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BUSINESS ADDRESS:
Department of Economics
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DESIRED RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS:

PRIMARY	SECONDARY
Development Economics	Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Industrial Organization	Health
	Applied Econometrics

FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION:
    Development Economics, Industrial Organization

DISSERTATION TITLE: "Essays on Development Economics"

Expected Date of Completion: May 2026
Principal Advisor: Supreet Kaur and Edward Miguel
Other References: Benjamin Handel and Jeremy Magruder

PRE-DOCTORAL STUDIES:

	DEGREE	DATE	FIELD
Georgetown University	B.S.	2018	Economics

PAPERS:

- Risk Aversion and Demand Uncertainty Among Small Firms: Evidence From New Product Adoption (Job Market Paper)
  - Abstract: Economists typically view firms as risk neutral. Yet many enterprises, especially in low and middle-income economies, are small and owner-operated, making household consumption sensitive to business risk. As a result, owners' risk preferences may influence firm decisions. This paper demonstrates that small retailers in Kenya are risk averse, leading them to under-adopt a new product when they face uncertain demand. I model risk averse firms who learn about demand through stocking decisions, then test the model's predictions using two field experiments. The first establishes that risk aversion affects the stocking decisions of enterprises. I test for risk aversion by offering treated firms an insurance contract that lowers expected profits from a new product and reduces the risk of losses, leading to a 50% increase in adoption. This rejects risk neutrality. The second experiment shows that temporarily reducing inventory risk leads firms to permanently stock a profitable new product because they overcome demand uncertainty through learning. These results show that risk aversion can impede product diffusion, challenging the common assumption that small firms are risk neutral.
- A New Experimental Method for Estimating Demand for Non-market Goods: With an Application to the Value of a Statistical Life (submitted)
  - Abstract: Economists often study non-market goods such as health and air quality. This paper introduces a new method to estimate demand for such amenities and applies it to measure the value of a statistical life (VSL) in Kenya. My approach is to update beliefs about the life-saving efficacy of a product (a motorcycle helmet) and elicit product choice. This generates instruments allowing one to use subjective beliefs to estimate demand, rather than assuming rational expectations. This method does not require beliefs to be reported error-free but does require classical mismeasurement. I validate this assumption using features of the experimental design. The estimated VSL is $224, near the left tail of Kenyan estimates. Standard methods for estimating VSL produce skewed results, driven by severe violations of rational expectations. These findings help explain low observed demand for many health products and suggest that directing more development aid towards consumption may increase welfare.
- Can Cash Transfers Save Lives? Evidence from a Large-Scale Experiment in Kenya (with Michael Walker, Nick Shankar, Edward Miguel and Dennis Egger, NBER Working Paper)
  - We estimate the impacts of large-scale unconditional cash transfers on child survival. One-time transfers of USD 1000 were provided to over 10,500 poor households across 653 randomized villages in Kenya. We collected census data on over 100,000 births, including on mortality and cause of death, and detailed data on household health behaviors. Unconditional cash transfers (accounting for spillovers) lead to 48% fewer infant deaths before age one and 45% fewer child deaths before age five. Detailed data on cause of death, transfer timing relative to birth, and the location of health facilities indicate that unconditional cash transfers and access to delivery care are complements in generating mortality reductions: the largest gains are estimated in neonatal and maternal causes of death largely preventable by appropriate obstetric care and among households living close to physician-staffed facilities and those who receive the transfer around the time of birth, and treatment leads to a large increase in hospital deliveries (by 45%). The infant and child mortality declines are concentrated among poorer households with below median assets or predicted consumption. The transfers also result in a substantial decline of 51% in female labor supply in the three months before and the three months after a birth, and improved child nutrition.

Infant and child mortality largely revert to pre-program levels after cash transfers end. Despite not being the main aim of the original program, we show that unconditional cash transfers in this setting may be a cost-effective way to reduce infant and child deaths.

- Free-Riding and New Product Adoption: Evidence from Burundi (with Luisa Cefala, Rédempteur Ntawiratsa and Nicholas Swanson)
  - Data collection in progress

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

RESEARCH:

Research Assistant, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2020-2024)
  Research with Professor Edward Miguel on the general equilibrium and health effects of cash transfers.
  Research with Professor Jeremy Magruder on the econometrics of multiple hypothesis corrections.
Research Associate, Harvard Business School and Precision Development (2018-2020).
  Research assistant to Professor Shawn Cole.

TEACHING:

Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (Fall 2021- Spring 2022)
  Undergraduate game theory and graduate economic theory.
Grader and teaching assistant (Spring 2023-Spring 2025)
  Graduate development economics

PUBLICATIONS:

"Using satellites and phones to evaluate and promote agricultural technology adoption: Evidence from smallholder farms in India"
  With Shawn Cole, Aparna Krishna and Tomoko Harigaya, *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 176, 2025.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

2021	National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
2022	Center for Effective Global Action ($28,000) – Funding to study the value of a statistical life
2023	Center for Effective Global Action ($7,000) – Pilot funding to study barriers to product adoption
2023	Weiss Fund ($49,000) – Grant for research on product adoption
2023	Rocca Pre-dissertation Fellowship ($4,000)
2023	Clausen Center for International Economics ($5,000) – Research funding to study information spillovers
2023	Gilbert Center ($3,000) – Research funding
2024	Center for Effective Global Action ($15,000) – Pilot funding to study competition in low-income countries
2024	Private Enterprise Development in Low Income Countries ($41,000) – Grant to study new product diffusion
2024	Private Enterprise Development in Low Income Countries ($40,000) – Grant to study competition (with Luisa Cefala and Nicholas Swanson)
2024	Best Applied Paper, University of Chicago Causal Inference Conference

OTHER INFORMATION:

Affiliations: American Economic Association, European Economic Association
Languages: English
Citizenship: United States