Information Session for Pre-Doctoral Fellows

October 2020
Our mission is to develop scalable policy solutions that will empower families throughout the United States to rise out of poverty and achieve better life outcomes.
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

From Jasmine, 7 years old, whose family moved to a high-opportunity area in Seattle

Thank You
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

- 2014: Geography of Opportunity
- 2015: Causal Effects Movers
- 2016: Revisiting MTO
- 2018: CMTO Initiated
- 2019: CMTO Release
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

Pre-Docs: Sarah Abraham, Shelby Lin, and Michael Stepner
The Geography of Upward Mobility in the United States
Average Income at Age 35 for Children whose Parents Earned $25,000 (25th percentile)

Note: Blue = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility
Chetty Hendren Kline Saez (QJE 2014)
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

Pre-Docs: Michael Droste, Benjamin Goldman, Jamie Gracie, Martin Koenen, and Joseph Winkelmann
The Opportunity Atlas

Chetty Friedman Hendren Jones Porter 2018
Household Income for Black Children of Low Income Parents

$17K

Dumont Avenue
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

2014
- Geography of Opportunity

2015
- Causal Effects Movers

2016
- Revisiting MTO

2017
- Opportunity Atlas

2018
- CMTO Initiated

2019
- CMTO Release

Pre-Docs: Nick Flamang, Jamie Gracie, and Sarah Merchant
Is Affordable Housing in Seattle Maximizing Opportunities for Upward Mobility?

Most Common Current Locations of Families Receiving Housing Vouchers
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

- 2014: Geography of Opportunity
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- 2018: CMTO Initiated
- 2019: CMTO Release

Pre-Docs: Sarah Merchant and Federico González
Fraction of Families Who Leased Units in High Opportunity Areas

Percent of Households Who Have Moved to High Opportunity Areas

Control: 16.8%
CMTO Treatment: 62.1%

Difference: 45.3 pp
SE: (4.9)

Bergman Chetty DeLuca Hendren Katz Palmer 2019
Destination Locations for Families Leased Units Using Housing Vouchers
From Research to Policy: Helping Families Find Opportunity

- 2014: Geography of Opportunity
- 2015: Causal Effects Movers
- 2016: Revisiting MTO
- 2018: CMTO Initiated
- 2019: CMTO Release
- 2020: CMTO Scale-up

OI Policy Team
H. R. 5793

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
JULY 11, 2018

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving such voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER MOBILITY DEMONSTRATION.

(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) may carry out a mobility demonstration program to enable public housing agencies to administer housing choice voucher assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)) in a manner designed to encourage families receiving such voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

(b) SELECTION OF PHAS.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish requirements for public housing agencies to participate in the demonstration program under this section, which

provide that the following public housing agencies may participate:
Opportunity Insights: Three Pillars

Reducing Segregation
Help Low-Income Families Move to High-Opportunity Areas

Place-Based Investments
Increase Upward Mobility in Low-Opportunity Areas

Improving Higher Education
Amplify Impacts of Colleges on Mobility
Organizational Structure: Three Branches

Raj Chetty, John Friedman, Nathan Hendren
*Directors*

**Operations**
- Kristen Watkins
  *Chief Operating Officer*
- Staff members

**Research**
- Professors
  *Principal Investigators*
- Sarah LaBauve
  *Predoc Manager*
- Pre-doctoral fellows
  + graduate students
  + other professors

**Policy**
- David Williams & Sarah Oppenheimer
  + Associates, analysts, interns
Life as a Predoc
Life as a Predoc

- Pre-docs are an integral part of the research process
  1. Process and analyze data
  2. Create figures and presentations
  3. Put together and help write/edit paper drafts
  4. Strong interaction with the PIs through weekly meetings and continuous iterations near project releases

- We are also part of the Harvard and general research community
  1. Access to the seminars occurring at OI and Harvard as a whole
  2. Can take classes for credit at a substantially reduced price or audit at Harvard/MIT
## Research Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>IRS</th>
<th>Headquarters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>Geography of Opportunity</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>Welfare Impacts, CMTO, Joint Work</td>
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Examples of Ongoing Projects

- Social Capital Project
  1. We aim to build a measure of social capital using actual social network data
  2. Examine its relation to economic mobility and other existing social capital measures
  3. Decompose social capital measure and its determinants
Examples of Ongoing Projects

- Social Capital Project
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- COVID Tracker
  1. Study the impact of COVID-19 on the US Economy
  2. Build macroeconomic indicators
Life as a Predoc - FRIENDS and FUN!

