

MICHAEL T. CASSIDY

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ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Princeton University, School of Public and International Affairs, Center for Health and Wellbeing
Associate Research Scholar (2023-Present)
Postdoctoral Research Associate (2020-2023)

The Century Foundation
Fellow (2015)
Policy Associate (2014-2015)
Intern (2013-2014)

New York City Office of Management & Budget
Unit Head, Administration of Justice Task Force (2012)
Analyst, Social Services Task Force (2007-2011)

EDUCATION

Rutgers University, Ph.D., Economics (2020)
Princeton University, M.P.A., Economics and Public Policy, *with distinction* (2014)
University of Pennsylvania, B.A., Communication and Political Science, *summa cum laude* (2007)

RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS

Applied Microeconomics	Public Economics
Health, Education, and Welfare Economics	Urban Economics
Labor Economics	Econometrics

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL). Social Policy Research Initiative (2023).
\$100,000 grant for “The Impact of Permanent Supportive Housing for Individuals Exiting Prison”
With Mary Kate Batistich and William Evans

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL). Bay Area Incubator (2022).
\$49,990 grant for “Pre-Implementation of the San Francisco Trust Youth Initiative & Evaluation”
With Sarah Berger Gonzalez and Anne Farrell

National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship (2019)

\$27,500 grant for dissertation research related to education

Peter Asch Memorial Scholarship, Rutgers Economics (2019)

Prize for distinguished performance in applied microeconomics

Sidney I. Simon Research Award, Rutgers Economics (2018)

Prize for best second year research paper

Teaching Assistantship, Rutgers Economics (2016-Present)

Competitive departmental funding for teaching and research

Presidential Fellowship, Rutgers University (2015-Present)

Annual university-wide grant for exceptional doctoral students

Excellence Fellowship, Rutgers Economics (2015)

Competitive departmental grant for first-year graduate study

George H. Frazier Award, University of Pennsylvania (2007)

Award to graduating student-athlete with the highest grade point average

Kathleen Hall Jamieson Award, University of Pennsylvania (2007)

Award to graduating Annenberg School for Communication student with the highest GPA

Phi Beta Kappa, University of Pennsylvania (2007)

Liberal arts and sciences honor society

PUBLICATIONS & WORKING PAPERS

“The Effects of Legal Representation on Tenant Outcomes in Housing Court: Evidence from New York City’s Universal Access Program” (2023). *Journal of Public Economics*, 222, 104844. With Janet Currie.

Housing is one of the areas where it may be most critical for poor people to have access to legal representation in civil cases. We use the roll out of New York City’s Universal Access to Counsel program (UA) to assess the effects of legal representation on tenant outcomes, using detailed address-level housing court data from 2016 to 2019. The program offers free legal representation in housing court to tenants with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline. We find that tenants who gain lawyers are less likely to be subject to possessory judgments, face smaller monetary judgments, are less likely to have eviction warrants issued against them, and are less likely to be evicted. Lawyers have larger effects for tenants at higher risk of possessory judgment. Our results support the idea that legal representation in civil procedures can have important positive impacts on the lives of poor people.

"Improving School Attendance among Homeless Children: Evaluating the Attendance Matters Program" (2023). *Children and Youth Services Review*, 149, 106880. With Dan Treglia and Jay Bainbridge.

Absenteeism is a prevailing concern in American education, and students experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to high rates of school absenteeism. Despite this increased risk, we find no research in which the primary focus is assessing the efficacy of shelter-based programs that seek to reduce absenteeism among homeless children. Thus, we evaluate the Attendance Matters program, which sought to improve school attendance among homeless students in New York City shelters through interagency coordination, leveraging data to target scarce program resources, and employing

evidence-based social work practices. We use administrative data in a quasi-experimental study to evaluate the program's effects on school attendance and, secondarily, on outcomes of proficiency and stability. Findings suggest that the program resulted in reductions in days absent and the absence rate among K-8 students, though findings for secondary outcomes and attendance outcomes for high school students were inconsistent across model specifications. Results, which likely understate actual program effects, have implications beyond this setting, as they suggest that a low-budget program leveraging evidence-based practices and existing resources can impact this seemingly intractable problem. Education and homelessness policymakers should seek opportunities to test replication in additional settings.

