

## **GEORGE ZUO**

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### **PLACEMENT DIRECTORS**

Prof. Guido Kuersteiner	<a href="mailto:gkuerste@umd.edu">gkuerste@umd.edu</a>	(301) 405-3493
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Prof. Nolan Pope	<a href="mailto:npope@umd.edu">npope@umd.edu</a>	(801) 995-9184

### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D. Economics, University of Maryland at College Park, expected May 2021  
B.A. Economics, Harvard University, 2013

### **FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION**

Primary: Public Economics  
Secondary: Labor Economics

### **DISSERTATION**

*Bridging Economic Disparities in America*

Committee: Prof. Melissa Kearney (Chair), Prof. Judith Hellerstein, Prof. Nolan Pope

### **JOB MARKET PAPER**

“Getting Beneath the Hood of Effective Place-Based Policies: Evidence from the Community Development Block Grant”

Growing spatial economic disparities across the U.S. have increased the need for effective place-based jobs policies. This paper seeks to uncover determinants of effective policies by analyzing the job impacts of thousands of spatially targeted investments made by local governments to spur economic development in low-income areas, funded by \$3-4 billion in annual block grants from the federal Community Development Block Grant. Using a hybrid approach combining synthetic control methods with traditional differences-in-differences, I find that census tracts receiving large place-based investments experienced a 13% increase in jobs within ten years, accompanied by negligible changes in home prices. The increase in jobs is driven by low-income workers living in close proximity to where investments occurred. Among the many activities funded by the CDBG, the most effective investments involved financial assistance to businesses or expenditures on buildings for commercial and industrial use. While the CDBG can only be used in lower-income neighborhoods, investments were more effective when deployed in neighborhoods that were comparatively less disadvantaged. I finally verify that block grants do not crowd out public spending and estimate that each dollar of block grant generates approximately three dollars of public spending.

### **OTHER RESEARCH PAPERS**

“Wired and Hired: Employment Effects of Subsidized Broadband Internet for Low-Income Americans,” forthcoming at *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*

“Suspending Suspensions: The Education Production Consequences of School Suspension Policies” with Nolan Pope, under review

“Constructing Moves to Opportunity: Evidence from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit” with Henry Downes and John Soriano, work in progress

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Instructor, Economics of Education Policy (undergraduate), University of Maryland, Summer 2020  
Instructor, Stata Bootcamp for Economists (graduate), Department of Economics, University of Maryland, Fall 2018

### **RESEARCH AND RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

Research Assistant, Prof. Melissa Kearney, University of Maryland, Feb 2017-July 2019  
Associate/Senior Associate, Deloitte, August 2013 – July 2016

### **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, 2018-2021  
Dean’s Research Initiative, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS), University of Maryland, 2020  
Faculty-Student Research Award, BSOS, University of Maryland, 2019  
Third Year Paper Award, Department of Economics, University of Maryland, 2019  
Graduate Summer Research Fellowship, BSOS, University of Maryland, 2018  
Melville J. Ulmer Graduate Fellowship, Department of Economics, University of Maryland, 2018  
Hilda Moskowitz Graduate Fellowship, Department of Economics, University of Maryland, 2017-18  
Abell Award in Urban Policy, 2017  
Thomas T. Hoopes Prize, Harvard University, 2013

### **CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS**

2020: Federal Communications Commission Economic Seminars Program, 2019: Southern Economics Association (invited), Association for Public Policy and Management Regional Student Conference

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Referee for *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*

### **LANGUAGES**

English (native), Mandarin Chinese (fluent)

### **COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS**

Stata, R, SAS, Python, SQL, VBA

### **REFERENCES**

Prof. Melissa Kearney	University of Maryland	<a href="mailto:kearney@umd.edu">kearney@umd.edu</a>	(202) 536-8878
Prof. Judith Hellerstein	University of Maryland	<a href="mailto:hellerst@umd.edu">hellerst@umd.edu</a>	(301) 806-1863
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