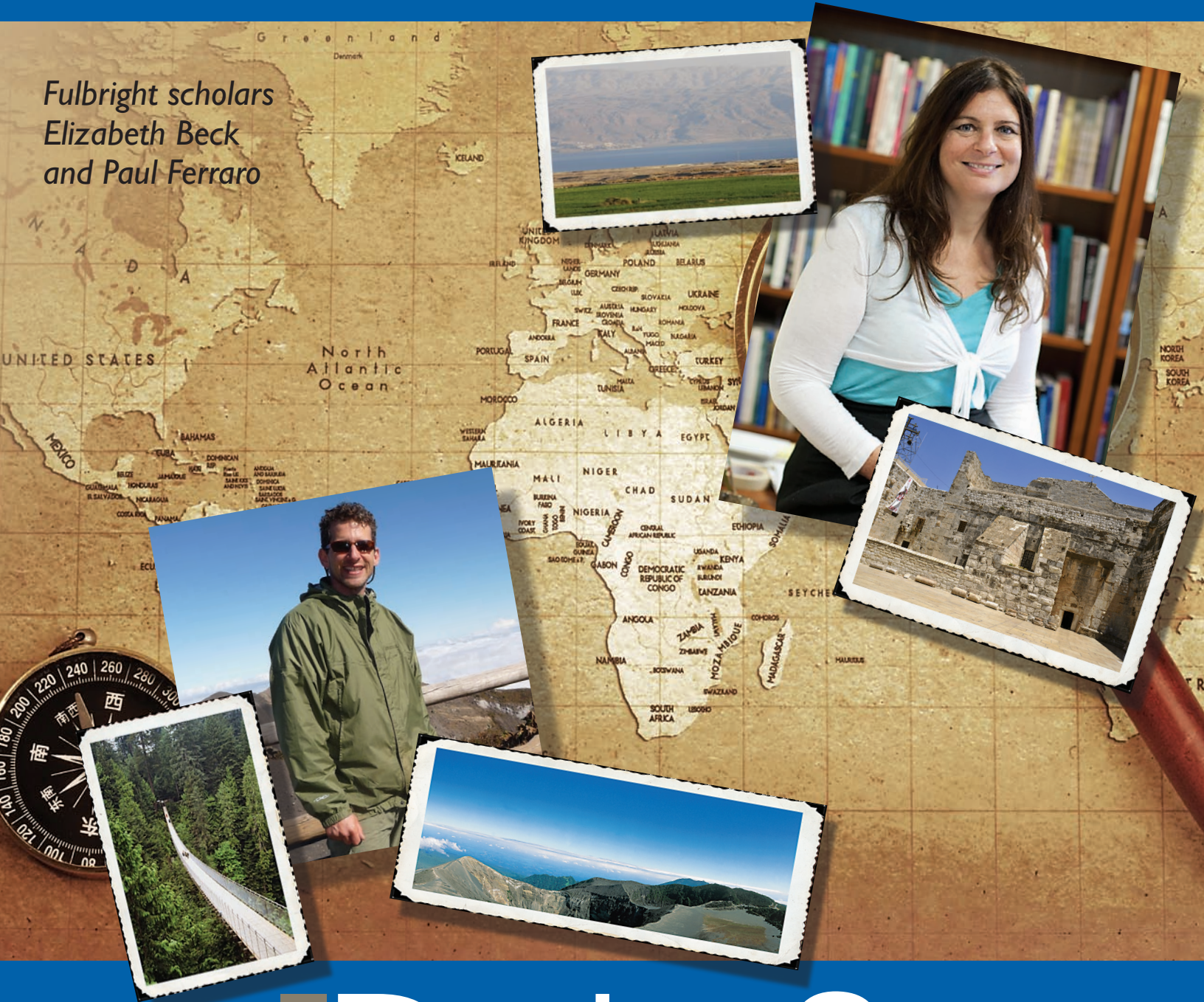


Fulbright scholars
Elizabeth Beck
and Paul Ferraro



THE Briefing

RESEARCH 2012



Research matters here

The direct connections between our academic research and our policy outreach and community engagement continue to account for our success as a policy school. In FY2011 our faculty

and staff produced more than 400 scholarly papers, articles, chapters and books. They also attracted more than \$8.8 million in new sponsored awards split almost evenly among federal, state and nonprofit/industry/other funders.

An entrepreneurial approach helps generate robust research funding and creative work, both in the academy and in the community. Our success rests squarely on the shoulders of our faculty, staff and students. In the last year many have received national recognition for their work.

Three Fulbright Awards were made here in the last year. Stories about the experiences of Fulbright Scholars Elizabeth Beck and Paul Ferraro, who returned from Costa Rica with more than \$2.9 million in grants for new research projects, follow. Our third, Lisa Muftić, left this semester to research and teach at the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Major awards and honors have streamed into the school this year. For example, the Association for Budgeting and Financial Management recently presented Regents Professor Roy Bahl, our founding dean, with its S. Kenneth Howard Award for lifetime achievement. Distinguished Research Professor Tim Sass was named co-PI on a \$10 million project funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences. "Best paper" awards from a number of top policy and public management associations have been presented to our faculty

and students including Ph.D. candidate [now alumnus] Lewis Faulk, who received ARNOVA's Gabriel G. Rudney Memorial Award for Outstanding Dissertation.

Our faculty's presence and efforts on editorial and other boards are another indication of our school's high profile. Newer appointees include Professor Paula Stephan to the Board of Reviewing Editors of Science, Associate Professor Erdal Tekin as associate editor of the *IZA Journal of Labor Policy* and Professor Brian Payne to the board of *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*.

Professor Bart Hildreth was elected a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and appointed director of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board. And Professor Nancy Kropf was selected to serve on the board of the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work.

As I began drafting this column in September, the news on my monitor warned that public research universities are in peril. State support for public research universities like ours had fallen an average 20 percent between 2002 and 2010, while enrollment grew, according to the National Science Board. Georgia was no exception.

Yet as a Georgia State University college, we continue to provide access to an affordable, quality education to all students. They will continue to enjoy – along with us – the thrill of discovery inherent in producing top-quality research.

Mary Beth Walker
Dean

Georgia State University
Andrew Young School
of Policy Studies
The Briefing
Research 2012

The Office of the Dean publishes *The Briefing* three times a year for alumni, friends, faculty and staff of the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University, P.O. Box 3992, Atlanta, GA 30302-3992.

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Fulbright Scholars make a mark in Costa Rica and the West Bank

Each year the Fulbright Scholar Program – the world's most widely recognized international exchange program – sends about 800 faculty and professionals from the United States abroad to teach and conduct research. AYSPS professors Elizabeth Beck and Paul Ferraro, named Fulbright Scholars last year, are back on campus, ready to share news of their experiences.

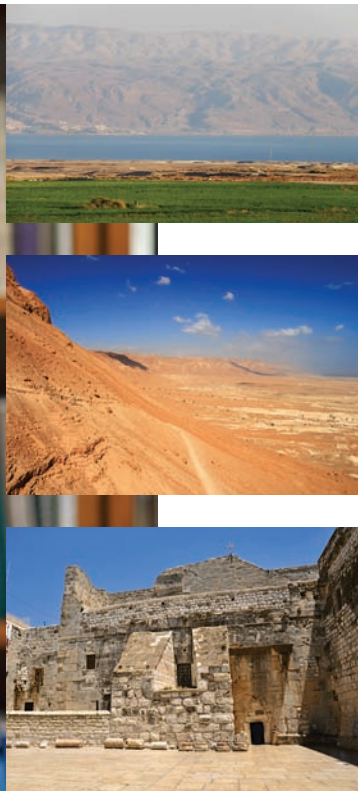
BUILDING A GRADUATE PROGRAM IN THE WEST BANK

Christmas Eve in Bethlehem is like Times Square, weighed down by tour buses and pilgrims jockeying to view the festivities at the Church of the Nativity. During Ramadan, visitors slip into public restrooms looking for hydration to stave off the desert heat.

"Palestine is a complicated place," says Professor Elizabeth Beck, who describes the region as "somewhere between a Third World country and a military zone." Palestine is also home to more than 500,000 refugees, about half of whom live in camps.



Elizabeth Beck and images of Palestine



Beck directs the Andrew Young School's Center for Collaborative Social Work. She spent the fall 2011 semester in the West Bank, where she developed the curricula to start a Master of Social Work degree program at the University of Bethlehem and gave lectures on trauma, her major research focus in the region. Working on several research projects with faculty, Beck says she was pleased to have mentored them in their publications and research agendas, largely on the issue of trauma and child welfare. She also supported the library for the new program with four boxes of textbooks and other essential publications she brought over.

Beck says the experience broadened her perspective of social work: "Most of the world looks at problems from a human rights framework, which we do not. This starting point shifts your way of teaching and advocating for services. You begin with the idea that all dilemmas start from the question, 'What are individuals afforded through their rights?' Then you figure out policies. Here in the United States, we are bogged down with determining what amount to give, and then we figure out how."

Like the Andrew Young School's social work center, the new program Beck helped develop is community-oriented. Only one other small, clinically oriented social work program exists in Palestine. There are few professors with doctorates in social work; undergraduates are taught by a mix of social services and humanities faculty.

Beck also knows the resource issue first-hand, as she lived with the shortages that affect people in the West Bank. "Water is a significant issue," she explains. "Palestinians are given about three quarters of the 100 liters that the World Health Organization says a person needs per day. So I learned how to shower with next to no water and reuse the grey water. Living alone, I never ran out of water, but for my students, the running out of water – sometimes for weeks on end – was a fact of life."

"I feel deeply privileged to have experienced all that I was able to experience," Beck reflects, "and I think that will make me a better teacher."

For decades, the Palestinians have lived with the turmoil of warfare. "You have people who are deeply affected by conflict, crisis and lack of resources," Beck says. "Given that, you have to ask: how do you create a context to move forward in a positive way?"

Thanks to the efforts of Beck and others to advance the knowledge and practice of social work in Palestine, its people may be moving one step closer to an answer.

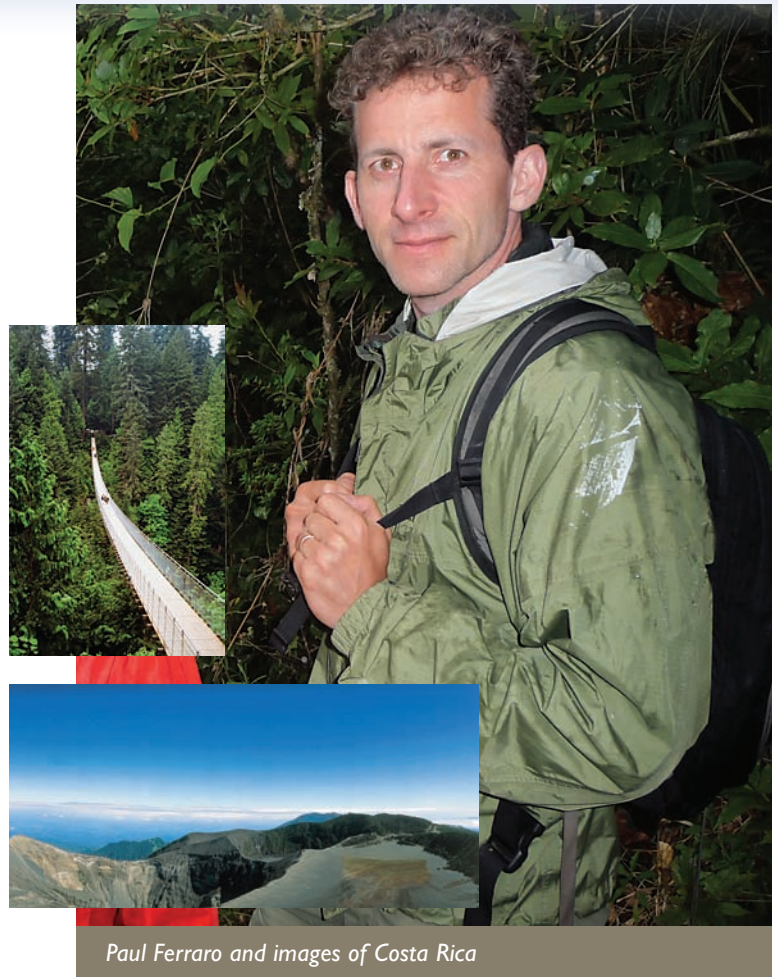
EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Economics professor Paul Ferraro recently enjoyed the opportunity of a lifetime, spending six months this spring in tropical Costa Rica as a Fulbright Scholar. He worked at the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) on an initiative he feels strongly about, conducting empirical research on how ecosystem conservation policies affect environmental and socioeconomic outcomes in developing and developed nations.

"I felt honored and lucky to have received a Fulbright award," says Ferraro. "It allowed me to pursue my professional interests and make professional connections in Latin America." While in Costa Rica, he also conducted seminars, mentored students and junior faculty, and helped faculty write grants.