“School Proximity, Attendance, Stability, and Achievement among Homeless Students” (2023). *Submitted.*

More than 1 million students in the United States experience homelessness annually. Among their challenges is getting to school. This paper uses novel administrative data and a natural experiment in shelter scarcity to assess the effects of school proximity. For the average homeless K-8 student, a 10-mile longer commute leads to 6-13 percent more absences, a quarter higher probability of changing schools, and a decline in math test scores of 0.03-0.11 standard deviations. A complementary difference-in-differences design reinforces the importance of distance. The prevalence of housing instability in public schools suggests broad policy relevance.

“Short Moves and Long Stays: Homeless Family Responses to Exogenous Shelter Assignments in New York City” (2020). *IZA Discussion Papers*, No. 13559.

Using an original administrative dataset in the context of a scarcity induced-natural experiment in New York City, I find that families placed in shelters in their neighborhoods of origin remain there considerably longer than those assigned to distant shelters. Locally-placed families also access more public benefits and are more apt to work. A fixed effects model assessing multi-spell families confirms these main results. Complementary instrumental variable and regression discontinuity designs exploiting policy shocks and rules, respectively, suggest difficult-to-place families---such as those that are large, disconnected from services, or from neighborhoods where homelessness is common---are especially sensitive to proximate placements. Better targeting through improved screening at intake can enhance program efficiency. The practice of assigning shelter based on chance vacancies ought to be replaced with a system of evidence-based placements tailored to families' resources and constraints.

“Breastfeed, If You Choose: Parental Context and the Long-Term Legacy of Lactation” (2020).

Despite consensus among medical authorities about the desirability of breastfeeding, causal evidence about its effects is scant. Using complementary empirical approaches and data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth spanning five decades, I investigate a comprehensive set of outcomes with greater breadth and continuity than previous work. On average, breastfeeding is associated with modest and persistent cognitive advantages from childhood through young adulthood—even after controlling for an extensive set of confounding forces. Accounting for breastfeeding duration strengthens these relationships and uncovers favorable labor market and fertility linkages as well. But there is no evidence for enduring health benefits. At the same time, a novel extended family fixed effects analysis comparing differentially breastfed siblings and cousins finds little association between breastfeeding and any outcome. These divergent results may reflect omitted variable bias in conventional estimates, but they may also be the consequence of considerable negative selection among the inconsistently breastfeeding families contributing to fixed effects identification.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“Evictions, Homelessness, and Mental Health: Evidence from Medicaid in New York City” (2023). With Janet Currie, Sherry Glied, and Renata Howland.

“Do Children's New Mental Health Conditions Spillover onto Parents and Siblings?” (2023). With Emily Cuddy and Janet Currie.
Slides: https://miketcassidy.com/files/chw_pres_feb23_2.pdf

“Prioritization of Homelessness Programming with the South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless” (2023). With Robert Collinson and David Phillips.
AEA Registry: <https://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/10324>

“A Randomized Controlled Trial on Permanent Supportive Housing for Individuals Exiting Prison” (2023). With Mary Kate Batistich and William Evans.
AEA Registry: <https://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/11260>
J-PAL: <https://www.povertyactionlab.org/initiative-project/impact-permanent-supportive-housing-individuals-exiting-prison>

“An Experimental Evaluation of Same Day Services for Public Transit Riders with Disabilities” (2023). With Ludovica Gazze and Christina Stacy.

“A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Cash Plus Program for Addressing Young Adult Homelessness” (2023). With Sarah Berger Gonzalez, Anne Farrell, and Matthew Morton.
J-PAL: <https://www.povertyactionlab.org/initiative-project/pre-implementation-san-francisco-trust-youth-initiative-evaluation>

“Understanding Homelessness Using Administrative Data: Evidence from Los Angeles” (2021).

