



Center for Free Enterprise

University of Louisville College of Business

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Center for Free Enterprise

As our university, and the country, begin to open up from the COVID-19 pandemic, we're looking back on a year unlike any other. In spite of the challenges brought on by the closing of the university in March, 2020, and the shift to mostly online courses and events in the fall, the Center for Free Enterprise moved forward, and worked with the lemons we were all given.

This past year, we were reminded of the importance of collaboration. Whether it was working together with other organizations or university colleagues to learn the ins-and-outs of producing Zoom webinars, or coming together with other Centers across the country to share programming, teamwork was key this year. The CFE organized a consortium of Centers who cross-promoted each other's programming,

resulting in students and faculty from across the country taking part in Center for Free Enterprise events based in Louisville, Kentucky. We teamed up with the Center for Public Choice and Market Process (CPM) at the College of Charleston, to offer our Jonathan Haidt event during CPM's Adam Smith Week in March. And with the help of social media, our events were "attended" by folks from India, Brazil, and the UK. All told, we reached students and faculty from more than 21 universities this past year.

Beyond the consortium, we continued our partnership with the Institute for Humane Studies (IHS), co-presenting four entrepreneurship research seminars, with plans for another later this summer. We also worked with IHS to present a talk by Matt Ridley last fall, as part of our Menard Family Lecture Series. In April, we joined forces with Stand Together to kick off Second Chance Month with a dynamic panel discussion on second chance hiring.

Our reading group program thrived in the '20-

21 school year, as students hungered for engagement beyond their laptops. We were able to offer a third group this year, allowing even more students the opportunity to read books and discuss them with their peers in a safe setting (see the article on page 8 for more on this). Students were able to choose a group based on their reading/educational interests, as well as their in-person (masked and physically distanced, of course) or virtual preferences. We had our most diverse group of students ever participate, with a wide variety of ages, majors, and backgrounds.

In a year we might like to forget, the Center for Free Enterprise has produced some unforgettable programming and results. We're looking forward to a return to in-person classes and events, traveling to conferences and seminars, and sharing meals with colleagues. But we'll also hold tight to the knowledge gained this year that working together is always better. As Ronald Reagan once said, "By working together, pooling our resources, and building on our strengths, we can accomplish great things."

Take a look at the pages that follow for more detail on our year, including our plans for in-person programming this fall. We would love to see you on campus in the coming year for one of our events.

Stephan F. Gohmann, PhD
Director, Center for Free Enterprise
BB&T Distinguished Professor of Free Enterprise
Professor of Economics



BY THE NUMBERS

The Impact and Reach of CFE Programming

MENARD FAMILY LECTURE SERIES

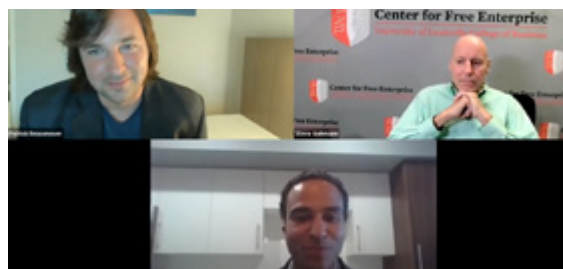
<i>They Say It Can't Be Done</i> , Patrick Reasonover, Brandon Barney	Attendees: 124
<i>The Economic Impact of Racism</i> , OJ Oleka, Terrance Sullivan	Attendees: 161
<i>Innovation & Freedom</i> , Matt Ridley	Attendees: 278
<i>The Black Wall Street Race Massacre 100 Years Later: What Have We Learned?</i> Clifton Taulbert, OJ Oleka	Attendees: 176
<i>The Coddling of the American Mind</i> , Jonathan Haidt	Attendees: 379
<i>The Business and Ethical Case for Second Chance Hiring</i> , Panel Discussion	Attendees: 120

READING GROUPS

Fall Reading Group #1	Participants: 16
Fall Reading Group #2	Participants: 14
Fall Reading Group #3	Participants: 13
Spring Reading Group #1	Participants: 15
Spring Reading Group #2	Participants: 12
Spring Reading Group #3	Participants: 15
VIP Reading Group (<i>How Innovation Works</i>)	Participants: 8

