

December 31, 2023

Premium Processing

USCIS

Attn: I-140 (Box 660128)

2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business

Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067-8003

**Re: EB-2 Immigrant Petition for Permanent Residency with request for a National Interest Waiver**

Petitioner/Beneficiary: **..(First name)... ..(Surname)...**, Ph.D. Student, M.A., MPhil.

Nature of submission: **ORIGINAL SUBMISSION**

Type of Petition: **I-140, EB-2 National Interest Waiver**

Classification Sought: **Immigration and Nationality Act 203(b)(2)(B)**

Dear USCIS Officer:

I, **..(First name)... ..(Surname)...**, seek an immigrant visa as a member of the professions holding an advanced degree pursuant to section 203(b)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C § 1153(b)(2). I respectfully request a national interest waiver of the labor certification requirement in recognition of my track record and potential contribution to applied micro-econometric that improve all members of the population especially the minority group, policy makers and the US government.

My unique contributions to student loan forgiveness, child poverty eradication, and policy evaluation are of substantial merit and national importance. Also, my contribution to better outcomes of children of incarcerated parents research by analyzing the mechanisms through which parent's observed behavior impact children's outcomes in health, education, and employment – is of national importance. Additionally, my role as a consultant at the World Bank focusing on poverty reduction further contributes to the national interest.

My solid academic background in econometrics and quantitative economics, coupled with my research contributions and track record, positions me to be a valuable contributor to tackling the various issues of quality, efficiency, access, and resource allocation in the U.S. In my case, the benefit of waiving labor certification will be in the national interest, as I will be a great asset to the United States.

I am submitting this petition and the attached documents to prove my demonstrated level of expertise and stellar track record and confirm my status as a valuable contributor who has and will continue to have a significant impact in my area of specialization.

## Summary

I am filing this petition as an advanced degree professional pursuant to 8 C.F.R. Section 204.5(k). I am eligible for EB-2 classification as a member of the professions holding an **advanced degree** pursuant to Section 203(b)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. §1153(b)(2) because I hold a **Master's degree in Applied Economics** from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, North Carolina [See Exhibit 1.1–1.4]. I also hold a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Statistics (Bachelor's degree equivalency in the U.S.) from the University of Ghana, Ghana [See Exhibits 1.7–1.8]. I am currently a Ph.D. Economics student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina [See Exhibit 2]; and also working as a Consultant with Enterprise Analysis Unit of the Work Bank Group [See Exhibit 6].

I further submit evidence and documentation to demonstrate that a waiver of the labor certification in my specific case is in the nation's interest pursuant to the Matter of Dhanasar, 26 I&N Dec. 864, Int. Dec. 3882 (A.A.O. 2016). In RE: Matter of DHANASAR, 26 I&N Dec. 884 (AAO 2016), Int. Dec. 3882.

### **I. My proposed endeavor has both substantial merit and national importance.**

As an applied microeconomist, I use econometric and quantitative economics methods to address intergenerational juvenile, substance abuse, poverty, and criminal activities among children of incarcerated parents; and improve the health, education outcomes and well-being of the most vulnerable children in the United States. Among other applications, my research is relevant to the development and testing of new policy interventions aimed: at reducing school dropout to improve adulthood employment outcomes; and lowering child opioid usage and crime in order to boost public safety. My consultancy role at the World Bank in advancing reduction of global child poverty and it is of substantial benefit to the US.

My research contributions span across these critical areas of national importance.

#### **i. Outcomes of Children of Incarcerated Parents:**

Estimated **2.7 million children are affected by 2.3 million parental incarcerations** and these children face a host of challenges and difficulties: psychological strain, antisocial behavior, suspension or expulsion from school, economic hardship, and criminal activity. **Incarceration cost the US \$80 billion per year.** Studying the long-term effects on parent behavior on these disadvantaged children is key to reducing intergenerational incarceration, substance abuse and school dropout. My research will also help in targeted allocation of government welfare programs (TANF, SNAP and public housing), and highlighting the significant role of the presence of fathers in early child development.

#### **ii. Poverty Eradication - The field of Child Poverty:**

In 2022, **16% of all children in the United States — 11.6 million kids total —**

**are living in poverty.** For adults who experienced poverty during childhood, earnings were **reduced by a total of \$294 billion** compared to adults who did not experience poverty during childhood in 2015. P.G. Peterson stated that the US is one of the developed countries with a high percentage of child poverty hence it is a major concern in the US.

iii. Student Loan Forgiveness - The Student Loans and the Transition to Adulthood:

As at 2023, the current student loan debt in the USA totals **\$1.766 trillion. More than two-thirds of college graduates now carry an average of around \$30,000** in student debt when they finish their 4-year degrees. Recently, politicians have discussed various plans to reduce or forgive student loans; addressing the implementation of these policies will **save the government millions if not billions of dollars** and give the average American college graduate a better standard of living.

iv. Policy Evaluation - COVID19 and Firm Performance:

During the COVID19 pandemic, the Paycheck Protection Program prioritizes millions of **Americans employed by small businesses by authorizing up to \$659 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses; and over 40% of these funds were misappropriated and loss to the US government.** Evaluating these policies informs policy decisions in the US to minimize government policy losses in situations like the one created by the pandemic.

II. I am **well positioned to continue to advance my endeavor and area of specialization.**

I have a master's degree in Applied Economics from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, USA. During my years as a master's degree graduate, I wrote a detailed research project with impressive econometric computational codes to address substance abuse problems among college students in the US. Understudying renowned economists at the university heightened my already existent passion for advanced economic research and teaching. I have contributed to eight peer-review publications, with other research currently ongoing.

I am currently a PhD student in Economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with my research focus in applied microeconomics research – specifically labor/education economics, health economics and industrial organization. I have completed the relevant course work required for my PhD research with an impressive performance that has equipped me to tackle this complex research. My unique academic background as well as my success in my previous diverse research endeavors are testaments to my ability to advance my proposed research and specialization in applied micro-economics and policy evaluation. I have already started contributing to this cause as I am currently working as a Consultant with the Enterprise Analysis Unit of the Work Bank Group.

### III. **On balance, it would be beneficial to the United States to waive the requirements of labor certification**

The evidence of my track record in research contributions, particularly in student loan forgiveness, child poverty eradication and early childhood development, is vital to the United States. These are corroborated by recommendations from experts in the research domain. It is imperative that there be all hands-on deck to find a lasting policy solution to child poverty and reduction of juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and criminal activities among children of incarcerated parents. I serve as a crucial member of the World Bank Enterprise Analysis Unit, focused on global poverty eradication. I have already made outstanding contributions to the field and will serve the national interest more than an available US worker having the same minimum qualifications.

This letter provides a guide through all submitted evidence; I will provide references directly from the content of the letters of recommendation from experts in the field. The various pieces of evidence are attached to this letter in the following order:

- **Proofs of my advanced degrees:** a Master of Art in Applied Economics from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, USA. Foreign Bachelor of Art in Economics and Statistics, from the University of Ghana, Ghana. PhD Economics admission letter from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and **my Curriculum Vitae** [See Exhibits 1 – 2].
- **Recommendation letters** written by outstanding experts (together with resumes of the authors) from well-recognized institutions such as: The World Bank, DC, USA; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC, USA; University of North Carolina at Greensboro, NC, USA; The University of Queensland, Australia. Eight letters: 3 research advisory opinion; 2 teaching advisory opinion from supervisors and mentors; and finally 3 independent advisory opinion [See Exhibits 3].
- **Articles from government and national agencies** supporting the benefits of my research to the United States of America [See Exhibits 4 – 5].
- Evidence of **Current Consultancy Employment at World Bank** – I included my employment contract and online website. [See Exhibit 6].
- Evidence of **Current Teaching and Mentoring at UNC Chapel Hill** – I included my employment contract. [See Exhibit 7].
- **Evidence of my past research contribution** supporting **my impact on the field** published in a peer-reviewed journal, including Google Scholar citations and reviewer reports [See Exhibits 8 – 9].
- Evidence supporting my **past track of achievements** including scholarships, awards, and volunteerism [See Exhibits 10 – 12].
- Evidence of my **membership in professional organizations** [See Exhibits 13].
- **Documents Pertaining to my Nonimmigrant status**– passports, I-94, and visas. [See Exhibits 16].
- **Documents Pertaining to my Marriage and Spouse’s Nonimmigrant status**– passports, I-94, and visas. [See Exhibits 17].

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# 1 Advanced Degree Professional

As is set forth under 8 C.F.R Sections 204.5(k)(1)-(4) {including the Miscellaneous and Technical Immigration and Naturalization Amendments of 1991}, an individual filing for classification as an alien who is a member of the professions and holding an advanced degree must submit a petition accompanied by:

1. An official academic record showing that the alien has an advanced degree from the United States or a foreign equivalent degree.
2. An official academic record showing that the alien has a United States baccalaureate and evidence from former employer(s) showing that the alien has at least five years of progressive post-baccalaureate experience in the specialty; or
3. An individual labor certification from the Department of Labor or proof of entitlement to a waiver of the requirement pursuant to 8 C.F.R. Section 204.5(k)(4)(ii).

## 1.1 I Meet the Standard for Advanced Degree Professional

On December 2020, I earned my **Master's degree in Applied Economics** from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. My final project was in the field of health and education economics, titled “**(Project Title)**”. In this study I provide an efficient way of measuring the casual effect of substance use, specifically alcohol and hard drug use among college students accounting for individual heterogeneity. I then establish the direct and indirect mechanism of these effects and the gender disaggregation as well [See **Exhibit 1.4**]. See the link below for the complete research work.