“Childhood Running, Academic Performance, and Health” (2020).

OTHER RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Research Affiliations

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), North America, Invited Researcher (2022-Present)

University of Notre Dame, Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities, Faculty Affiliate (2021-Present)

NYU Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, Visiting Scholar (2020-2023)

Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), Research Affiliate (2020-Present)

Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence (CIDI), Office of the Mayor of the City of New York, Fellow (2017-Present)

USC Homeless Policy Research Institute, Research Committee Partner (2021-Present)

The Century Foundation, Fellow (2015-Present)

Selected Conference and Seminar Presentations & Participation

Princeton Center for Health and Wellbeing Spring 2023 Seminar Series. “Do Children's New Mental Health Conditions Spillover onto Parents and Siblings?” February 27, 2023.

2022 NBER Summer Institute. Law and Economics. “The Effects of Legal Representation on Tenant Outcomes in Housing Court: Evidence from New York City’s Universal Access Program.” July 27, 2022.

16th North American Meeting of the Urban Economics Association. Session 3I. Foreclosure and Eviction. September 30, 2022.

Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness 2022 Conference. Session 9B. - Housing Access, Homelessness, and Student Outcomes: Evidence from New York City. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” September 23, 2022.

NYU Furman Center, Spring Speaker Series. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” Virtual. March 7, 2022.

Opportunity & Inclusive Growth Institute, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. 2021 Fall Research Conference. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” Virtual. October 14, 2021.

Princeton University Princeton, Education Research Section. Spring 2021 Workshop. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” Virtual. March 10, 2021.

2021 Allied Social Science Associations (ASSA) Virtual Annual Meeting. Homelessness Session. “Short Moves and Long Stays: Homeless Family Responses to Exogenous Shelter Assignments in New York City.” January 4, 2021.

2020 APPAM Virtual Fall Research Conference. Housing, Neighborhoods and Children’s Health and Well-Being Panel. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” November 13, 2020.

2020 Virtual Meeting of the Urban Economics Association. Education II Panel. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” October 16, 2020. (*Nominee for Student Paper Prize*)

2020 NBER Summer Institute. Children’s Workshop. “A Closer Look: Proximity Boosts Homeless Student Performance in New York City.” Virtual. July 24, 2020.

10th European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association. London, UK. *Cancelled.* (2020)

2020 National Academy of Education/Spencer Spring Fellows Retreat. Virtual. (2020)

APPAM DC Regional Student Conference. Washington, DC. *Cancelled.* (2020)

National Academy of Education Annual Meeting & Fellows Retreat. Washington, DC. (2019)

Rutgers University, Department of Economics. Applied Microeconomics Seminar. October 25, 2019.

Rutgers University, Department of Economics. Applied Microeconomics Seminar. April 13, 2017.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Econometrics, Rutgers University, Summer 2017, Summer 2018

Teaching Assistant

Financial and Monetary History of the United States, Rutgers, Fall 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019; Spring 2020

European Economic History, Rutgers University, Fall 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

Personal Economics and Public Policy, Spring 2019

Economics of Taxation, Rutgers University, Spring 2018

Environmental Economics, Rutgers University, Spring 2018

Introduction to Macroeconomics, Rutgers University, Spring 2017

Public Policy Towards Business, Rutgers University, Spring 2017

Law and Economics Rutgers University, Spring 2017

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING

Data analysis for “Scoring States on Charter School Integration,” Report authored by Halley Potter and Miriam Nunberg, The Century Foundation, 2019.

“Subsidizing the Future: Landing Road Lessons Learned,” Report on the Homestretch Model of Homeless Shelter Development, Prepared for the Bowery Residents’ Committee (BRC), 2018.

SELECTED NON-ACADEMIC WRITING

“Wild Ride Through The Labor Market: Earnings Variability, Well-Being, & Assets Among Primary Earners in the United States, 2008-2013,” The Century Foundation (2016). Unpublished.