SEMINARS/CLASSES

Entrepreneurship Research Seminar, June 2020 Co-presented with Institute for Humane Studies	Participants: 60
Entrepreneurship Research Seminar, April-May, 2021 Co-presented with Institute for Humane Studies	Participants: 60
Econ 375: Capitalism and Economic Freedom, Gohmann	Participants: 31
Econ 201: Principles of Microeconomics, Lennon	Participants: 80



2020-2021 PROGRAMMING

MENARD FAMILY LECTURE SERIES

THEY SAY IT CAN'T BE DONE

Patrick Reasonover, Documentary Producer; Partner, Just Add Firewater

Brandon Barney, Co-Founder/Director of Research & Communications, Primary Ocean

September 16, 2020

The Menard Family Lecture Series opened the fall semester with a screening of *They Say It Can't Be Done*, an award-winning documentary that explores how entrepreneurs can solve some of the world's greatest problems – climate change, organ waitlists, world hunger, factory farming – if we just let them. The movie was followed by discussion and audience Q&A with the movie's producer, Patrick Reasonover, and Brandon Barney, one of the entrepreneurs featured in the film.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RACISM

OJ Oleka, PhD, President, Association of Independent KY Colleges and Universities; Co-founder, AntiRacismKY

Terrance Sullivan, JD, Executive Director, KY Commission on Human Rights; Co-founder, AntiRacismKY

October 14, 2020

OJ Oleka and Terrance Sullivan are UofL alumni and long-time friends who come from different backgrounds and have opposing political views. But they share a passion for social justice and a desire to eliminate systemic racism and subsequent economic disparity. OJ and Terrance discussed AntiRacismKY, an organization they founded following racial unrest in Louisville last summer, in a riveting, timely discussion moderated by Steve Gohmann.

INNOVATION AND FREEDOM

Matt Ridley, Bestselling author; Journalist; Member, House of Lords

November 5, 2020

In this highly-attended event, Matt Ridley discussed his bestselling book, *How Innovation Works and Why it Flourishes in Freedom*. Peppered with Ridley's anecdotes and stories of innovation, this presentation educated and entertained viewers, and was followed by audience Q&A.





THE BLACK WALL STREET MASSACRE 100 YEARS LATER: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Clifton Taulbert, Bestselling author; Entrepreneur

OJ Oleka, PhD, President, Association of Independent KY Colleges and Universities; Co-founder, AntiRacismKY

February 23, 2021

This incredible discussion between Clifton Taulbert and OJ Oleka took us back to the 1921 Tulsa race massacre and destruction of Black Wall Street. It was an enlightening look at a dark time in our nation's history, filled with stories of despair and ending with Clifton's hopeful take on the future.

THE CODDLING OF THE AMERICAN MIND

Jonathan Haidt, Bestselling author; Professor of Ethical Leadership, NYU Stern School of Business

March 15, 2021

In an outstanding presentation, Jonathan Haidt discussed the current culture of *safetyism* and how it has produced young adults who are not only ill-prepared for the real world, but who suffer from anxiety, depression, and suicidal tendencies in alarming rates. He identified three terrible ideas that have been woven into American childhood and education, interfering with young people's social, emotional, and intellectual development.

THE BUSINESS AND ETHICAL CASE FOR SECOND CHANCE HIRING

Robin Berry, Rue Gilt Group; Sydney Heller, The Last Mile; Jeff Korzenik, Fifth Third Bank/author; Sumit Lal, Slack; Alex Love, Alex Love Consulting, Levelset

April 1, 2021

This discussion featured panelists from all sides of the second chance hiring movement who talked about why it makes good business, economic, and ethical sense for companies to implement second chance hiring programs. Comprised of second-chance thought leaders, HR professionals, and a successful second-chancer, the panel provided convincing data and stories about why now, more than ever, companies should be looking to this untapped source of employees to create workforces that are more equitable and diverse.





THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RACISM

OJ Oleka & Terrance Sullivan

College friendships are sometimes just that. They may begin and develop over the course of four years, but in the time following graduation, friends can drift apart and friendships can fade. Some relationships forged in college, however, stand the test of time. And in the case of two University of Louisville alumni who met in the College of Business, that friendship happened to lead them back to where it all began.

