

CONTACT INFORMATION

University of Notre Dame
3085 Jenkins Nanovic Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556

hdownes@nd.edu
+1 (860) 305-5327
henrymdownes.com

RESEARCH FIELDS

Applied Microeconomics, Labor Economics, Public Economics, Economic History, Economic Demography

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame – Notre Dame, IN

Ph.D. in Economics

Exp. May 2025

M.A. in Economics

2020

University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa, AL

B.A. in Economics, Political Science, and History, *summa cum laude*

2015

Visiting Student at Universität Mannheim

2013

PUBLICATIONS

Downes, H., Phillips, D. C. and Sullivan, J. X. (2022), ‘The Effect of Emergency Financial Assistance on Healthcare Use’, *Journal of Public Economics* **208**, 104626. [[Published Version](#)]

WORKING PAPERS

‘Did Organized Labor Induce Labor? Unionization and the American Baby Boom’
(Job Market Paper) [[PDF](#)]

Labor unions have many well-documented effects on economic outcomes that are plausibly related to family formation. I study the impact of unionization on fertility using evidence from the largest expansion of unionism in American history: the enactment of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). I introduce new estimates of local union membership and exploit variation in exposure to the NLRA shock to estimate the place level effect of union growth on fertility outcomes. Unionization has positive effects on birth rates and completed fertility, and can account for approximately 20% of overall fertility increases during the Baby Boom. Effects are driven primarily by wage growth, protection against adverse labor market shocks, and impacts on female labor force participation.

‘Can Moves to Opportunity be Constructed? Evidence from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit’ (with John Soriano and George Zuo) [[PDF](#)]

WORK IN PROGRESS

‘Jim Crow in Federal Labor Law? The Davis-Bacon Act and Black Economic Mobility’

‘Growth Dynamics of the American Labor Movement’ (with Rob Gillezeau)

‘The Effects of Moving to LIHTC-Subsidized Housing on Labor Market Outcomes’ (with Stephanie Karol, John Soriano, and George Zuo)

TEACHING

Moreau College Initiative

Instructor	Research Internship Program	2023
------------	-----------------------------	------

University of Notre Dame

Instructor	Principles of Microeconomics (UG)	2023
TA	Statistics for Economists (UG) (x2)	2022-2023
Tutor	Econometrics (UG)	2022
Tutor	Statistics for Economists (UG)	2021

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

University of Notre Dame

Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities	2019-2022
---	-----------

University of Alabama

Alabama Center for Insurance Information and Research	2015-2016
---	-----------

EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS

2025: University of Georgia; University of California, Davis; Florida State University; University of Florida; Ohio State University; Texas A&M University; College of William & Mary; Tilburg University (scheduled)

2024: Mountain West Economic History Conference; Northwestern University; NBER Summer Institute; Economic History Association; Miami University; Southern Economic Association

2023: Midwest Economic Association (session organizer, chair, and presenter); World Congress of Cliometrics; Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

2022: Young Economist Symposium; Social Science History Association

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS

External

Economic History Association, Graduate Dissertation Fellowship (\$10,000)	2024-2025
---	-----------

Smith Richardson Foundation, Domestic Public Policy Program (\$268,091)	2023-2025
---	-----------

University of Notre Dame

Graduate School, Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition Winner	2024
---	------

Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award	2024
---	------

Graduate Student Government, Conference Presentation Grant	2024
--	------

Institute for Ethics and the Common Good, Graduate Fellowship	2023-2024
---	-----------

Center for Social Concerns, Graduate Fellowship	2022-2023
---	-----------

Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, Graduate Research Grant	2022
--	------

Graduate School, Professional Development Grant	2021
---	------

University of Alabama

College of Arts & Sciences, Most Outstanding Junior	2014
---	------

Department of Economics, Special Achievement Award	2014
--	------

SERVICE

University of Notre Dame

Organizer, Graduate Student Research Workshop

2021-2022

Co-Chair, Economics Department Graduate Student Council

2021-2022

Ambassador, Economics Department

2019-present

COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

Stata, MATLAB, R, Python, ArcGIS, L^AT_EX

PERSONAL

Citizenship: U.S.A.

Special Sworn Status, U.S. Census Bureau

REFERENCES

Kasey Buckles (Co-Chair)

Professor of Economics

University of Notre Dame

kbuckles@nd.edu

William Evans (Co-Chair)

Keough-Hesburgh Professor of Economics

University of Notre Dame

wevans1@nd.edu

Daniel Hungerman

Professor of Economics

University of Notre Dame

dhungerm@nd.edu

James Sullivan

Professor of Economics

University of Notre Dame

jsulliv4@nd.edu