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Ph.D., Economics, 2020-2026 (expected)
B.A., Economics and Mathematics, *magna cum laude*, distinction, 2016-2020
Primary Field: Industrial Organization
Secondary Fields: International Trade, Labor

Course of Study

I am a third-year PhD student. I completed field courses in industrial organization and international trade. I was a participant in the 2022 NBER privacy tutorial in Boston. In my work, I use IO methods to study topics in international trade and labor.

General Research Interests

I research on remote services trade, where workers provide online services such as data analytics to foreign firms. The ability to export services without the physical movement of persons or goods produces exciting opportunities, especially for workers in developing countries. At the same time, traditional trade frictions such as information problems still exist when trade occurs online. These frictions can curtail the growth of remote services trade.

Digitalization powers large swaths of remote services trade. Traditionally, traders have had to travel to other locations to build trade relationships. The emergence of digital platforms like Upwork has fundamentally changed how trade takes place. For a buyer sitting at her house in Nairobi, rated portfolios of millions of sellers sit at her fingertips. The rating system helps her evaluate the quality of foreign buyers. Translation technologies allow her to discuss business needs with foreign language-speaking sellers. And information security technologies enable her to sign contracts over the Internet. Digitalization lowered the barriers for firms to outsource their service tasks and for individuals to access well-paid opportunities from anywhere in the world.

Work in Progress

Search Mechanisms on Online Remote Labor Platforms

In this project, I study how better search mechanisms improve match outcomes on a large, international online remote labor platform.

Although remote labor trade produce exciting opportunities for workers especially in developing countries, it can be hard to find work and build a reputation with foreign clients on an online platform. The sheer quantity of available workers makes it even harder to "break in." This project

quantifies the role that search mechanisms play in easing the burden of information frictions. Coming up with better search mechanisms can maximize the benefits that remote labor trade bring to both workers and firms.

On this platform, employers can search for a worker directly or use the platform's "open bid" function and wait for workers to submit applications. Different search mechanisms can generate different match outcomes. Employers may prefer one mechanism to the other depending on their experience on the platform and their particular work needs.

I start with facts about the use of search mechanisms. I show that preferences for search mechanisms are correlated with employers' experience and the scale of the task. I also show that more experienced workers receive more tasks through direct offers than through "open bid." I then build an equilibrium model where heterogeneous employers choose between direct offers and "open bid." I estimate this model using linked data of search mechanisms and outcomes. With this model, I conduct simulations of match outcomes under alternative menus of search mechanisms.

The Global Market for Remote Service Workers (joint with Samuel Solomon)

In this project, we use microdata from a payroll and compliance provider which helps thousands of firms manage their remote hires to shed light on the reality of international hiring.

Consider a firm in the U.S. looking to hire a software engineer who will work remotely. The firm can either find a domestic U.S. worker or look for a candidate abroad, for example in Poland. Because the prevailing wages for software engineers in the U.S. are much higher than the wages in Poland, will the firm decide to hire a Polish worker? What about the extra effort that the American firm may need to put in to overcome time zone, language, and cultural differences?

These questions are of interest not by themselves, but because they lie at the core of many other questions of interest: how large are the actual gains for employers to access foreign labor markets? How would competition from low-wage countries impact workers in high-wage countries? Should policy makers try to regulate this new type of trade in the same spirit with which they regulated the opening up of international trade in goods, e.g. by setting tariffs for imports?

In this project, we will provide empirical evidence on the reality of global remote work, and build and estimate a model of firms' hiring. We make use of the discrete-choice framework in Industrial Organization. We model heterogeneous firms (consumers) who face a list of candidates (products) with different attributes, including their nationality and reservation wage. Our estimates will inform policies to encourage or regulate remote services trade.