Meet OJ Oleka and Terrance Sullivan. OJ graduated from the College of Business with a degree in marketing and a minor in political science. (He went on to receive his MBA and PhD in leadership and higher education from neighboring Bellarmine

University.) He is currently president of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities. Terrance graduated from UofL with a bachelor's degree in political science, law and public policy, a minor in economics, and later earned his JD from UofL's Brandeis School of Law. He is executive director of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.

The two met in a CIS100 (computer information systems) classroom, and OJ credits his friend with being the reason he was able to get a B in the class. The rest, as they say, is history.

**“WE NEEDED TO
FIND A WAY TO USE
OUR EXPERIENCES
AND SKILLSETS TO
PARTICIPATE IN
CREATING CHANGE...”**

—Terrance Sullivan

Fast forward to summer 2020, when social unrest was peaking in Louisville. The two, who had remained close over the years since graduation, knew they needed to do something. “We needed to find a way to use our experiences and skillsets to participate in creating change,” said Terrance.

THE CENTER FOR FREE ENTERPRISE

So, over the course of a weekend in June, AntiRacismKY (ARKY) was born. ARKY is a non-partisan coalition created to eliminate institutional racism through policy change. After gathering ideas and concerns from citizens throughout the state, the two decided ARKY would focus on creating meaningful reform in eight key areas: agriculture, education, economic development, housing, health care, criminal justice, wealth generation, and the workplace.

OJ and Terrance spoke about AntiRacismKY in October as part of the Center for Free Enterprise Menard Family Lecture Series. During the virtual event “The Economic Impact of Racism,” they discussed how, although they come from different backgrounds, and are on opposite sides of the political aisle, they felt it was important to come together to create change in the community and state they call home.

Both OJ and Terrance say their undergrad days at UofL and the College of Business helped shape who they are and what they do today. “Courses like Capitalism and Economic Freedom with Professor Gohmann helped me approach issues from an economic perspective, as well as encouraged me to learn and appreciate ‘the other side of the argument,’ which has helped me develop consensus on many issues professionally and personally,” said OJ. Terrance echoes the importance of his experiences at UofL. “There was great reiteration on how we can go further together, and I firmly believe that,” he said. “For me, campus involvement meant identifying needs for a larger group, and working with that larger group to facilitate change. And that bleeds over to my professional work and AntiRacismKY.”

“Any time a former student says their time in class and on campus was well-spent is rewarding for a professor and a win for the university,” said Center for Free Enterprise director Steve Gohmann. “The fact that Terrance and OJ are using what they learned at UofL to make lives better is certainly gratifying. It’s why we are here.”

**“COURSES LIKE
CAPITALISM AND
ECONOMIC FREEDOM ...
ENCOURAGED ME TO
LEARN AND APPRECIATE
‘THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
ARGUMENT...’”**

—OJ Oleka



READING GROUPS

Fall 2020 & Spring 2021

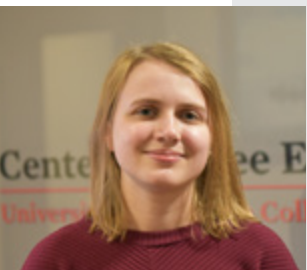
The ability to engage in civil discussion with someone who has different views, or comes from a different background, seems to have become a lost art on college campuses, and our country in general. People on different sides of issues often turn a deaf ear, or worse, shout down, dismiss, or belittle those who don't think like they do. Through its robust student reading group program, the Center for Free Enterprise is working to change that disturbing trend, one book at a time.

Each semester the Center offers up to three different reading groups for students who are interested in reading a variety of books, and participating in discussion with their peers. Center faculty facilitate the discussions, but it is the students who take the lead. "It's really important for students to lead these discussions," said Steve Gohmann, Director of the Center for Free Enterprise. "This isn't about what I think about a book. It's an opportunity for students to listen and learn from each other, to develop their own opinions, and maybe hear a different viewpoint they hadn't considered before."

And that brought Carl Fletcher back to participate in a second reading group this spring. "I have learned about many other perspectives, and it really helped me think about economics and politics a lot differently," said the sophomore economics and finance major. "The group has really helped sharpen my communication skills, along with improving my ability to think about other possible perspectives."

