UCHENNA CHRISTIANA UDOJI AMNES

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RESEARCH INTEREST

Health Economics, Healthcare Access, Telehealth, Health Inequality, and Informal Insurance.

EDUCATION

Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama
Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Economics **Expected: August 2028**
Advisor: Hyeongwoo Kim
Courses Taken: Microeconomic, Macroeconomic, Mathematical Economics, Econometrics, Microeconometrics, Macroeconometrics, Health Economics, Financial Econometrics

Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria
Master of Science in Economics (in progress) **Expected: October 2026**
Thesis: *Banking Sector Development and Exchange Rate Risk Mitigation: Threshold Effects on FDI in Nigeria's Telecommunications Sector*

Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria
Bachelor of Science in Economics **October 2020**
First Class Honors (3.73/4.00 GPA)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant **August 2025 – Present**
OnMed Telehealth Project, Auburn University

- Contributing to analysis of health equity, telehealth adoption and preventable hospitalization across five rural Alabama counties
- Work with county-level health data to examine patterns of utilization and outcomes
- Investigating institutional factors affecting telehealth utilization, including insurance coverage, social networks, trust, and existing healthcare infrastructure
- **Funding:** Community Development Block Grant, USDA telemedicine grants, JSL Health Capital

Research Assistant (Contract) **July – October 2022**
Preston Consults, Abuja, Nigeria

- Conducted systematic reviews of survey frameworks and performed gap analysis for the Ease of Doing Business survey project funded by the World Bank
- Transcribed and analyzed over 300 interview responses, organizing qualitative data into structured reports and presentations
- Coordinated with multiple stakeholders and maintained detailed progress updates throughout project lifecycles

Research Fellowship (Remote) **September – October 2022**
PEFA Solutions, Lagos, Nigeria

- Designed databases and conducted quantitative analysis using Python for textual and graphical analysis
- Managed collaboration with research and industry stakeholders ensuring periodic progress updates and deliverables for project sponsors

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Assistant **August 2024 – Present**
Department of Economics, Auburn University, Alabama

- Assist with undergraduate economics courses, including grading, office hours, and student mentoring
- Lead review sessions and provide individual tutoring on microeconomics and quantitative methods
- Support students in developing analytical and problem-solving skills in economics

Graduate Assistant **October 2022 – August 2024**
Department of Economics, Veritas University, Abuja

- Delivered interactive tutorials on software applications (STATA, R, EVIEWS) to 300- and 400-level students, creating engaging learning materials and hands-on demonstrations.
- Collaborated regularly with faculty advisors, providing progress updates and adapting teaching methods based on student feedback.
- Improved student academic performance by 86.8% in Econometrics through application of real-world examples and interactive learning approaches.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Bridging the Access Gap: Telehealth Utilization and Preventable Hospitalization Trends in Rural Alabama with *Tannista Banerjee and Linda Gibson-Young*

This research evaluates the impact of OnMed CareStations on preventable hospitalizations using county-level variation in rollout timing. Focuses on access to care among Medicare populations and how institutional constraints affect utilization.

Coping with Health Shocks: Remittances, Ethnoregional Associations, and formal Insurance in Rural Nigeria

This paper examines how rural Nigerian households finance healthcare during shocks through informal risk-sharing mechanisms, with particular focus on remittances and loans from ethnoregional associations. Using household panel data, I analyze the effectiveness of these informal institutions as substitutes for formal insurance markets. The research contributes to understanding how communities self-organize to provide social insurance in the absence of functioning formal institutions.

GRANTS/FUNDED PROJECTS

- Country Level Analysis to Provide Evidence in Support of Africa's Mission for Improving Equitable Access to The Covid-19 Vaccines in Particular and Vaccines in General (Nigeria)- **Funded by The African Health Economics & Policy Association (AfHEA) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC)** **October 2024**
  Investigate vaccine access and uptake by distributing questionnaires to groups of interest. Research and document factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy
- Development of Affordable, Clean and efficient Multi-fuel Biomass Cooking Stove: Panacea for Socio-

economic, Health and Environmental cost of using the three-stone biomass fire stove- **Funded by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND)** **April,2024**

Leading the execution of the pilot study in communities within the Abuja Municipal Area Council, conducting interviews, and overseeing logistics.