I also earned a Bachelor of Art in Economics and Statistics degree (**equivalent to a US Bachelor's degree**) from the University of Ghana, Ghana and a Master of Philosophy in Economics (**equivalent to a US Master's degree**) from the University of Ghana, Ghana.

## Exhibit 1: Advanced Degrees

Exhibit 1.1: My Curriculum Vitae

Exhibit 1.2: M.A. Applied Economics; Degree Certificate University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Exhibit 1.3: M.A. Transcript; University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Exhibit 1.4: M.A. Project Work

Exhibit 1.5: M.Phil. Economics; Degree Certificate University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.6: M.Phil. Transcript; University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.7: B.A. Economics and Statistics; Degree Certificate University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.8: B.A. Transcript; University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.9: Ranking of University of North Carolina at Greensboro

(<https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/unc-greensboro-2976/overall-rankings>).

Based on the facts demonstrated above, I qualify for the EB-2 classification as a member of the **professions holding an advanced degree**.

## 2 Some Evidence of Previous Successful Works and Their National Importance

I am a third year PhD student in Economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ranked #4 Top Public University and the first Public University founded in the USA [See Exhibit 2]. In this chapter, I will introduce to you three pieces of evidence of my previous research contributions and their impact on the United States of America. In the next chapter, I will then introduce to you my current proposed PhD research (research in progress), its contribution, its substantial merit, and its national importance.

### 2.1 Evidence of Successful Work 1: Student Loans and Transition to Adulthood

#### 2.1.1 *Introduction to Student Loans Debt*

As at 2023, the current student loan debt in the USA totals **\$1.766 trillion**. The majority of young adults now attend at least some college, and many take on substantial student debt in the process. More than **two-thirds of college graduates now carry an average of around \$30,000** in student debt when they finish their 4-year degrees. Recently, **politicians have discussed various plans to reduce or forgive student loans**, and some colleges have begun to implement programs to reduce loans for low-income students.

According to the **US Department of Education**, in 2020 students who completed a bachelor's degree on the average **borrowed \$45,300 in federal student loans**. Among these completers, the average amount borrowed was higher for those who even had received a Pell Grant than for those who had not (\$47,100 vs. \$42,200). This is an issue which cuts across all races and ethnicity in the USA. Among bachelor's degree recipients who had ever received federal student loans,

- Black students borrowed an average of \$58,400, which was higher than the average amount borrowed by those who were Asian (\$49,100), of Two or more races (\$43,400), White (\$43,300), Hispanic (\$41,700), or American Indian/Alaska Native (\$36,900); and
- Asian students borrowed an average of \$49,100, which was higher than the average amount borrowed by those who were Hispanic (\$41,700) or American Indian/Alaska Native (\$36,900).

I have provided articles adapted from the National Center for Education Statistics, which is part of **U.S. Department of Education**, the student loan forgiveness bill in discussion in **U.S. congress** and articles from other sources that explain the student loan debt issues [See Exhibit 4.1.1 – 4.1.4].

#### Exhibit 4.1: Articles Supporting Student Loan Debt Research

Exhibit 4.1.1: Loans for Undergraduate Students and Debt for Bachelor's Degree Recipients (By the **U.S. Department of Education**, National Center for Education Statistics) <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cub>



- Exhibit 4.1.2: Student Loan Debt Statistics (Education Data Initiative – National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)) <https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-statistics>
- Exhibit 4.1.3: Statement from *Vice President Kamala Harris* on Additional Student Loan Forgiveness (*The White House* – Statement and Releases) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/07/14/statement-from-vice-president-kamala-harris-on-additional-student-loan-forgiveness/>
- Exhibit 4.1.4: Student Loan Forgiveness Bill (*118th Congress US - House of Representatives*) <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-joint-resolution/45/text?externalTypeCode=enr&format=xml>

### 2.1.2 Economic implications of Student Loan Debt in the USA

Student Loan Debt has a dire impact on college graduates and the US economy. The effect of student debt on a large scale is equivalent to an economic recession. From 2019 to 2023, the average student loan debt grew by 3.6%; meanwhile, the national economy shrank by 3.4%. In the last decade, **student loan debt increased by an average of \$78.7 billion every year**. Student debt reduces aggregate spending, inhibits business growth, hampers the housing market, and causes a lot of stress on government social programs. Here are some facts. Here are some facts:

- 18% of student loan holders find it difficult to buy daily necessities because of their student loans.
- Debt may inhibit spending for decades as 20 years after entering school, half of student borrowers still owe \$20,000 each on outstanding loan balances.
- Would-be entrepreneurs are 11% less likely to start a new business if they owe more than \$30,000 in student loan debt.
- Students with outstanding loan payments are 36% less likely to purchase a house. [See **Exhibit 4.1.2**]

Because of the devastating impact of student loan debt on US citizens the issue of student loan forgiveness has been the talk of congress in the last couple of years. Recently on July 14, 2023, the **Vice President Kamala Harris in a statement** on student loan forgiveness stated:

*“President Joe Biden and I are committed to delivering relief to student loan debt borrowers to help them move forward with their lives – whether they want to start a family, buy a home, or become an entrepreneur. Today, we are taking another historic step by **forgiving \$39 billion in student loan debt for 804,000 borrowers who have been paying down their debts for 20 years or more and should qualify for relief**. We will not stop there. Last month, President Biden announced we are pursuing an alternative path to provide relief through **the Higher Education Act**, and we finalized our new income-driven repayment plan – which will **cut monthly payments in half for undergraduate loans**.”* [See **Exhibit 4.1.3**]

### 2.1.3 My contribution to the Student Loans study

Working on a project being funded by the **National Science Foundation** worth **\$360,228** [Grants #1947603 and #1947604] on Student Loans and Transition to Adulthood, myself and other two professors seek to answer the question: Should student loans be forgiven, and if so by how much? Exploring the impact of student loans and COVID-19 on human capital and health (academic performance, student wellbeing and job prospects after graduation).

We studied **Student Loan Debt and Higher Education Disruptions during COVID-19**. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted higher education and exacerbated inequalities, potentially including those related to student loan debt. **We collected and analyzed a survey of 1,018 undergraduate students at a public regional university in 2021** and using a **longitudinal mixed-method study and logistics econometric techniques** to examine pandemic disruptions to education, living situations, and finances, and their relationship to loan presence and reports of taking out more loans because of the pandemic. Over half of students had student loans, and over one-third of them reported increasing loan debt due to the pandemic. Students with loans were more likely to have moved out of dormitories and in with parents during the pandemic, and doing so reduced their likelihood of taking out additional loans. Students who experienced pandemic-related financial difficulties were more likely to have loans or take on additional student debt as a result of the pandemic. Results revealed pandemic-related education and financial disruptions increased student debt for some.

The result of this study has been submitted for publication in a peer reviewed journal, “*Review of Higher Education*” [See **Exhibit 8.1.3**]. Also, the study was presented the 117<sup>th</sup> American Sociological Association conference held on August 5-9th, 2022 in Los Angeles, CA.

Professor ....., who is a Professor the Sociology Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a researcher at the Carolina Population Center and a co-author, commented on my contribution to this ground-breaking research in her recommendation letter as follows:

*“I have known ..(First name)... since the summer of 2021 when I hired him for a summer research assistantship for a **National Science Foundation supported grant project about student loans and its effects on young adults**, on which I am PI. **Mr. ..(Surname)... has continued to work on this project, which is now undergoing peer review for publication.** Our part of the project together focuses on how COVID-19 higher education effects and student loan debt were interrelated, a project of national interest to the United States given ongoing policy debates related to student debt, and the importance of understanding the full effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*...(First name)... contributed to the project in many key ways. It was his interest in higher education effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that led us to first focus on this topic within our broader project on student loans. He completed extensive coding and data analysis work for the project, reviewed academic literature, and contributed ideas and extensive writing to the paper. Our research uncovered links*

*between student debt and worse educational outcomes during COVID, between student debt and a greater likelihood of higher education disruptions such as moving out of dormitories and back home with parents as a result of COVID, and between student debt and a higher likelihood of experiencing COVID related job loss and family job loss. **We presented this research at the American Sociological Association conference in Los Angeles in 2022, the leading sociology professional organization, and this paper is currently undergoing peer review at The Review of Higher Education, a leading higher education journal.***

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.2 – 3.2A].

#### 2.1.4 Summary of benefits to the United States of America

Student Loan Debt in the USA has no national barrier, and it affects over two thirds of all college graduates and cuts across all gender, race, and ethnicity. About **43 million Americans have federal student loan debt**. The findings are well informative and applicable in informing policies which are currently pending in congress. A total of **\$197.3 million** in federal student loans have been forgiven through **Teacher Loan Forgiveness**. As politicians ponder higher education funding during an era of instability and uncertainty, understanding how the pandemic itself may have increased loan debt—and how instabilities caused by the pandemic may be more common among those with loans—should inform political discussions and decisions as to how much should be forgiven and who are the most vulnerable. Furthermore, the literature is informative for governments, non-governmental organizations, and the country at large to set priorities, formulation of policies and the allocation of funds for Higher Education.

In addition, my contribution to the student loan research is contribution to college student education through textbooks for college students. Professor ..... my co-author also states my contribution to the textbook for undergraduate college students in her recommendation letter as follows:

*“..(First name)... was a pleasure to work with and contributed many important ideas and an impressive amount of work to this project. **He also contributed extensive amounts of further statistical coding for other related projects for this study on student loans, that was used in further publications and that is contributing to a book project I am writing on the topic.** His research coding contributed to additional work I am completing and have published on higher education affects the COVID-19 pandemic including a project examining which undergraduates had greater family support during the pandemic, how students spent stimulus money, and the relationship of loans to differential experiences within college.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.2 – 3.2A].

