Diego Climate Energy Partners is a National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded project with an overall vision to be a nationally recognized model to educate community leaders about climate science and impacts to foster informed decisions and improve climate literacy. To achieve this vision, CEP implemented a research-based climate science education and communication program for a non-K-16 audience known as “Key Influentials” (KIs). RTI’s evaluation focused on the cross-sector team collaboration and the impact of CEP educational activities on KI climate change knowledge and their participation in public discussions of climate change. Led development of interview/focus group protocols, conducted site visits, led reporting, and co-facilitated team building sessions.

Evaluation of the Innovation Lab Network (2015 to 2016)—*Analyst and Writer*. For the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a developmental evaluation of the Foundation-supported, state-based initiative, the Innovation Lab Network (ILN), whose goal is to advance education reform toward implementing deeper learning approaches in schools. Project assessed the ILN’s progress, established metrics for measurement of progress, and tracked the progress of the ILN’s activities over the course of the study. Project activities included evaluation of site visits, interviews with state policymakers, and the development and analysis of survey of ILN stakeholders. Conducted site visits, led analysis of qualitative data, contributed to the writing of an internal report, and consulted on survey development.

Evaluation of Seattle’s Ready to Work Program (2014 to 2016)—*Project Director*. RTI conducted an evaluation of Seattle’s Ready to Work Program, funded by the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs in Seattle, Washington. The program model represents a pathway to jobs and/or training for immigrants and refugees who are in the workforce (employed or looking for work) and have limited English proficiency. It seeks to bridge the gap between established programs such as “Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training” and English as a Second Language offered in community-based organizations through instruction that tends to focus on civics, life skills, and family literacy. Ready to Work provides extensive wraparound services through in-depth case management tailored to address the specific needs of immigrants and refugee populations. Served as project director and oversaw research design, qualitative and quantitative data collection, site visits, and reporting. Led the development of the public-facing outcomes report.

Developmental Evaluation for “Science in Action” and “Student Science Fellows” Youth Programs at the California Academy of Sciences (2012 to 2014)—*Co-Project Director*. The youth programs at the California Academy of Sciences offer high school students the opportunity to engage with STEM programming outside of school and access resources they otherwise would not encounter. Contributed to the development of research design and assisted co-project director in overseeing data collection activities and data analysis. Consulted closely with program staff at the Academy of Sciences frequently and provided formative feedback in the form of written reports, phone calls, and formal presentations to Academy staff. Served as “thought partner” to key program managers during program development and steering committee discussions at the Academy.

Evaluation of the University of Washington Dream Project (2011 to 2014)—*Co-Project Director*. The University of Washington Dream Project is a student-initiated college access and retention program that partners University of Washington students with first-generation and low-income students in Seattle-area high schools to assist in the college admissions process. Led the qualitative data collection—including site visits and interviews—in the final two years of the four-year evaluation of the Dream Project. Served as project director for the final year of the evaluation, which included site visits and management of extensive summative quantitative outcome analysis and reporting in addition to the analysis and reporting of qualitative data from all four years of the evaluation.

Evaluation of the Bay Area STEM Summer Institute (2010 to 2013)—*Project Director*. The Bay Area After School STEM Summer Institute expanded the pool of qualified teaching candidates by training disadvantaged youth, veterans, and displaced workers to become teachers in their own communities. Oversaw research design and evaluation plans with evaluation team and was responsible for end-to-end qualitative and quantitative analysis, including final evaluation reports. Developed pre- and post-attitudinal surveys, observation, and focus group protocols. Coordinated data collection activities with research staff and STEM Summer Institute program staff across five sites in California. Provided formative feedback, written and verbal, to program developers on a biweekly basis.

Professional Experience

2013 to date RTI International, Berkeley, CA.

Senior Research Associate. Serves as project director and researcher, with emphasis on developmental and out-of-school time evaluations. Responsible for end-to-end qualitative and quantitative data analysis, including final evaluation reports for clients and stakeholders. Full project management responsibility includes budgeting, management of research staff, and client communication.

- 2010 to 2013 MPR Associates, Inc., Berkeley, CA (acquired by RTI International in 2013).

Research Associate. Served as project director and researcher, with emphasis on STEM evaluations. Responsible for end-to-end qualitative and quantitative data analysis, including final evaluation reports for clients and stakeholders. Full project management responsibility included budgeting, management of research staff, and client communication.
- 2010 Cabrillo MESA, Santa Cruz, CA.

Contract Evaluator. Inputted, reviewed, cleaned, and recoded data from online student surveys from a STEM summer bridge program in California. Developed focus group protocols and helped write and edit the final annual formative evaluation report.
- 2010 to 2012 Cal-PASS, Santa Cruz, CA.

