Studies in the News
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**ECONOMY**


When the banking market becomes highly competitive, this leads to an increase in risk taking. These risk patterns are associated with economic outcomes that have occurred during the 2008-09 financial crises, such as high unemployment rates. Analyzing banks’ risk taking behaviors is important when observing the housing market. This paper finds that “banks in high-competition markets lowered their lending standards in anticipation of high house price volatility.” This paper delves deeper into possible strategies of supply and demand effect of bank lending on the macroeconomy.
EDUCATION


This report analyzes “the role higher education has played in promoting upward income mobility by analyzing the EOP's [Equality of Opportunity Project's] student and parental federal tax returns data from 1996-2014 and postsecondary education data from the U.S. Department of Education.” The authors found “[o]ne in five students enrolled at four-year Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and nearly one in four students enrolled at four-year Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were from families in the lowest income quintile…. Two-year and four-year MSIs [Minority Serving Institutions] enrolled between 30 and 60% of first-generation college students.” The authors conclude that Minority Serving Institutions are on track to provide upward income mobility for lower-income students and students of color.


“The majority of SROs [school resource officers] carry handcuffs, a gun, mace, and a taser. In addition, 30 percent wear body cameras. On a typical day, SROs are most likely to be found in school hallways. Just under half of SROs (48%) monitor the social media use of the students in the schools they serve. Morale is relatively strong among SROs. Most SROs (58%) say morale is excellent or very good. Just 3% say morale is poor. Younger and female officers have somewhat poorer morale. Top work-related challenges for SROs include resources and a lack of cooperation or support from administrators and staff. Most SROs (79%) say their schools are prepared to handle an active shooter. Most officers say that having an armed officer on campus deters school shootings and minimizes harm in the event of a school shooting. Only a minority of officers (33%) say that training and arming a select group of teachers would make schools safer.”

EMPLOYMENT


“In this paper, we undertake empirical analysis to understand U.S. wage behavior since the beginning of the new millennium. At the macroeconomic level … the upward pressure on wage growth from recent tightening in the labor market has been dampened by a persistent decline in trend labor productivity growth and the share of income that accrues to labor.” At the microeconomic level, “[l]ower regional unemployment puts an upward pressure on wages of individuals, although this effect has become weaker since 2008. But there is downward pressure on wages for individuals with occupations that are exposed to automation and offshoring, and in industries with a higher concentration of large firms. All these factors appear to play a role illustrating why it is difficult to single out any one culprit for the observed wage growth moderation.”
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT


“This week, the scientists who evaluate the health of Pacific Bluefin tuna, one of the most iconic and valuable fish species in the world, released a new stock assessment that shows that the population at just 3.3% of its unfished level.... The assessment ... reveals that most of the recent catch has been composed of juvenile fish—that is, those that are too young to reproduce. Taking fish out of the water before they have a chance to reproduce bodes poorly for the population's future.... Along with stricter, proactive approaches to Pacific bluefin management ... the leading fishing nations for this species—Japan; Mexico; South Korea; Taiwan; Province of China; and the United States—must show they take the rebuilding effort seriously and take steps to ensure that their fishermen do not continue to exceed their catch limits. Quota overages threaten the success of any rebuilding plan and the future viability of the species.” (Pewtrusts.org, May 21, 2018).

HEALTH


“Despite receiving billions of dollars in taxpayer money, Medicaid insurers are lax in ferreting out fraud and neglect to tell states about unscrupulous medical providers, according to a federal report released Thursday.... [S]ome insurance companies failed to recover millions of dollars in overpayments made to doctors, home health agencies or other providers. The inspector general said insurers stood to benefit financially from this because higher costs can justify increased Medicaid rates in the future.... These companies tout their expertise at spotting suspicious billing patterns and chasing down criminals using sophisticated data mining, but the inspector general found that their fraud-fighting results don’t always match the rhetoric.” (California Healthline, July 12, 2018)

HUMAN SERVICES


“Almost a quarter of the nation’s children under 5 are at risk of not being counted in the 2020 census, which could have serious implications for the well-being of children around the United States.... In 2010, the census failed to count nearly 1 million children younger than 5. Experts warn that it could exceed that number in 2020.... Children of color and low-income kids are most at risk, as well as immigrant children.... Around 300 federal programs rely on U.S. census data ... to allocate more than $800 billion a year.... If young children are being undercounted, that means less money will be allocated to federally funded programs such as Medicaid and Head Start.” Of the 4.5 million kids living in hard-to-count census tracts in the U.S., one-sixth live in California. (Los Angeles Times, July 9, 2018).

Cyber-based threats are a continued risk to the nation’s critical infrastructures—energy, transportation systems, financial services, and communications, among others. “The GAO reported 35,277 security incidents on federal government computers during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 including email ‘phishing’ attacks, improper use and loss of equipment, according to the study issued Wednesday. The agency had reported 33,632 incidents for the previous year. ‘The pace of change needs to pick up real quickly because the threat is evolving much faster than the government's ability to address it,’ Gene L. Dodaro, the GAO’s comptroller general, said at a House hearing after the report’s release.” (Bloomberg, July 25, 2018).

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