Ferraro's economic research advances the evaluation of the effects of environmental policies and programs, particularly on poor populations. Although the final results of his work in Costa Rica are not yet available, his preliminary observations suggest that the country's national park system reduces poverty through its creation of a tourism economy. By setting up a national park for tourists, the industry produces auxiliary services that help the local economy. Tourism is now Costa Rica's largest foreign exchange earner, he says.

While in Costa Rica, Ferraro and his co-authors were honored during the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences. He celebrated from afar as AYSPS alumnus Merlin



Paul Ferraro and images of Costa Rica

Hanauer accepted the 2011 Cozzarelli Prize for their article, "Conditions associated with protected area success in conservation and poverty reduction."

Ferraro continues to work on two new projects he initiated in Costa Rica. The first, conducted with a team from CATIE, focuses on improving the design of conservation incentive programs for private land owners. The second, research on human adaptation to climate change in Central America, is supported with a grant from the Canadian government.

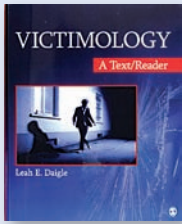
Economic development and environmental policymakers have found Ferraro's research useful. "Policies need to be based on evidence of what works and under what conditions," he says. "Countries can learn a lot from the Costa Rica experience, such as how to best balance economic development and environmental protection."

His work will also benefit students here. He teaches undergraduate and doctoral-level courses in environmental policy and causal inference, and uses articles from his studies as resource material and research data for homework problems.

On bookshelves now

VICTIMOLOGY: A TEXT/READER

Leah E. Daigle



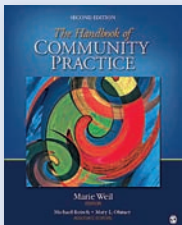
"Part of the SAGE Text/Reader Series in Criminology and Criminal Justice, this book provides an overview of the field of victimology, includ-

ing a collection of carefully selected articles that have previously appeared in leading journals, along with original material in a mini-chapter format that contextualizes the concepts. It provides the history and development of the field of victimology, explains who is victimized and why, explains how the criminal justice system and other social services interact with victims and each other, and provides information about specific types of victimization." – SAGE

672 pp · 2012 · ISBN: 9781412987325

THE HANDBOOK OF COMMUNITY PRACTICE, SECOND EDITION

Marie Weil (Ed.), Michael Reisch, Mary Ohmer (Assoc. Eds.)



"The Second Edition of *The Handbook of Community Practice* is expanded and updated with a major global focus and serves as a

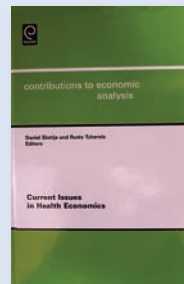
comprehensive guidebook of community practice grounded in social justice and human rights....The handbook consists of 40 chapters which challenge readers to examine and assess practice, theory and research methods. As it expands on models and approaches, delineates emerging issues, and connects policy and practice, the book provides vision and strategies for local to global community practice in the coming decades.

The handbook will continue to stand as the central text and reference for comprehensive community practice, and will be useful for years to come as it emphasizes direction for positive change; new developments in community approaches; and focuses attention on globalization, human rights and social justice. It will continue to be used as a core text for multiple courses within programs, will have long-term application for students of community practice, and will provide practitioners with new grounding for development, planning, organizing, and empowerment and social change work." – SAGE

968 pp · 2012 · ISBN: 9781412987851

CURRENT ISSUES IN HEALTH ECONOMICS (CONTRIBUTIONS TO ECONOMIC ANALYSIS)

Daniel Slottje, Rusty Tchernis (Eds.)



"Across the globe every nation wrestles with how it will pay for, provide, regulate and administer its healthcare system. Health economics is the field of economics that deals with

every one of those issues and the difficult issue of allocating resources where the allocation can literally mean life or death, alleviating suffering or not. A key issue that is always mentioned, but little acted on, is the role that preventive measures play in the battle against disease and using limited healthcare resources more efficaciously. This book brings together leading researchers in the healthcare economics field presenting new research on some of these key issues such as the impact of obesity on health; children's healthcare policies, education and health; and many more." – Emerald Group Publishing Limited

300 pp · December 2010 · ISBN-13: 978-0857241559

Hartford award provides Lewinson a \$100,000 research grant

Terri Lewinson, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work, has received a prestigious John A. Hartford Geriatric Scholar Award of \$100,000 to conduct health-related research with older adults. Lewinson is one of only three Hartford faculty scholars ever named in Georgia. Her research topic is titled "Mental and Physical Health Outcomes of Older Adults Residing in Extended Stay Hotels." goo.gl/8l2vh.



Terri Lewinson

Laury experimental article most often cited

A recent analysis of publishing trends in experimental economics for the period 2001-2010 shows that a 2002 article published in the *American Economic Review*, "Risk

Aversion and Incentive Effects," by Susan Laury and Charles Holt, is the most cited experimental paper of the decade. With one exception, "no other paper has even half the citations," according to Emory University economist Charles Noussair, who looked at citation counts for papers that reported new experimental data. Laury is associate director of the Experimental Economics Center and an associate professor of economics.



Susan Laury

Ferraro, Hanauer and Sims receive coveted Cozzarelli Prize

The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) Editorial Board awarded Professor Paul J. Ferraro, alumnus Merlin M. Hanauer (Ph.D. in Economics '11) and Katharine R.E. Sims (Amherst College) the 2011 Cozzarelli Prize for their article, "Conditions associated with protected area success in conservation and poverty reduction." Hanauer accepted the honor at the PNAS Editorial Board meeting during the National Academy of Sciences annual meeting on April 30 in Washington, D.C.

The prize "recognizes outstanding contributions to the scientific disciplines represented by the National Academy of Sciences," according to the organization. Named the best in PNAS's Applied Biological, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences category, Ferraro and Hanauer's article was one among six recognized for their scientific excellence and originality from a pool of more than 3,500 research articles published in the journal last year.

"We look for papers that are not merely technically superior but have had special impact and maybe novel techniques or novel applications of techniques or very important discoveries," reports Randy Schekman, PNAS editor-in-chief, in a podcast interview about the award. "...the overall goal is to make the journal even more powerful and to have it represent the very best science."

Podcast interviews with the winning authors are available at www.pnas.org/podcasts. Find the article at www.pnas.org/content/108/34/13913.abstract.



Merlin Hanauer accepts the 2011 Cozzarelli Prize from PNAS editorial board member Susan Hanson

National Tax Association honors Sjoquist



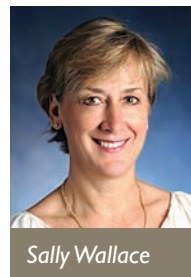
The National Tax Association named Professor David Sjoquist the winner of the prestigious 2012 Steven D. Gold Award.

"David has had a wonderful career as an academic and policy-oriented economist. His work generally, and especially his work on state fiscal matters in Georgia and elsewhere, is very consistent with the

spirit of the Gold Award," the organization proclaimed in its award announcement.

The Gold Award recognizes persons who have made significant contributions to public financial management in the field of intergovernmental relations and state and local finance. Awarded annually by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management and the National Tax Association, it is presented by one of the organizations each year.

Anil, Sjoquist and Wallace article win SEA's Georgescu-Roegen Prize



Economics professors David L. Sjoquist and Sally Wallace, with Bulent Anil (University of Minnesota-Duluth), were awarded the 2011 Georgescu-Roegen Prize for best academic article published in the *Southern Economic Journal* during the Southern Economic Association's annual conference in Washington, D.C., in November 2011.

The authors were honored for their article, "The Effect of a Program-Based Housing Move on Employment: HOPE VI in Atlanta," published July 2010, which examines the effects of displacement on employment during the redevelopment of public-assisted housing in Atlanta.

U.S. News & World Report

2013

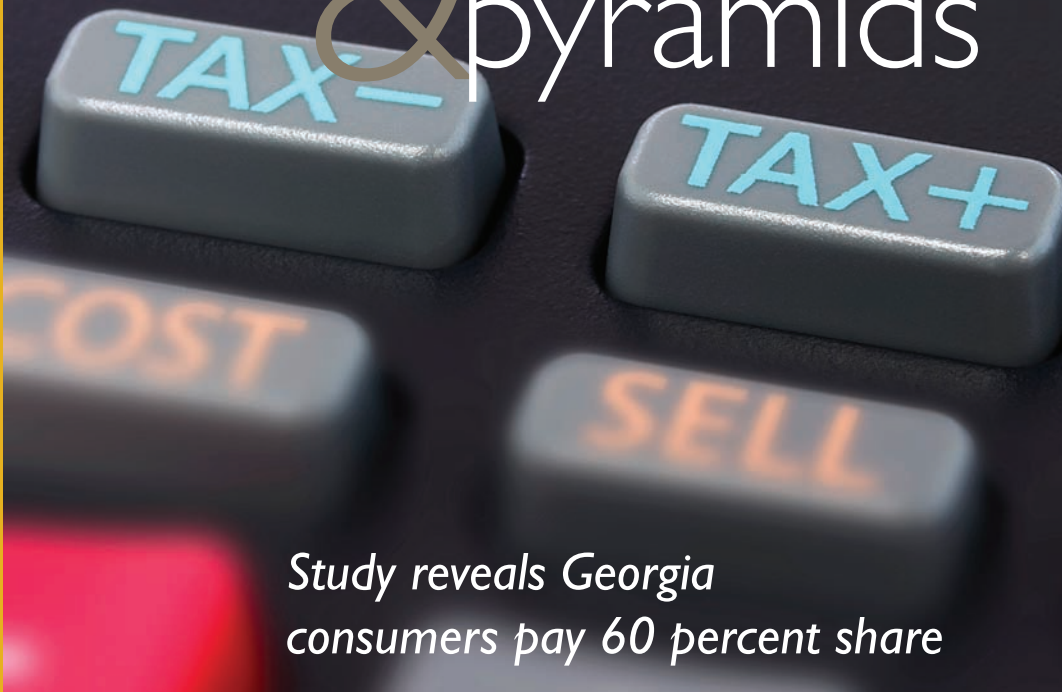
RANKINGS

of America's
Best
Public
Affairs
Graduate
Schools

#4

**PUBLIC
FINANCE &
BUDGETING**

Of sales taxes & pyramids



*Study reveals Georgia
consumers pay 60 percent share*

In 2009 the total sales tax revenue collected for the state of Georgia was \$9,877 million, of which Georgia's citizens paid approximately 60 percent, according to alumna Tamoya Christie (Ph.D. in Economics '11) in her report, "Consumer's Share of Georgia's General Sales Tax" (FRC Brief No. 234, May 2011). The remainder of Georgia's sales tax revenue comes mainly from business purchases, with a smaller amount from purchases by nonprofit organizations and nonresidents.

Christie estimates the proportion paid by consumers using data provided in the Consumer Expenditure Survey (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). She contends that her methodology allows "for a more accurate approximation of taxable consumer purchases."

Christie examines the consumers' share of sales tax revenue at a time when some economists argue against taxing non-consumer purchases made by businesses. They believe this would lead to

tax pyramiding, where a single product is taxed more than once – when it is purchased by a retail business and again by the consumer.

"State policymakers may want to look at this data to see the possible extent of tax pyramiding, and how the sales tax can be improved to better target the final purchase of consumer goods," says Christie. In addition, she says, businesses can use this information as an argument for lobbying against input taxes that are levied on merchandise, materials and parts that businesses purchase for use in their operations.

Christie wrote the brief while a student at AYSPS. She now lectures at the University of the West Indies. Download a copy of the report at aysps.gsu.edu/frc/5548.

Tax retail sales OR general consumption?

TAX REFORM RESEARCH SUGGESTS ADVANTAGES, DIFFICULTIES

LIKE MANY AMERICANS, Georgians are voicing their demands for fundamental tax reform. Many are calling to replace the current retail sales tax with a proportional tax on consumption. In response, the Georgia General Assembly recently considered the idea of a general consumption tax.

The idea has many advantages, says Professor Mark Rider. Yet it would be a complicated system, difficult to administer and most likely face the inertia of the status quo. He analyzes the implications of fundamental tax reform in “Can Georgia Adopt a General Consumption Tax?” (*FRC Report 235*, June 2011).

A general consumption tax holds a number of advantages, says Rider. “You get a broader tax base than with the current sales tax; you tax services; and if done correctly, there is no cascading,” (a tax-on-taxes problem that plagues retail sales taxes).

“The virtue of a broad-based consumption tax is that it doesn’t tax the income from savings and investment, thus creating incentives to save and invest, which grow the economy. People have more capital to work with, they are more productive, and they make higher wages as a result. It should be win-win.”

That may sound like an easy solution, he continues. Then he peels off a number of concerns. Administering a consumption

tax at the state level would be a massive headache. And it doesn’t address taxing e-commerce, which is eroding the sales tax base of Georgia and many other states.

Then there is the question of imports. “If goods are leaving Georgia, they should be exempt from the consumption tax in order to create a level playing field, and imports into the state should be taxed. But we don’t have tax authorities at our borders. Establishing such tax outposts would interfere with interstate trade, which is unconstitutional,” he says.