## 2.2 Evidence of Successful Work 2: Multidimensional Child Poverty

### 2.2.1 *Introduction to child poverty*

Eradicating extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030 is a pivotal goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 1). Child poverty has the tendency to dent the mental and physical health, setting children on a lifelong path of low levels of education and declined productivity and sustaining intergenerational cycles of poverty. Children from wealthy families have better adolescent and adult outcomes than their counterparts from poor families. The World Bank Group and UNICEF study in 2022 indicates that 333 million children living in extreme poverty (\$2.15) and 1.43 billion children living below \$6.85. One in 6 children live in extreme poverty. Children are more than twice as likely as adults to live in extreme poverty. They comprise more than half of those living in extreme poverty, while their share of the population is 31 per cent. Children who grow up impoverished often lack the food, sanitation, shelter, health care and education they need to survive and thrive. Across the world, about 1 billion children are multidimensionally poor, meaning they lack necessities as basic as nutritious food or clean water [See Exhibit 4.2.3].

In 2022, **16% of all children in the United States — 11.6 million kids total — are living in poverty.** A family of four with annual earnings below \$29,678 is considered poor. According to the **White House report on September 12, 2023 the poverty rate for children more than doubled from a historic low of 5.2 percent in 2021 to 12.4 percent in 2022**, erasing all of the record gains made against child poverty over the previous two years [See Exhibit 4.2.5]. P.G. Peterson Foundation, a nonpartisan and nonprofit organization stated that the US is one of the developed countries with a high percentage of child poverty hence it is a major concern in the US [See Exhibit 4.2.2].

### Exhibit 4.2: Articles Supporting Child Multidimensional Poverty and Welfare Programs

Exhibit 4.2.1: Record Rise in Poverty Highlights Importance of Child Tax Credit (*US Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*)

<https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/9-12-23pov-stmt.pdf>

Exhibit 4.2.2: What Are The Economic Costs Of Child Poverty? (Peter G. Peterson Foundation Center)

<https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2023/10/what-are-the-economic-costs-of-child-poverty#:~:text=The%20largest%20economic%20cost%20of,poverty%20during%20childhood%20in%202015>

Exhibit 4.2.3: Global trends in child monetary poverty (UNICEF)

<https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/9-12-23pov-stmt.pdf>

Exhibit 4.2.4: Mission, Vision, and Values (*US Agency for International Development*)

<https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/mission-vision-values>

Exhibit 4.2.5: The 2022 Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Reports (*The White House report*)

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/cea/written-materials/2023/09/12/the-2022-income-poverty-and-health-insurance-reports/>

### 2.2.2 Implication of multidimensional child poverty in the USA

The largest economic cost of child poverty is the reduced future earning potential of children born into poverty. For adults who experienced poverty during childhood, earnings were reduced by a total of \$294 billion compared to adults who did not experience poverty during childhood in 2015. The next largest costs are related to street crime and poor health. In all, **child poverty reduced the size of the economy by an estimated \$1 trillion dollars**, or 5.4 percent of gross domestic product, in 2015. Just the seven implications of child poverty listed by researchers cost the US over \$1 Trillion [See Exhibit 4.2.2].

Cash transfer programs have the capacity to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty because it provides financial aid to poor families while creating an avenue for human capital investment in the long run. Most of the cash transfer programs are also conditioned on children's health care and educational investment, which tends to improve human capital development. Hence the need for more research in how to measure child poverty with precision so no vulnerable children are left behind, also to inform government policy programs like TANF and SNAP.

### 2.2.3 My contribution to multidimensional child poverty eradication

In 2022, I co-authored a research paper on child poverty titled “.....” in a peer-reviewed journal called *International Journal of Social Economics* [See Exhibit 8.1.2]. The impact of cash transfers on improving the living conditions of children and reducing early-life deprivations and vulnerabilities are crucial to safeguarding equality of opportunities and achieving sustainable, equitable and inclusive growth within the Sustainable Development Goals 1. The study aims to examine the change in deprivation rate among children aged 0–17 years between 2010 and 2012, as well as the impact of cash transfer on multidimensional child poverty in Ghana using the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

We modelled with a standardized global measure of child poverty using two dimensions and five indicators accounting **immunization, health insurance and nutrition for pre-school children** – this was often missing in most measurement of poverty index. I used the **Difference-in-Difference** estimation technique to establish a **causal impact** of the cash transfer program on the MPI of pre-school (0–5 years) and school-aged (5–17 years) children; and compared the results with that of **Propensity Score Matching**.

According to **Google Scholar**, this study has been cited **7 times** by other expert researchers, both national and international, to support their research [See Exhibit 9].

Dr. .... a renowned senior research fellow at the Center for the Business and Economics Health at the University of Queensland **who cited my worked** highlighted the power of my model and the skills in measuring poverty.

*“I am fully aware of the contribution Mr. ..(Surname)... has made to the child poverty literature. I cited his work on ‘Cash Transfer and Multidimensional Child Poverty: Evidence from Ghana’, which I can*

*testify that he demonstrated sound econometric technique and used the necessary indicators in measuring child poverty across all the different dimensions.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.8 – 3.8A].

#### 2.2.4 Summary of benefits to the United States of America

The findings of this research study are applicable in the USA. The econometric technique we used in calculating the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is important to the **U.S. Census Bureau to inform or improve their measure of child poverty**. Accounting for all the multiple dimensions leads to precise estimation of child poverty. We found that cash transfer programs like the **Child Tax Credit** in the USA are efficient in alleviating child poverty. Also, the program should be supplemented with the SNAP for children to reduce the deprivation of nutrition.

Dr. .... an expert in the field of multidimensional index measures, highlighted some of the results of my research findings and their national importance:

*“As one who led a team of researchers from the United States to introduce a novel multidimensional disease outbreak resilience index (DORI), I can attest that Mr. ..(Surname)...’s contribution is significant and has great potential of contributing to the U.S. Census Bureau’s measure of child poverty which is the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). Considering the findings of his research, I believe his contribution is policy-relevant in the eradication of poverty not only in the US but globally as well.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.8 – 3.8A].

## **2.3 Evidence of Successful Work 3: COVID, Firm Performance and Government Policies**

### 2.3.1 Introduction to small business and the economy and COVID

The effect of this pandemic has been severely detrimental to most businesses starting from borders being closed (hence impacting international trade), businesses shutting down (either temporarily or permanently), and consumers cutting down on spending. Consequently, most firms have gone out of business or reduced operations, resulting in the layoff of several workers. To prevent the collapse of most businesses and the potential rippling consequences on the economy, most governments have resolved to give some form of assistance to businesses to sustain their operations. For example, **the United States passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March 2020 providing over \$2 trillion of economic relief to**

**workers, families, small businesses, industry sectors, and other levels of government** that have been hit hard by the public health crisis created by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) [See Exhibit 4.3.1]. This Act also included the Pay-check Protection Program, a program aimed at providing small businesses with the resources they need to maintain their payroll, hire back employees who may have been laid off, and cover applicable overhead costs. The Paycheck Protection Program prioritizes millions of **Americans employed by small businesses** by **authorizing up to \$659 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses**.

#### **Exhibit 4.3: Articles Supporting COVID, Firm Performance and Government Policies**

- Exhibit 4.3.1: The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (By the *U.S. Office of Inspector General*) <https://oig.treasury.gov/cares-act>
- Exhibit 4.3.2: Little of the Paycheck Protection Program’s \$800 Billion Protected Paychecks (The New York Times) <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/01/business/paycheck-protection-program-costs.html>
- Exhibit 4.3.3: The \$800 Billion Paycheck Protection Program: Where Did the Money Go and Why Did it Go There? (*National Bureau of Economic Research*) <https://www.nber.org/papers/w29669>

#### *2.3.2 My contribution to small business and government policies*

Also, as a way of grasping opportunity amid the pandemic, I led a few colleagues to publish research article on the topic ‘.....’ in a peer-reviewed journal called *SN Business & Economics* [See Exhibit 8.1.1]. This research evaluated the at the effectiveness of the government pandemic relief grants to small businesses in the manufacturing and service sectors; using a two-period panel (before and during the pandemic) and applying first difference estimation technique. We found that firms with government grants in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic saw an 11% increase in sales revenue by the end of June 2020 compared to those yet to receive the grant, and just a 1% increase compared to those that did not receive any grant (including those that did not apply for grants). We also made policy recommendations which gained lots of attract in the economic-public policy space, such as: government policy geared toward protecting businesses from shutting down during the pandemic should target improving sales growth in the services sector; cash grants and wage subsidies should be the main forms of government grants made available to firms, particularly medium-size firms, compared to fiscal reduction grants, because wage subsidies have a more immediate impact on firms in situations like one created by the pandemic.

According to **Google Scholar**, this study has been cited **13 times** by other expert researchers to support their research [See Exhibit 9].

### 2.3.3 Summary of benefits to the United States of America

According to the New York Times about a quarter of the Pay-check Protection Program fund allocation went to businesses that would have been lost. A big chunk of the monies went to less vulnerable business and some not even invested in the business at all. Also, out of the roughly **\$510 billion the program lent in 2020**, a maximum of \$175 billion that is about 34%, went to paying workers who would have lost their jobs [See Exhibit 4.3.2 – 4.3.3]. The rest of the money was just a windfall for business owners. My study recommends strategies to enhance targeted policies to ensure the US can minimize government policy losses in situations like one created by the pandemic. We made policy recommendations which gained lots of attract in the economic-public policy space, such as: government policy geared toward protecting businesses from shutting down during the pandemic should target improving sales growth in the services sector; cash grants and wage subsidies should be the main forms of government grants made available to firms, particularly medium-size firms, compared to fiscal reduction grants.

