

MAURICIO ROMERO

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Economics
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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Associate Professor	Centro de Investigación Económica, ITAM	2024 –
Visiting Scholar	Department of Economics, Universidad de los Andes	2024 – 2025
Assistant Professor	Centro de Investigación Económica, ITAM	2018 – 2024

EDUCATION

University of California — San Diego	PhD in Economics, 2018
University of California — San Diego	MA in Economics, 2013
Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia	BA in Mathematics (Cum Laude), 2010
Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia	BA in Economics (Summa Cum Laude), 2009

AFFILIATIONS

Research Affiliate, Jameel Poverty Action Lab, MIT (J-PAL)
Research Affiliate, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)
Academic Member, Experiments in Governance and Politics (EGAP)
Non-resident Research Fellow, Center for Global Development (CGD)
Affiliate, The Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD)
Research Affiliate, IZA — Institute of Labor Economics

EDITORIAL SERVICE

2025– Co-Editor, Journal of Development Economics
2022 Guest editor, Economics of Education Review. [Special issue on “Education in Low Income Settings”](#)

RELEVANT POSITIONS HELD

Consultant	World Bank	2022
Consultant	UNICEF	2021
Consultant	Innovations for Poverty Action	2020
Consultant	Econometria Consultores	2018 – 2020
Research Assistant	UCSD (Prof. Karthik Muralidharan)	2013 – 2018
Junior Researcher	Quantil Matemáticas Aplicadas	2009 – 2012
Research Assistant	Universidad de los Andes (Prof. Álvaro Riascos)	2008 – 2009

PUBLICATIONS (PEER-REVIEWED)

“Inputs, Incentives, and Complementarities in Primary Education: Experimental Evidence from Tanzania”. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 134, Issue 3, 2019. Joint with Karthik Muralidharan, Isaac Mbiti, Youdi Schipper, Constantine Mandak, and Rakesh Rajani

“Outsourcing Education: Experimental Evidence from Liberia”. *American Economic Review*, Volume 110, No. 2, 2020. Joint with Justin Sandefur and Wayne Sandholtz

“Communal Property Rights and Deforestation”. *Journal of Development Studies*, Volume 57, No. 6, 2021. Joint with Santiago Saavedra.

“Local Incentives and National Tax Evasion: The Response of Illegal Mining to a Tax Reform in Colombia”. *European Economic Review*, Volume 138, 2021. Joint with Santiago Saavedra.

“Direct vs Indirect Management Training: Experimental Evidence from Schools in Mexico”. *Journal of Development Economics*. Volume 154, 2022. Joint with Juan Bedoya, Rafael de Hoyos, Marcela Silveyra, and Monica Yanez-Pagans.

“Cross-Age Tutoring: Experimental Evidence from Kenya”. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Volume 70, No. 3, 2022. Joint with Lisa Chen and Noriko Magari.

“Beyond Short-term Learning Gains: The Impact of Outsourcing Schools in Liberia after Three Years”. *Economic Journal*, Volume 132, No. 644, 2022. Joint with Justin Sandefur.

“Designing Teacher Performance Pay Programs: Experimental Evidence from Tanzania”. *Economic Journal*, Volume 133, No. 653, 2023. Joint with Isaac Mbiti and Youdi Schipper.

“Learning Losses during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from Mexico”. *Economics of Education Review*. Volume 98, 2024. Joint with Enrique Alasino, María José Ramírez, Norbert Schady and David Uribe.

“The Effect of School Grants on Test Scores: Experimental Evidence from Mexico”. *Economica*. Volume 91, No. 363, 2024. Joint with Juan Bedoya, Rafael de Hoyos, Marcela Silveyra, and Monica Yanez-Pagans.

“Factorial Designs, Model Selection, and (Incorrect) Inference in Randomized Experiments”. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*. Volume 107, Issue 3, 2025. Joint with Karthik Muralidharan and Kaspar Wuthrich.

“COVID-19 Learning loss and recovery: Panel data evidence from India”. Joint with Abhijeet Singh and Karthik Muralidharan. **Forthcoming at the Journal of Human Resources**.