“There are other issues, even if you just marginally change the balance between the state sales tax and the state personal income tax. For example, if you itemize deductions at the federal level, you would deduct either the state income tax or the sales tax paid. Most people in Georgia deduct their personal income tax for federal purposes. Shifting the balance between the two taxes in favor of the sales tax would increase the taxpayers’ total state and federal tax burden, because the federal deduction of the state income tax would be smaller, while the sales tax would be greater.”

Despite these issues, Rider believes a general consumption tax might



Mark Rider

work in Georgia – if all states and the federal government adopt the same system. “Short of that, I don’t think there is a practical way to do it,” he says.

Download the report from the list at aysps.gsu.edu/frc/5548.

Despite size, deficits and debt

Technology, citizen access may improve the federal budget process

The federal budget process has evolved in the last century from a fragmented, legislature-directed system focused on fiscal control to a more centralized, executive-driven process focused on policy, according to Professor Katherine Willoughby and Paul Benson, associate director of the International Center for Public Policy. They examine this process in “Program Evaluation, Performance Budgeting and PART: The U.S. Federal Government Experience” (*ICePP Working Paper*, May 2011).

Despite the highly charged politics of the federal budgeting process, the U.S. legislative and executive branches have exhibited a consistent and common thread of concern for improving government performance and a desire

to inject more rationality via measurement and evaluation, the authors find. However, establishing a direct link between and among performance measurement, program evaluation and final appropriations is an elusive goal.

“The budget’s sheer size, the dramatic change in the nature of federal expenditures – from predominantly supporting government administration to funding transfer payments to individuals – ups the ante of the politics of the budgeting process,” says Willoughby.

The paper provides a historic overview of federal budgeting and budget reforms and concludes with predictions about budget reform and the roles

of evaluation and performance measurement.

“Technological advancements will have significant effects,” says Willoughby. “The ability to store, analyze and present data will invite greater public consumption and interpretation of the federal budget, which in turn will impact citizen demands on the president and Congress regarding budget results.”

Download the report at goo.gl/Ma5sA.



Was the Atlanta Empowerment Zone effective? *Fiscal Research Center report finds mixed results*

THROUGHOUT THE MID-1990s AND 2000s, the federal government awarded communities across the United States funds to help revitalize economically distressed and impoverished areas. The Empowerment Zone (EZ) program allowed local governments to provide grants and tax incentives to help increase employment, reduce poverty and improve overall quality of life.

One such zone was a section of Atlanta that covered approximately 10 square miles surrounding downtown from the west, south and east.

In *FRC Report 230*, “The Atlanta Empowerment Zone: Description, Impact, and Lessons for Evaluation” (March 2011), assistant professors of economics Rachana Bhatt and Andrew Hanson examine the Atlanta EZ program to determine its impact.

Using census data, the authors compare socio-economic changes that occurred in the Atlanta EZ to those that occurred during the same time period in four large southern cities and

areas in Atlanta that did not receive EZ status. They find that the Atlanta EZ experienced lower employment growth relative to that found in cities such as Nashville or other comparison areas. Also, poverty reduction in the Atlanta EZ was not strikingly different than that found in the comparison areas.

“It is difficult to judge the effectiveness of the EZ program in Atlanta because these comparison areas are only suggestive of what would have happened to Atlanta in the absence of the program,” Bhatt and Hanson conclude.

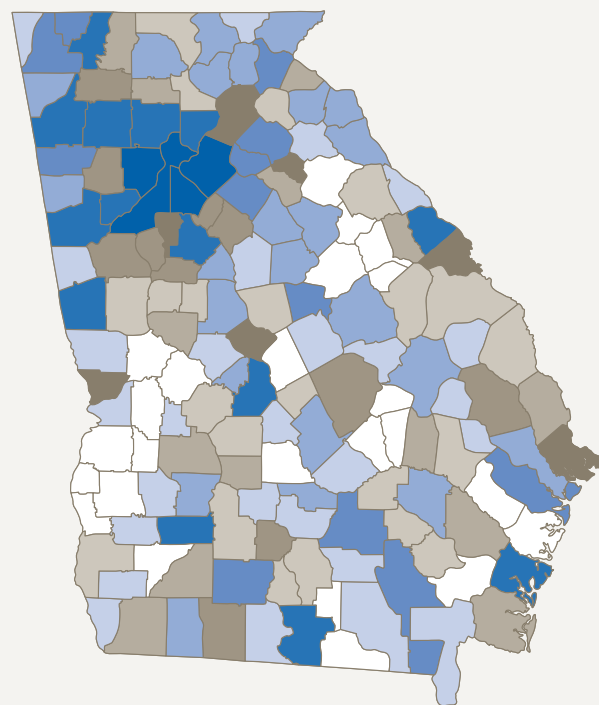
Despite not finding a definitive answer as to the program’s effectiveness, the results can be helpful to policymakers, says Bhatt. The study provides policymakers new information they can use in structuring future EZ programs to better evaluate their effectiveness.

Download this report at aysps.gsu.edu/frc/5548.

Where the jobs are

Two new policy briefs produced by the Fiscal Research Center, *FRC Briefs* 245 and 246, provide snapshots of employment across Georgia. Using establishment data from the Georgia Department of Labor's 2009 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages and NAICS codes, the briefs report on the number, type and quality of jobs (based on average wages paid) in every Georgia municipality and county and the percentage of total state employment in each.

Authors are Associate Professor Carolyn Bourdeaux, assistant director of the FRC, and alumnus Zachary Hawley (Ph.D. in Economics '12). Download the policy briefs at aysps.gsu.edu/frc/7460.



LEGEND

GEORGIA COUNTIES – NUMBER OF JOBS

110-1,075	5,875-8,940	46,695-104,625
1,075-2,200	8,940-14,425	104,625-565,000
2,200-3,935	14,425-24,845	
3,935-5,875	24,845-46,695	



Are business tax credits good policy?

Policymakers consider business tax credits powerful allies in the race for economic development.

Georgia offers more than 30 unique business income tax credits. Although several states liberally use these tools to promote job growth or advance specific income-generating activities, little research has been done to evaluate their effectiveness.

Detractors call tax credits poor tax policy, citing studies that question whether they have any effect on business decisions. Supporters point to the challenges they help address, such as interstate competition, a shallow pool

of related industries, skills training and firm mobility.

In “Creating a Better Business Tax Credit” (*FRC Brief No. 226*, 2011), Senior Research Associate Laura Wheeler and Professor David Sjoquist examine the arguments for and against business tax credits. They outline criteria and factors that should be considered in determining when – or even whether – to apply a business tax credit. They also show how to optimally design these credits and measure their effectiveness by examining benefits, costs,

and whether they achieve the desired objectives.

“State policymakers need to consider whether tax credits or direct appropriations are the best way of encouraging certain desired behavior,” the authors conclude. “If the purpose of the credit is not targeted to any one industry, or the credits are not particularly effective in achieving the goal, then the best option may be no credits at all, but lower tax rates.”

Download this report at aysps.gsu.edu/frc/5548.

Global advisors

*ICePP
working
papers
advance
sound
fiscal policy
country
by country*

Economists, researchers, policy officials and students seeking a better understanding of fiscal policy in developing countries will find it in the Working Paper Series published by the Andrew Young School's International Center for Public Policy (ICePP). The series is a comprehensive collection of articles focusing primarily on fiscal decentralization, local governance, tax policy, public budgeting and fiscal management in the global context.

ICePP research articles are written by AYSPS faculty and other associated scholars and housed on IDEAS at RePEc (Research Papers in Economics), a large nonprofit database that distributes the research for free.

"The Working Paper Series has helped us to build bridges with scholars and policymakers all over the world," says Regents Professor Jorge Martinez-Vazquez, ICePP director. "When I talk to officials or academics from foreign

countries, I find that they visit our website regularly to get ideas and solutions from our working papers."

As many scholarly journal articles can take up to a year (or more) to be published, the Working Paper Series makes relevant information immediately available. Established in 1997, its primary objective is to disseminate academic research and findings quickly that will stimulate discussion, expand knowledge, instill optimal practices and build public sector capacity around the world.

Topics can range from restructuring urban governance to the economics of excise taxation, and new articles are added regularly. Here are a few:

- In "Explaining Property Tax Collections in Developing Countries: The Case of Latin America" (Cristian Sepulveda and Jorge Martinez-Vazquez) explains a problem common in developing economies – and particularly severe in Latin



How fiscal
decentralization
may impact poverty

The trend toward fiscal decentralization began in earnest in developing nations at the end of the 20th century. Sweeping changes brought about by the collapse of communism ushered in democracy and a new optimism toward the elimination of poverty. Many policy experts believed that an increase in local government control would improve opportunities for marginalized citizens and generate a new equality in these countries.

It's not that simple, according to visiting Assistant Professor Cristian Sepulveda and Regents Professor Jorge Martinez-Vazquez. In their study, "The consequences of fiscal decentralization on

America – in which the property tax does not always become a productive revenue source, and local governments do not gain the fiscal autonomy required to realize the benefits of fiscal decentralization.

- In “Taxing Soft Drinks” (Roy Bahl) reviews the practice of levying an excise tax on soft drinks in sub-Saharan African countries and evaluates this practice against theoretical norms for levying an excise tax. The question is whether such taxes are justified or discriminatory and impose a welfare cost on the country.
- In “Sub-national Revenue Mobilization in Peru” (Gustavo Canavire-Bacarreza, Jorge Martinez-Vazquez and Cristian Sepulveda) attempts to identify the main factors behind the poor revenue collection performance of sub-national governments in Peru and proposes several policy reforms to improve collection performance while maintaining a sound revenue structure.

The International Center for Public Policy provides academic and professional training, applied research and technical assistance in support of sound public policy and sustainable economic growth in

poverty and income equality” (*Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 2011), they find that while fiscal decentralization does significantly impact the two, poverty may actually increase in some countries. Income inequality declined in countries where the central government controls 20 percent or more of the economy.

“Countries that decentralize very fast have more problems getting rid of poverty,” Martinez explains. “We speculate that some governments and regions may have a higher acceptance of poverty, so they spend less money on it. At the same time, decentralization seems to be helping with income

“The Working Paper Series has helped us to build bridges with scholars and policymakers all over the world.”

REGENTS PROFESSOR
JORGE MARTINEZ-VAZQUEZ
ICePP director



developing and transitional economies around the world. The Working Paper Series is an extension of that work. Articles in the series are available at ideas.repec.org/s/ays/ispwps.html.

distribution, possibly because the government is encouraging growth and entrepreneurship.”

The results provide vital information for agencies like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the U.S. Agency for International Development, which are tasked with aiding countries in fiscal decentralization and eliminating poverty.

Martinez cautions that the speed of decentralization must slow. Otherwise, he adds, “What you are doing with one hand, you are undoing with another.”

Download the research at ideas.repec.org/p/ays/ispwps/paper1002.html.

Low adoption of wage tax credits suggests further evaluation

The federal Employment Zone tax credit, which encourages businesses in distressed communities to hire residents of those areas, is the largest employer-based wage tax credit in terms of dollars claimed, measuring nearly \$250 million in 2002. But how well does the program reach its targeted population?

“Earlier research had focused on the number and types of firms claiming these tax credits,” says Associate Professor Andrew Hanson. In “Utilization of Employment Tax Credits: An Analysis of the Empowerment Zone Wage Tax Credit” (*Public Budgeting & Finance*, 2011), he compares national estimates from the Internal Revenue Service against population data from the census and finds that at least 3.5 percent of the population that was eligible was claimed under the EZ wage credit in 1999.

“Use of this credit is similar to other employer-claimed wage credits, despite their added restrictions,” he says. To understand why, he suggests further research. “The ever-expanding role that employment tax incentives in general play in policymaking begs a more complete evaluation.”

Find the article at goo.gl/LveRW.



New study: Four-day school schedule improves math and reading performance

"Get Schooled" with Maureen Downey, 1 March 2012

Mary Beth Walker, dean of the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University, has just published [a working paper] looking at four-day school weeks and their impact on elementary school students.

Her study offers a surprising conclusion: The adoption of a four-day school week had a positive and often statistically significant relationship with performance in both reading and mathematics.

The study estimates the impact of the four-day school week on student achievement using fourth grade reading and fifth grade mathematics test scores in Colorado; more than a third of Colorado districts have adopted four-day schedules. Walker co-authored "Does Shortening the School Week Impact Student Performance? Evidence from the Four-Day School Week" with Mark Anderson (Montana State University).

According to the authors: "The four-day school week is associated with an increase of over seven percentage points in the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the math achievement tests, and this result is estimated with precision. This represents roughly a 12 percent increase from the mean test scores for schools on traditional schedule."

While not as pronounced in reading, the shortened week still had a positive estimate of more than three percentage points. The study states: "For math, we find that the biggest share of the improvement comes from the students formerly classified as partially proficient. ... As a result, we see a large and statistically significant increase in the percentage of students scoring at the proficient level. For reading, the only statistically significant results occur in the lowest and the highest categories."

Why?

The study suggests that the shorter week improves student attendance. Parents are also more likely to schedule appointments on the day off, so fewer students miss class for medical or dental appointments. The four-day schedule permits flexibility in the event of weather-related school cancellations; schools can reschedule missed days without increasing the length of the school year.