- Articulating a Meta-Theory for Contemporary African Change & Development - **Funded by Fords Foundation.** **October 2023**

  Team member, co-writer, and logistic manager of the project.
- Ease of Doing Business Subnational Survey. Driven by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council(PEBEC)- **Funded by the World Bank** **November 2022**

  Review existing framework of the subnational baseline survey, conducted and transcribed interview.
- Assessment of the State Supported Health Insurance Scheme in Gombe state, Nigeria- **Funded by African HealthObservatory Platform (AHOP).** **February 2021**

  Transcribed interview and drafted the manuscript from the technical report.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- College Award for Top Oral Graduate Presentation at 2026 Auburn University Research Symposium **April 2026**
- Certificate of Achievement, Writing Winning Grant Proposals, ITOCA **December 2023**
- Certificate of Achievement, Ignite Innovation for Climate Change Virtual Challenge **June 2021**
- Award of Excellence as one of the pioneer Fellows of Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Abuja. **February 2021**
- Award of excellence as the best female graduating student in the Department and Faculty of Social Science. **Sept 2020**
- Director of Development, Veritas University; Award of excellence to First Class Students. **September 2020**
- Award of commendation for emerging winner in the Registrar's spelling bee competition. **2018/2019 session**
- Award of commendation for emerging winner of the VC/Registrar debate and spelling bee competition. **2017/2018**
- Recipient of the Catholic Bishop Conference of Nigeria Scholarship Award of **$**2500. **2016 -2020**

SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

- **Technical Skills:** Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Statistical software (STATA, R, GUASS, Python, SPSS, EVIEWS). LaTeX for document preparation. GEPHI for network analysis. Quick learner with new software and cloud-based platforms.
- **Research Methods:** Causal inference (2SLS, Difference-in-Differences, Fixed Effects), survey data analysis, mixed methods research, institutional analysis, comparative case studies. Experience with population health data and household survey datasets
- **Communication:** Excellent written and verbal communication. Experience delivering tutorials and training sessions. Strong interpersonal skills from working with diverse teams and stakeholders.
- **Languages:** Igbo (Advanced), English (Advanced), French (Beginner), Spanish (Beginner)

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Health Partner, Rural Health Connect, Auburn University **September 2025– Present**
- Senetor, Graduate Student Council, Auburn University **August 2025 – Present**
- President, SDGs Community Development Group **May 2021 – June 2022**

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Associate Member, Nigerian Economics Society
- Health System, and Development Research Group, Veritas University, Abuja.
- Young Africa Leaders Initiative – YALI (Member)

STATEMENT OF INTEREST: MENTORING PROGRAM ON AGING AND HEALTH ECONOMICS

I am a PhD student in Applied Economics at Auburn University with a research focus on healthcare access and financial protection in settings where formal systems are limited. My work looks at how households navigate health risks in both developing and underserved U.S. contexts, and how institutional and structural constraints shape the effectiveness of available healthcare resources. I am applying to this program at a stage where guidance can meaningfully shape how I develop these ideas and connect them to the broader field.

One part of my current work examines the rollout of OnMed CareStations across rural Alabama counties. Using variation in the timing of adoption, I study how access to these services relates to preventable hospitalizations among Medicare-enrolled populations. The empirical patterns I see so far are not immediate; hospitalizations do not change much in the rollout period but begin to decline after sustained exposure. Once the CareStations have been in place for a full year, I observe a decline of approximately 741 preventable hospitalizations per 100,000 Medicare-enrolled residents. What I am still trying to understand is what drives that delay. It could reflect gradual adoption, differences in how communities respond to the technology, or other local constraints. In a related analysis, I find that safety-net characteristics heavily interact with these burdens; areas with higher uninsurance have higher hospitalization burdens (roughly 312 additional admissions per percentage-point increase), and deep local poverty appears to limit initial CareStation use, which raises questions about how financial and informational barriers shape access even when services are physically available.

In a different setting, my work on rural Nigeria looks at how households manage healthcare spending during illness when formal insurance is not available. There, I focus on informal arrangements such as remittances and ethnoregional associations. This project has made me think more carefully about how people rely on alternative systems to cope with health shocks, and how those responses might depend on social structure and local networks. Across both settings, I am interested in a broader question of why expanded access does not always translate into actual use, and how different types of constraints (financial, institutional, or informational) interact.

While my work is grounded in health economics, I am interested in developing it further in directions related to aging and health, particularly around chronic disease management and healthcare use among populations that depend heavily on public or informal systems. I do not yet have a clear path for doing this, which is one of the reasons I am applying to this program.

At this stage, I would particularly benefit from guidance on how to interpret patterns in settings with recent and highly unbalanced post-treatment exposure and a small number of treated clusters. I am not yet sure how to separate adoption dynamics from true treatment effects in this context, or how to move from these reduced-form relationships toward a better understanding of underlying behavioral mechanisms. I am also eager to learn how to connect my current work to the questions, data resources (such as restricted Medicare claims), and conceptual approaches that define research in aging and health economics, transforming these separate projects into a more coherent, policy-relevant research path.