To garner a diverse array of viewpoints and enrich the discussions, the Center encourages students of all majors and grade levels to apply to participate. Junior Bioengineering major Katya Kovatsenko, who was back this spring for the fifth time,

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appreciates the diverse make-up of the groups and the varied conversations that result. “The participants provide refreshing perspectives to different economic topics,” she said.

Gohmann said another goal of the reading groups is to help students hone important skills to enhance their academic careers, as well as life beyond college. “Reading books they might not otherwise read, and discussing them with their peers, helps students develop important critical thinking and listening skills, and those will be important as they leave college and head into their chosen career fields.”

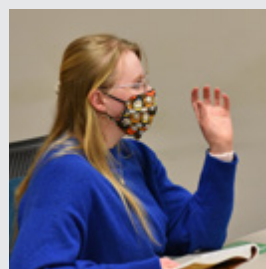
Katya is already using what she has learned through the reading groups in her classes. “Last semester, I participated in a group focused on healthcare. As someone interested in medicine, I have always focused on the scientific issues rather than those in the realm of business, economics, or politics,” said Katya. “However, through the three books of that group, I learned more about the past, present, and future of healthcare and expanded my viewpoint on the business of hospitals and clinics. As a future clinician, I believe that learning about these issues will help me to advocate for an equitable environment for my patients.”

Perhaps most importantly, Gohmann wants to offer students a place where they can feel comfortable expressing their opinions and engaging in open dialog without fear of judgment. Both Katya and Carl agree the reading groups offer just that. “Having the freedom to speak freely about my opinions has been a positive aspect of ... the program,” said Katya. Carl added, “When I considered the reading group, I felt that it was crucial to have a safe atmosphere, and I believed that if it wasn’t, then I wouldn’t participate.”

The Center has been hosting student reading groups since its founding in 2015. During the pandemic, students were able to choose from in-person or virtual meetings. The Center provides all reading materials and meals following discussions free of charge for participants, and those students who meet participation requirements receive a scholarship.



Being a reading group member has enabled me to take part in the discussion-based learning that I craved upon entering college. Reading group is valuable for students who want an enriched educational experience.





THE BOOKS WE READ

Believe in People, Charles Koch and Brian Hooks

Big Business, Tyler Cowen

Leave Me Alone and I'll Make You Rich, Art Carden and Deirdre McCloskey

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Alexander Solzhenitsyn

The Moon is a Harsh Mistress, Robert Heinlein

The Pox of Liberty, Woerner Troesken

The Price We Pay, Marty Makary

The Probability Broach, L. Neil Smith

Ensuring America's Health, Christy Ford Chapin

How Innovation Works, Matt Ridley

The Innovator's Dilemma, Clayton Christensen

Evolve or Die, Tom Triumph

Burn the Business Plan, Carl Schramm

Bureaucrats or Markets in Innovation Policy?
Nils Karlson, Christian Sandtrom, Karl Wennberg

The Worldly Philosophers, Robert L. Heilbroner

What Money Can't Buy, Michael J. Sandel

WHAT STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT READING GROUPS

“(The reading group) provides civilized debates and exchanges of ideas in a healthy environment...”

“(The discussions my group had circled big topics of not only the book, but our current society and condition as a whole!”

“(...allowed me to strengthen my speaking and critical thinking skills.”