The authors cite other research that teachers find that the four-day week cut out wasted time and forced them to focus their instruction more successfully. In some districts, the day off is devoted to teacher planning and collaboration. The authors say many school districts have reported fewer teacher absences after switching to the alternative schedule.

The study concludes: "In a time of tough budget situations for most public school systems, a variety of cost-saving measures have been adopted. To relieve financial pressures, a growing number of smaller and more rural school districts are switching from the traditional Monday through Friday school week to a four-day weekly schedule. One concern, however, is that student academic performance may be compromised by such a switch. The results presented in this paper illustrate that academic outcomes are not sacrificed under the four-day week; in fact, we provide some evidence that math and reading achievement scores in elementary schools actually improve following the schedule change. The math results in particular are robust to a number of alternative specifications and checks."

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Urban trails & childhood obesity

Broad policies are no panacea

CHILDHOOD OBESITY IS A NATIONAL HEALTH CRISIS.

One-third of U.S. children are overweight, increasing their risk for diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The economic costs are significant, and experts believe this generation may have a shorter life span than their parents.

Government and business alike have taken notice, developing and promoting products and services – ranging from healthier foods to programs that educate and increase physical activity – to combat obesity. First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move!” campaign promotes national awareness of healthy living.

All of these approaches sound sensible, but some actually miss the mark. “Before we enact any major policy decisions, we need to fully understand the realities,” says Associate Professor Rusty Tchernis. He co-authored “Effects of the Built Environment on Childhood Obesity: The Case of Urban Recreational Trails and Crime,” forthcoming in the *Economics of Human Biology*, with doctoral student Xilin Zhou, Robert Sandy and Jeff Wilson (Indiana University-Purdue University) and Gilbert Liu (Indiana University).

Tchernis and his colleagues analyze how the urban environment, particularly the presence of recreational walking trails and crime near a child’s home, can affect childhood obesity and body mass index. Using data on trails and violent crimes in Indianapolis combined with diagnostic data from children’s clinic visits between 1996 and 2005, they find that trails within a quarter mile of home have a beneficial effect on children’s weight in higher-income neighborhoods, primarily among older boys. But these benefits depend on the level of crime nearby; in fact, the presence of a trail near a violent crime area appears to add to a child’s weight.

“If you have a walking trail next to a child’s house in a good neighborhood, that is associated with reduced weight,” says Tchernis. “But if the trail is used for criminal activities, especially if the child has a long trail nearby, children are less likely to go outside.”

The study adds to a growing body of literature on childhood obesity, but Tchernis and his colleagues emphasize that none of the many different policies they discuss is the panacea. “Walking trails make perfect sense, but what makes sense isn’t always the most effective policy in reality. We must consider unintended consequences before setting broad policies.”

Tchernis, an expert on childhood obesity, has conducted research on school meals, food stamps and the effects of year-round school calendars. His earlier study on school breakfasts found that children who eat breakfast at school as part of The School Breakfast Program weigh less than those who don’t.

“Many things we think we know might not be true. For example, there are differences between calories, depending on the source. Calories from fat are not the same as calories from sugar,” he says.

There is one universal truth, Tchernis acknowledges. “Weight is easy to gain, but difficult to lose. The best way involves changing your lifestyle. That’s why I look at childhood obesity – the goal is to prevent weight gain instead of having to reverse it.”

Find additional working papers at aysps.gsu.edu/working-papers/2012.

Rusty Tchernis in one of the City of Atlanta’s urban parks, above

LATINO IMMIGRANTS MORE LIKELY TO COMMUTE



A study exploring the relationship between immigrant worker communities and commuting in six major metropolitan areas – Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Seattle and Washington, D.C. – reveals comparatively low levels of individual car use and increased use of alternative means of reaching the workplace, such as public transit and carpooling.

“Travel Behavior among Latino Immigrants: The Role of Ethnic Concentration and Ethnic Employment” (*Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2011) was written by Assistant Professor Cathy Yang Liu and Gary Painter (University of Southern California).

Liu finds that Latino immigrant workers living in concentrated ethnic enclaves and employed in professional fields dominated by Latinos are likely to eschew single-person car commutes in favor of alternative transportation modes.

Additionally, differences in travel behavior were observed between city cores and inner- and outer-ring suburbs, underscoring the importance of access to public transportation closer to workers’ homes and jobs. Availability and proximity facilitate increased reliance on alternate transportation among this population.

The travel modes adopted by these workers offer examples of alternative transportation approaches that can help alleviate metropolitan areas’ growing traffic pains, says Liu. Projects launched by major cities to improve the quality and accessibility of public transportation networks should also take immigrant workers’ travel patterns into account if they hope to accommodate the needs of a diverse range of worker populations.

The article is available at jpe.sagepub.com/content/32/1/62.

Creative industries follow

Throughout the past half century, cheaper land and the promise of less congestion lured major industry away from central U.S. cities. Workers and customers alike raced to the suburbs, and industries like manufacturing followed, decentralizing their operations.

While this process was playing out, one group appeared to cling to the cities: the creative class. Artists, musicians and professionals tightened their grip on intown galleries, clubs, theaters and museums. Over time, city officials

began to see creative industries as engines of metropolitan growth.

In their paper, “Are central cities more creative? The intra-metropolitan geography of creative industries” (*Journal of Urban Affairs*, 2012), Assistant Professor Cathy Yang Liu and doctoral candidate Ric Kolenda seek evidence that the creative class is an economic panacea for central city growth. And if the answer is “yes,” is it possible to replicate the process in multiple metropolitan areas?

The authors use data from *County Business Patterns Special Extracts* (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development) in three industry categories: information; professional, scientific and technical services; and arts, entertainment and recreation. Examining 40 of the top 101 U.S. cities from 1998 to 2001, they discovered the creative class is actually decentralizing. Preliminary data from the mid-2000s follow the same trend.

“Most surprising was the variety of the diversity of trajectory,” says Liu. “Each city behaves differently,” confirming there is no one-size-fits-all model.

“This is among the last patches of centralization, and it is starting to catch up

A better way to grade



Tim Sass

New teacher productivity measures examined

"Recent research consistently finds that teacher productivity is the most important component of a school's effect on student learning," write Professor Tim Sass and Douglas Harris (University of Wisconsin–Madison) in "Skills, Productivity and the Evaluation of Teacher Performance" (*W.J. Usery Workplace Research Group Paper Series*, 2012). "However, relatively little is known about what makes some teachers more productive than others in promoting student achievement."

A possible explanation is that researchers have not been measuring the characteristics that truly affect teacher productivity, they suggest.

Using a sample of teachers and school principals from 30 schools in a mid-size Florida school district, the authors estimate the relationship between a variety of teacher personality traits and productivity. They also test how well prior student scores and principal evaluations predict future student achievement.

Estimates of teachers' contributions to student achievement are at best weakly correlated with readily observable characteristics like attainment of advanced degrees. This finding indicates that other factors such as teacher intelligence, subject knowledge, teaching skills, motivation and enthusiasm may be relatively more important in determining teacher productivity.

They also find positive associations in principals' evaluations and teachers'

estimated contributions to students' test scores. Yet their findings suggest principals are better at identifying the least productive teachers than those who are best at raising student test scores. "Thus, principal evaluations would appear to be more valuable in retention decisions than in allotting rewards under a performance-pay system," they write.

Download the paper at goo.gl/QECBh.

Where's the bias?

Finding a better measure for teacher training and school achievement

Millions of dollars in federal grants rest on how well states demonstrate their success in raising student achievement scores and developing effective teachers and principals. A provision in the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund requires states to improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs and to publicly report the data for every teacher credentialing program in their state.

In "Where You Come From or Where You Go? Distinguishing Between School Quality and the Effectiveness of Teacher Preparation Program Graduates" (*W.J. Usery Workplace Research Group Paper Series*, 2012), Professor Tim Sass joins Kata Mihaly, Daniel McCaffrey and J.R. Lockwood of RAND in looking at the feasibility and implications of controlling for school contextual factors in comparing teacher preparation programs. They also discuss the implications of their results for policymakers.

Retrieve this paper at aysps.gsu.edu/working-papers/2012.

march to suburbs

with the other decentralization trends," Kolenda adds.

Download the article at goo.gl/UWLHB.



The most important crime

“Awesome burden of homicide” creates unique stressors for police

model to account for the nature and dynamics of stress within law enforcement. This approach is flawed, according to Associate Professor Dean Dabney, doctoral student Shila Hawk-Tourtlot, Heith Copes (University of Alabama, Birmingham) and Richard Tewksbury (University of Louisville) in “A Qualitative Assessment of Stress Perceptions Among Members of a Homicide Unit” (*Justice Quarterly*, 2011).

“A more reasonable approach assumes that the source and form of the stressors are influenced significantly by the nature of the police work in question and the organizational context within which the work occurs,” they write. They use inductive ethnographic methods – field observations – to examine stress within a metropolitan homicide unit.

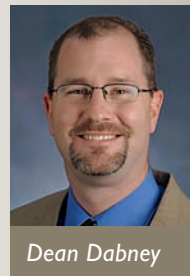
Dabney logged about 300 hours of field work with 26 homicide officers, riding with investigators on duty, interacting in the squad room and in social settings, and conducting interviews.

The bureaucratic elements of law enforcement have important, negative impacts on performance, the authors find. “Conceptually, the stresses experienced by homicide investigators can be reduced to the issues of responsibility, uncertainty and scrutiny.”

This research makes it feasible to develop practical methods and instruments for assessing and monitoring stress among homicide investigators. “Such an endeavor is critical for maintaining high-quality investigations. If investigators are identified as experiencing high levels of stress, they may be less likely to function effectively and efficiently,” the authors conclude.

To read the article, go to goo.gl/4UjUl.

The traditional research approach used to explain how first responders experience and respond to stress has led to a “one-size-fits-all” conceptual



Dean Dabney

Is elder a crime?

Definition matters

As Baby Boomers settle into their senior years, Americans are taking a better look at how its culture treats the elderly. Their looming presence makes it essential that researchers understand the dynamics and agree on definitions of care. Yet criminologists and other social scientists have traditionally shied away from studying elder mistreatment.

In “The Neglect of Elder Neglect as a White-Collar Crime: Distinguishing Patient Neglect from Physical Abuse and the Criminal Justice System’s Response,” (*Justice Quarterly*, 2011), Professor Brian Payne, Anita Blowers (University of North Carolina-Charlotte) and

YES in my backyard

Home values rise when a school district decentralizes

Smaller school districts apparently offer major curb appeal, according to a study by Associate Professor H. Spencer Banzhaf and Garima Bhalla (University of North Carolina). Their findings, reported in “Do Households Prefer Small School Districts? A Natural Experiment” (*Southern Economic Journal*, 2012), suggest that households value school district decentralization as shown by rising housing values.

In April 2000 the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) – which includes the city of Los Angeles and 23 additional municipalities – was divided into 11 mini-districts. In comparing the changes in real estate prices before and after the breakup

announcement, the authors find that LAUSD-area real estate prices increased at a greater rate than nearby control districts.

“Against a background of nine percent housing price appreciation in the Los Angeles area during 1999-2001, LAUSD prices increased by an additional 1.5 to 2.7 percentage points,” they write.

Previous studies have suggested that many urban school districts are too large to manage efficiently, with per-pupil costs increasing when there are 15,000 or more students in a school district. (For comparison, Atlanta Public Schools reports 55,000 students and neighboring DeKalb County Schools reports 100,000.)

“Our study looks at this issue in a different way,” says Banzhaf. “Instead of reexamining school budgets, we look at what citizens think about this issue. And we did that with the ultimate test: how people ‘voted with their feet’ after a reform to split up a large school district.”

Find more at goo.gl/ZNwNH.

“neglect”

graduate student Daniel Jarvis argue that the lack of a common definition for elder neglect may lead to significant harm, or the possible death, of nursing home patients. Payne chairs the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology.

Using data from *Medicaid Fraud Reports* published by the National Association of Attorneys General, the authors analyzed 252 cases of elder maltreatment in order to distinguish elder neglect from elder abuse.

Their results indicate that many neglect cases are never investigated due to a combination of uncertainty and lack of cooperation among social organizations. Therefore, criminal behavior may continue unchecked.

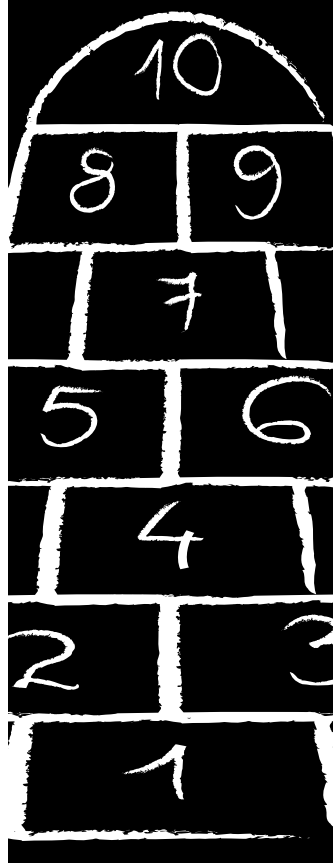
“When most people talk about ‘elder neglect,’ it is about fiscal or financial neglect,” says Payne. “But elder abuse can be physical, financial and emotional. The law has good definitions of what is considered neglect, but in reality the application of those standards is not always clear.”

