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**Economic Research in the Public Service: Interning with the U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Economic Policy**

This summer of 2017, under the auspices of the Class of 1960 John Heinz Government Service Fellowship, I had the opportunity to intern in the Office of Economic Policy at the U.S. Department of the Treasury in Washington, D.C. As someone with a long-standing interest in economics research and in potential graduate study in the future, I was determined to seek out summer opportunities that had the same eye for rigorous empiricism and analysis that I had found in my prior academic research assistantships here at Yale. However, I also sought out opportunities that would allow for faster pacing, more sensitivity to policy relevance, and a more domestic economic bent than I was able to enjoy in research experiences thus far. To this effect, my experience in the Office of Economic Policy surpassed my expectations.

In the Office of Economic Policy, I had the opportunity to partake in a diverse range of research opportunities. On a day-to-day basis, I was tasked with conducting literature review of scholarly journals; conducting econometric analysis using programs like Stata, SAS, or R; or curating and graphing macroeconomic data using Haver Analytics and Bloomberg. These research tasks were combined with regular visits to think tank events and Congressional hearings to prepare briefings for the Office, as well as intern team meetings with Treasury politicals and other economic policy institutions such as the Federal Reserve and the Council of Economic Advisers. The sum of activities made for a dynamic and stimulating work environment over the course of the summer.

One of the most fulfilling aspects of my time in the Office of Economic Policy—and one that I had hoped to enjoy upon starting—was the ability to at once delve into areas of economic policy of prior interest as well as gain substantive exposure to critical areas I had not yet explored. For example, as someone deeply drawn to labor economics and the relevant questions it entails, I was given the opportunity to center my summer around two major projects in this area. One pertained to the interaction between labor market indicators and the financial sector, in which I explored such topics as whether financial development helps or harms employment and wages and whether financial deregulation has beneficial or adverse distributional effects. The other pertained to the employment, wage, and human capital ramifications of occupational offshoring, with a specific focus on whether it results in diminished investment in crucial occupation-based skills. At the same time, I was also able to attend and brief the Office on a number of Congressional hearings on Dodd-Frank and consumer financial protection, and provided research assistance for a project on the economic spillover effects of infrastructure investment, two areas that I had comparatively less exposure to before starting my internship. The combination of these two channels provided a sense of intellectual challenge and well-roundedness and added more depth to my pre-existing knowledge base.

My summer at the Treasury proved to be an incredibly enriching one. I was undoubtedly able to add to my knowledge base and technical skillsets with each project, but unlike my experiences in academia, I was also exposed to how data and conclusions from it could be communicated in an accessible and effective way to be acted upon by higher-level politicals. Throughout the summer, I was able to enjoy the mentorship of the

Office's staff economists, from whom I was able to gain broad exposure to new research fields as well as further crystallize my own research plans and objectives. Perhaps most importantly, and in the spirit of the Heinz Fellowship's core mission, the labor and public economics work I was able to conduct helped affirm the value of research in the service of the public. It affirmed the potent force that research—when coupled with policy—can prove to be in both addressing such topics as inequality and social mobility in the United States in a particular sense, but in more broad sense expanding the range of human capabilities and potential. No matter how I ultimately choose to pursue it, I feel quite certain that economic research not only presents itself as an individual calling to me, but presents itself as a means by which I can best contribute to the aggregate welfare of the commons.

Summarily, I would like to underscore the deep value of my summer experience in affirming my desire to employ rigorous empirical analysis in the service of the greater good and for imparting me with a much more fulsome toolbox of knowledge and skills needed to tackle timely and pressing economic issues head-on. I would like to extend my deepest of thanks to the Heinz Government Service Fellowship and the CIPE for making this incredible opportunity—from which I have grown intellectually, professionally, and personally—a financial possibility, and for inspiring me to embrace the spirit of public service in my future endeavors.