Dr. ...., a Fiscal Economist at the World Bank and an expert in the field of global economic policy, highlighted the impact of this research contribution in shaping national policy:

*“Mr. ..(Surname)..., albeit in graduate school, possesses invaluable attributes that is already evident in his contributions to the field of economics and economic policy. Specifically, he has made timely contributions to government policy and firm performance in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study highlights how government support to firms, through grants in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, helped stabilize economic activity in Italy. The findings from his timely study is part of a large body of research work that contributed to shaping government policy targeting firm performance/survival during the pandemic.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.7 – 3.7A].



### 3 Current Proposed Endeavor, Substantial Merit, and National Importance

My proposed endeavor is using econometric and quantitative economics methods to address intergenerational juvenile, substance abuse (opioid abuse), poverty, and criminal activities among children of incarcerated parents; and improve the health, education outcomes and well-being of the most vulnerable children in the United States. Among other applications, my research is relevant to the development and testing of new policy interventions aimed: at reducing school dropout to improve adulthood employment outcomes; and lowering child opioid usage and crime in order to boost public safety. This chapter will introduce you to my current research and its importance to the US. The final section of this chapter will explain **my consultancy role at the World Bank in advancing my proposed endeavor and its substantial benefit to the US.**

#### 3.1 Current Research: Parental Behavior and Child's Outcome

Following my enrollment at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC, to pursue a Ph.D. in Economics [See Exhibit 2.1–2.3], I have taken on a very complex and challenging research project that requires knowledge in different fields of study such as labor economics, health economics, high education economics and policy evaluation. It also requires advanced-level mathematics, statistical and econometric skills such as casual inference, modern econometric methods and structural model estimation techniques. My research is to examine the impact of parental (mostly mothers) observed behaviors at different ages of a child on the later life outcomes of that child.

##### 3.1.1 Early childhood development of children of incarcerated/opioid abuse parents and need for research

Lack of parental involvement in the early state of a child's life is detrimental. The reason most of the parents are not available in the life of the children is due to criminal choices, substance use abuse and among others. According to the official report of **US National Institute of Corrections, currently an estimated 2.7 million children are affected by 2.3 million parental incarcerations** [See Exhibit 5.1]. In addition, an estimated 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their life, with over 5 million being children under age 10. Furthermore, the **US Department of Health and Human Services reports more than 21 million children in the United States lived with a parent who misused substances**, and more than 2 million lived with a parent who had a substance use disorder, especially opioids [See Exhibit 5.2]. The opioid epidemic is considered a public health emergency, **with 136 deaths per day and climbing**. In addition, in the USA there are approximately **50,000 death per year from opioid overdose, with 10 million people misusing opioids every year** [See Exhibit 5.6]. In 2021, opioids were involved in over 80,00 overdose deaths.

Children whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system, in particular, face a host of challenges and difficulties: psychological strain, antisocial behavior, suspension or expulsion from school, economic hardship, and criminal activity. There is the concern that parental incarceration leads to intergenerational criminal behavior. A statistic by the **U.S. Department of Justice states that children of incarcerated parents are, on average, six times more likely to become incarcerated themselves [Exhibit 5.3]**. Moreover, family's income are 22 percent lower during the incarceration period and 15 percent lower after the parent's re-entry. These lead to lower educational outcomes of the child due to absence of the parent and high levels of school dropouts, and high levels of suspensions.

Children with parents who use substances are at an increased risk for child maltreatment. Drugs and alcohol inhibit a parent's ability to function in a parental role and may lessen impulse control, allowing parents to behave abusively. Children in these homes may suffer from a variety of **physical, mental, and emotional health** problems at a greater rate than do children in the general population. Children of Alcoholics are **3-4 times more likely than others to become addicted** to alcohol or other drugs themselves [Exhibit 5.4]. Moreover, babies exposed to opioids during pregnancy can be born with **neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS)**. Facing lengthy hospital stays, babies with **NOWS are more likely to have low birthweight, trouble breathing and difficulty eating**. They may also experience seizures and tremors.

It is difficult to predict how a child will fare when a parent is intermittently or continually incarcerated, and research findings on these children's risk factors are unclear and hence there is the need for most research in this space. Most of the research has been socially related without any statistical and quantitative insight, therefore there is the need for econometric research. Research so far lacks casual inference econometric techniques and has endogeneity issues which causes estimation errors. Also, the dynamic nature of the parent's behavior in the most sensitive stage of the child's life has been neglected.

#### **Exhibit 5: Articles Supporting Parent impact on Child development**

- Exhibit 5.1: Incarceration and the Estimated Number of Children Affected (*U.S. National Institute of Corrections*) <https://nicic.gov/resources/nic-library/webinars-broadcasts/communicating-families-and-children-correctional-0>
- Exhibit 5.2: U.S. National and State Estimates of Children Living with Parents Using Substances (*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*) <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/f34eb24c1aff645bed0a6e978c0b4d16/children-at-risk-of-sud.pdf>
- Exhibit 5.3: Hidden Consequences: The Impact of Incarceration on Dependent Children (*U.S. Department of Justice*) <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/hidden-consequences-impact-incarceration-dependent-children>
- Exhibit 5.4: Effects of Parental Substance Abuse on Children and Families (*American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress*) <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/hidden-consequences-impact-incarceration-dependent-children>

Exhibit 5.5: The Economic Burden of Incarceration in the United State (*U.S. National Institute of Corrections*) <https://nicic.gov/weblink/economic-burden-incarceration-us-2016>

Exhibit 5.6: Opioid Epidemic: Addiction Statistics (*U.S. National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics*) <https://drugabusestatistics.org/opioid-epidemic/>

### *3.1.2 Economic Implication of parental incarceration and substance abuse on children's latter life outcome*

The economic cost of parental incarceration and substance abuse in huge to the US. According to the **US National Institute of Corrections incarceration cost the US \$80 billion per year**. This is even an understatement since it does not account fully for the impact on families and children. The immediate cost of parental incarceration on child includes [Exhibit 5.5]:

- child welfare cost (**\$5.3 billion**),
- children rendered homeless by parental incarceration (**\$0.9 billion**),
- children's education level and subsequent wages as an adult (**\$30 billion**), and
- increased criminality of children of incarcerated parents (**\$130.6 billion**)

Furthermore, the implication of children abusing opioids has medical and non-medical consequences. In the USA, the direct medical cost incurred due to opioid abuse is an excess of approximately **\$10,000 to \$20,000 per patient per year**. This aggregates to a minimum of **\$100 billion per annum in excess of medical cost**.

### *3.1.3 My contribution to parent-child dynamic behavior and cognitive research*

The title of my proposed research is “.....*title*.....”. The work for this paper will develop into a chapter of my dissertation. I use panel data from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study to examine the impact of parental (mostly mothers) observed behaviors at different ages of a child on the later life outcomes of that child. My data is an oversample of non-married disadvantaged women; who may have some form of criminal record or had a child with a man who have spent some time in jail.

I estimate this with casual inference econometric techniques, and I account for all endogeneity which reduces estimation errors. Also, I account for the dynamic nature of the parent's behavior in the most sensitive stage of the child's life. I explore how employment, marriage/cohabitation, social services assistance (welfare, housing), substance use and criminal behavior/decisions at five different ages (i.e., 0, 1, 3, 5, 9) of the child's life, impacts the child's

teenage outcomes (specifically test-score, suspension from school, health, risky sexual behavior, and underage substance use). Ultimately, I jointly estimate mom's time-varying behaviors with child's outcome, allowing for correlation in both time-varying and time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity over time and across behaviors.

The preliminary results show that children without a father (be it biological or not) in their first 10 years of life are likely to have worse education, health, and juvenile outcome in their teenage days, with the effect being worse for the minority children (black children). Also, welfare packages (TANF, SNAP and public housing) for non-working mothers seem to have a positive impact on the outcomes of black children; but on the contrary children with parents on welfare for longer periods are likely to have poor educational outcomes.

#### 3.1.4 Summary of benefits to the United States of America

My proposed endeavor is using econometric and quantitative economics methods to address intergenerational juvenile, substance abuse, poverty, and criminal activities among children of incarcerated parents; and improve the health, education outcomes and well-being of the most vulnerable children in the United States, including my current research at the World Bank Enterprise Analysis Unit, is therefore also nationally important.

My study highlights the importance of early child development in the prevention of juvenile behavior and improving educational outcomes of minority children. The preliminary results emphasize the critical role of paternal presence and welfare packages in shaping the outcomes of minority children, emphasizing the importance of policies supporting single mothers. **My research, apart from the development and testing of new policy interventions to reduce school dropout, to improve adulthood employment outcomes; prevention of youth opioid usage and juvenile; and reduce child poverty – will also save the US government significant billions of dollars.**

Fellow experts in the field have provided further detail on the importance of this endeavor to the United States.

Professor ....., an international expert on the economic evaluation of alcohol and substance use screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) programs, highlights the importance of my research:

*“I am very excited about where his research is going. **His work on how parental behaviors impact child outcomes is incredibly important.** Understanding how parental behaviors like employment, marriage/cohabitation, use of social services assistance, substance use, and criminal activity impact children's teenage outcomes has obvious policy implications.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.1 – 3.1A].