Payne’s research contributes to the ongoing dialogue among agencies serving the elderly. Given a common language, social and criminal justice systems will work from the same playbook.

The article is available at goo.gl/aEukB.



Strong ties = safer neighborhoods



“What makes some neighborhoods safer from crime than others?” Professor Barbara Warner and doctoral student Audrey Clubb offer an answer in their chapter for the *Oxford Handbook of Criminological Theory, 5th Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

For “Neighborhood Ties, Control and Crime,” the authors reviewed more than 20 years of theoretical and empirical research on the role of neighborhood social ties in providing informal social control – the actions neighbors take to prevent or stop inappropriate behavior – in preventing crime. They

focus on social disorganization, or how this control varies across neighborhoods.

“[Q]uestions regarding what neighborhood characteristics lead to the development of effective informal social control continue to drive contemporary social disorganization theory and research,” they write. “In particular, many questions remain with regard to the role of neighborhood social ties in providing informal social control and preventing crime.”

The authors discuss knowledge gaps that require further research and recommend that social disorganization theorists develop clearer policies, such as teaching communities when and how to intervene when inappropriate behaviors arise.

“We think there is much in the current literature on restorative justice, community justice and peacemaking criminology that can be informative in developing such programs that rely ultimately on strong neighborhood ties,” they write.

Their contribution to the new text joins two other chapters authored by Andrew Young School faculty: “General Strain and Urban Youth Violence” by Associate Professor Timothy Brezina and Robert Agnew (Emory University) and “Choosing Street Crime” by Richard Wright (University of Missouri-St. Louis) and Associate Professor Volkan Topalli.

Learn more at goo.gl/2rcQO.

Barbara Warner, above

U.S. News & World Report

2013

RANKINGS

of America's
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#12

NONPROFIT
MANAGEMENT

Sustainability & social enterprises

Social enterprises are relatively new.

The concept itself connotes a wide variety of activities and organizational forms, according to Professor Dennis Young and his co-authors in "The Dynamics and Long-term Stability of Social Enterprise," a working paper presented at the New York University Conference on Social Entrepreneurship in November 2011.

Beginning with the broadest definition of "social enterprise" – an economic venture operating in a market environment that is intended to be financially successful and self-sustaining while contributing to a social purpose – the study names a wide array of structural and legal forms, from profit-making businesses incorporating a social purpose to social cooperatives to complex combinations of nonprofits and for-profits under holding company or partnership structures.

Experience in the many varieties and legal forms of social enterprise is limited, Young and his colleagues note. This raises the question of how well they work, both short term and over the long term,

when issues of stability, survival and focus manifest themselves.

The authors use a metaphorical model of stability to examine long-term viability and use case studies to illustrate the "tensions and likely evolutionary paths associated with various arrangements," showing that some forms are sustainable while others are more likely to fail.

They find that governance arrangements, financial reward structures and regulatory regimes may help direct an enterprise towards sustainability over time.

The paper is authored by Young, the Bernard B. and Eugenia A. Ramsey Chair of Private Enterprise, Assistant Professor Janelle Bassett Kerlin, doctoral student Jung-In Soh and Simon Teasdale (University of Birmingham).



Dennis Young



Janelle Kerlin

Arts and sports



Measuring economic value despite limited market data

Economics has analytical options for measuring the impact of arts and culture, even in the most problematic cases. Bruce Seaman shows how in the chapter, "Economic Impact of the Arts," written for *A Handbook of Cultural Economics, Second Edition* (Edward Elgar, 2011). Described as "the definitive guide to cultural economics," the book comprises several chapters written by leading scholars, including Seaman, who has conducted more than 20 major economic impact studies on cultural and sports events and facilities.

For more about the book, go to goo.gl/C16lw.

Value INVESTMENT

Charting government's impact on nonprofit growth

Do nonprofits thrive when government collaborates, or do they fare better when government minimizes its footprint? In "Nonprofit Sector Growth and Density: Testing Theories of Government Support" (*Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 2012), Assistant Professor Jesse Lecy and David Van Slyke (Syracuse University) attempt to find the optimal relationship between the two sectors.

The authors conduct a large-scale empirical test of two of the most prominent nonprofit theories – government failure theory and interdependence theory – to determine which has a more favorable effect on the number of human service nonprofit organizations in a community. They test these theories using panel data for 331 U.S. metropolitan areas with populations of 50,000 or more.

Government failure theory emphasizes that nonprofit activities are substitutes for state programs. When government fails to provide a sufficient array of services for diverse communities, nonprofits step in to fill the gap. Interdependence theory stresses congruent goals for nonprofits and the state, where mutual dependency arises from the partnership.

The interdependence theory has a more favorable effect on the density of human services nonprofit organizations, according to the authors. In examining different sources of nonprofit revenue,

government-funded grants and contracts appear to have the largest effect on increasing the number of nonprofits in an area.

"Governments can, over time, become dependent upon nonprofit organizations to provide services... that may be aligned with public goals and priorities," they write. "At the same time, nonprofit organizations that are recipients of public funding can begin to rely on those monies and perhaps become dependent on this source of revenue."

Their finding calls into question the validity of conclusions from the last large-scale panel study of nonprofit density by Matsunaga and Yamauchi in 2004, which found support for the government failure theory. Lecy and Van Slyke suggest that because the data used in the earlier report was limited, the authors could not separate government funding from private donations and therefore did not attribute their results to the correct theory.

Testing the two theories simultaneously, Lecy and Van Slyke use a more detailed panel dataset. "We split apart important variables and defined geographic areas more effectively by looking at the nonprofit sector on a city level, whereas



Jesse Lecy

previous researchers looked at it on a state level," says Lecy.

The findings may be of great interest to cities that want to develop a robust nonprofit sector. "Nonprofits are important to cities for a variety of reasons," says Lecy. "The nonprofit sector is large and growing quickly. In the recent economic downturn, where for-profits laid off many employees, the nonprofit sector has added employees."

Find the article at jpart.oxfordjournals.org/.



Building for the arts:

The boom examined

A new report, “Set in Stone: Building America’s New Generation of Arts Facilities, 1994-2008” (Cultural Policy Center, University of Chicago, 2012), provides an in-depth analysis of the internal dynamics of the massive surge in cultural infrastructure

building projects that took place during this period.

Building in the arts between 1998 and 2001 grew faster than, or on par with, building in other sectors, particularly health and education, according to Professor Bruce

Seaman and his co-authors from the University of Chicago, the University of Texas and the National Opinion Research Center.

Relying on comprehensive data analysis supported by a series of individual case studies, the authors offer a number of far-reaching conclusions about the relative effectiveness of cultural infrastructure building projects. They address the industry landscape, investment determinants, feasibility and effects on communities.

The report also examines underlying reasons for the increased interest in cultural infrastructure that characterized this period, providing

insights into the social, political and economic developments that facilitated the 14-year, \$16 billion construction boom.

While factors such as the strengthening of the southern states’ economic position are unlikely to come as a surprise to readers, the report offers invaluable findings.

The economic consequences of the building boom ensure the report’s importance to policy experts and others interested in the effects of building large-scale cultural infrastructure.

Download the report at goo.gl/Ezlui.

A NEW approach TO evaluating NGOs

HOW DOES ONE JUDGE WHETHER A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGO) is improving lives or whether donors are getting the most bang for their buck?

Gauging the effectiveness of an NGO is challenging. It is difficult to quantify the success of efforts to foster cross-border communication between nations, provide vulnerable communities with educational infrastructure, and help citizens get more involved with environmental conservation projects – just a few types of NGO projects – straightforward economic terms.

Performance reviews, however, can help NGOs optimize their use of limited resources and remain viable in difficult economic periods.

Assistant Professor Jesse Lecy and his co-authors conduct a comprehensive review of non-profit effectiveness across three different literatures to distill lessons in “Non-Governmental and Not-for-Profit Organizational Effectiveness: A Modern Synthesis” (*Voluntas*, 2011).

In the article, Lecy, Hans Peter Schmitz (Syracuse) and Haley Swedlund (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen) develop a novel approach to establishing a common corpus of knowledge using citation-based links among articles that cross disciplinary lines to sift through large volumes of research. An electronic search algorithm guarantees the representative nature of the sample, eliminating researcher bias and focusing on citation frequency.

Lecy contends that this sampling method helped formulate a new multi-dimensional, cross-disciplinary model of NGO effectiveness that will further research and practice in this field.

Find the article at goo.gl/fnuk7.



Minimum wage rising

New research finds where higher rates are absorbed

About six percent of U.S. full-time hourly workers aged 16 and older earn the prevailing federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour or less. Among private sector hourly workers, the percentage rises to 6.5 percent. It is even higher for women and part-time workers, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010).

"The minimum wage is the most researched and debated policy issue in American labor economics," write professors Barry Hirsch, Bruce Kaufman and alumna Tetyana Zelenska (Ph.D. in Economics '11) in "Minimum Wage Channels of Adjustment" (IZA Discussion Paper, 2011). They conduct an empirical study to advance knowledge on two fronts: minimum wage empirical evidence and its implications for theory.

Using a unique multi-part data set collected from quick-service restaurants in Georgia and Alabama, the authors forego the prevailing minimum wage analysis to focus on "channels of adjustment," or the vehicles through which the hourly wage increases change the behavior of firms – in this case, hours, prices, turnover, training, performance standards and non-labor costs – and measure the impact on workers, consumers, owners and other agents.

Over three years (2007-2010) and across restaurants, the authors find that cost increases were absorbed through channels that included higher prices, lower profit margins, wage compression, reduced turnover and higher performance standards.

The study breaks ground in several areas: innovative data, the broad "channels of adjustment" framework, its finding of an employment impact statistically undistinguishable from zero, and a new explanation for the insignificant minimum wage employment effects to date. The authors also determine that in the short run, the evidence best clusters around the institutional/behavioral model and its emphasis on human-related adjustments and internal operations. They speculate that the standard competitive model can help explain longer-run effects not yet fully observed.

Of particular interest to policymakers, says Kaufman, is the finding that rising minimum wages were generally passed along and absorbed through many channels of adjustment.

Using a unique multi-part data set ... the authors forego the prevailing minimum wage analysis to focus on "channels of adjustment," or the vehicles through which the hourly wage increases change the behavior of firms



"The wage increases were reflected in the product price to consumers," he says. "Other channels included operational 'tightening up,' higher employee performance standards and work effort, new marketing programs to expand sales and compression of the internal wage structure.

"Additionally, an analysis of our interviews suggests that restaurants can maintain profit margins in good economic times by adjusting other channels, but in hard times these adjustments may be insufficient to prevent higher minimum wages from taking a bite out of profits, particularly in low-margin stores."

How Economics Shapes

New book puts scientific research under the microscope



APPROXIMATELY 75 PERCENT of the articles published in scientific journals are written by scientists and engineers working at universities and medical schools, where about 60 percent of all basic research in the United States is conducted, according to economics professor Paula Stephan.

The United States spends between 0.3-0.4 percent of its gross domestic product on research and development in public universities and medical schools, which in 2009 represented almost \$55 billion, or approximately \$170 per person, she writes in *How Economics Shapes Science* (Harvard University Press, 2012).

In the book, Stephan describes research costs and the incentives that produce scientific research in public institutions. She shows how universities, medical schools and their faculty

respond to incentives such as the doubling of the budget of the National Institutes of Health between 1998 and 2003 and the building spree it created in the early 2000s, when construction and renovation costs for biomedical research facilities at U.S. medical schools accelerated from \$348 million annually to \$1.1 billion.

“This is a marvelous book – lucid, cogent and lively, full of fascinating anecdotes and news about what university science costs, who pays for it and who benefits,” writes economist Richard Freeman of Harvard University. “Paula Stephan saw science as an economic enterprise long before other economists did, and she’s written what will be the definitive book for years to come.”

Stephan, named a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science earlier this year, brings a keen understanding of the ongoing cost-benefit calculations made by individuals and institutions as they compete for resources and reputation.

Her research shows how universities offload risks by increasing the percentage of non-tenure-track faculty, requiring tenured faculty to pay salaries from outside grants, and staffing labs with foreign workers on temporary visas. She shows that with funding tight, investigators pursue safe projects rather than less fundable ones with uncertain but potentially path-breaking outcomes. She also illustrates how ever-lengthening apprenticeships, the scarcity of permanent academic positions and the difficulty of getting funded are creating increasingly dismal career prospects for younger science graduates.

The book highlights the growing gap between the science haves and have nots – especially the vast imbalance between the biomedical sciences and physics/engineering – and offers a persuasive vision of a more productive, more creative research system that would lead and benefit the world.

