UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY  PLACEMENT SERVICE: Graduate Office

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**BUSINESS ADDRESS:**

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**DESIRED RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS:**

PRIMARY SECONDARY

Development Economics Industrial Organization

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., Valedictorian 2018 Economics

**PAPERS:**

* Risk Aversion and Barriers to Firm Growth: Experimental Evidence from Small Retailers (Job Market Paper)
  + Abstract: Firms in low and middle-income economies often grow slowly. This paper examines whether firm risk aversion prevents risk taking necessary to grow. While economists tend to model firms as risk neutral, I posit that this assumption is unlikely to hold for the modal developing country firm, which is owner-operated, so that uncertain investments may directly threaten owners’ consumption. I develop a model that shows how risk aversion can reduce firms’ willingness to experiment with new technologies, impeding investment and growth. I test the model’s predictions within the context of retail firms’ decision to adopt and sell a new consumer product using two field experiments with over 1,200 Kenyan firms. First, offering firms an insurance contract that creates a mean-preserving contraction of profits increases new product adoption by 50%. Effects are concentrated among firms whose owners exhibit higher levels of risk aversion. Second, temporarily inducing firms to try selling a new product with a supplier returns policy leads to a 70% increase in stock purchases after the intervention ends. Third, consistent with bandit models of learning, experimentally increasing the continuation value of learning increases adoption by 80%. These persistent effects arise through a reduction in the variance of beliefs, rather than through changes in mean beliefs. These results show that a feature inherent to developing country environments -- small firms in the presence of missing financial markets -- itself creates a barrier to firm innovation and growth.
* 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)
* Free-Riding and New Product Adoption: Evidence from Burundi (with Luisa Cefala, Rédempteur Ntawiratsa and Nicholas Swanson)
  + Data collection in progress
* Multiple Missing Markets and Allocative Efficiency (with Supreet Kaur)
  + Analysis 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:**

2024 Best Applied Paper, University of Chicago Causal Inference Conference

2024 Private Enterprise Development in Low Income Countries ($40,000) – Grant to study competition (with Luisa Cefala and Nicholas Swanson)

2024 Private Enterprise Development in Low Income Countries ($41,000) – Grant to study new product diffusion

2024 Center for Effective Global Action ($15,000) – Pilot funding to study competition in low-income countries

2023 Gilbert Center ($3,000) – Research funding

2023 Clausen Center for International Economics ($5,000) – Research funding to study information spillovers

2023 Rocca Pre-dissertation Fellowship ($4,000)

2023 Weiss Fund ($49,000) – Grant for research on product adoption

2023 Center for Effective Global Action ($7,000) – Pilot funding to study barriers to product adoption

2022 Center for Effective Global Action ($28,000) – Funding to study the value of a statistical life

2021 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

Affiliations: American Economic Association, European Economic Association

Languages: English

Citizenship: United States