

Carlo Medici

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EMPLOYMENT

University of California, Los Angeles, Assistant Professor 2025–
Department of Public Policy, Luskin School of Public Affairs
Brown University, Postdoctoral Research Associate 2024–25
Population Studies and Training Center (PSTC)

AFFILIATIONS

California Center for Population Research (CCPR), UCLA, Faculty Affiliate 2025–

EDUCATION

Northwestern University, PhD, Managerial Economics and Strategy 2018–24
Northwestern University, MSc, Managerial Economics and Strategy 2018–19
Bocconi University, MSc, Economic and Social Sciences (summa cum laude) 2014–16
Bocconi University, BSc, Economic and Social Sciences (summa cum laude) 2011–14

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Political Economy, Economic History

WORKING PAPERS

“Closing Ranks: Organized Labor and Immigration” [\[PDF\]](#)
Revise and Resubmit, Journal of Political Economy

This paper shows that immigration fostered the emergence of American organized labor. I digitize archival records to assemble the first county-level dataset on historical U.S. unionization and use a shift-share instrument to isolate plausibly exogenous labor supply shocks induced by immigration, between 1900 and 1920. Counties with higher immigration experienced increases in union presence and membership. These effects were more pronounced among skilled workers, particularly in counties more exposed to immigrant labor competition, and in areas with more negative attitudes toward immigrants. The evidence is consistent with existing workers unionizing in response to immigration, driven by economic and social motivations.

“The Impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act on the Economic Development of the Western U.S.”
with Joe Long, Nancy Qian, and Marco Tabellini [\[PDF\]](#)

This paper investigates the economic consequences of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which banned immigration from China. The Act reduced the number of Chinese workers of all skill levels living in the United States. It also reduced the labor supply and the quality of jobs held by white and U.S.-born workers, the intended beneficiaries of the Act, and reduced manufacturing output. The results suggest that the Chinese Exclusion Act slowed economic growth in western states until at least 1940.

“Political Appointments, Careers, and Performance in the Civil Service: Evidence from U.S. Federal Judges” with Massimo Pulejo

This paper studies the role of political appointments on the performance and career trajectories of civil servants. The focus is on U.S. federal judges, who are nominated

by the president based on recommendations from their home-state senators. Leveraging individual-level data on judges and senators from 1789 to 2019, we employ difference-in-differences and event-study designs to compare judges' performance before and after their recommending senators leave office. Following their recommenders' exit from Congress, judges' performance decline. These negatives effects manifest in both quantity, as measured by fewer judicial opinions authored and a larger backlog of civil cases, and quality, indicated by shorter opinions and fewer citations made and received. The results are consistent with an erosion of career prospects driving the effects: after their recommenders leave office, district court judges become less likely to be promoted to upper-level courts. The findings highlight how political appointments can incentivize civil servants through career concerns but also show that these incentives are closely tied to the tenure of their political sponsors.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS	<p>"The Economic Effects of Public Hiring Constraints" with Maria Carreri, Edoardo Di Porto, Edoardo Teso, and Silvia Vannutelli</p> <p>"Political Cycles in Black Union Membership"</p>	
FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS	<p>Arthur H. Cole Research Grant, Economic History Association 2025</p> <p>Nevins Dissertation Prize (Finalist), Economic History Association 2024</p> <p>Global Impacts Graduate Fellowship, Northwestern Buffett Institute for Global Affairs 2023–24</p> <p>PhD Research Grant, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University 2023</p> <p>Doctoral Fellowship, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University 2018–23</p> <p>IGIER Visiting Student Initiative, Bocconi University 2014–16</p>	
PRESENTATIONS	<p>2025 (<i>incl. scheduled</i>): UCLA Public Policy, ASREC Conference (George Mason University), CNEH Conference (University of Montreal), NEWEPS (NYU), USC</p> <p>2024: ASSA Annual Meeting (San Antonio), University of Nottingham, CREI, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, USC Marshall, "Institutions, Organizations & Growth" (IOG) Spring Conference (UChicago BFI), "Fighting for Freedom Symposium" (GSU and UMD, online), Tilburg University (online), NICEP Conference (University of Nottingham), "Junior Economists" Meeting (University of Milan), NBER Summer Institute "Development of the American Economy", EHA Annual Meeting (Sacramento), Northwestern-UBC Political Economy of Development Conference, CEMIR Junior Economist Workshop on Migration Research (ifo Institute), UW-Milwaukee, Brown University, AFD-World Bank "Migration and Development Conference" (Bologna), Online Economic History Workshop, "Crime Before Christmas" Workshop (Bocconi University), Donde Workshop in Public Policy (Bocconi University)</p> <p>2023: EHA Annual Meeting (Pittsburgh) [poster session], Northwestern University</p>	
REFeree SERVICE	<p>American Economic Review, Quarterly Journal of Economics, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, Explorations in Economic History, Journal of Labor Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization</p>	
TEACHING EXPERIENCE	<p>Northwestern, Statistical Decision Analysis (EMBA), Teaching Assistant 2020–23</p> <p>Northwestern, Making Business Decisions with Big Data (MBA), Teaching Assistant 2020–21</p> <p>Northwestern, Business Analytics I (MBA), Teaching Assistant 2019–21</p>	
RELEVANT PAST POSITIONS	<p>Research Assistant, Prof. Nancy Qian, Northwestern University 2020–22</p> <p>Research Assistant, Prof. Edoardo Teso, Northwestern University 2020</p>	

Research Assistant, Prof. Guido Tabellini, Bocconi University	2017–18
Trainee, Research Department, European Central Bank (Frankfurt, Germany)	2016–17
Research Assistant, Prof. Tommaso Nannicini, Bocconi University	2015–16
Summer Analyst, Fitch Ratings (London, UK)	2015

LANGUAGES

English (fluent), Italian (native), French (intermediate), Spanish (basic)

Last updated: August 2025