Professor ....., the Head of the Council on Contemporary Families, an interdisciplinary academic organization focused on family studies, in her recommendation had this to say about my research:

*“He then went on to a PhD program at UNC Chapel Hill, one of the foremost higher education institutions in the country. His admission to the prestigious and extremely competitive economics PHD program at UNC is demonstration of the importance and relevance of his work. **In his PhD work he is continuing to study issues of national interest, using the nationally representative Future of Families and Child Wellbeing study to examine how parental behavior in childhood affects childhood outcomes.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.2 – 3.2A].

Dr. ...., a Fiscal Economist at the World Bank, said this about relevance my current research to the US and globally as well:

*“The study highlights the importance of early child development in the prevention of juvenile behavior and improving educational outcomes of minority children. The work intends to uncover the critical role of paternal presence and welfare packages in shaping the outcomes of minority children. **The study will be an important body of knowledge that will help inform government transfer policies supporting mothers both in the United States and other countries.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.7 – 3.7A].

## **3.2 My role as a Consultant at the World Bank Group**

### **3.2.1 Consultant at the Enterprise Analysis Unit (DECEA)**

I am working as a consultant with the World Bank Enterprise Analysis Unit. With 189 member countries, the World Bank Group is a unique global partnership between five institutions **working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and to create a world free of poverty on a livable planet.** Furthermore, the World Bank’s Enterprise Analysis Unit (DECEA) is a team of economists and firm-level survey experts that both 1) conducts Enterprise Surveys and 2) draws upon this wealth of firm-level data to produce research on the micro-economic foundations of growth.

**My proposed endeavor also has broad implications for the United States.** As a member of the DECEA team, my research findings and recommendations are helping policy makers identify, prioritize and implement reforms of policies and institutions that support efficient private economic activity. Key research topics of the unit include firm performance and job creation, legal gender parity for entrepreneurs and workers, informality, and export performance. **My research at the world bank uses entrepreneurial and job creation innovation to empower the disadvantaged in over 155 countries; these interventions advance my proposed endeavor of empowering parents (mostly mothers) of marginalized children to reduce child poverty.**

Dr. ...., a Senior Economist at the World Bank Enterprise Analysis Unit, confirms how my work advances my proposed endeavor research:

*“In addition, Mr. ..(Surname)... conducts analytical research as required by the Enterprise Analysis Unit (DECEA)’s work program, particularly contributing to the DECEA’s existing knowledge products and helping design new knowledge products for the unit. His work contributes to key research topics of the DECEA which is firm performance and job creation, legal gender parity for entrepreneurs and workers among others. **His training and experience at the unit is incorporated as part of his dissertation research which uses applied microeconomics modelling to answer questions related to intergenerational child poverty, welfare, and employment decisions among disadvantage families.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.6 – 3.6A].

I hereby submit the following documents as evidence of my current employment at the Enterprise Analysis Unit of the World Bank Group.

**Exhibit 6: Evidence of Consultancy at the World Bank**

Exhibit 6.1: Current Contract – Consultant (08/21/2023- 06/30/2024)

Exhibit 6.2: Letter of Appointment from the World Bank

Exhibit 6.3: Letter from PhD Advisor to World Bank

Exhibit 6.4: Profile on World Bank Website

**3.2.2 Summary of benefits to the United States of America**

Our work involves conducting enterprise surveys and utilizing firm-level data to inform policies that support efficient private economic activity in emerging markets and developing economies. These interventions empower parents (mostly mothers) of marginalized children and help reduce child poverty. Also, my contributions at the World Bank align with the national interest

of the United States in fostering global economic growth and stability. As the mission of USAID states:

*“In support of America's foreign policy, the U.S. Agency for International Development leads the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance through partnerships and investments that **save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance**” [See Exhibit 4.2.4].*

The World Bank being a sister institution to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) collaborate on projects to achieve a common goal of eradicating poverty.

In addition, my independent recommenders mention the benefits of my work not only to the US but also to other countries across the globe. Dr. .... highlights the contribution of my work at the World Bank:

*“Relatedly, Mr. ..(Surname)... served as a consultant to the Enterprise Survey unit at the World Bank and contributed to building a global firm indicator database. **The database is a crucial source of reliable and comprehensive firm-level data, which is used by researchers and policymakers all across the world to inform economic policy.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.7 – 3.7A].

Dr. .... also highlights the broad implication of my work at the World Bank:

*“Mr. ..(Surname)...’s contribution to DECEA’s **research findings and recommendations are helping policy makers across 155 countries to identify, prioritize and implement reforms of policies and institutions that support efficient private economic activity and global poverty reduction.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.6 – 3.6A].

## 4 I am Well Positioned to Advance the Proposed Endeavor

The summary focus of my proposed research endeavor is to examine the impact of parental (mostly mothers) observed behaviors at different ages of a child on the later life outcomes of that child. The objective here is to build an econometric model observing the dynamic behavior of the parent; this is what has been missing in the estimation in the literature. The significant progress in this research stems from my outstanding background knowledge and experience in applied micro-econometric research. Aside from being an adept researcher, I am well positioned as well (being a Teaching Fellow) to be a great teacher and mentor to young college students – since I have the passion not to only be a researcher but to be in academia to mentor students.

Nothing says more about my unique abilities to carry out the proposed endeavor than my record of specific contributions and achievements in the past through my research and my role at the World Bank. Such success is solidly supported and documented with this petition, particularly by my outstanding educational background, professional recommendation letters written by 8 experts in the field (**3 research advisory opinion; 2 teaching advisory opinion from supervisors and mentors; and finally 3 independent advisory opinion from professionals in the field who I DO NOT know personally, but only professionally**), and my awards. They indicate that I have become an expert who possesses exceptional and unique skills that are hard to define and impossible to quantify as the ordinary minimum qualification required in the process of a labor certificate.

This chapter aims to:

- describe my past track of achievements
- show how my contributions are important for U.S. national interest
- present myself as a researcher, mentor and educator in high education
- show my skills and expertise that set me apart from my peers.

### 4.1 Advanced Degree

On December 2020, **I earned my Master's degree in Applied Economics** from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. My final term project in the field of health and education economics and titled “.....*title*.....”. In this study I provide an efficient way of measuring the casual effect of substance use, specifically alcohol and hard drug use among college students accounting for individual heterogeneity. I then establish the direct and indirect mechanism of these effects and the gender disaggregation as well. See the abstract and link below for the complete research work.

#### **ABSTRACT:**

*It is often speculated that a significant cost of college drinking affects education. While several studies have examined this effect by measuring education by using*



*years of education completed, high-school graduation, or dropping out of college, this paper investigates the effect of alcohol use on the quality of education among college students. The main objective of this paper is to estimate the direct and indirect effect of alcohol use on college students' performance (using GPA as a measure of performance). Using data on 3467 college students from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort (NLSY97), the study employed the IV Fixed Effects method for the estimation. The results indicated there was a negative significant impact of chronic and acute alcohol use on academic performance of male students and no effect on females. [See Exhibit 1.4].*

Dr. ...., a Jefferson-Pilot Excellence Professor of Economics and a household name in the health economics substance abuse research – who supervised my MA project, had this to say about my contribution to the alcohol abuse among US college students:

“

*...(First name)... has a nearly unique ability to see important applied economic research issues and the intellectual ability to address them. His project in my class is an example of how **he saw that the pattern of alcohol consumption was likely important in explaining how alcohol impacts labor market performance.** Although he was limited by the data available to him for a class project, **he showed an amazing ability to use novel econometric approaches to push the data as far as they could go.**”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.1 – 3.1A].

I also earned a Master of Philosophy in Economics from the University of Ghana, Ghana. I have included to this application the following documents in Exhibit 1 as evidence of my advanced degree:

## **Exhibit 1: Advanced Degrees**

Exhibit 1.1: My Curriculum Vitae

Exhibit 1.2: M.A. Applied Economics; Degree Certificate University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Exhibit 1.3: M.A. Transcript; University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Exhibit 1.4: M.A. Project Work

Exhibit 1.5: M.Phil. Economics; Degree Certificate University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.6: M.Phil. Transcript; University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.7: B.A. Economics and Statistics; Degree Certificate University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.8: B.A. Transcript; University of Ghana

Exhibit 1.9: Ranking of University of North Carolina at Greensboro

(<https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/unc-greensboro-2976/overall-rankings>).

Based on the facts demonstrated above, I qualify for the EB-2 classification as a member of the **professions holding an advanced degree**.

## **4.2 Past Record of achievements and Impact on the field**

I have shown my past record and achievement that spans across the applied microeconomics fields; specifically, Labor economics, Health economics and Industrial Organization. As a measure of my contribution to applied econometric research, this section focuses on the records of my achievements that show that I am well-positioned to advance the proposed research endeavor.

### ***4.2.1 Scholarships***

In May 2021 I received a full scholarship to study PhD Economics at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill which provided a stipend and tuition waiver. The stipends are awarded on an academically competitive basis with no regard for financial need or visa status. Renewal of the stipend was dependent on satisfactory progress in the PhD program.

*“The Admissions Committee in the Economics Department at the University of North Carolina would like to congratulate you on your excellent academic record and writes to inform you that we have recommended your admission to the Graduate School. You should hear from the Graduate School soon. You have also been selected to receive our competitive fellowship package, which includes:*

- *An appointment as teaching assistant, which will pay \$15,700 for the 9-month academic year plus \$6,000 as summer support bringing the total to an annual stipend of \$21,700 guaranteed for five years with an option for a sixth year based on needs and merit.1*
- *Annual tuition and fee scholarship valued at \$58,860 over five years.” [Exhibit 10.1]*

Additionally, 2019 I received a full scholarship during my M.A. Applied Economics program at University of North Carolina at Greensboro which provided a stipend and tuition waiver. The stipends are awarded on an academically competitive basis with no regard for financial need or visa status. Renewal of the stipend was dependent on satisfactory progress in the M.A. program. The scholarship also offered an opportunity of extension into the Ph.D. program at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, should I choose to join their Ph.D. Economics program.

