

Janjala (Pom) Chirakijja

Contact Information

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Academic Position

Monash University, Department of Econometrics and Business Statistics
Lecturer (Assistant Professor), 2018- Present

Research Interests

Labor Economics, Public Economics, Urban Economics

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University, 2018
Dissertation: Essays in Labor and Public Economics
Committee: Seema Jayachandran (Co-Chair) and Matthew Notowidigdo (Co-Chair), Lori Beaman, Jonathan Guryan
M.A., Economics, Northwestern University, 2014
M.Sc., Economics, London School of Economics, 2011
B.A. (Hons), Economics, University of Cambridge, 2010

Working Papers

“The Local Economic Impacts of Prisons”

This paper examines the local economic consequences of prisons using two complementary approaches. The first uses the openings of 230 prisons during the 1990s across the entire United States, and the second uses a quasi-experimental strategy that compares winning and rejected communities in prison site-selection competitions in Texas. I find that prisons decrease housing values by 2-4 percent and lead to substantial changes in neighborhood composition, specifically towards low socioeconomic status individuals. The negative housing value impacts are localized to the neighborhoods that are closest to the new prisons, while the economic benefits of prisons are spread across broader communities. In particular, counties where prisons opened experienced an increase in total employment driven largely by the jobs at the new prisons. Prisons thus fail to create substantial spillovers to other sectors or provide a major boost to local economies beyond the direct effect of prison employment. Lastly, I find that after the opening of a prison, local labor markets in treated counties are less responsive to macroeconomic shocks, consistent with the view that jobs at prisons are “recession proof.”

“Surviving the Winter: Inexpensive Heating Reduces Mortality”, with Seema Jayachandran and Pinchuan Ong

This paper examines how the price of home heating affects mortality in the US. Exposure to cold is one reason that mortality peaks in winter, and a higher heating price increases exposure to cold by reducing heating use. It also raises energy bills, which could affect health by decreasing other health-promoting spending. Our empirical approach combines spatial variation in the energy source used for home heating and temporal variation in the national

prices of natural gas versus electricity. We find that a lower heating price reduces winter mortality, driven mostly by cardiovascular and respiratory causes.

Other Papers

“The Stimulus Effect of the 2008 UK Temporary VAT Cut”, with Thomas F. Crossley, Melanie Lührmann and Cormac O’Dea, Proceeding of the 102nd Annual Conference on Taxation, National Tax Association, 2011.

Fellowships & Awards

Dissertation Year Fellowship, Northwestern University, 2017-2018
 Susan Schmidt Bies Prize (Best Third-year Ph.D. Student Papers Relevant to Economic Policy), Northwestern University, 2015
 Conference Travel Grant, Northwestern University, 2015
 Graduate Research Grant, Northwestern University, 2014
 Fellowship, Northwestern University, 2011-2012
 Robert Skerne Scholarship, St.Catharine’s College, University of Cambridge, 2008

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University, 2013-2017
 Economics of Developing Countries (Professor Lori Beaman), Winter 2017
 Experimental Economics (Professor Scott Ogawa), Winter 2016
 Money and Banking (Professor Richard Walker), Fall 2016, Spring 2016, Winter 2015, Winter 2014
 Introduction to Applied Econometrics (Professor Richard Walker), Fall 2015
 Business and Government (Professor James Hornsten), Spring 2014
 Introduction to Macroeconomics (Professor Richard Walker), Fall 2013

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Professor Lori Beaman, Northwestern University, 2014-2015
 Research Assistant, Professor Cynthia Kinnan and Professor Emily Breza, 2014-2015
 Summer Research Student, Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), London, 2009
 Research Assistant, Thailand Development Research Institute, Bangkok, 2008

Professional Activities

Referee for *Economic Development and Cultural Change*
 Presenter at the 1st Asian Workshop on Econometrics and Health Economics, Kyoto, December 2018
 Presenter at the 13th Meeting of the Urban Economics Association, New York, October 2018
 Presenter at the Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Graduate Student Workshop, San Diego, June 2017
 Organizer of the Applied Microeconomic Student Seminar, Northwestern University, 2015-2016
 Participant at the Becker Friedman Institute for Research in Economics Price Theory Summer Camp, University of Chicago, July 2015
 Presenter at the Italian Development Economist Association (IDEAS) Summer School in Development Economics, Garda, June 2015

Other Work Experience

The Boston Consulting Group, Bangkok, Associate, 2011-2012
 The Bank of Thailand, Bangkok, Intern, 2010

Languages

English (fluent), Thai

Computer Skills

STATA, ArcGIS, MATLAB, LaTeX