María Medellín Esguerra

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2026–27 Economics Job Market Candidate

Fields	Applied microeconomics, education
Placement Director	Toru Kitagawa | toru_kitagawa@brown.edu
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Dissertation committee and references

Stelios Michalopoulos	**David Weil**	**Andrew Foster**
Professor of Political Economy	Professor of Economics	Professor of Economics
Brown University	Brown University	Brown University
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Education

09/2020 – Present	PhD Candidate in Economics Fields: Applied microeconomics, economic history and political economy Brown University – Economics Department
05/2021	MA Economics Brown University
10/2018	MA Economics Universidad de los Andes, Colombia
10/2016	BA Economics Universidad de los Andes, Colombia

Research

Career effects of violent shocks: Evidence from mass shootings in colleges and universities (Job Market Paper)
Presented at: Brown University Growth Breakfast (2025, 2026), NEEPC (2026)

Exposure to violence alters beliefs about world benevolence and safety, which could push people into the helping professions. I test this by examining the effects of mass shootings in US colleges and universities on graduates' career paths. Using data from 2 million LinkedIn profiles, I show that there is no evidence of human capital losses, but that exposed cohorts shift into healthcare. They are 13% more likely to enter healthcare degrees, gain 8% more experience in this sector and 5% more experience in empathy-distinct occupations. Teaching does not show this shift. Instead, students exposed to a shooting during an education degree are 15% less likely to be employed in education, and exhibit significantly lower attachment to empathy-distinct occupations. The effects concentrate among people already inclined toward mission-driven work, and their direction is consistent with which belief dominates: healthcare gains future providers, while concerns about safety push future teachers out of schools.

Radio for Progress: Lessons from a Large-Scale Media Education Program in Colombia (with Bruno Cardinale [Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona])
Presented at: Brown University Growth Breakfast and Applied Micro Lunch (2023, 2024), VII Congreso de Economía Colombiana (2024), Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Seminar Series (2024)

We harness archival records and full-count census data to evaluate the long-term impact of Radio Sutatenza, a nationwide adult education program in Colombia. Using a differences-in-differences cohort-level specification comparing individuals who were younger upon program arrival, we find no significant improvements in adult literacy, likely due to positive selection. However, the program produced an unintended 10% increase in children's likelihood of completing primary school. *(Draft available upon request)*

Publications

[1] F. Acosta, M. Medellín Esguerra, and H. Zuleta. Descentralización, economía y política: el papel de los tributos territoriales [decentralization, economics and politics: The role of local taxes]. In *Política Fiscal: Una Visión de Futuro*, pages

184–224. Alpha Editorial, 1 edition, 2021.

[2] H. Zuleta and M. Medellín-Esguerra. *Crecimiento económico en tiempo discreto [Economic growth in discrete time]*. Editorial Universidad del Rosario, Bogotá, 2020. eISBN: 9789587844788(EPUB), eISBN: 9789587844795(PDF).

[3] A. Álvarez, D. León, M. Medellín, A. Zambrano, and H. Zuleta. El coronavirus en colombia: vulnerabilidad y opciones de política [covid-19 in colombia: Vulnerability and policy options]. *UNDP*.

Teaching

Summer 2026	Macroeconomics 3 – Economic Growth Universidad de los Andes – Economics Department (Main instructor)
Fall 2021, Spring & Fall 2022, Spring 2025, Spring 2026	Intermediate Macroeconomics Brown University – Economics Department (TA)
Fall 2023, Fall 2025, Fall 2026	Culture, Institutions and Comparative Development Brown University – Economics Department (TA)
Spring 2024	Theory of Economic Growth Brown University – Economics Department (TA)
Spring & Fall 2019, Spring 2020	Doing Economics 2 – Public Policy Impact Evaluation Universidad de los Andes, Colombia (TA)

Experience

02/2019 – 06/2020	**Research Associate, Universidad de los Andes [Colombia]**, Prof. Hernando Zuleta *National Commission for Regional Tax Structure*: Co-authored the Commission's final report.
05/2019 – 12/2019	**Contractor, Ministry of Justice [Colombia]** Assisted the Drug Policy Department in monitoring drug prices and cannabis licensing trends, and conducting fieldwork monitoring in coca-producing regions.
08/2017 – 02/2019	**Intelligence Analyst, Concentra [Colombia]** Conducted econometric analysis of large administrative datasets on Colombia's natural gas market.
08/2016 – 05/2017	**Research Assistant, Centro Internacional de Pensamiento Social y Económico (CiSoe) [Colombia]** Consultancy projects for multilateral and government organizations on gender inequality and conflict in Colombia.

Skills

Languages	Spanish (native), English (fluent)
Programming	Python (advanced), Stata (advanced), R (proficient)

Awards

May 2023, Jan 2025	Orlando Bravo Center for Economic Research Grant
Fall 2024	Brown University Economics Department Research Travel Fellowship
June 2024	Brown University Graduate Program in Development Summer Funding
May 2024, May 2025, May 2026	Brown University Economics Department Teaching Award

Service

Referee	Public Opinion Quarterly (2025)
Seminars	**Growth Lab** (Brown): Seminar organizer, September 2023 – Present **Growth Breakfast** (Brown): Seminar organizer, Fall 2023
Equality in Economics	**Econexpertas**: Co-created a database of women experts in economic topics (July 2020) to diversify discussions in economic policy and related subjects. Now under the direction of Universidad de los Andes's women student organization MÍA.