*“I am pleased to tell you that the department is offering you a graduate assistantship for the academic year 2019-2020, a financial package that includes a \$15,000 stipend plus an in-State tuition waiver and out-of-State tuition waiver. In summary, financial assistance to support your success in the program will include:*

- *\$15,000 for academic year 2019-2020*
- *\$5,219 In-State tuition waiver (tuition remittance value up to \$2,609.50 per semester)*
- *\$13,718 Out-of-State tuition waiver (tuition remittance value at up to \$6,859 per semester)*
- *\$1,200 student development funding” (See Exhibit 10.2)*

#### **Exhibit 10: Scholarships**

Exhibit 10.1: Ph.D. Scholarship Letter (**\$58,860** per academic year for 5 years)

Exhibit 10.2: M.A. Scholarship Letter (**\$34,537** per academic year for 2 years)

Exhibit 10.3: Joseph Bryan Foundation Scholarship (**\$11,000** for 2020/21 academic year)

#### **4.2.2 Awards**

While a M.A. graduate student at University of North Carolina at Greensboro I won a grant which was awarded based on my environmental sustainability research proposal to study the use of electricity consumption on the University of North Carolina at Greensboro campus [See **Exhibit 3.3, Exhibit 8.3** and **Exhibit 11.1**]. I received the Academic Excellence Medal which is awarded to students graduating top 1% (GPA 3.9 and above) of their class. In addition, I was awarded the Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Fellowship. This award is the most prestigious merit fellowship offered within the UNCG Bryan School. I have provided a copy of my curriculum vitae, which details all my achievements [See **Exhibit 1.1**].

This is what Dr. ...., the then Economics Department Chair had to say about my awards and scholarship achievement:

*“While at UNC Greensboro, ..(First name)... received the BB&T Academic Excellence Fellowship and the Joseph M. Bryan Foundation Scholarship, both of which are testaments to the value we saw in having ..(First name)... at UNC Greensboro.” [See Exhibit 3.1].*

The following list below contain all my awards and location in the exhibit files

**Exhibit 11: Awards**

Exhibit 11.1: Green Fund Award (**\$9720** research grant)

Exhibit 11.2: Academic Excellence Medal

Exhibit 11.3: Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Fellowship

**4.2.3 Publications**

I have included my curriculum vitae to this application, which shows a list of all my publications and achievements. So far, I have contributed to **8 research publications** in highly reputable international peer reviewed journals and to **1 conference presentation**. In addition, I also have **2 working papers, 2 project reports** and 1 paper currently submitted for publication and undergoing peer-review. In total, I have contributed 13 academic studies in my field of applied economics. Exhibit 1.1 contains my detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV), which highlights all my major publications.

**Exhibit 8: Publications**

Exhibit 8.1: List of Publications and Abstracts

Exhibit 8.2: Conference Presentations

Exhibit 8.3: Project Reports

#### 4.2.4 Citations

According to Google Scholar, my works have been **cited 25 times**, both nationally and internationally and by other researchers based on my contribution to the field of economics in my research publications. Attached is a Google Scholar document for my account.

#### **Exhibit 9.1: Citations – Google Scholar**

(..... *link* ....)

Some notable researchers who cited my contribution to support their research works include:

- i. Development Research Group, Development Economics, The World Bank, Washington, DC, USA (<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099404412122317205/idu0d4cdf5830014b043cf0801e03451560fd5f5>)
- ii. Department of Policy Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK  
Social Sciences Department, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain  
(See link <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12187-023-10025-1>)
- iii. UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti, Florence, Italy  
Department of Economics and Management, University of Florence, Florence, Italy  
(See link <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0743016722002972>)
- iv. Centre for the Business and Economics of Health (CBEH), University of Queensland, Australia. (See link <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11150-022-09641-7>)
- v. Finance Department, American University (See link <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/3/1940>)

### **4.3 Member in a professional association**

#### 4.3.1 American Economic Association

I am a **member** of the American Economic Association. The American Economic Association is the nation's non-profit, non-partisan, scholarly association dedicated to the discussion and publication of economics research and consists of members from academia, business, government, and consulting groups within diverse disciplines from multi-cultural backgrounds. All are professionals dedicated to economics research and teaching. Membership is by nomination. Membership is conferred upon those who have demonstrated noteworthy achievements in economic research.

The “Criteria for Membership” can be found in Article 1 Section 1 of the Society's Bylaws:

*“Any person interested in economic inquiry may, on the nomination of a member, be enrolled in the Association.”*

**[See Exhibit 13.1 – 13.1A]**

#### 4.3.2 Sigma Xi

I was duly elected a **full member** of **Sigma Xi**, The Scientific Research Society. Sigma Xi is the world's largest general research honor society mainly for STEM professionals and students. Membership in Sigma Xi is by nomination only. As a STEM researcher in the field of Econometrics and Quantitative Economics, full membership was conferred upon me having demonstrated noteworthy achievements in research.

The "Criteria for Membership" can be found in Section 2 of the Society's Bylaws:

*"General Requirements: Nomination of an individual engaged in scientific research may be made provided that the nominee is, by the quantitative emphasis of the work combined with its synthesis and qualitative stature, deemed eligible for nomination.*

*Noteworthy Achievement: Noteworthy achievement in research specified for election or promotion to full membership, in accordance with Article II, Section 3 A of the Constitution, must be evidenced by publications, patents, written reports or a thesis or dissertation. Membership in the Society is neither linked to the possession of any degree nor contingent upon belonging to some other organization".*

[See Exhibit 13.2 – 13.3]

#### 4.3.3 Beta Gamma Sigma

Additionally, I was a **full member** of **Beta Gamma Sigma** in 2020. Beta Gamma Sigma is the International Business Honor Society which is globally recognized. Since 1913 we have recognized and honored top performing students from around the world in business schools accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Members are the top 20% of graduate students at an AACSB accredited business school.

The "Criteria for Membership" can be found in Article 1 Section 2 of the Society's Bylaws:

*"Your college or university can extend an invitation to eligible BGS members. Please note that some schools have more restrictive criteria for membership in Beta Gamma Sigma. Check with your campus's Chapter Advisor for additional information. Invites are sent to:*

- *Top 20% of master's students after completing half of their program.*
- *Doctoral candidates who have successfully defended their dissertation.".* [See Exhibit 13.4 – 13.4A]

### **Exhibit 13: Membership of professional association**

Exhibit 13.1: Membership of American Economic Association

Exhibit 13.1A: Membership Bylaws of American Economic Association

Exhibit 13.2: Certificate of Sigma XI Membership

Exhibit 13.3: Letter of Recognition of Sigma XI Membership

Exhibit 13.4: Certificate of Beta Gamma Sigma Membership

Exhibit 13.4A: Membership Bylaws of Beta Gamma Sigma

#### **4.4 My role as a Teaching Fellow**

##### ***4.4.1 Introduction to my Teaching Fellow role***

As a Ph.D. Economics candidate at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I received the award of being a Teaching Fellow which an Except from Human Resource Act – Non Faculty position (EHRA - NF). This is a competitive position awarded based on teaching skill and experience. In this capacity as Teaching Fellow, I am the main instructor of record for ECON101 Introduction to Economics. I have taken relevant training courses in teaching (Teaching Methods in Economics I and II) which equipped me with all the skills in student learning outcomes definition and incorporation of active learning, and I have also received a Teaching Associate Certification [See Exhibit 7.3].

Dr. ...., a Teaching Professor, stated in her recommendation:

*“..(First name)... has a genuine passion for working in academia and is dedicated to teaching. He has successfully completed two teacher training courses offered in our department. These courses are designed to equip graduate students with the fundamental principles of effective lecturing, active learning exercises, classroom management and course design. As the instructor of one of these courses, I can attest that ..(First name)... really strived to get the most out of it and contributed positively and meaningfully to our class discussions. Furthermore, ..(First name)... has since chosen to serve as a graduate fellow in our department and, as such, has twice been the instructor of record in both the summer and fall of 2023. His teaching evaluations from his summer course revealed that 92% of his students concluded that they “learned a great deal” in his class.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.4 – 3.4A].

Dr. ...., the Director of the Summer school, stated in her recommendation:

*“..(First name)... I was the Director of the Summer courses in the Economics department in Summer 2023 when ..(First name)... taught the Introductory course in Economics, and it was his first time teaching a course independently at UNC. This course is the gateway course for the Economics major and hence it is very important for*

*students to get a strong foundation in this course. In the middle of the summer session, I received an email from UNC's summer school that a student's parent had stopped by in their office and had shared very positive feedback about ..(First name).... The parent had specifically mentioned that her daughter was very impressed with ..(First name)...’s teaching and was learning a lot of important topics in his class and enjoying it. When the summer school administrators shared this news with me, it was not a surprise for me because I had observed ..(First name)...’s enthusiasm to teach during my interactions with him in the classroom. It is to be noted that it is very rare for Ph.D. students to be complimented for their teaching. Most times, students complain about instructors who are still Ph.D. students. For ..(First name)... to get this compliment during the very first time that he taught a class at UNC is indeed an **impressive achievement**.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.5 – 3.5A].