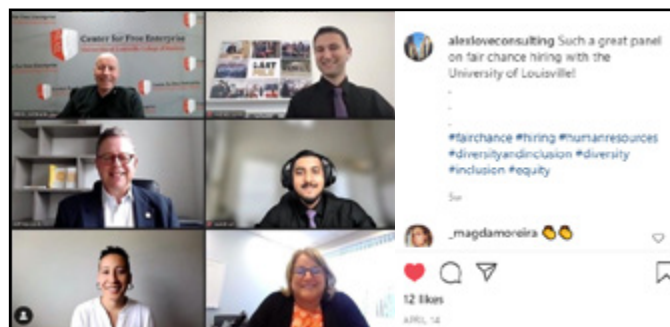
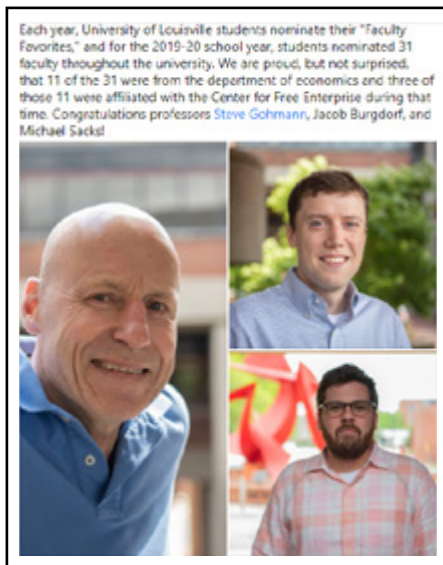
“(...one of my favorite and most impactful extracurriculars here at UofL.”

VIP READING GROUP

As a preface to our November event featuring Matt Ridley, the Center hosted a VIP reading group that read Ridley's *How Innovation Works*. Attendees, who received a free copy of the book, included business people, faculty from different universities, and upper level students.



SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Like so many other changes that occurred during the past year, the Center overhauled its podcast to deliver listeners insight into the economic impact of the pandemic. Host Steve Gohmann spoke with economists and other experts about topics ranging from the legal ramifications of business shutdowns to COVID's impact on family owned businesses, and much more. In addition to COVID-related issues, Steve spoke to students, business people, and the Center's guest speakers.

As the pandemic winds down, FreeSpeak will pivot to focus once again on Center programming and activities, and themes related to free enterprise and entrepreneurship. Watch for new episodes, a variety of hosts, and compelling topics, coming soon.

Listen to past episodes of FreeSpeak [HERE](#).



For all the damage the shutdown of the country did, it did encourage more robust partnerships with Centers from around the country, and even placed our events on the worldwide stage. By working with University Centers and organizations, our events were promoted to more students, more communities, and as a result were more widely seen than ever before, even despite Zoom-fatigue.

UNIVERSITY CENTER CONSORTIUM

Center director Steve Gohmann organized a consortium of universities and organizations that shared and cross-promoted their programming with each other, which resulted in increased communication and sharing of ideas among colleagues, and increased event attendance. The consortium included representatives from:

Albany State University

Ball State University

Baylor University

Clemson University

College of Charleston

Creighton University

Florida Gulf Coast University

Florida State University

George Mason University

Iowa State University

Lindenwood University

Middle Tennessee State University

Oklahoma State University

St. Francis University

University of Georgia

University of Kentucky

University of San Diego

University of South Carolina

University of West Georgia

University of Wisconsin LaCrosse

Western Carolina University

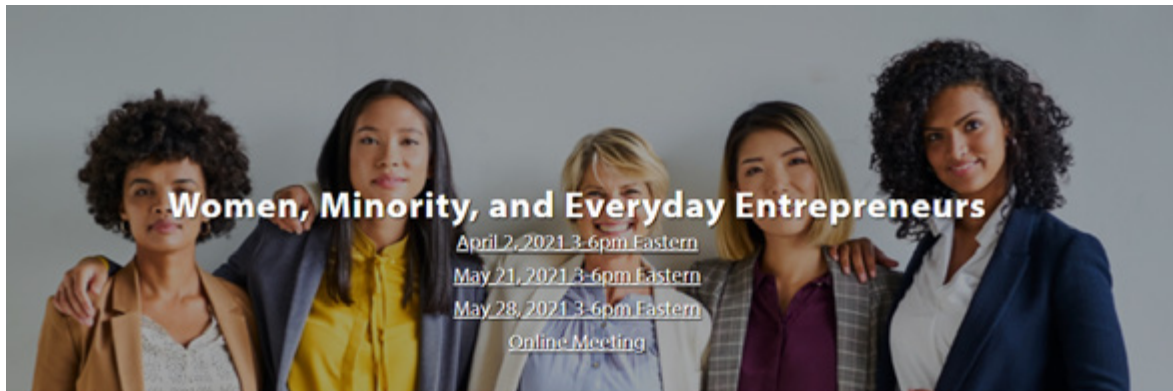
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COLLABORATIONS

(cont'd)

ONGOING PARTNERSHIP WITH INSTITUTE FOR HUMANE STUDIES

The Center enjoys a continuing partnership with the IHS. In addition to working together on student discussion colloquia and reading group scholarships, we joined with IHS and the Pacific Research Institute in last June to present *The Impact and Challenges of Entrepreneurship in America*. This two-day seminar focused on the role entrepreneurship plays in economic growth, job creation, and innovation; its decline, and possibilities to reinvigorate the entrepreneurial spirit.

