

I am an applied microeconomist with a focus on Education, Labor, and Health Economics. My primary field of interest, Education Economics, is influenced by my experience in Teach for America (TFA), teaching special education mathematics. As a teacher in a Hawaii, I saw how income disparities and inadequate educational inputs and resources affected my students' educational outcomes and their viable future labor market choices. These issues, among many others, concern me deeply and motivate me to continue researching

My current research agenda focuses on how to improve students' cognitive and non-cognitive skills as well as how schools can attract and retain teachers that will have the greatest positive impact on students' outcomes. My job market paper, Brick and Mortar vs. Computers and Modems: The Impacts of Enrollment in K-12 Virtual Schools on Student Outcomes, studies the impact of K-12 full-time virtual schools- schools where all classes are online - on students' academic and nonacademic outcomes. I use a unique longitudinal dataset, from 2007 through 2016, composed of individual-level information on all public-school students and teachers throughout Georgia. I find that students who attend virtual schools fare worse academically than their traditional brick and mortar peers across different specifications –Student Fixed Effect and Semi-Parametric Cell Analysis. Given the little research done on full-time virtual schools, this is evidence that virtual schools as a school choice option could be harmful to students' learning and future economic opportunities, as well as a suboptimal use of taxpayer money in Georgia.

Another research paper outside of my dissertation, The Effects of Differential Pay on Teacher Recruitment and Retention, under review at Journal of Human Resources, evaluates whether additional differential pay for mathematics and science teachers leads to greater teacher retention and recruitment. Using a difference-in-differences strategy, we find that bonus pay reduces teacher

attrition by 18 to 28 percent. However, we see no evidence that the program increases the probability that education majors become secondary math and science teachers upon graduation nor does it alter specific major choices within the education field.

I have several working papers. The first, “Predicting Who Will be a Highly Effective Teacher”, studies how a teacher's pre-service non-cognitive skills can predict how successful they will be in improving student's cognitive and non-cognitive skills. I also examine whether pre-service and non-cognitive skills can enhance the selection of teachers relative to selection on pre-service credentials alone. The second, Do Social-Emotional Learning Skills Improve Cognitive and Noncognitive Skills, examines the impact of a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program on student achievement and non-cognitive outcomes, such as attendance, behavior, and dropout rate over a three-year period in an urban district. In a third paper, “The Impact of Achieve Atlanta Scholarship on College Outcomes”, my coauthors and I study the effect of receiving an income and achievement-based scholarship on college enrollment and college persistence using a regression discontinuity framework.

In the future, I plan to continue to study the effects of attending Virtual Schools in other types of setting such as part-time virtual schools and their impacts on labor market outcomes. I have contacted with Georgia Virtual School, a statewide part-time virtual school and hope to study how part-time virtual school differs from full-time and traditional settings. I also plan to examine the intersections of health and education such as how does the new school lunch policy and food deserts impact student health and academic outcomes. As an Afro-Latina, an underrepresented population in economics and the social sciences, I can contribute to the public policy and economics community through my research and unique perspective on issues that affect human labor outcomes and well-being.