“Preventing School Dropout: Experimental Evidence from Guatemala” Joint with Melissa Adelman, Francisco Haimovich, and Emmanuel Vazquez . **Accepted at the Journal of Labor Economics**

“The productivity of public and private preschools (and schools): Evidence from India” Joint with Petter Berg and Abhijeet Singh. **Accepted at the Economic Journal**

COMMENTS, CONFERENCE PROCEEDING, AND OTHERS

“How to make replication the norm”. *Nature*. 554: 417–419, 2018. Joint with Paul Gertler and Sebastian Galiani

“Risk Adjustment Revisited using Machine Learning Techniques”. *Proceeding Series of the Brazilian Society of Computational and Applied Mathematics*, v. 6, n. 2. 2018. Joint with Álvaro Riascos and Natalia Serna

NON-ECON PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

“On the optimality of answer-copying indices: theory and practice”. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*. 40: 435–453. 2015. Joint with Álvaro Riascos and Diego Jara

“Misinformation About HIV and Negative Attitudes Toward Homosexuality and Same-Sex Couples’ Rights: The Case of Colombia”. **International Journal of Public Opinion Research**. Volume 29. Issue 3. pp. 426–448. 2017. Joint with Federico Andrade-Rivas

WORKING PAPERS

“The incidence of affirmative action: Evidence from quotas in private schools in India”. Joint with Abhijeet Singh. **Revise and resubmit at the Review of Economic Studies**

“Toxic Recycling: The Cost of Used Lead-Acid Battery Processing in Mexico” Joint with Erin Litzow, Bianca Cecato, and Tatiana Zarate-Barrera

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“The long term effects of admission to an elite high-school” Joint with Enrique Seira and Rafael de Hoyos

“Improving preschool services: Experimental evidence on a technology-aided intervention in India”. Joint with Ajinkya Keskar, Abhijeet Singh and Karthik Muralidharan.

“Designing Teacher Incentives for Scale: Experimental Evidence from Tanzania”. Joint with Isaac Mbiti, Youdi Schipper, and Karina Gomez.

“Beyond the experiment: medium-run impacts of a teacher performance pay program in Tanzania”. Joint with Isaac Mbiti, Youdi Schipper, and Karina Gomez.

“How much do we gain from personalization? Experimental evidence from Peru”. Joint with Raphaelle Aulagnon, Julian Cristia, Nicolas Bottan, and Jose Luis Montiel.

“Air filters and student learning: Experimental evidence from Colombia”. Joint with Santiago Saavedra and Michael Kremer.

“Mitigating learning losses during school closures by bridging the digital divide: Experimental evidence from India”. Joint with Abhijeet Singh and Karthik Muralidharan.

“Preventing dropout using mentors and information: Experimental evidence from Guatemala”. Joint with Martina Jakob, Carla Coccia and Eric Edmonds.

“Targeted instruction with teachers: Experimental evidence from El Salvador”. Joint with Martina Jakob and Carla Coccia.

RESTING PAPERS

“Benefit Plans, Insurer Competition, and Pharmaceutical Prices: Evidence from Colombia”

“Using Instrumental Variables under Partial Observability of Endogenous Variables for Assessing Effects of Air Pollution on Health”. Joint with Tarik Benmarhnia and Prashant Bharadwaj

“The effect of gold mining on the health of newborns”. Joint with Santiago Saavedra

TEACHING EXPERIENCE**Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México**

Economics IV	Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023
Microeconometrics (impact evaluation)	Fall 2020, Fall 2021, Spring 2023, Fall 2023

J-PAL's Evaluating Social Programs

Mechanics of power calculations	June 2021
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EGAP Learning Days

Estimands and estimator in field experiments	September 2021
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University of Bern

Experimental Methods in Development Research	Spring 2020
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Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

Microeconomics 3	Summer 2016
Game Theory	Summer 2013 and Summer 2014
Calculus I	Spring 2009

