

WORKING PAPERS

“Parents' Valuations of Cash vs. Near-Cash Benefits: Evidence from Supplemental Security Income”

(with Chris Earles), *Job Market Paper*

We examine the relative valuations of cash and near-cash benefits in a setting where the use of near-cash benefits incurs substantial administrative costs: the Supplemental Security Income program for children. We exploit a discontinuity in program approval time that affects whether children receive cash or near-cash benefits. Using Social Security Administration microdata, we assess the relative valuations of these two benefit types through parents' labor market responses to the income shocks they induce. We find that secondary earners in near-cash families work 10.8 percentage points more and earn nearly \$1,470 more during the year of approval. Our estimates suggest that each near-cash dollar is valued at only 65% of a cash dollar.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“The Effects of Remote Work on Workplace Disabilities and Federal Disability Claiming”

Remote work has transformed modern employment. Since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, almost 60% of workers who can telework work all or most of the time from home. This new mode of work raises questions about its impact on the incidence of workplace disabilities as well as on incentives to apply for federal disability benefits. I study these questions using a combination of administrative and public datasets, including California workers' compensation claims, Social Security Administration (SSA) data on Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income applications, and national survey data. I use dynamic difference-in-differences designs that either compare remote vs. non-remote occupations across years or exposure to remote occupations across states before and after the dramatic rise in telework. To isolate the effects of remote work from other pandemic-era shocks, I study impacts after the prevalence of the COVID-19 disease subsided. Knowing the effects of remote work on workplace disabilities and federal disability claiming is crucial for understanding how SSA programs and the diverse populations they serve are changing.

“Racial Disparities in the Social Security Disability Insurance Application Process”

(with Chris Earles)

Previous research has shown health differences between White and non-White beneficiaries two years after entering Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). However, it remains unclear whether these racial disparities stem from differences in disability propensity or from specific stages of the application process. We examine two distinct but related examiner decisions: (1) the requirement for additional medical tests and (2) the ultimate disability determination. Using Social Security Administration microdata, we first estimate racial disparities in these decisions. Next, we leverage the quasi-random assignment of applicants to examiners to estimate separate examiner fixed effects for White and non-White applicants. Using these fixed effects, we decompose the observed disparities into applicant characteristics and causal examiner effects. Finally, we examine correlations between the two examiner decisions to determine how various stages of the application process contribute to racial disparities in SSDI program participation.

PUBLICATIONS

Beaulieu ND, Chernew ME, McWilliams JM, Landrum MB, Dalton M, Gu AY, Briskin M, Wu R, El Amrani El Idrissi Z, Machado H, Hicks AL, Cutler DM. 2023. “Organization and Performance of U.S. Health Systems.” *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 329(4): 325-335.

TEACHING

TA for Master's Market Failures	Winter 2024
TA for Undergraduate Social Insurance and Redistribution	Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024
TA for Undergraduate Microeconomics with Calculus	Winter 2023
TA for Undergraduate Econometrics	Winter 2022

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Presentations

2023: ARDRAW Small Grant Program Webinar Series

Service

2023: UCSD Women in Economics Group Organizer

2021: UCSD Graduate & Professional Student Association Representative

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Analyst, Compass Lexecon, 2015-2017

OTHER INFORMATION

Citizenship: USA

Computer Skills: Stata, SAS, Unix, Python

Languages: English (Native), French (Intermediate), Mandarin Chinese (Intermediate)