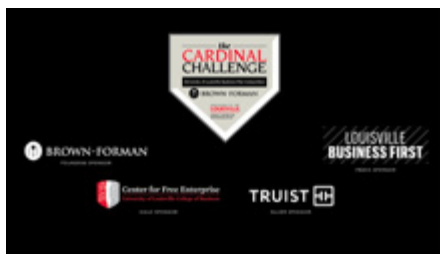


This spring, we worked together on a series of seminars entitled *Women, Minority, and Everyday Entrepreneurs*, which included three 3-hour sessions (Women in Entrepreneurship, Minority Entrepreneurship, and Entrepreneurs). Each session featured a panel of experts, opportunities for Q&A, and breakout discussions for individualized research questions, ideas, and feedback.

While both of these events were online, the Center is working with IHS for an in-person research seminar in Denver this August.

CFE EVENT OPENS ADAM SMITH WEEK

Working with the College of Charleston's Center for Public Choice and Market Process, our March Menard Family Lecture Series event kicked off the CPM's Adam Smith Week. Dr. Jonathan Haidt spoke on his bestselling book, *The Coddling of the American Mind*, and commanded an audience of 379 viewers from all over the country.



CARDINAL CHALLENGE SPONSORSHIP

For the second year, the Center has helped sponsor the Brown Forman Cardinal Challenge, a business plan competition presented annually by UofL's Forcht Center for Entrepreneurship.

The competition is open to graduate level entrepreneurship students, and this year featured

teams from all over the United States and Canada competing for more than \$32,000 in cash prizes for their startup businesses.

TRAVEL | EDUCATION | RESEARCH

CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY CENTER AFFILIATED FACULTY

Virtual, unless otherwise noted with an *

Academy of Management Annual Meeting	August 2020
Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Meeting	November 2020
Association of Private Enterprise Education Annual Meeting, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	April 2021*
Economic History Association Annual Meeting	September 2020
Financial Literacy & EconEd Annual Conference	October 2020
Institute for Humane Studies Academic Research Conference	June 2020
Institute for Humane Studies Academic Research Series	May 2021
Institute for Humane Studies Conference: Family, Community, and Meaningful Work	January 2020
Institute for the Study of Free Enterprise Reforming Healthcare Markets Workshop	July 2020
Kentucky Economic Association Annual Meeting	October 2020
Mercatus Center Annual Summit	July 2019
NBER Health Economics Program Fall Meeting	December 2020
NBER Health Economics Program Spring Meeting	May 2021
University of North Texas Economics Research Group Seminar	March 2021

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

Binqing Cai, Stephan Gohmann , Jeff Guan, "Chinese Business Freedom and Industry Growth," Association of Private Enterprise Education Meetings	April 2021
Conor Lennon , "G.I. Jane Goes to College? Female Educational Attainment, Earnings, and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944," Economic History Association Annual Meeting	September 2020
Conor Lennon , "G.I. Jane Goes to College? Female Educational Attainment, Earnings, and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944," Kentucky Economic Association Annual Meeting	October 2020
Conor Lennon , "Do Ridesharing Services Increase Alcohol Consumption?" Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Meeting	November 2020
Daniel Bennett , "Environmental Context & Entrepreneurship," IHS Academic Research Seminar on Impact & Challenges of Entrepreneurship	June 2020
Daniel Bennett , "Regional Innovation Networks & High-Growth Entrepreneurship," University of North Texas Economics Research Group Seminar	March 2021
Stephan Gohmann , "Impact and Challenges of Entrepreneurship in America," Institute for Humane Studies (IHS) Academic Research Seminar	June 2020

TRAVEL | EDUCATION | RESEARCH

PAPERS PRESENTED

Bennett, Daniel. “Different Strokes for Different Folks: A Configurational Analysis of Regional Entrepreneurial Ecosystems,” Academy of Management Annual Conference August 2020

Lennon, Conor. “Are the Costs of Employer-Provided Health Insurance Passed on to Workers at the Individual Level?” Institute for the Study of Free Enterprise Reforming Healthcare Markets Workshop July 2020

PUBLICATIONS

Bennett, D.L. and B. Nikolaev (In Press). “Individualism, Pro-Market Institutions, and National Innovation.” *Small Business Economics*.