“A New Safety Net for An Era of Unstable Earnings,” (with Andrew Stettner and George Wentworth), The Century Foundation (2016).

“The Job Market Took a Vacation—So Why Can’t More Americans Do the Same?,” The Century Foundation (2016).

“Should You Buy Buying Happiness?,” The Century Foundation (2016).

“Fix for \$15,” The Century Foundation (2015).

“Where Are the Jobs?,” *Working Paper Series*, The Century Foundation (2015).

“Who Are the Unemployed?,” *Working Paper Series*, The Century Foundation (2014).

“Uncovering the Labor Market Recovery,” *Working Paper Series*, The Century Foundation (2014).

“Don’t Forget the Kinda Unemployed,” *U.S. News* (2014).

“Unemployment Rate Hides Who the Jobless Really Are,” *U.S. News* (2014).

“The Jobs Report in Black and White: The Hidden Bias in Hiring,” *The Fiscal Times* (2014).

“Unemployment at 5.8%? Here’s the Number that Really Matters,” *The Fiscal Times* (2014).

“Yeah, Why Are Those Bums Getting Paid So Much?,” *U.S. News* (2014).

“Time to Worry About Long-Term Unemployment,” *Real Clear Policy* (2014).

“Giancarlo Stanton’s \$325 Million Deal Isn’t as Rich as it Seems” *The Fiscal Times* (2014).

“Madison Bumgarner: Exhibit A in Baseball’s Screwball Salary System,” *The Fiscal Times* (2014).

“Inverting the Competition,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“Jesus Was a Keynesian,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“Vox’s Poor Measure of Food Affordability,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“What the Spurs Can Teach Us About Inequality,” *Real Clear Policy* (2014).

“How the World Cup Helps Us Make Better Anti-Poverty Policy,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“Going the Extra 30 Percent,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“The Death Swoosh,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“Hawking Yellen,” *Blog of the Century* (2014).

“Laying the Groundwork for a Post-Partnership Health Insurance Marketplace in Illinois,” (with co-authors), School of Public and International Affairs Graduate Consulting Project (2013).

“Welfare Welcome Mats: The Evidence on Welfare Magnets in the Post-Reform Era,” The Century Foundation (2013). Unpublished.

“The Intergenerational Asset Grab,” The Century Foundation (2013).

“Red State/Black State: Taking Fiscal Strength above the Bottom Line,” The Century Foundation (2013).

“The Time of My Life: Staten Island Native Mike Cassidy Shares His Experience Finishing The NYC Marathon Hand-In Hand With His Hero Meb Keflezighi,” *LetsRun.com* (2013).

“On Immigration, the Catholic Church Gets It Right,” *Real Clear Policy* (2013).

“After Boston: Run the Recovery,” *Running Times* (2013).

“America’s Submerged Welfare State,” *Real Clear Policy* (2013).

“Long Run Pain: A Staten Islander’s View on Why the Marathon Should Not Have Been Cancelled,” *LetsRun.com* (2012).

SEMI-PROFESSIONAL DISTANCE RUNNING

2012 U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials Participant
Staten Island Marathon Record Holder (2:18:52)
24th Place Overall & 11th American, 2016 New York City Marathon
18th Place Overall & 3rd American, 2016 Houston Marathon
22nd Place Overall & 4th American, 2013 New York City Marathon
11th Place Overall, 2012 Philadelphia Marathon
11th Place Overall, 2011 California International Marathon
22nd Place Overall & 6th American, 2010 ING New York City Marathon
Three-Time Staten Island Half-Marathon Champion (2011, 2012, 2013)
Two-Time Fred Lebow Manhattan Half-Marathon Champion (2014, 2018)
Champion, 2020 AEA 5K

PROGRAMMING AND SOFTWARE SKILLS

Stata, R, SQL, LaTeX, Mata, Gauss, Java, Git

INTERESTS

Sports, science, nature, comedy, pizza