

GEORGINA CISNEROS

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Education

American University, School of Public Affairs, Washington, DC

Ph.D in Public Administration and Policy, degree anticipated May 2028

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

Master of Arts, Economics, 2022

Universidad Centroamericana, San Salvador, El Salvador

Bachelor of Arts, Economics, 2017

Working Papers

“Health Care Reform and Firm Dynamics: Evidence from Medicare Part D and the Retail Pharmacy Industry” with Brandyn F. Churchill and Kelli Marquardt. NBER WP No. 35380.

Health care reforms are often enacted before implementation, creating uncertainty that can shape firms’ decisions. We examine how Medicare Part D affected the retail pharmacy industry using 2000-2009 establishment-level data, leveraging the fact that Part D disproportionately affected counties with larger elderly populations. Consistent with predictions from a conceptual model in which pre-implementation uncertainty discourages entry and lower post-implementation margins prevent full recovery, we find that Part D was associated with a 5-percent reduction in pharmacies, driven by fewer openings rather than more closures. We also find suggestive evidence that reduced pharmacy access dampened Part D’s mortality benefits.

“SNAP Purchasing Power and Household Time Allocation”

SNAP benefits are set uniformly across the contiguous United States, but geographic variation in food prices creates substantial disparities in the program’s real purchasing power. This paper exploits this variation using a triple-difference strategy that compares SNAP-eligible to near-eligible households across 35 local markets.

I find that A 10-percent increase in SNAP purchasing power was associated with a 7-percent reduction in daily purchasing time and a 4-percent increase in leisure time, with no meaningful results on market work, home production, childcare, or sleep. Heterogeneity analysis reveals that these associations differ by gender and parental status. These findings suggest that geographic disparities in benefit adequacy affect not only what households can purchase but how they allocate their time.

“Does Food Assistance Drive Spending on Sugary Foods? Evidence from the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program” with Brandyn F. Churchill.

Although it is unclear whether food assistance contributes to lower diet quality among recipients, policymakers are actively working to restrict SNAP-eligible purchases of items high in added sugars. We provide timely evidence on the extent to which food assistance increases spending on sugary items by studying the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program, which provided food assistance benefits to families of children who lost access to free and reduced-price school meals due to COVID-19 pandemic school closures. Leveraging state-level variation in the timing of P-EBT disbursements and using a stacked difference-in-differences identification strategy with NielsenIQ Consumer Panel data, we find that P-EBT disbursement was associated with a 16-percent increase in weekly spending on sugary items among SNAP-eligible households with school-aged children. Notably, this increase exceeded the percentage increase in overall food spending for this group, suggesting that SNAP-eligible households with school-aged children allocated a disproportionately large share of their P-EBT-driven purchases toward sugary items relative to their pre-period baseline. We do not detect changes among households unlikely to have received P-EBT benefits or in placebo disbursement years.

Technical Reports

“Technical Document on Public Policy Proposal: Social Security” with María Elena Rivera (2019). Fundación Dr. Guillermo Manuel Ungo (FUNDAUNGO), Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA), Universidad Don Bosco (UDB), FLACSO Programa El Salvador. ISBN: 9789220316375 (print), 9789220316368 (web PDF). [Original in Spanish]

“Pension System Reform in El Salvador in the Context of International Social Security Standards and Best Practices” with María Elena Rivera, Carlos Eduardo Argueta, Helmut Schwarzer, and José Francisco Ortiz (2020) Organización Internacional del Trabajo (ILO), ISBN: 9789220316375 (print), 9789220316368 (web pdf) [Original in Spanish].

“Returned Migrants: Gender and Access to Social Services in El Salvador” with Carlos Eduardo Argueta, Antonieta Ramírez, Jonathan Canjura, and María Elena Rivera (2018). Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0001219> [Original in Spanish].

“The Risks and Opportunities for the Effective Reinsertion of ‘TPS’ Recipients in El Salvador with Policy Recommendations” with Lyla Gil, and María Elena Rivera (2019). Prepared for the Wilson Center, Washington D.C. [Original in Spanish]. Available [here](#).

Honors/Awards

Fulbright Scholar, Economics, Vanderbilt University, 2021-2022

Professional Memberships

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)

American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon)

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Washington DC, August 2024 - Present

American University

Supported Brandyn F. Churchill and Claudia Persico with data analysis and literature review on different projects related with health economics and education policy.

Senior Research Assistant, Nashville, TN, January 2023 - July 2024

The Kidtalk Lab, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University

Responsible of data analysis for randomized control trials on early childhood education, manage a team of research assistants, and coordinate data collection.

Research Intern, Washington DC, June 2021 - August 2021

The Brookings Institution

Supported Carol Graham research projects by compiling data, writing code and collecting literature in topics related with health economics, theory of well-being and, behavioral economics.

Researcher, San Salvador, El Salvador, September 2017 - December 2020

FUNDAUNGO, Public Policy Studies Program

Led research and consulting on social issues and public policy, focusing on migration, social protection, and pensions. Relevant tasks included proposal writing, budget design, and collaborating with organizations like ILO, IDB, and USAID.