Bennett, D.L. (In Press). “Local Institutional Heterogeneity and Firm Dynamism: Decomposing the Metropolitan Economic Freedom Index.” *Small Business Economics*.

Bennett, D.L. and B. Nikolaev (2021). “The Historical Prevalence of Infectious Diseases and Global Innovation.” *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, 45(1): 145-174.

Bennett, D.L., C. Bjørnskov, and **S. Gohmann** (2021). “Coups, Regime Transitions, and Institutional Change,” *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 49(2): 627-643.

Bennett, D.L. and B. Nikolaev (2020). “Rising Income Inequality and Economic Growth...Are Americans Better Off?” *Journal of Private Enterprise*, 35(3): 63-92.

Bennett, D.L. and S. Vedula (2020), “Different Strokes for Different Folks: A Configurational Analysis of Regional Entrepreneurial Ecosystems for Self-Employment, Formal Entrepreneurship, and High-Growth Entrepreneurship,” *Academy of Management Proceedings Best Papers*.

Courtemanche, C., J. Garuccio, A. Le, **J. Pinkston**, and A. Yelowitz, “Strong Social Distancing Measures In The United States Reduced The COVID-19 Growth Rate,” *Health Affairs*, vol. 39(7), July 2020.

Courtemanche, C., J. Garuccio, A. Le, **J. Pinkston**, and A. Yelowitz, “Chance Elections, Social Distancing Restrictions, and Kentucky’s Early COVID-19 Experience,” *PLOS One*, forthcoming.

Gohmann, S.F. (2021). “Blue Laws” and Other Cases of Bootlegger/Baptist Influence in Beer Regulation’, in Hoffer, A.J. *Regulation and Economic Opportunity: Blueprints for Reform*. pp. 403-422.

Lennon, C. (2021). “Are the Costs of Employer-sponsored Health Insurance Passed on to Workers at the Individual Level?” *Economics & Human Biology*, 41, 100995.

Munnich, Elizabeth L., and Michael R. Richards. 2020. “Treatment Flows After Outsourcing Public Insurance Provision: Evidence from Florida Medicaid.” *Health Economics*, 29(11): 1343-1363.

Teltser, K., **Lennon, C.**, & Burgdorf, J. (2021). “Do Ridesharing Services Increase Alcohol Consumption?” *Journal of Health Economics*, 77, 102451.

William, N., Sarah Kroeger, **Elizabeth L. Munnich**, Grace Ortuzar, and Kathryn L. Wagner. 2021. “Reducing Readmissions by Addressing the Social Determinants of Health.” *American Journal of Health Economics*, 7(1): 1-40.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

CFE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

In 2021, the Center is providing funding for three student research assistants to work with economics faculty. The project has proved to be win-win, as it has given critical experience and mentoring to students who are interested in furthering their education through research, and welcome support for faculty in their research efforts. “It’s exciting to see the students learn and grow through this program, and inspiring to know that the Center has a part in their future success,” said Steve Gohmann, Center director.



DINA CHAIKA | SENIOR ECONOMICS MAJOR

Dina is grateful for the opportunity to grow her research portfolio, since she plans to begin applying to PhD programs in the fall. She notes the challenges an undergrad can face getting started in the research realm, and says her work has helped her take the first steps under the guidance of seasoned professors. One of her favorite things about the position is that “you are constantly working at a level beyond your current ability...and growing at an incredible pace.” She knows the work she is doing now will set her up for success in the future. “The work gives me unique opportunities to gain strong and fast growth in the sphere I want to pursue in the future....and better understand what areas of research excite me.”

