

Micah Villarreal

+1 (757) 272-3030
micahvillarreal@ucsb.edu
<https://micahvillarreal.com/>

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2025 (expected)
M.A. in Economics, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2020
B.A. in International Relations & Economics, Wellesley College, 2015

Research Fields

Labor Economics, American Economic History, Intergenerational Mobility

Working Papers

“Black Gold: The Effect of Wealth on Descendants of the Enslaved.” August 2024
“Last Place Aversion in the Jim Crow South.” December 2021.

Works in Progress

“Capitalism without Capital: The Importance of Paying Customers to Economic Development.”
“The Effect of Wealth on Descendants of Native Americans.”
“Last Place Aversion on Black Wall Street.”

Professional Activities

Visiting Graduate Student, Center for Economic History at Northwestern University, 2023–2024
AEA Dissertation Fellow at The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Summer 2023
Co-President of “Women in Economics at UCSB” (WESB), 2020–2022
Graduate Associate at the Broom Center for Demography, 2020–2023

Research Grants

Early Career Grant, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, 2024 (\$15,000)
Dissertation Research Grant, Russell Sage Foundation, 2024 (\$10,000)

Fellowships & Awards

Doctoral Scholars Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara Graduate Division, 2022-2025

Graduate Research Fellowship, The National Science Foundation, 2019-2024

Peggy Howard Fellowship, Wellesley College Department of Economics, 2019

Natalie Bolten Prize for Best Econometrics Paper, Wellesley College, 2015

Conferences & Seminars

2025 ASSA/AEA Annual Meeting

2024 UT Knoxville Economics, Bay Area Economic History Workshop at Stanford University, UCSB Applied Microeconomics Lunch, CSMGEP Summer Pipeline Mentoring Conference, IPUMS Data-Intensive Research Conference, Economic History Association, Trans-Pacific Labor Seminar, Southern Economic Association

2023 Princeton University Industrial Relations Section Labor Lunch, The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Northwestern University Economic History Lunch

Research Assistance Experience

Research Assistant to Professor Youssef Benzarti, 2021

Programmer Analyst in the Social and Economic Policy Division, Abt Associates Inc., 2015–2018

Undergraduate Research Assistant to Esther Duflo, 2015

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Econometrics (undergraduate level), 2023

Pre-Doctoral Work

“Using the Family Self-Sufficiency Program to Help Families with Housing Assistance Improve Earnings, Credit Score, and Debt Levels: A Quasi-Experimental Analysis” (with Judy Geyer, Leslie Freiman and Jeff Lubell), *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 2018.

“What is the impact of a first-year experience course and mentoring program on early postsecondary outcomes? Experimental evidence from the Broncos FIRST program” (with Jennifer Ash, Austin Nichols, Andrea Beach and Daniel Collier). U.S. Department of Education. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, 2019.

“Interim Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Compass Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program. Conducted for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development” (with Sam Dastrup, Leslie Freiman, Jeff Lubell and Daniel Weiss). Abt Associates, 2017.

“Evaluation of the Compass Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Programs Administered in Partnership with Public Housing Agencies in Lynn and Cambridge, Massachusetts” (with Judy Geyer, Leslie Freiman and Jeff Lubell). U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates. 2017.

Languages & Skills

Languages: English (native), Spanish (conversational)

Programming Languages: Stata, R, ArcGIS, Python. GitHub, \LaTeX .

References

Peter Kuhn (chair)

Distinguished Professor

Department of Economics

University of California, Santa Barbara

pjkuhn@ucsb.edu

Katherine Eriksson

Associate Professor

Department of Economics

University of California, Davis

kaeriksson@ucdavis.edu

Gonzalo Vazquez-Bare

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics

University of California, Santa Barbara

gvazquez@econ.ucsb.edu

Last updated: January 2025