## **Exhibit 7: Teaching Fellow Appointment and Teaching Evaluation**

- Exhibit 7.1: Summer Teaching Fellow Contract
- Exhibit 7.2: Fall Teaching Fellow Contract
- Exhibit 7.3: Teaching Associate Certificate
- Exhibit 7.4: Teaching Evaluation
- Exhibit 7.5: Article Supporting Need for Diversity among Economics Faculty in US

### 4.4.2 Teaching and Teaching Evaluation

I received a Teaching Evaluation from my students in the period for which I taught them. These evaluations are anonymous and a revelation of the current state of my teaching skills. The final rating was an average of 4.5 out of 5; placed me in the top 10% of successful college level teaching. These are a few of the evaluations from the students. The full course evaluation report is available in [Exhibit 7.4].

1. *Professor ..(Surname)... was **a great instructor** and answered every question a student had. He ensures all students are understanding the subject material, and **goes above and beyond to provide resources and clear instructions**.*
2. *...(First name)... ..(Surname)... **encouraged all students to participate in class.***



3. *Mr. ..(Surname)... **provided many ways for me to review material from class by providing good recitation problems and extra multiple choice problems for each chapter and before each midterm. While the class was paced fairly fast, the extra problems as well as Poll Everywhere problems during the lectures helped me understand the material better.***
4. *Extended group work time and gave open hours. ..(First name)... ..(Surname)... **also recorded lectures for us to look back and study through along with filled out slides from class.***
5. *He made the class very informal and fun. **Lots of group discussions and was open to questions and helping.***
6. *..(First name)... **was respectful and cooperative in answering questions that needed to be clarified.***
7. ***He made learning possible for me in my questions that I had for him after class. When I wanted to dive deeper into the topics at hand, Mr. ..(Surname)... was there to help me. The best thing was he knew how to address my conceptions because he was able to identify the angle that I was looking at it from and corrected it for me.***
8. *The aspect of teaching and the instructor should be kept. **Mr. ..(Surname)... is genuinely interested in engaging the class and making an impact on those who aren't easily able to get their information down. The good thing about Mr. ..(Surname)... is that he explains concepts to people like its the first time. Any outlying factors allow that my peers have questions about, he addresses and that gives me a sense of things that I would need to know for my future exams....***

#### 4.4.3 Summary of benefits to the United States of America

There is a need for more professionals in research to address the policy issues among the minor group in the US, which is why I choose the path to become a refined and adept economist and to work in academia, notwithstanding the challenging nature of this career path as a minority. According to the American Economic Association, **representation in economics at the doctorate level is 3.1% with only just about 1.6% representation in the tenure track faculty position. I bring on board diversity and I always look to take an active role in whichever community I find myself, working with others to make the community more equal, fair, and sustainable.**

According to the Peterson Institute for International Economics (an independent nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization dedicated to strengthening prosperity and human welfare in the global economy through expert analysis and practical policy solutions) in the last half a century economics has a had the lowest representation of minority students at advance and graduate level economics [See Exhibit 7.5].

These numbers are evident in my life as I happen to be the only black among 83 graduate students in the economics department of my current program. As a minor in STEM (Econometrics and Quantitative Economics), apart from being a skillful teacher, I serve as role model for black college kids who are not encouraged to go into STEM for lack of representation.

Dr. ...., a Teaching Professor with over two decades of Teaching experience in the field of economics, emphasis on my contribution to student mentoring and diversity in the field:

*“Finally, I want to underscore that as a minority individual, ..(First name)... serves as an inspiring role model for minority students, encouraging them to pursue graduate-level economics and contributing to a more diverse representation within the field. ..(First name)...’s ability to connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds is noteworthy. His commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning environment has positively influenced the academic community. This commitment extends beyond the classroom to a broader dedication to diversity and inclusion within the field of academia.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.4 – 3.4A].

#### 4.5 PhD Research Progress

I have made significant progress in my PhD field paper research titled “.....**Title**.....” I have made significant progress and have achieved some preliminary results. I have presented my initial findings in the UNC Applied Microeconomics workshop; where I received constructive feedback from renowned experts in the field of applied microeconomics.

Professor ..... highlighted the advances I have made in my research as:

*“While he is still exploring the data to determine which kids’ outcomes have the highest quality (i.e., non-missing, non-response, quality of measurement), his focus is on educational and behavioral outcomes. To date, ..(First name)... has done a lot of coding and programming to determine a sample of adolescents with the “cleanest” history of mom’s behaviors. Ultimately, he will jointly estimate mom’s time-varying behaviors with child’s outcome, allowing for correlation in both time-varying and time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity over time and across behaviors.”*

[See Exhibit 6.3].

Professor ..... made an impressive progress in the PhD program:

*“As a result of this outcome, you have passed the **Qualifying Examination** due to your prior grade in Macro (P). Congratulations! You can now concentrate on your field courses and research work.*

*If you wish to discuss your continuing academic plans, please arrange to talk with me or other professors. Meanwhile, you may want to consult the webpage about fields of specialization here.*

*All the best and many congratulations again.”* [See Exhibit 2.4].

#### **4.6 Invitation to speak at Research Conference and to Submit Articles**

I was invited to speak at the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition and Healthcare, please find evidence below. Also, I have been invited to submit my research papers in several journals and book publications, some of which are listed below:

#### **Exhibit 14: Letter Confirming Invitation to speak at Conference and to Submit Articles**

Exhibit 14.1: Letter Confirming Invitation to speak 2nd International Conference on Nutrition and Healthcare (Paris, France)

Exhibit 14.2: Letter Invitation to submit to a Book Series – Sustainable Development

Exhibit 14.3: Letter Invitation to submit articles to Global Journal of Human-Social Science

#### **4.7 Letters Confirming Invitation to be a Reviewer of a Journal**

I was appointed reviewer of the journal the Review of Development Economics (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14679361?journalRedirectCheck=true>). This journal is a leading journal publishing high-quality research in development economics. The Review of Development Economics publishes rigorous analytical papers, theoretical and empirical, which deal with contemporary growth problems of developing countries, including the transition economies. I am submitting the following evidence to show my role as a reviewer of this journal.

#### **Exhibit 15: Letters Confirming Invitation to be a Reviewer of a Journal**

Exhibit 15.1: Letter Confirming Reviewer Position (*Review of Development Economics*)

## 4.8 Volunteerism

### 4.8.1 Data Dive participant at Community Housing Solutions

Community House Solutions is an independent non-profit organization with the mission to make Guilford County homes warmer, drier, and safer by providing repairs and ownership opportunities to low-income homeowners. Community Housing Solutions is supported by local community volunteers who work alongside skilled construction staff throughout the year. They were selected by the National Center for Healthy Housing and Johns Hopkins University to be awarded “Aging Gracefully in Place”; for going into homes as a team with physical therapists and nurses to assess homeowner needs and provide necessary accessibility modifications, the project will demonstrate the effectiveness of modifications that help people over 65 years of age stay in their homes safely for more years.

During my time as a Data Dive volunteer, I worked with other colleges to build a robust data solution. We analyzed data from their website to make their service to Guilford County more targeted to the most vulnerable. We made recommendations which lead to making their website and application for home repair more user friendly. [See Exhibit 12.1]

### 4.8.2 BSBE Graduate Student Ambassador

I volunteered as a BSBE Graduate Student Ambassador for the year 2021 as a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The BSBE Graduate Student Ambassador program is a partnership between graduate students and the graduate recruitment team that offers participants leadership development opportunities and benefits recruitment of future students into the Bryan School of Business and Economics graduate programs.

As a Graduate Student Ambassadors, I represented the Economics graduate programs in partnership with the BSBE Graduate Recruitment Team to aid with the outreach and recruitment of prospective students. I served in various opportunities, but not limited to:

- I provided prospective students with information about the Economics graduate program experience via email and on off-campus events.
- I provided event support and served on student panels at graduate recruitment and outreach events.
- I served as an encouraging role model and advocating for the Economics graduate programs. [See Exhibit 12.2]

#### 4.8.3 International Ambassador

I volunteered as an International Ambassador during 2019/2020 academic year at University of North Carolina at Greensboro. In this role I worked with the International Student office to help mentor freshmen students on campus to transition into college life. I work with students from different race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and countries. I always look to take an active role in whichever community I find myself, and work with others to make the community more equal, fair, and sustainable. [See **Exhibit 12.3**]

#### **Exhibit 12: Letters and Certificate Confirming Volunteerism**

Exhibit 12.1: Certificate of Participation at Data Dive

Exhibit 12.2: Letter of Acceptance as BSBE Graduate Student Ambassador

Exhibit 12.3: Certificate of Volunteerism as International Ambassador

## 5 Beneficial to the USA to Waive the Labor Certification

It would be beneficial to the USA to waive the Labor Certification because the national interest would be adversely affected if a labor certification were required.

### 5.1 My Prior Achievements Justify Projected Future Benefits.

My innovative and novel contributions in the field of applied micro-econometrics specifically health economics, labor economics, and policy evaluation as discussed in **Section 2 and 3** above, prove my ability to provide unprecedented, unparalleled, and vital benefits to the national interest. I have a truly impressive record of success that has impacted on my field, as evidenced in part by citations of my research results by other experts in my field [**Exhibit 9**]. Further, these contributions have been well above those of others with similar formal qualifications.

Professor ..... emphasizes the need for research skills as:

*“I am very excited about where his research is going. **His work on how parental behaviors impact child outcomes is incredibly important.** Understanding how parental behaviors like employment, marriage/cohabitation, use of social services assistance, substance use, and criminal activity impact children’s teenage outcomes has obvious policy implications.*

*I know that **..(First name)... will continue to conduct innovative research that advances the national interest and so is deserving of an EB-2 national interest waiver for permanent residency.** I fully endorse and support his EB-2 NIW application and recommend him without hesitation.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [**Exhibit 3.1 – 3.1A**].