- We also celebrate with lab outings and parties! Bowling alleys, holiday parties, backyard BBQs with the PIs
- And between us and other econ RAs, we are also all FRIENDS and have fun hangouts :):)
Post Fellowship Life
What happens after your pre-doc?

- Most predocs go on to economics graduate programs

- Other predocs have gone on to other grad programs: law school, sociology, public policy, machine learning

- Economics PhDs also have a variety of options
  1. Academia
  2. Private sector: econ consulting, data sciences, economist
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>University/Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Abraham</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>MIT</td>
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<td>Trevor Bakker</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>Stanford University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Bell</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, Harvard University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Augustin Bergeron</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Political Economy and Government, Harvard University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaveh Danesh</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, UC-Berkeley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caroline Dockes</td>
<td>MPhil in Machine Learning and Machine Intelligence, University of Cambridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Droste</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, Harvard University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niklas Flamang</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, UC-Berkeley</td>
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<td>Robert Fluegge</td>
<td>Ph.D Candidate in Economics, Harvard University</td>
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<td>Jamie Fogel</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, University of Michigan</td>
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<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, Harvard University</td>
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<td>Charlotte Grace</td>
<td>M.Phil in Economics, University of Oxford</td>
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<td>Nikolaus Hildebrand</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, MIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Hoyle</td>
<td>MSc in Computational Statistics and Machine Learning, University College London</td>
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<td>Alex Jenni</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, University of Zurich</td>
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<td>Jesse Silbert</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics, Princeton University</td>
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<td>Sam Karlin</td>
<td>JD Program, Harvard Law School</td>
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<td>Ph.D Program in Political Economy &amp; Government</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Frina Lin</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Public Policy</td>
<td>Harvard University</td>
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<td>Shelbi Lin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Ruhm</td>
<td>Remote Monitoring Expansion Coordinator</td>
<td>Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Scuder</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>UC-Berkeley</td>
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<td>Priyanka Shende</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kamelia Stavreva</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>Columbia University</td>
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<td>Evan Storms</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>Stanford University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilbur Townsend</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Business</td>
<td>Economics, Harvard Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Wahlers</td>
<td>Ph.D Program in Economics</td>
<td>Stanford University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Winkelmann</td>
<td>Ph.D in Public Policy</td>
<td>Harvard Kennedy School</td>
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Things learned as an OI predoc

- Exposure to a wide variety of topics in economic research
- Technical skills - eg. Working with “Big Data”
- Big emphasis on presenting results visually to outside audiences
- A great community!
Application Materials

- Application flyer posted on the Opportunity Insights website

- Fill out the following two forms:
  1. Application form with general info through Google forms
  2. Application through Harvard’s hiring portal

- Submit following materials in the Dropbox:
  1. Resume/CV
  2. Cover Letter
  3. Writing sample (independent work preferred or clear indicator of contribution)
  4. 2-3 References whom we can contact (this is only for later stages and we will give notice)

- We can accommodate a need for expedited decisions and other extenuating circumstances; just let us know!
Application Process

- Resume review process begins after submitting all application materials.

- Selected candidates will receive a data task that they have 48 hours to complete:
  1. Though we prefer Stata, it can be in any programming language!
  2. Candidates have a two-week time frame to choose when they want to complete the task.

- Selected first-round interviews with one PI and two pre-docs:
  1. Most of the interview will be walking through a project that you’ve worked on, and thinking about different identifications and assumptions.
  2. An example about working on a team (since OI is all team-based!) ;)

- Final round interviews with PIs + Predoc Manager:
  1. Same questions and format as the first round interview, and the chance to meet all the PIs and any questions you may have.
Fall 2020 Application Timeline

- **Sept 18**: Applications open
- **Oct 16**: Applications close
- **Late October**: Stata task distributed
- **Early November**: Stata task due
- **Early-mid November**: First round interviews
- **Mid-late November**: Final round interviews
- **Mid-Nov Early-Dec**: Offers!
Thank You!

1-on-1 with the predocs
Meeting ID: 983 8870 1893
Password: Ol_predocs

Send any further questions to hiring.opportunity.insights@gmail.com!

Please fill out our survey! (link in the chat)

Ask us anything!