“Dina is a promising undergraduate student, and I appreciate her help and enthusiasm on a study that examines the effects of minimum wage laws on establishments in low-wage industries,” said Joshua Pinkston, Associate Professor of Economics.

EMILY DAVIS | SENIOR ECONOMICS MAJOR

Emily Davis knew in her sophomore year that she wanted to pursue a graduate degree in economics after undergrad, and needed experience in research work before pursuing a PhD. Her work with Economics professors Jose Fernandez and Beth Munnich is giving her just that. “I enjoy working in STATA and learning how to write code to clean and manipulate the data. It is so exciting to transform an incomprehensible set of numbers into meaningful information.”

Emily knows her experience will be invaluable when it’s time to apply to graduate school. “This research is the best preparation I could have for applying to graduate school, other than my courses. I have also learned valuable coding skills and other problem solving and research skills I will use outside of my field.”



Emily will continue her research work throughout the summer and begin applying to graduate schools in the fall.

“Emily’s curiosity about the subject matter is at times infectious. She has truly blossomed over the last year from a student who had an interest in research into a student who has a desire to do research,” said Department of Economics chair Jose Fernandez.

Associate Professor of Economics Beth Munnich agreed, adding, “(Emily’s) analytic skills have been a tremendous asset to my research, and her thoughtful questions have led us to collaborate on new projects. I’m grateful for the opportunity to work with this rising research star through the Center for Free Enterprise.”



**BRITTANY LOWE |
ECONOMICS/MARKETING
MAJOR, CLASS OF 2020**

Like many students, the pandemic derailed Brittany’s plans after graduating from the University of Louisville in May 2020. A Boren Scholar, she was scheduled to travel to Tanzania for cultural and language immersion. Instead, she returned to the College of Business for another year of classes and hopes she’s able to travel to East Africa on her scholarship this summer. In the meantime, working with faculty on research is helping her prepare for her future, which also includes pursuing her PhD in economics. “It is helping me hone my statistics, literature analysis, and writing skills a lot. All of those things are going to be helpful no matter

where I end up. But as someone who wants to continue research after undergraduate, it’s really given me the opportunity to practice and learn from the best.”

Brittany’s research is focused on the connection between economic freedom and women’s health and well-being, especially in lower income countries. She’s found her passion in her topic, and in research. “I love finding questions I’m passionate about and then really getting to understand the root of the question and research to be able to interpret results. It’s always a challenging puzzle with a lot of trial and error, but being able to contribute to the conversation on issues that matter with economic research is so rewarding.”

“Brittany’s research skills have really developed over the past year. Her interest and commitment to the work has been fun to watch.”

– Steve Gohmann, Director, Center for Free Enterprise

COMING THIS FALL

MENARD FAMILY LECTURE SERIES, FALL 2021



AMITY SHLAES

Chair, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation;
NY Times bestselling author of *Coolidge*,
The Forgotten Man, and *Great Society: A New History*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22



COREY DEANGELIS, PhD

National Director of Research,
American Federation for Children;
Executive Director, Educational
Freedom Institute

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3



MISS VIRGINIA: MOVIE SCREENING AND DISCUSSION

Virginia Walden Ford
Advocate for parent empowerment and
educational opportunity

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

THE CENTER FOR FREE ENTERPRISE

WELCOME FABIAN DIAZ

In August, Fabian P. Diaz, will join the Center for Free Enterprise as Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship. Fabian is completing his PhD in entrepreneurship and emerging enterprises at Syracuse University and holds a BS and MS in economics, both from San Jose State University. His research focuses broadly on labor market regulations and entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on licensing, entry, and working-class entrepreneurship. We look forward to welcoming Fabian to the CFE family.

“We’re happy to have Fabian join the College of Business and work with the Center for Free Enterprise,” said Steve Gohmann, director of the Center. “His research on entrepreneurship is a great fit with our mission.”



Fabian P. Diaz

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Founded in August 2015, the mission of the Center for Free Enterprise is to engage in research and teaching that explores the role of enterprise and entrepreneurship in advancing the well-being of society. The Center gives students the opportunity to learn about the use of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking in their work, no matter their intended major or career choice.

The Center for Free Enterprise would like to thank our donors and sponsors for their ongoing generous support of our programming.

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