

Matthew Pecenco

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Doctoral Studies University of California, Berkeley
PhD, Agricultural and Resource Economics, Expected completion May 2020
DISSERTATION: “Essays in Development and Labor Economics”

PRIMARY FIELDS: Development, Labor

Professor Elisabeth Sadoulet
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Department of Agricultural
& Resource Economics

Professor W. Reed Walker
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Professor Edward Miguel
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Diana Lazo
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Prior Education UC Santa Cruz B.A. Economics, Computational Mathematics 2011

Research Papers “**Opportunities and Entrepreneurship: Evidence on Advanced Labor Market Experience**” (JOB MARKET PAPER) with Carlos Schmidt-Padilla and Hamilton Taveras [Working paper](#).

This paper provides the first experimental estimates of the effects of managerial labor market experience on career outcomes and subsequent measures of business creation. Exploiting randomized lotteries for government contracts to manage construction projects in the Dominican Republic, we show that after five years, individuals who win contracts are (i) 7.8 percentage points more likely to be owners of formal firms and (ii) less likely to be private-sector employees. Also, the firms created by lottery winners are more likely to hire and survive than those of non-winners. We use a selection model to recover the distribution of heterogeneity that drives selection into and returns from contractual experience. We find that workers select in based on potential gains and that the young drive firm creation. Since individuals with higher marginal benefits are willing to incur higher costs to participate, reducing the number of contracts allocated in the same event, or increasing application costs, would screen out applicants who may benefit from the program the least.

“**The Effects of Parental and Sibling Incarceration: Evidence from Ohio**” with Samuel Norris and Jeffrey Weaver

Revision requested by the American Economic Review. [Working paper](#).

Every year, millions of Americans experience the incarceration of a family member. Using 30 years of administrative data from Ohio and exploiting differing incarceration propensities of randomly assigned judges, this paper provides the first quasi-experimental estimates of the effects of parental and sibling incarceration in the US. Contrary to conventional wisdom, parental incarceration has beneficial effects on children, reducing their likelihood of incarceration by 4.9 percentage points and improving their adult socioeconomic status. We also reject large effects of parental incarceration on academic performance and teen parenthood. Sibling incarceration leads to similar reductions in criminal activity.

Research in Progress “**Online Market Access: Evidence from SMEs**” with Erin Kelley, Greg Lane, and Edward Rubin
“**Prison Quality**” with Samuel Norris and Jeffrey Weaver
“**Experimental Evidence on Consumer-side Discrimination**” with Erin Kelley and Edward Rubin

Teaching	UC Berkeley	ARE, <i>Undergraduate Development Economics</i> , Marco Gonzalez-Navarro	2018
	UC Berkeley	ARE, <i>Graduate Econometrics I</i> , Aprajit Mahajan	2017
Grants, Fellowships, and Awards	2019	Institute for Research on Labor and Employment Doctoral Fellowship, Innovations for Poverty Action Peace and Recovery Program, Sacheti Family Fellowship, Hung Wo Ching Travel Grant	
	2018	Weiss Program Family Fund Research Grant, Center for Effective Global Action 2018 Spring Development Challenge, Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries Exploratory Research Grant, UC Berkeley Graduate Division Summer Grant, National Science Foundation Economics Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab Governance Initiative Proposal Development Grant	
	2017	Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries Exploratory Research Grant, Center for Effective Global Action Levin Family Seed Grant, Weiss Program Family Fund Research Grant, Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy Grant	
	2016	Berkeley Economic History Lab Grant, US Department of Education Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship	
	2015	UC MEXUS Small Grant	
Prior Employment	UC Berkeley , Graduate Student Researcher (Elisabeth Sadoulet, Reed Walker, Edward Miguel)	2015 - 2018	
	Innovations for Poverty Action/Harvard Kennedy School , Project Associate/Research Fellow US Department of Energy (PNNL) , SULI Intern	2012 - 2014 2012	
Invited Talks	2019	North East Universities Development Consortium Conference (NEUDC)	
	2019	Western Economics Association International Annual Meeting	
	2019	Pacific Conference for Development Economics (PacDev)	
	2019	ASSA Annual Meeting	
	2018	World Bank Land and Poverty Conference	
	2018	All-CA Labor Economics Conferences (ACLEC)	
	2017	Empirics and Methods in Economics Conference (EMCON)	
	2016	Empirics and Methods in Economics Conference (EMCON)	
Languages	English (native), Spanish (advanced)		