Paula Stephan with her latest book, above

Science

Book review, interviews and Stephan's writings about the book have appeared in *Insider Higher Ed* (goo.gl/QPQxa) and the world's leading science journals, including *Science* (goo.gl/5rGfW) and *Nature* (goo.gl/YGeUn), for which she was also invited to write the commentary, "Research efficiency: Perverse incentives" (goo.gl/WIfUE).

Find more information at goo.gl/6crOg.

— Amelia "Molly" Atlas, senior publicist at Harvard University Press, contributed.

Status and science: **What's in a name?**

A Nobel laureate's affiliation with a biotechnology start-up firm preparing for an initial public offering (IPO) signals the firm's quality to potential investors.

This connection arguably lowers investor risk at a time of high uncertainty, according to Professor Paula Stephan and her co-authors from the Georgia Institute of Technology, Matthew Higgins and Jerry Thursby, in the article, "Conveying quality and value in emerging industries: Star scientists and the role of signals in biotechnology" (*Research Policy*, 2011). In time, as other measures of the firm's quality become available and the industry matures, the value of this signal diminishes.

The study is the first to examine the dynamic nature of signals, such as scientific status, and the role they play in IPOs of technology-focused firms during the different stages of an emerging industry's evolution.

"First window firms with a Nobel laureate affiliate realize greater IPO proceeds in the amount of \$24 million," the authors find. Yet in the later, second window, "the amount of money raised is not significantly different between Nobel and non-Nobel firms."

Find the article at goo.gl/s854y.



Calculate employment changes online

"Let's use the Atlanta Fed Jobs Calculator; to reach an unemployment rate of 5.5 percent within four years — four years! — we would need 179,000 jobs a month."

PAUL KRUGMAN, *The New York Times* (5 March 2012)

Paul Krugman and CNBC are among those who have discovered the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's online Jobs Calculator. Designed by Adjunct Professor Julie Hotchkiss, a research economist and policy advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, this easy-to-use tool "calculates the next employment change needed to achieve a target unemployment rate after a specified

number of months" in the United States, as described on its site.

"The Federal Reserve spends a lot of time forecasting inflation levels, GDP growth and the unemployment rate," says Hotchkiss. "The calculator was developed as an internal tool to help us quickly determine whether the implications of these forecasts for employment growth seemed reasonable."

It has since become a powerful education tool, helping teachers illustrate the important relationships among the unemployment rate, labor force participation and employment, she says.

The calculator's simple elegance and utility are best conveyed by its use. Go to www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/calculator/index.cfm.



Georgia small business staying power examined

Small businesses = big impact IN GEORGIA

MANY ECONOMISTS AND POLITICIANS HAVE described small businesses as the driving force of the U.S. economy. In 2009, 90 percent of all private businesses in Georgia were small businesses (establishments with 25 or fewer employees).

In “Impact of Small Business on the Georgia Economy” (*FRC Brief 237*, October 2011), senior researcher Laura Wheeler and Julia Namgoong (University of California, Berkeley) use data from the Georgia Department of Labor and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to show the contributions of small businesses in Georgia. They find that in 2009, small businesses employed more workers than large businesses (establishments with more than 500 employees), accounting for 32 percent of total employment in the state.

“Policymakers need to know who the employers are, and the role small businesses play in the state’s economy,” says Wheeler. “They need to know the factors that are influencing economic development in Georgia.”

Out of 12 regions examined, Southern Georgia has the highest percent of small business-related employment (slightly more than 40 percent); the Atlanta Regional Commission region has the lowest at about 24 percent. Although present in a wide range of industries – from agriculture and mining to finance and insurance – they dominate the real estate and rental and leasing industry. The authors also find that small business wages are not as high as those in large businesses, but they are higher on average than medium-sized establishments.

For the full report, go to aysps.gsu.edu/frc/5548.

What factors into whether a new business thrives or fails? Alumna Tamoya Christie (Ph.D. in Economics '11) and Professor David Sjoquist set out to answer the question in “New Business Survival in Georgia: Exploring the Determinants of Survival Using Regional Level Data” (*Growth and Change*, March 2012).

The study looks at 65,352 Georgia businesses that started between 2001 and 2004. Using data from the Georgia Department of Labor, the authors measure and test several factors that have proved important to the likelihood of firm survival in other regions.

For Georgia’s new businesses, establishments located in more economically developed counties have an improved chance for survival. Firms with the greatest likelihood of failure include those starting with five employees or less, those affiliated with a multi-establishment firm (i.e., one company with different locations) and those facing strong competition.

Approximately 14 percent of Georgia start-ups failed after one year, the authors find. By the end of the third year, 37 percent had failed, and only 44 percent were still in existence at the end of the study.

“[It is] important for local policymakers to know what specific factors affect new firm survival so as to be able to design policies and programs which will facilitate the overall success of new businesses,” the authors write. This knowledge will help with development policy and entrepreneurship promotion.

Find the article at goo.gl/e7JIH.

Banks, more than stock markets, speed capital growth

In theory, banks have long been considered more effective than stock markets at funding business investment in capital (e.g., expanding production facilities and buying new machines), although both are important. Since earlier studies focus on the effects of banks and stock markets on overall economic growth, associate professors Felix Rioja and Neven Valev

decided to study the relationship of banks and stock markets with capital accumulation.

In “Financial structure and capital investment” (*Applied Economics*, 2012), the authors use panel techniques to test a broad sample of 62 countries to investigate how banks and stock markets affect capital investment.

They find that financial structure does matter for

Gay rights march on

Studies document social and political trends



After a long period of inertia, support for same-sex marriage is on the rise. In his May 2012 interview with Professor Greg Lewis, *The Washington Post's* Ezra Klein wrote that "different polls...show that support for same-sex marriage has increased by 16 points since 2004."

"In 2008, I published an article saying we haven't seen any movement on same sex marriage ever," Lewis told Klein. "But that was using data a few years old. If you look back at the numbers now, you can see that support really began

to take off in 2004." Lewis estimates support had reached 46 percent by the end of 2011 – up from 30 percent in 2004.

Lewis, who was appointed chair of the Department of Public Management and Policy on June 1, has researched public opinions on gay rights for more than 20 years, witnessing the evolution as gays stepped out of the closet and into the mainstream.

In "The Friends and Family Plan: Contact with Gays and Support for Gay Rights" (*Policy Studies Journal*, 2011), Lewis states that the percentage of Americans who report knowing lesbians, gay men or bisexuals (LGBs) has risen from approximately one-third of the population in 1983 to two-thirds or three-quarters of the population in 2010.

Gay rights advocates accept the contact hypothesis – the idea that coming out to straight friends and family members increases acceptance of and support for gay rights. But the impact is difficult to measure, says Lewis, because "if LGBs come out primarily to people they expect to be accepting...the repeated finding that people who know LGBs are more likely to support gay rights could be overstating the impact of coming out."

Using individual level data from 27 national surveys and controlling for a range of variables including demographics, religion and politics, he finds that across the board – even with specific groups such as those who deem homosexuality immoral – people who know LGBs are much more likely to support gay rights.

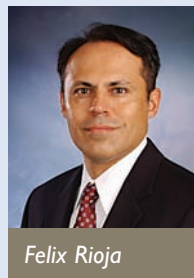
Lewis explores another common perception in "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Voters in the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election" (*Politics & Policy*, 2011). In the last several elections, LGBs have overwhelmingly voted for the Democratic presidential candidate, but the reason was unclear: Are LGBs more liberal on a wide variety of policies, or was it because the Democratic Party has been better on LGB-related policies?

His analysis of a Harris online survey conducted after the 2000 election confirms that LGBs are much more liberal than heterosexuals, on average. It also shows that social involvement in the LGB community and interest in LGB rights does increase liberalism, suggesting that LGBs use their relationships with other LGBs to construct a new political understanding of their world, says Lewis.

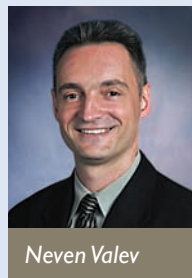
The articles are available at goo.gl/8Z5rY and goo.gl/HLMnB.

capital investment. "Specifically, countries with more bank-based financial systems have faster rates of capital accumulation," says Rioja.

"Policymakers in international organizations and domestic governments that have pushed for expansion in financial markets in the last 15 years have sometimes focused on stock market development," the authors report. "Our findings imply that if such efforts are also focused on the expansion



Felix Rioja



Neven Valev

and efficiency improvements in the banking sectors, the positive effects on capital accumulation in these countries may be even larger."

Find the article at goo.gl/LjVUf.

U.S. News & World Report

2013 RANKINGS

of America's Best Public Affairs Graduate Schools



**PUBLIC
MANAGEMENT
ADMINISTRATION**

Financial aid and graduation rates



New measures produce different results

“**S**tates spend a substantial amount of money on aid programs, both need-based and merit. ... But we know very little about the effects of aid programs, particularly regarding their effects on college completion,” write Professor David Sjoquist and AYSPPS alumnus John V. Winters (University of Cincinnati) in “Building the Stock of College-Educated Labor Revisited” (*Journal of Human Resources*, 2012).

Looking at a 2008 study in the *Journal of Human Resources* that found merit

aid programs in Georgia and Arkansas increased college completion by three percentage points, the authors revisit the results using a different data sample and alternative approaches for computing statistical significance levels. Their results suggest “statistically insignificant effects of merit programs on degree completion,” they write.

Merit-based financial aid programs typically promote three related goals necessary to increasing the college-educated labor force: improving access, promoting greater attendance in-state and increasing the numbers of graduates.

In the case of the third goal – more college graduates – “We cannot be reasonably confident that the true effects of these financial aid programs are statistically different from zero,” the authors conclude. Sjoquist is also the Dan E. Sweat Distinguished Chair in Educational and Community Policy and director of Domestic Programs.

Download this paper at ays.isu.edu/lab.org/research.

PUBLIC MANAGERS WILL BE REQUIRED

to make three fundamental changes in how they manage over the next decade, according to Professor Theodore Poister. Essentially, they will have to shift from strategic planning to strategic management and from performance measurement to performance management, and they must be able to link strategy and performance management more effectively.

In an article for the *Public Administration Review*, “The Future of Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: Linking Strategic Management and Performance” (2010), Poister reviews predictions made in 1942 for the future of public management and follows with new predictions. He then briefly examines public management within this context, offering ideas and case examples of making and integrating the transition from strategic planning to management.

“If the coming decade is as turbulent as the present, drifting into the future on somewhat predictable tides will not be an option,” he concludes. Public managers must be organizational entrepreneurs, able to create visions of success, develop strategies and mobilize support for pursuing those visions. They must understand and appreciate the value of basic management systems and commit to using them to effectively implement strategy and management performance.

The article is available at goo.gl/HrEBR.

Public administration in 2020

The storm ahead

Rapid loss of government workers reduces capacity to serve



Gregory Lewis

Aging baby boomers and the downsizing of government present the perfect conditions for a “tsunami” of retirements, especially in critical and top leadership positions. While various federal initiatives are in place to stem the consequences, the states are less prepared, according to Professor Gregory B. Lewis and Yoon Jik Cho, a former visiting faculty member, in “The Aging of the State Government Workforce: Trends and Implications”

(*The American Review of Public Administration*, 2011).

Using U.S. Census Public Use Microdata Samples and American Community Surveys, the authors examine the challenges and opportunities these retirements will bring, including decreased institutional memory, more “fresh blood,” rising diversity and higher educational levels. Their analysis finds that state government workers are older, on average, than any other sector; the retirement tsunami may hit states harder than the federal government.

The loss of experienced employees with deep institutional memory can reduce government’s overall learning ability, competence and strategic ability. “Retaining older workers and rehiring retirees can be a short-term fix, but at a cost to younger workers whose career advancement has been slowed by following the leading edge of the baby boom,” they write.

If states hire younger workers successfully, they can increase workforce diversity and better match skills to emerging demands. However, improving educational qualifications and skill matches will require more effort, say Lewis and Cho. “States will need to recruit effectively to obtain workers with the skills they need. Although the qualifications of state workers have risen steadily since 1980, experience levels are likely to fall over the next two decades.”

Improving human resource management will prevent the deterioration of workforce quality. Streamlining hiring processes, providing appropriate monetary and nonmonetary incentives



and paying more attention to employee training and development are initial steps in that improvement, their research suggests.

Five human resource issues are among the 10 most serious barriers to effective management: adequately rewarding outstanding employees, filling key staff vacancies, recruitment procedures, retention of experienced staff and disciplining/dismissing low performers. As states compete for more highly qualified young workers in the near future, they may need to increase their recruitment efforts and simplify their hiring processes. Also, pay competitiveness with the private sector and the image of state government are likely to become increasingly important.

In another article, “Turnover Intention and Turnover Behavior: Implications for Retaining Federal Employees,” (*Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 2012), Cho and Lewis continue their study of the retirement wave of Baby Boomers, examining ways to retain employees at the federal level, which they say is “nearly as crucial as hiring top-quality new people.”

Government may want to focus its retention efforts on employees who are newly hired and near retirement, they find. For the newly hired, salary, performance appraisals and the fair allocation of rewards matter most. For seasoned workers, managers need to increase the meaningfulness of their work, possibly through the enhancement of empowerment and employee participation.