In addition, Professor ..... on the benefits of my research applied economics (health, education, and policy) in her letter of recommendation:

*“It is my opinion as an expert in the field that **..(First name)... ..(Surname)... is making highly important contributions to the fields of economics, higher education studies, public health, and family studies, that are of national importance to the United States.** Therefore I enthusiastically and with no hesitations recommend that he be granted US permanent residency on the basis of the Category EB-2 National Interest Waiver (NIW)”.*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [**Exhibit 3.2 – 3.2A**].

An independent recommendation from Senior Research Fellow at The University of Queensland's Centre for the Business and Economics of Health (CBEH) Dr. ...., emphasizes my contribution to poverty eradication:

*"As one who led a team of researchers from the United States to introduce a novel multidimensional disease outbreak resilience index (DORI), I can attest that Mr. ..(Surname)...’s contribution is significant and has great potential of contributing to the U.S. Census Bureau’s measure of child poverty which is the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). Considering the findings of his research, I believe his contribution is policy-relevant in the eradication of poverty not only in the US but globally as well."*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.8 – 3.8A].

As such, it can be seen that my specific contributions are both highly influential for the field of applied micro-econometrics research and are of superior nature to those of my peers. My past achievements prove that I am especially able to make significant strides that are likely greater than those of my peers. Moreover, no labor certification process could take into account all these impressive record of success.

## **5.2 I Possesses Unique Skills, Knowledge, and Background that Serve the National Interest.**

As can be seen from my noteworthy research accomplishments, I have highly valuable skills for my ongoing work. In addition to my technical expertise, I am distinguished through special traits like uncommon intellect and work ethic. Indeed, such factors are beyond the scope of a labor certification process. All my exceptional skills, abilities, and knowledge combined with past record of success make me ideally suited to econometric and quantitative economics research. Moreover, these unique traits cannot be articulated in a labor certification process.

Professor ..... highlights my unique coding skills, and statistical and econometric skills. She also expounded on my unique ability to handle confidential research and compliance to Institutional Review Board (IRB):

*"...(First name)... was a pleasure to work with and contributed many important ideas and an impressive amount of work to this project. **He also contributed extensive amounts of further statistical coding for other related projects for this study on student loans, that was used in further publications and that is contributing to a book project I am writing on the topic. His research coding contributed to additional work I am completing and have published on higher education affects***

*the COVID-19 pandemic including a project examining which undergraduates had greater family support during the pandemic, how students spent stimulus money, and the relationship of loans to differential experiences within college.*

*..(First name)... was trustworthy and worked with sensitive data, showing care for ethics and confidentiality at all times, and carefully and thoroughly conducted his work. After finishing his official work with me, he continued to be available and helpful as we finished the project and prepared the paper for submission.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.2 – 3.2A].

Professor ..... highlights my economics modeling, leadership, and grant writing skills:

*“Mr. ..(Surname)... has leadership experience in grant writing and data analysis. In Spring 2021, after the successful completion of the project the prior year, Mr. ..(Surname)... and another student decided to put together a similar project. Mr. ..(Surname)... then led the project. In addition to managing the project and data work, Mr. ..(Surname)... also supervised other team members including assigning tasks and monitoring performance.*

*Expertise in economic modeling and data analysis are crucial for the United States economy to deliver economic growth for the well-being of U.S. citizens. A vibrant economy is also crucial for national security. Mr. ..(Surname)...’s unique skills in data analysis and economic modeling will serve the vital interests of the United States, and I give him my highest recommendations for the National Interest Waiver.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.3 – 3.3A].

Dr. .... also highlights the broad implication of my work at the World Bank:

*“Mr. ..(Surname)...’s contribution to DECEA’s research findings and recommendations is helping policymakers across 155 countries to identify, prioritize, and implement reforms of policies and institutions that support efficient private economic activity and global poverty reduction. I can attest that his work advances the World Bank’s goal of Ending Extreme Poverty and Promoting Shared Prosperity. Given his unique economic modeling skills, computer coding and data analysis skills, and commitment to poverty reduction, I can say without reservation that Mr. ..(Surname)... will continually be an asset to the US and the world at large. I strongly recommend granting Mr. ..(Surname)... Permanent Residency in the United States.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.6 – 3.6A].



**5.3 I will serve the national interest to a substantially greater degree than others with minimum qualifications.**

My outstanding accomplishments, exceptional abilities, and my potential for advancing public policy, health economics, labor/education economics and development economics research through my econometric and quantitative economics prowess, and PhD program prove my capacity to perform at a level above that of others with similar minimum qualifications.

Professor ..... speaking on my unique abilities above my peers:

*“(First name)... stood out in that class as a student who “gets it.” Even behind the COVID required face covering, I could see in his eyes when something clicked for him. He has both a technical understanding of econometric methods and an intuitive understanding of when a more complicated method is worth the effort. He understands the difference between statistical significance and policy importance that many students struggle to grasp.*

*“(First name)... has a nearly unique ability to see important applied economic research issues and the intellectual ability to address them. His project in my class is an example of how he saw that the pattern of alcohol consumption was likely important in explaining how alcohol impacts labor market performance. Although he was limited by the data available to him for a class project, he showed an amazing ability to use novel econometric approaches to push the data as far as they could go.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.1 – 3.1A].

Dr. ...., also speaks of my skill above the average graduate student:

*“Furthermore, I know Mr. ...(Surname)... to be a talented, hardworking, brilliant, ambitious, kind, and reliable human being, who wants to pursue a future in academia, contributing to the field of applied microeconomics with focus on health, education, and labor economics. Evaluating Mr. ...(Surname)... at his current career path and the resources available to him, I see an individual with a high career ceiling, who is ahead of several of his peers—i.e., contributing to the economic literature, consulting in key policy roles while pursuing a PhD at a highly ranked institution. It is crucial for the United States to keep talents like Mr. ...(Surname).... His unique skill set will serve the interests of the United States, and as such comes with my highest recommendation for the National Interest Waiver.”*

Full recommendation letter and curriculum vitae are available in [Exhibit 3.7 – 3.7A].

Therefore, I will serve the national interest to a substantially greater degree than will most others with the same minimum qualifications. The **labor certification process should not be used** in my particular case. On balance, it would be beneficial to the United States to waive the job offer and labor certification requirements.

#### **5.4 Consequences of Requiring a Labor Certification.**

Because many of the proposed benefits from my work rely on my proven track record of achievement and my unique and innovative skills, knowledge, and background, more than just minimum qualifications are required to succeed in my proposed endeavors.

Because a labor certification process is standardized and relates only to minimum requirements, it will not consider these crucial factors. In other words, many of the essential qualities that I have, which are crucial to serving the national interest, will not be articulated in a labor certification process.

Moreover, failure to consider these factors could result in a denial of a labor certification because a U.S. worker with minimum qualifications might be found. Since I will serve the nation to a substantially greater degree than anyone with minimum qualifications, non-participation in my current and future work would deprive the country of an exceptional and crucial contribution to the national interest. The loss of this significant contribution would be contrary to the interests of the United States. Therefore, requiring a labor certification would adversely affect the national interest.

## **6 Evidence of Nonimmigrant Status for my spouse and myself**

### **6.1 My Nonimmigrant Status**

I submit the following evidence of my non-immigrant status in the Exhibit 16.

#### **Exhibit 16: Evidence of Non-immigrant status for Myself**

Exhibit 16.1: All F1 Visa Stamps

Exhibit 16.2: Passport Photo Page

Exhibit 16.3: Current I-94

Exhibit 16.4: Previous I-94

Exhibit 16.5: All Form I-20

### **6.2 My Wife's Nonimmigrant Status**

My spouse, .....(name)....., is a professional pharmacist, with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She is currently enrolled at the ..... University – pursuing a Master's in Public Health, with a concentration in environmental health. Her professional pharmacy training and current research is likewise of national interest to the US.

#### **Exhibit 17: Documents Regarding Spouse's Nonimmigrant Status (Priscilla Owusu-Mensah)**

Exhibit 17.1 Marriage certificate

Exhibit 17.2: Spouse F1 Visa Stamps

Exhibit 17.3: Spouse Passport Photo Page

Exhibit 17.4: Spouse Form I-20

Exhibit 17.5: Current I-94

#### **Exhibit 18: Documents Regarding Spouse's Educational Achievement**

Exhibit 18.1: Doctor of Pharmacy Degree Certificate

Exhibit 18.2: Transcript of Doctor of Pharmacy

Exhibit 18.3: Pharmacy License Certification

Exhibit 18.4: Admission Letter to Master of Public Health

Exhibit 18.5: Enrollment Verification Certification

## 7 Summary

I have provided evidence to demonstrate my extraordinary skills and unique research contribution to applied micro-econometrics research spanning from health economics, labor economics, to policy evaluation.

My rare yet vital skills and background, along with the impressive record of achievement and unique knowledge relevant to my current and future work, indicate that I will serve the national interest to a substantially greater degree than another individual with minimum qualifications. As a labor certification may not articulate my exceptional future contributions, such a requirement would adversely affect the national interest.

**I respectfully request that you consider this petition and the evidence submitted herewith, and upon consideration, you approve my petition and request a National Interest Waiver. Your attention to my case will be deeply appreciated. Thank you for your time and review of my request.**

Sincerely,

.....

..(First name)... ..(Surname)...., Ph.D. Candidate, M.A.

Economics Department,

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,

141 South Road, Gardner Hall

Chapel Hill, NC 27599, USA.

Tel: .....

Email: .....