Contracted Researcher. Edited user documents for a pilot data program for use with faculty at community colleges. Served as a beta tester for the program to identify any problems for a potential user.
- 2009 to 2010 SRM Evaluation group at the University of California, Los Angeles, CA.

Program Evaluator. Conducted focus group meetings with teachers, students, and administrators as a part of a 5-year grant evaluation for Long Beach Unified School Districts. Served as the lead qualitative analyst and lead writer for the final formative evaluation report (both quantitative and qualitative data).
- 2009 to 2010 University of California, Los Angeles, CA.

Program Coordinator. Conducted yearlong monitoring and evaluation of K–5 afterschool program. Developed and maintained databases for data analysis with SPSS/Excel for future research/publications.
- 2006 to 2008 EF International Language Schools, Redondo Beach, CA.

Senior Instructor. Taught English as a Foreign Language to various age groups at all levels of English proficiency. Served as the assistant director of studies and trained all new classroom teachers; developed curriculum for all levels of English proficiency; and managed the enrollment, testing, and placement of 8–120 new international students weekly.

Professional Associations

American Educational Research Association
American Evaluation Association

Special Courses

NVIVO Training, San Francisco, 2012

Computer Skills

SPSS, Excel, PowerPoint, Prezi, NVivo, Survey Gizmo, SurveyMonkey

Languages

Spanish, Italian (conversational)

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Radford, A. W., Robles, J. L., Cataylo, S. E., Horn, L. J., Thornton, J., & Whitfield, K. (2014). The employer potential of MOOCs: A mixed-methods study of human resource professionals' thinking on MOOCs. *International Review of Research in Open & Distance Learning*, 15(5), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v15i5.1842>

Presentations and Proceedings

Feldman, J., Robles, J., & Venkateswaran, N. (2018). *Best practices in collective impact partnerships*. Manuscript in preparation.

Feldman, J. E., Robles, J. L., de Barros, J., and Abdulle, H. (2015, November). *Community & district partnerships in the Road Map Race to the Top District Consortium Project—An initial exploration of what collective impact means*. Presented at AEA 2015: Exemplary Evaluations in a Multicultural World, Chicago, IL.

Robles, J. L., Feldman, J. E., & Levedahl, K. (2013, October). *Integrating youth as participatory evaluators in a developmental evaluation*. Presented at AEA 2013: The State of Evaluation Practice in the Early 21st Century, Washington, DC.

Henriquez, C., & Robles, J. L. (2010). *I challenge you: How students develop and maintain expertise in game play*. Presented at AERA annual meeting: Understanding Complex Ecologies in a Changing World, Denver, CO. Roundtable Session: Digital Identities.

Robles, J. L. (2009, February). *I challenge you: How students develop and maintain expertise in game play*. Presented at University Links annual meeting—5th Dimension, San Diego, CA.

Selected Technical Reports

McKnight, K., Venkateswaran, N. M., Laird, J., Robles, J., & Shalev, T. L. (2017). *Mindset shifts and parent teacher home visits*. Prepared for Parent Teacher Home Visits. Available at http://www.pthvp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/PTHV_Study1_Report.pdf

Robles, J., & Laird, J. A. (2018). *Implementation evaluation of BELL Greenville*. The Riley Institute at Furman University.

Wisniewski, R. L., & Robles, J. (2017). *Revitalizing graduate STEM education for the 21st century: Overview of student and faculty focus group findings*. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

Robles, J., Warkentien, S., & Silver, D. (August 2016). *Evaluation of the Ready to Work Program*. Seattle, WA: The Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

Robles, J., Venkateswaran, N., & Feldman, J. (April 2016). *Perspectives from the field in Year 3: Impact and effectiveness of RTT-D collaboration, Executive Summary*. Seattle, WA: the Puget Sound Educational Service District.

Feldman, J., Robles, J., Bentz, A., & Shaw, S. (April 2015). *Road Map District Consortium Race to the Top: Interim update on power measures outcomes*. Seattle, WA: the Puget Sound Educational Service District.

Robles, J., & Feldman, J. (March 2015). *Road Map District Consortium Race to the Top: Nature and quality of partnerships formative evaluation report*. Seattle, WA: the Puget Sound Educational Service District.

Robles, J. L., & Laird, J. A. (2013, November). *Evaluation of the 2013 STEM Summer Institute*. San Francisco, CA: Growth Sector.

Media and Communications

Bevc, C. A., & Robles, J. (2018). *An imperfect storm: Restoring essential child care services in Hurricane Florence's wake*. Web publication/blog, RTI International. Retrieved from <https://www.rti.org/insights/imperfect-storm-restoring-essential-child-care-services-hurricane-florence%E2%80%99s-wake>
