# SETH NELLER

Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin
2225 Speedway C3100 | Austin, TX 78712
Cell: 214-906-0435 | seth.neller@gmail.com | https://sethneller.github.io

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. (in progress), University of Texas at Austin, 2022 (anticipated)
M.S. in Economics, University of Texas at Austin, 2018
B.B.A. in Accounting and Economics, Harding University, 2008
- Graduated Honors with Distinction, *Summa Cum Laude*

REFERENCES

Marika Cabral (Primary)
Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin
marika.cabral@utexas.edu

Mike Geruso
Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin
mike.geruso@utexas.edu

Dean Spears
Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin
dspears@utexas.edu

RESEARCH FIELDS

Primary: Health Economics, Public Economics, Environmental Economics
Secondary: Labor Economics, Economics of Crime

WORKING PAPERS

**Ashes to Ashes: The Lifelong Consequences of Early-Life Wildfire Exposure (Job Market Paper),** with Samuel Arenberg

This paper assesses the impact of in utero and early-childhood exposure to wildfire smoke on longevity as well as economic achievement, human capital accumulation, and disability in mid-to-late adulthood. To identify areas that were exposed to wildfire pollution, we leverage mid-20th century (1930-1969) California wildfires and smoke dispersion modeling. We then combine these wildfire pollution data with comprehensive, restricted-use administrative data from the Social Security Administration and Census Bureau. These linked data allow us to measure childhood exposure to wildfire smoke for four decades of birth cohorts and to observe a rich set of later-life outcomes including mortality, economic achievement, educational attainment, and disability outcomes. Using this data, we estimate a cohort distributed leads-and-lags regression model, exploiting plausibly exogenous variation in smoke exposure in order to identify long-run effects. We find that moving from the 25th to 75th percentile of early-life wildfire smoke exposure results in 1.7 additional deaths before age 55 per 1,000 individuals, conditional on surviving past early childhood. Estimating these effects across ages 30 to 80 translates to 46 life years lost per 1,000 persons. We further find that smoke exposure results in unfavorable changes to a wide range of later-life outcomes across economic achievement, educational attainment, and disability measures. Using these results, we conservatively estimate that each child born in California during our sample period sustained, on average, ~$20,000 of discounted damages in lost life expectancy and lost earnings due to wildfire smoke. These findings suggest that warming temperatures, which exacerbate the duration and intensity of wildfire seasons, is already meaningfully affecting the life cycles of exposed children through increased smoke exposure.

WORKING PAPERS (CONTINUED)

**The Impact of Youth Medicaid Eligibility on Adult Incarceration,** with Samuel Arenberg and Sam Stripling
*Revise and Resubmit: American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*
*Winner of the IPUMS Award for Best Graduate Student Research Using Health Surveys*

This paper identifies an important spillover associated with public health insurance: reduced incarceration. In 1990, Congress passed legislation that increased Medicaid eligibility for individuals born after September 30, 1983. We show that Black children born just after the cutoff are 5 percent less likely to be incarcerated by age 28, driven primarily by a decrease in incarcerations connected to financially motivated offenses. Children of other races, who experienced almost no gain in Medicaid coverage as a result of the policy, demonstrate no such declines. We find that reduced incarceration in adulthood substantially offsets the initial costs of expanding eligibility.

**How Do Medicare Payments Influence Physician Practice Structure?**
*(Under Review)*

This paper exploits spatial discontinuities in Medicare payment rates to estimate the effect of reimbursements on primary care physicians' choice of organizational structure. I find that a 1 percent increase in Medicare reimbursement leads to a 1.7 to 2.2 percentage point increase in primary care doctors who practice with a small group (defined as 25 providers or fewer). This effect is driven by changes in the tails of the practice size distribution: a 1.8 percentage point increase in physicians who are affiliated with the smallest (1- or 2-provider) practice groups with a corresponding decrease in physicians joining very large practices ($\geq$ 150 providers). I do not, however, detect any evidence of physician sorting or bunching around the boundary in response to differential payment, supporting the underlying assumptions of my regression discontinuity design. Accordingly, my findings suggest that Medicare pricing may be a factor in the trend of consolidation in the physician and clinical services market.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

**Does a Stitch in Time Save Nine? The Long-Run Effects of Hospital Access** with Samuel Arenberg [Part of Census RDC Project #2272]

**Air Pollution, Educational Outcomes, and Long-Term Incarceration** with Samuel Arenberg and Anjali P. Verma [Part of Texas ERC Project #155]

**The Relationship Between Pain Management and Surgery Decisions** with David Beheshti

**How Does Where You Grow Up Affect How Long You Live? Evidence from Migration** with Samuel Arenberg [Part of Census RDC Project #2603]

**The Later-life Impacts of Early-life Lead Exposure: Evidence from Changes in Vehicle Emissions** with Samuel Arenberg [Part of Census RDC Project #2272]

HONORS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

University Graduate Continuing Fellowship (2019 – 2020)
Summer Research Fellowship (2019, 2021)
Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award (2019)
Winner of Best Second-Year Paper Award, UT Department of Economics for "Do Medicare Payments Affect Medical Practice Structure?" (2018)
Outstanding Senior Economics Student, Harding University (2008)
Arkansas Distinguished Governor's Scholar (2004 – 2008)

## TEACHING AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant Experience:
2021: Intermediate Microeconomics (Professors Dima Shamoun and Gerald Oettinger)
2020-2021: MBA Managerial Microeconomics (Professor Dima Shamoun)
2018-2019: Law and Economics (Professor Dima Shamoun)
2018: Health Economics (Professor Mike Geruso)
2017: Introductory Economics (Professor Wayne Hickenbottom)
2016-2017: Introductory Microeconomics (Professor Wayne Hickenbottom)

Research Assistant Experience
2019-2020: Research Assistant for Professor Marika Cabral

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITES

Conferences:
Western Economic Association International (2021): "*The Impact of Youth Medicaid Eligibility on Adult Incarceration*"

Southern Economic Association (Scheduled, 2021): "*Ashes to Ashes: The Lifelong Consequences of Early-Life Wildfire Exposure*"

National Tax Association (Scheduled, 2021): "*Ashes to Ashes: The Lifelong Consequences of Early-Life Wildfire Exposure*"

Credentials:
U.S. Census Bureau Special Sworn Status (2020-present)
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Without Compensation Position (WOC) Status (2019-present)

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain, PC (Brentwood, TN):
- Manager – Audit and Advisory Services (2014-2016)
- Senior Accountant – Audit and Advisory Services (2012-2014)

The MB Group, LLC (Plano, TX):
- Senior Accountant – Assurance Services (2011-2012)
- Staff Accountant – Assurance Services (2009-2010)

## PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

Proficient in Stata, Matlab, LaTeX, ArcGIS, QGIS
Familiar with: Python, SAS, R

*Last Updated: October 28, 2021*