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NORTH AMERICA
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
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Good afternoon,

Two years ago, I shared with you [my story](#) of participating in Chicago's summer youth employment program (SYEP), One Summer Chicago, and how it was a transformative experience. At that time, the future of SYEPs was clouded in uncertainty due to the pandemic. Yet over the past two years, we have seen the incredible resilience of SYEPs across the country.

Not only did many cities successfully transition to a virtual or hybrid model for their summer jobs programs, SYEPs have garnered the attention of policymakers across the United States as a program worthy of increased investment. It was particularly heartening to see how evidence motivated this attention. For instance, in his call to direct American Rescue Plan funds toward SYEP, [President Biden](#) cited studies conducted by J-PAL affiliates [Sara Heller in Chicago](#) and [Alicia Sasser Modestino in Boston](#) as evidence of the benefits these programs offer.

In the wake of this call, the [United States Department of Education](#) announced Lexington's \$960,000, Madison's \$1.15 million, Milwaukee's \$3.8 million, and Baltimore's \$8.4 million investments in their summer youth programs using American Rescue Plan funds. This summer, New York City will also see a historic [100,000 jobs](#) available for youth. At the same time as SYEPs gained increased attention across the country, J-PAL affiliated researchers were conducting exciting new evaluations of SYEPs to better understand the program's impact. To help distill the results of this research, my colleagues and I synthesized key policy lessons across these studies for city and state implementers.

To that end, I am excited to share J-PAL's [new review](#) of rigorous evidence on summer jobs programs in four major cities: Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia. The takeaway? The full picture of SYEP's potential impact on young people's lives is rich and complex. From providing access to employment and earnings during the summer, to reducing criminal legal involvement and decreasing mortality even after the summer ends, to potentially improving attendance and graduation rates for some groups, the findings point to SYEPs as a promising tool in promoting healthy youth development along multiple dimensions. Eleven years after completing my own SYEP experience, I am proud to showcase the potential of SYEPs to transform the lives of youth everywhere.

As this year's SYEPs get underway, I invite community leaders, government officials, and

other organizations interested in evaluating their programs to [reach out to J-PAL North America](#) and see how we can support you. Together, we can illuminate the full range of benefits that youth can derive from SYEPs and uncover more ways in which we can support today's young people.

Sincerely,

Yiping Li

Senior Policy Associate, J-PAL North America

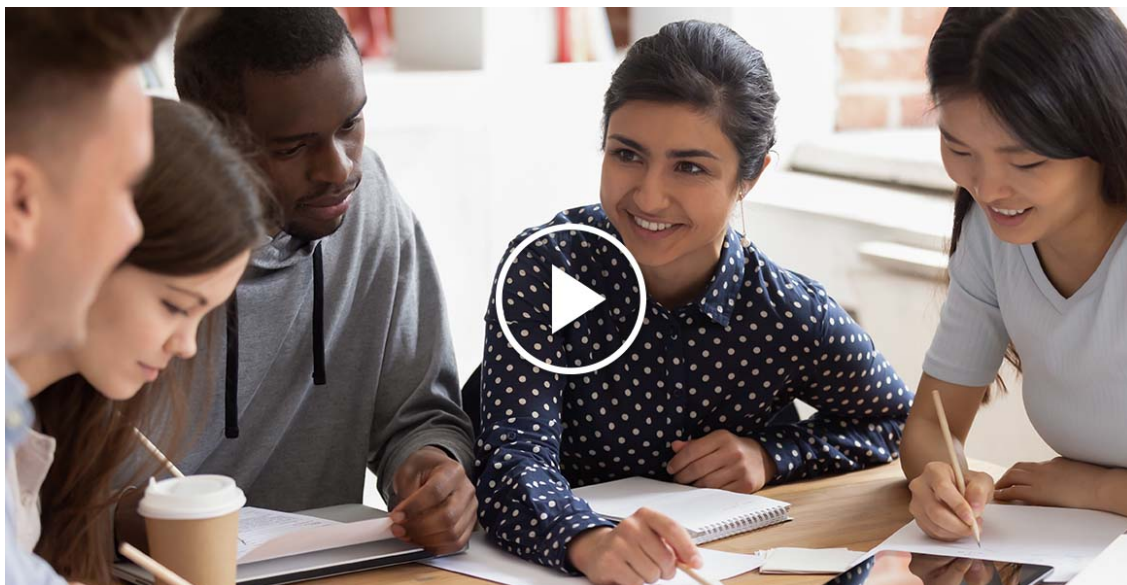


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The promises of summer youth employment programs

Providing employment opportunities and support to youth as they enter adulthood can shape their trajectories—both in the short and long-term. A [new J-PAL North America evidence review](#) of thirteen studies summarizes the impact of summer youth employment programs, which makes jobs available to youth and connects them to local community organizations and businesses. The evidence base suggests that summer youth employment programs not only improve employment and earnings during the summer, but also help youth and young adults stay safe and provide positive development experiences beyond the program. The review also highlights common features of impactful programs, policy recommendations for program implementation, and open questions for future research.



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Diversifying economics through a collaborative pipeline program

The field of economics influences policies across education, criminal justice, housing, labor markets, and more. Despite this far-reaching influence, economics as a field historically has not represented the full spectrum of identities and viewpoints in society. J-PAL North America's [Economics Transformation Project \(ETP\)](#) is a student-informed, pipeline program seeking to address barriers to entry for underrepresented minority students in economics. In an ongoing series on the J-PAL blog, [program staff](#) and [partners](#) discuss how ETP works to improve representation in the field and how partnerships with other organizations in this space can promote continued learning.



Photo: J-PAL

Meet members of J-PAL North America's health team

J-PAL North America's health team aims to evaluate promising programs seeking to make health care in the United States more efficient, effective, and equitable. While working collaboratively toward this common mission, staff bring their unique skills, backgrounds, and perspectives to their work. In the [first post](#) of an ongoing staff spotlight series, we highlight four J-PAL North America team members who support Co-Scientific Director Amy Finkelstein's research projects and staff the US Health Care Delivery Initiative. Across spotlights, staff share about their paths to J-PAL, give insight into their roles, and speak about valuable lessons learned.

FEATURED EVALUATION SUMMARY

FEATURED RESEARCH RESOURCE



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Revealing discriminatory hiring practices by major US employers

Discriminatory hiring practices remain common across the United States, often exacerbating racial inequities in the workforce. In a [randomized evaluation](#), researchers aimed to identify acts of discrimination among major employers by sending fictional resumes, with varying demographic information, to determine whether certain characteristics would lead to discrimination. Employers were less likely to contact resumes with distinctively Black names than resumes with distinctively white names, and racial discrimination was found to be highly concentrated among certain employers.



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Design and iterate implementation strategy

During the design phase of a randomized evaluation, researchers and implementing partners should work closely together to create a feasible implementation strategy. This [research resource](#) provides a framework for researchers making study design decisions with their partners. The steps covered in the resource include 1) identifying stakeholders in the community, 2) getting buy-in and feedback on study design decisions, and 3) iterating design decisions with an implementing partner.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[Interview with Larry Katz](#)

Mixtape: the Podcast

[Racism undermines the health of Black Americans. This physician-economist is looking for solution](#)

PBS Newshour

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