The first article is online at arp.sagepub.com/content/41/1/48. abstract and the second at rop.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/05/12/0734371X11408701.abstract.

The three publics

New book examines the citizen/government relationship



Over several decades, public administration experts have fielded lively discussions about whether governments should call their constituents “citizens” or “customers,” but this debate has not been fruitful, says Professor John C. Thomas. Governments work best when they understand that their public fit under any of the three roles he outlines in his new book, *Citizen, Customer, Partner: Engaging the Public in Public Management* (M.E. Sharpe, 2012).

Thomas’ interest in public involvement began more than 30 years ago, when he studied how Cincinnati’s neighborhood organizations were involved with city government. “These groups grew out of the era of ‘citizen participation,’ a 1960s movement to involve citizens more in implementing public policies and programs.

“The idea of the public as a customer of government came along a little later, around 20 years ago. The idea was that government should be more market-oriented, with its residents the customers,” he says.

“The partner aspect, which arose most recently, has its roots in the idea that almost everything governments are involved in works only if citizens partner with government.” Thomas offers recycling as an example. “Recycling programs work only if people are willing to sort their garbage and take it to the curb.

“People still tend to think of themselves as customers of government. Governments must do their part, but more often people have to do their part, too, for government to work,” he says. “We have moved from manufacturing

to a service economy, and services are co-produced. People are partners and have to be more involved for services to be effective.”

Still, “citizen” remains the public’s most important role in government, Thomas believes. “Managers deliberate with the public to answer larger questions about what services should be provided or how government authority should be exercised,” he writes. “Members of the public then assume their arguably most important role as citizens, deliberating with public managers over the direction of government.”

In the book, Thomas further describes each role and the challenges it presents for public administrators and the public. He follows with recommendations for how to successfully work with the public in each role.

John C. Thomas at Atlanta City Hall, above

"Frequently, public managers must work with people in more than one of these roles at a time. They may expect to be treated like customers, in a courteous and helpful manner, even while they voice their opinions, and as citizens on the nature of public programs," he says.

This reality poses a dual challenge for public administrators.

"First, public managers need to understand the nature of the publics that they face, including what those publics expect in the different roles they assume as citizen, customer and partner:

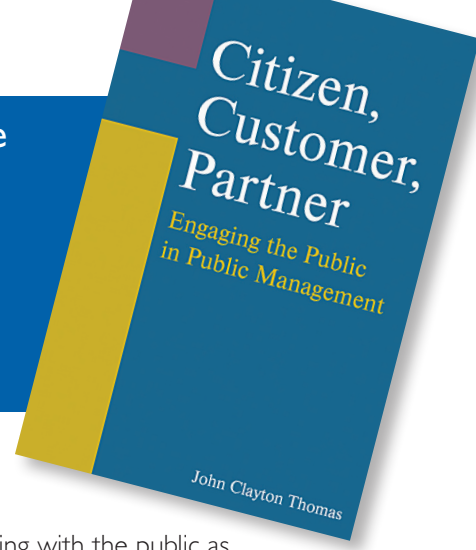
"As the second and more difficult part of the challenge, public administrators

"The partner aspect, which arose most recently, has its roots in the idea that almost everything governments are involved in works only if citizens partner with government."

need to know how to interact with the public in each of the different roles. Most generally, administrators need to be able to work as 'professional citizens' who seek 'power with' rather than 'power over' the citizenry. Thinking of themselves as professional citizens, public managers will be better prepared for

working with the public as citizens, customers, partners or as some combination of the three," he says.

Read more at aysps.gsu.edu/pmap/faculty/john-thomas.



Underpaid? Overpaid?

State and local governments pay lower salaries than private firms – or do they?

In the early 1960s, the Federal Salary Reform Act of 1962 and Executive Order 11073 set public-private pay comparability as official federal policy. Citizens and institutions have debated public salaries and how to measure "equal work" in the public and private sectors ever since.

"Pay comparability has proved exceedingly elusive to achieve," write Professor Gregory B. Lewis and Chester Galloway (Strayer University) in "A National Analysis of Public/Private Wage Differentials at the State and Local Levels by Race and Gender" (SSRN, 2011). Lewis chairs the Department of Public Management and Policy.

Analyzing census data from 1990, 2000 and 2001-2006, the authors question whether state and local governments pay premiums, whether pay patterns differ by race or gender, and how pay patterns have changed over time. They measure trends in pay parity over time and estimate national and state public-private wage differentials by race and gender.

Most state and local governments pay less than private firms in the same state for similar workers. "Holding constant education, estimated work experience, occupation, location, race and gender, state and local government employees earned four percent to six percent less than comparable private sector workers during the period studied. This is especially true for white men and Asians. Blacks and Latinos earn more in the public than private sector, though that conclusion does not appear to hold for blacks in the South," they find.

"All of these conclusions are limited by uncertainty about the appropriate way to estimate public-private pay disparities," they conclude. "The debate over how to measure 'equal work' in the two sectors, and how to handle occupations that are nearly unique to the public sector, continues."

Download a copy of this paper at goo.gl/ZqXld.



U.S. News & World Report

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**ANDREW
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Distributing environmental justice

*Economist suggests
policy improvements*

The finding of a “disproportionate environmental burden borne by the poor and by people of color” motivated President Clinton’s 1993 executive order that tasked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with directing federal resources and programs to these communities in a process known as “environmental justice.”

Yet nearly two decades later, the EPA could do more to consider the true distributional effects of its regulations, suggests Associate Professor Spencer Banzhaf in “Regulatory Impact Analyses of Environmental Justice Effects” (*Journal of Land Use and Environmental Law*, 2011).

The agency’s current position, which emphasizes providing assurances that its programs are not damaging to environmental justice, prevents it from making progress towards meaningful gains, he contends.

“Environmental justice continues to be overshadowed by efficiency considerations as embodied in benefit-cost analyses. The EPA’s environmental justice and benefit-cost policies and procedures

in rule-making can be improved by bringing them closer together; ultimately improving environmental regulations,” he writes.

Rather than keeping distributional considerations – like environmental justice regulatory actions – separate, Banzhaf suggests incorporating them into the analyses. Many regulations have hidden costs that affect the poor through higher product prices and housing costs.

Environmental justice advocates who focus only on the one-dimensional aspect of the environment, to the neglect of other aspects of welfare, may advocate policies that unintentionally harm the poor, Banzhaf suggests. Incorporating all distributional impacts into benefit-cost analyses can help overcome such unintended consequences.

Download the article at [yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/WPNumber/2010-08/\\$File/2010-08.PDF](http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/WPNumber/2010-08/$File/2010-08.PDF).

ASSIGNING NATURE'S VALUE

PROTECTION OF THE

world's natural capital has become an organizing principle in international environmental practice and policy, particularly in developing countries. In an attempt to place value on the consequences of ecosystem change, world leaders have reclassified these resources as "ecosystem services."

In developing nations, where reducing poverty and growing the economy are major concerns, use of the term "ecosystems services" (instead of "biodiversity") can lead to greater access to economic development funds from international organizations and governments. These funds are invested in a variety of popular conservation programs, such as national parks and reserve systems, decentralization of management authority to local people, or incentive programs for land owners.

Yet there is little evidence that these programs work, says Professor Paul Ferraro (with Kathleen Lawlor, University of North Carolina; Katrina L. Mullan, University of California-Berkeley; and Subhrendu K. Pattanayak, Duke University) in "Forest Figures: Ecosystem Services Valuation and Policy Evaluation in Developing Countries" (*Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, 2011).

Ferraro believes "ecosystem services" is fundamentally an

economic concept. However, ecosystem valuations are primarily conducted by "natural scientists, biologists and ecologists, who don't have training in economics – so they don't frame the questions correctly, or they get answers to questions that are not economically relevant," he says.

"On the evaluation side, it is difficult to estimate policy effects ... (There are) few well-designed studies that provide a coherent picture of ecosystem values or policy effectiveness.... There are two separate literatures, and neither gives the full picture.

"It does no good to tell me what the value of a hypothetical change in air pollution would be if I have no policies or programs that can actually achieve that," he continues. "Do the benefits outweigh the costs? This is what economics would consider the complete picture. And we don't have that yet."

The environment is a missing market on the global exchange, the authors claim. "We destroy the environment because its values are not reflected in markets," says Ferraro. "If I want a hamburger, I have to pay for it. If I want clean air, it is just there. If I didn't contribute to keeping it clean, I still get to use it."

Ferraro and his colleagues conclude that future research should integrate policy and research in studies that

combine nonmarket valuation and impact evaluation based on observed impacts in the context of real-world programs.

"We believe that investing scarce research funds in such an integrated approach will increase the likelihood that future research on ecosystem services will yield high-quality evidence of practical use to policymakers," he says.

PROTECTING FORESTS

Policymakers have designed many popular global policies for forest protection. One such initiative, called Payments for Environment Services (PES), encourages the beneficiaries of ecological services to pay the landowners who supply them, thereby creating incentives to protect ecosystems. PES has broad international support from scientists and policymakers. It is being used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and ecosystem degradation.

Costa Rica pioneered a PES program in the mid-1990s, paying landowners to protect four ecosystem services: mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, water protection, protection of biodiversity and protection of scenic beauty. PES programs proliferate in developing countries, but Ferraro says empirical estimates of their effectiveness are sorely needed.

Previous studies of Costa Rica's program have claimed large impacts, but Ferraro was skeptical. "Many people who sign up for these incentive programs are those who were doing the activity anyway," he says.

In "Do payments for environmental services reduce deforestation? A farm level evaluation from Costa Rica" (*Land Economics*, 2011), Ferraro, Rodrigo Arriagada (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile), Erin Sills, (North Carolina State), Subhrendu Pattanayak (Duke) and Silvia Cordero-Sancho (University of Michigan) estimated more modest impacts: the program increased forest cover over an eight-year period by 11 to 18 percent on participating farms.

"Policies should be based on the best available evidence of what works and under what conditions. Unfortunately, policies are often implemented without this evidence and without being evaluated to determine if they were as effective as envisioned. One of the strengths of the Andrew Young School is that we focus on generating and applying the best available evidence."

The articles are online at reep.oxfordjournals.org/content/6/1/20.abstract and le.uwpress.org/content/88/2/382.abstract.

Money Follows the Person analysis shows mixed results



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is helping states rebalance their long-term care systems through its Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Demonstration Program, which helps transition people with Medicaid from institutions back into the community.

Forty-two states and Washington, D.C., have implemented MFP to date, and the Affordable Care Act will expand it to more states through 2016.

In partnership with the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) has provided evaluation services to Georgia's MFP program, conducting follow-up interviews with participants, co-leading evaluation work groups and providing quarterly analyses.

A recent analysis conducted by GHPC research staff Kristi Fuller, Lillian Haley, Brittney Romanson and Glenn Landers, "Are Money Follows the Person Program Participants Better Off? A Pre- Post- Analysis of Quality of Life," examines the results of quality of life surveys administered prior to and approximately a year after the clients' transition from a nursing home or intermediate care facility to a community setting.

"Our analyses indicate that after transitioning to a community setting, participants are exercising more choice and control in their daily lives," says Fuller, "but they may have less access to the community, friends and family." These findings suggest policy implications in the areas of housing, social support and access to community, activities and work.

The GHPC recently received funding to continue its evaluation of the MFP program.

Empirical model builds better

Population health rankings at state and county levels are commonly used by policymakers, public health researchers and community leaders. These assessments are effective tools in communication, evaluation and prioritization, according to Associate Professor Rusty Tchernis and Samir Soneji (Dartmouth) in "Modeling Area-Level Health Rankings" (SSRN, 2012).

But the two most popular sources for these rankings – the state-level *America's Health Rankings* and *County Health Rankings* – share some key limitations, according to the authors. Neither source suggests whether differences in the rankings are meaningful, and both

use subjective rather than empirical measures to produce their rankings.

In their article, Tchernis and Soneji use an empirical approach, the factor analysis model, to estimate county-level health rankings in Texas and Wisconsin and estimate the statistical uncertainty in each. They suggest ways to summarize findings and offer guidance on using their approach to produce health rankings using health, behavioral, social and demographic data.

"The core motivation of our framework is a belief that health is a latent construct (cannot be measured directly) and observed variables are its manifestations," they write.

STRENGTH

IN NUMBERS

Economic analysis improves medical decision-making

IN OCTOBER 2010, the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Aging awarded a \$1.2 million joint research grant to professors James C. Cox of the Andrew Young School and John F. Sweeney of the Emory University School of Medicine to conduct joint research on discharge decisions at hospitals.

Two years later, Cox – whose work Sweeney has compared to that in the movie “Moneyball” – says he would like to see behavioral and experimental economists “go viral” in the health care profession.

“Unplanned readmissions cost Medicare about \$12 billion a year,” says Cox. “Hospital length of stay is a central factor in the increasingly important and complex interplay between the quality of health care delivery and medical costs. Our project joins experimental and behavioral economics with medical informatics to improve the hospital discharge decision in ways that will improve care and lower costs.”

Cox, the only economist named a Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar, directs the Experimental Economics Center. Sweeney is chief of the Division of General and Gastrointestinal Surgery at Emory. Co-investigators are Assistant Professor Vjollca Sadiraj, Associate Professor Kurt Schnier and David McClusky (Emory).

For the first part of the discharge project, Schnier applied econometrics on a large sample of patient records housed in Emory's medical data warehouse from which personal identification was removed.

“With this large database, we were able to identify measurable patient characteristics that are good predictors of successful and unsuccessful discharges,” says Cox. “We looked at reason admitted, diagnosis code, treatment, complications, lab tests and other information. We supplemented the medical data with census and demographic data like gender, race and age, their neighborhood, income and family structure. All of these things can affect whether a discharge is successful.”

They then surveyed Emory physicians. “We compared the criteria they say they use with what our economic analysis says are good predictors and found a difference. Our analysis shows there is something we can improve.”

The team is now going national, submitting short papers showing results and establishing priorities. They have also used the results to design decision support software that will aid doctors in making discharge decisions. Lab experiments with the software have begun.

“Physicians make discharge decisions based on what they learned in medical school, as a resident, in practice and talking to colleagues. This is a very small information basis on which to make this decision,” says Cox. “In contrast, about 50,000 patients are admitted to Emory Healthcare every year.

“You'd like to inform every individual discharge decision by the experience accumulated from the discharge of all of these patients,” he continues, “but that is impossible without development of new information technology. Our software will provide output that helps inform and guide doctors' decisions.

“Our purpose is to improve hospital discharge decision-making. Getting this right is important for the quality of the patients' care and medical costs.”

Find more about this joint project online at goo.gl/Wdk77.

health rankings

“Public health researchers consider a broad range of health, social, economic and environmental determinants when assessing population health and identifying areas of greatest need,” they conclude. “Population health assessments are often presented to policymakers and communities as ranks, given their ubiquity and ease of interpretation. Our framework ... allows direct ... comparison of geographic areas.”

Originally published in the W.J. Usher Workplace Research Group Paper Series, the article is available at goo.gl/OohjF.



NEW MODEL shows how employers impact the health insurance market

More than two-thirds of all U.S. workers are covered by health insurance at their place of work. This positions their employers as middle men in the health insurance market. However, little formal analysis had been conducted on how employers impact the types of insurance policies purchased.

"There was something important missing in the standard economic theory about health insurance, and we decided it was the employers," says Associate Professor James Marton. "Their role in the market is substantial."

In "Employer-Provided Health Insurance and the Adverse Selection Problem" (*Public Finance Review*, 2012), Martin and Marco Castaneda (Tulane University) present and analyze a model of employer-provided health insurance, showing how employers make the market work.

"The goal in insurance markets, in general, is to get both healthy and sick people to buy policies together, pooling

the risk," says Marton. "However, standard economic theory has said this won't work because rival insurance companies will try to cherry-pick healthy people out of the pool.

"Although the standard model doesn't consider the role of employers, they make the insurance market work in the United States," he continues. "By pooling employees together, employers make it easier for health care insurers to charge an average price, which is hard to do in the private market where sick people are more likely than healthy ones to purchase health insurance." The second condition, known as "adverse selection," leads to higher average premiums.

Marton admits some may find their idea obvious, but no one had put it into a theoretical model. "Our goal is to show how it is possible, despite commonly accepted theory, to bring both sick and healthy people together to create a functioning, healthy insurance market," he says.

The article is online at goo.gl/Uveyyn.

Trauma drama

Public funding inadequate for system in crisis

Georgia voters rejected a constitutional amendment in 2010 that would have imposed a \$10 annual fee on certain vehicles to support the statewide trauma care network. The measure, if approved, would have raised approximately \$80 million per year to help bolster the provision of trauma care in the state.

In "Funding Trauma Care in Georgia" (*Journal of the Medical Association of Georgia*, 2010), Associate Professor James Marton and Patricia Ketsche of Georgia

State University's Robinson College of Business explore the challenges of financing a system described as in crisis by a 2007 legislative study committee.

The number and distribution of hospitals and medical staff in Georgia's trauma system are insufficient to meet the state's needs. The trauma death rate in Georgia is about 20 percent higher than the national average, yet there are only four Level I trauma centers in Georgia, all north of Macon. "Low participation in the

network is largely attributable to the financial challenges resulting from such participation," they write, which at the hospital level includes emergency room overcrowding, uncompensated care, trauma system readiness and coordination of care.

Despite the state's subsequent appropriations for the Georgia Trauma Fund and other efforts like the "super speeder" fine passed in 2010, "Georgia's trauma network

participants will continue to face uncertain state support for the excess costs they incur," the authors write.

After describing factors that have impeded Georgia's trauma network financing, the authors conclude that the system will continue to face serious challenges. They note, however, that other funding proposals will be put forth in the future.



James Marton

Health Impact Assessments

Georgia Health Policy Center sets the bar high



A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) can determine what effects a pending decision within a development project, plan or policy will have on health and help mitigate any potential negative outcomes.

A powerful tool, HIAs help policymakers identify unintended health risks, find practical solutions and leverage opportunities to improve the well-being of the community in which the project or policy – often not health-related – is proposed.

The Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) has rapidly forged ahead in the HIA field. In the last year, GHPC researchers have:

- obtained coveted funding to conduct an HIA,
- secured contracts to provide training and technical assistance to a county health department, public health institutes and federal agencies,
- conducted trainings and webinars for organizations interested in learning the practice, often in collaboration with HIA experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
- shared their expertise at the inaugural National HIA Meeting in Washington, D.C.,
- helped establish North America's first national association for HIA practitioners, and
- recruited two HIA experts to join their team.

“Georgia actually has done more Health Impact Assessments than many other parts of the country,” says Holly Avey, associate project director with the GHPC.

In the metro Atlanta area, a GHPC-conducted HIA was important to the redevelopment plans for former Army base Fort

McPherson. GHPC also served on the advisory board for the HIA of the Atlanta Regional Commission's comprehensive Plan 2040.

In July 2011, GHPC was one of two sites named an HIA training center by the Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, through a cooperative agreement with the National Network of Public Health Institutes.

Additionally, the Health Impact Project, with additional funding from the Kresge Foundation, awarded the GHPC and Georgia State University's College of Arts and Sciences a grant to conduct an HIA in Galveston, Texas. The GHPC is partnering with Deirdre Oakley and Erin Ruel from GSU's Department of Sociology – specialists in the connection between housing and health – and the University of Texas Medical Branch's Center to Eliminate Health Disparities. The HIA will focus on strategies to replace nearly one-third of the 569 public housing units lost to Hurricane Ike in 2008, offering recommendations to the Galveston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

“Health Impact Assessments help build awareness of the connections between different sectors, to the point that people start to interact with each other proactively,” Avey says. “This tool is not always necessary. ... If health professionals are included in planning processes, then the goal has been achieved.”

For more information on the GHPC's work, please visit www.gsu.edu/ghpc.

GHPC staff Holly Avey and Beth Fuller, above

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SECOND HELPING

*Finding new ways to aid
grandparents raising children*

Nationally more than 1.6 million children are being raised by their grandparents, a dramatic increase over the past few decades. Nearly half of these custodial grandparents are African American, many of them low-income grandmothers.

As associate director of Project Healthy Grandparents, Associate Professor Deborah Whitley knows the problems facing this population well. Since 1996, she has helped the program strengthen the lives of custodial grandparents raising grandchildren from 0-16 years of age.

"Many children are being raised by grandparents because of neglect or abuse, or they were exposed prenatally to illicit substances," says Whitley. "All of these problems tend to exacerbate their risk for developing disabilities. If we don't address these issues early, it is much more difficult for them when they do get into school.

"Custodial grandparents often have their own issues and concerns raising children a second time around: financial and emotional. They are stressed. Many have health issues; obesity and diabetes and hypertension are prevalent."

Project Healthy Grandparents is designed to support this family group. It provides home-based care management – social workers and nurses – and access to support groups and other resources. It also provides assessments of grandchildren so they can access the appropriate services. When the tests are done, the team works with the grandparents to create a protocol that will best meet the needs of each child, says Whitley.

In "Perceptions of Family Empowerment in African American Custodial Grandmothers Raising Grandchildren: Thoughts for Research and Practice" (*Families in Society*, 2011), Whitley and Georgia State

University faculty members Susan Kelley and Peter Campos explore

empowerment practices and the effects of a strength-based community service program in serving this population. They find that their service intervention fosters empowerment among these caregivers, particularly in the areas of knowledge, advocacy and self-efficacy.

"When the children are four and five and first entering school, we work with the schools to ensure they provide the necessary services. This is where the empowerment piece comes in," says Whitley. "Grandparents may be totally unaware of the necessary services their grandchildren are entitled to receive through the school system. Also, they may not be aware of the behavior outcomes of their grandchildren based on their diagnoses; their expectations may not be appropriate.

"Our work is to empower them by informing them of the diagnosis and expected behaviors and how to relate to their grandchild. We help prepare them on questions to ask of the schools and prompt them to request services. If the child needs an individual attention plan, we help make sure they know to ask for the annual update."

Whitley and her coauthors' study is part of a larger ongoing research project designed to measure the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving the well-being of families in this situation. Examining empowerment issues among these grandparents is important, they believe, because the challenges of raising children are especially difficult for people who encounter various forms of social stigma and discrimination.



Deborah Whitley

Vicarious victimization may lead youth to offend

Research has clearly established a relationship between victimization and criminal behavior in youth. Assistant Professor Robin Hartinger-Saunders believes that a better understanding of the factors that lead to youth violence will aid in developing more effective prevention and intervention strategies.

In “Victimization, psychological distress and subsequent offending among youth” (*Children and Youth Services Review*, 2011), Hartinger-Saunders and co-authors Barbara Rittner and Thomas Nochajski (University of Buffalo), William Wieczorek and John Welte (Buffalo State College) and Christine M. Rine (Plymouth State University) offer new insights into the relationship between indirect victimization and offending among youth. Their research explores psychological distress – in the form of depression, anxiety, anger, dissociation, post-traumatic stress – as a mediating factor.

“In addition to examining long-term consequences of youth violence, it is necessary to dissect how we conceptualize victimization and subsequent offending in order to identify a more salient road map towards prevention efforts,” they write.

Pointing to the growing awareness of “vicarious victimization through exposure or by witnessing violence,” the authors take a comprehensive look at how violence impacts young people and how they respond. They do so by conducting a secondary data analysis of a cohort of 625 males (ages 16-19) and 625 family participants in the Buffalo Longitudinal Study of Young Men.

“Earlier studies consistently identify the relationship between exposure to

violence and psychological distress but don’t differentiate between the types of exposure. Our study attempts to fill that gap,” says Hartinger-Saunders. “We also expand the traditional definition of exposure to include events that young people are aware of in their neighborhoods, in their homes and among their peers.”

Their findings suggest a strong correlation between a young person’s indirect exposure to violence and future offending.

The article concludes with several suggestions for practice. “Successfully diverting offending behavior among youth involves identification of victimized

youth and appropriate interventions... which require the attention and collaboration of various stakeholders to successfully address victimization and psychological distress, and to divert subsequent offending.

“Approaches that focus only on a singular individual (blaming the youth themselves), the family (looking to a single parent’s lack of monitoring), a segment of professionals (expecting the school and/or police to gate keep alone) or a community (discounting neighborhoods as being beyond hope) are not effective.”

Read more at goo.gl/msjMw.

Addiction prescription *New social psychological principles promote interaction, change*

Workers Need to Know to Be Effective Facilitators of Change” (*Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*, 2011), Associate Professor Jill Littrell suggests this knowledge begins with the insights offered by advances in neuroscience.

Two decades of research examining brain mechanisms now help explain why some people are compelled to use drugs and alcohol. Littrell shows how these findings are leading to more effective ways to counter addiction and offers suggestions on interacting with substance-dependent clients in ways that promote change without provoking resistance.

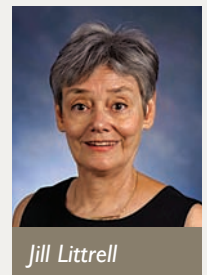
“All drugs that are compulsively used by people share the property of releasing dopamine from the specific brain structures that motivate behaviors of eating, having sex and bonding with loved ones. Through the process of becoming addicted, these structures are hijacked by the drug,” she says.

“It’s important to realize that these structures are not about enjoyment. People do not use because the drugs feel good, but because they are compelled to use. Treatment is about building environmental controls that will give back choices.”

Clients who decide to become sober are in the action and maintenance stages of change, attempting to avoid relapse. Littrell suggests building coping skills and self-regulatory capacity and developing contingency plans for handling a relapse.

Putting the principles for facilitating change into practice requires a concerned, caring social worker, she concludes. “The process of change is labor intensive for both the client and the social worker. There is no substitute for listening and getting to know the client.”

Find the article at goo.gl/AF662.



Jill Littrell

“Grandparents and schools have said to us, ‘if you weren’t here, on top of this, this child would have slipped through the cracks,’” says Whitley.

The article is available at goo.gl/3PbTy.

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