Universidad del Rosario, Bogotá, Colombia

Microeconomics 2	Summer 2018
Mathematical Economics	2011

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**Invited Presentations**

- 2025 Universidad de los Andes (Colombia), PUC-Chile, Universidad de los Andes (Chile), Universidad EIA, Banco de la República
- 2024 Universidad Javeriana, Universidad del Rosario
- 2023 El Colegio de Mexico, Dartmouth College, Institute for International Economic Studies (IIES), Stockholm School of Economics, University of Zurich
- 2022 Banco de La República, University of Chicago (Harris School of Public Policy), RIPED Economic Seminars, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Universidad de la República de Uruguay, Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF), World Bank, Georgetown University
- 2021 Columbia University (Sustainable Development Seminar), German Institute of Global and Area Studies, MIT (DEDP seminar), PUC-Chile (Economics Seminar)
- 2020 Northwestern University (Applied Microeconomics Seminar), Columbia University (Economics of Education Seminar), University of Bern (Economics Seminar), Universidad ICESI (Economics Seminar), Williams College (CDE alumni webinar)
- 2019 University of California - Merced (Economics Seminar)
- 2018 Center for Global Development, University of Bern, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, Universidad del Rosario
- 2017 Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank (DIME)
- 2016 Banco de La República, Universidad de los Andes (Economics Seminar), Universidad del Rosario (Economics Seminar)

Conference Presentations

- 2025 Desafíos de la Educación en México (COLMEX), How should we transform school instruction to address the needs of all students? Within-class learning variability in low- and middle-income countries? (NYU), Texas Development Economics Workshop (TXDW)
- 2024 VIII Congreso de Economía Colombiana
- 2023 IIMA-RISE Research Conference on Education Economics, LACEA-LAMES
- 2022 XV RIDGE Forum (Public Economics), NBER Education (Fall)
- 2020 XII RIDGE Forum (13th Annual Meeting of the Impact Evaluation Network), E-econ of Education
- 2019 NBER Education (Spring), Society For Research On Educational Effectiveness (SREE), Workshop on Private Provision of Public Education, X RIDGE-LACEA Forum Public Economics, X RIDGE-LACEA Forum Labor Economics, NBER-SI (Labor Economics), LACEA-LAMES 2019 Annual Meeting, Annual Meeting Colombian Economics Conference
- 2018 PACDEV, RISE Conference, NBER-SI (Development)
- 2017 PACDEV, Western Economic Association International, Frontiers of Health Economics Research in Latin America, NEUDC, Empirical Management Conference
- 2016 LACEA/LAMES
- 2015 Southern Economics Association Conference, LACEA, PACDEV

Referee Service

Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Journal of Comparative Economics, The Economic Journal, Journal of Human Resources, Environment and Development Economics, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, The Review of Economics and Statistics, American Economic Review, Review of Economic Studies, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Development Economics, American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, Experimental Economics, Journal of Public Economic, American Economic Review: Insights, Journal of the European Economic Association, Economics of Education Review, Health Economics

AER: Insights Excellence in Refereeing Award, 2021.

Journal of Human Resources Excellence in Refereeing Award, 2023.

Other Service

- 2023 Organizing committee for the G²LM|LIC & BREAD Conference on Development Economics in Nairobi, Kenya
- 2023 Organizing committee for EGAP Learning Days 13: Latin America Regional Hub Workshop
- 2023 Organizing committee for EGAP Latin America Regional Hub Meeting: Mexico City, October 2023
- 2023 Organizing committee for EGAP Priority Theme Meeting: Mexico City, October 2023
- 2024–2027 LACEA's Executive Committee

GRANTS

USAID (through LASER/PULSAR), 2024.

J-PAL Learning for All, 2024.

Weiss Fund, 2023.

What Works Hub for Global Education, 2022.

J-PAL King Climate Action Initiative, 2022.

J-PAL King Climate Action Initiative, 2021.

UC MEXUS-CONACYT Collaborative Research Grant - CN-20-172, 2020.

J-PAL Post-Primary Education (PPE) Initiative, 2019.

J-PAL Governance Initiative (GI), 2019.

Research Grant ES/P006043/1, ESRC, 2017.

PDEL - Graduate student research funding, UC San Diego, 2015.

LACEEP - Grant IDEA-302, Latin American and Caribbean Environmental Economics Program, 2014.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Jacobs Foundation Research Fellowship, 2024–2026.
 LACEA's Juan Luis Londoño Prize, 2023.
 Investigador Nivel I — Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (SNI), 2023–2027.
 Candidato a Investigador — Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (SNI), 2019–2022.
 O’Gorman Scholars Program (summer visiting scholar program), Columbia University, 2022.
 Chancellor’s Dissertation Medal (Social Sciences), UC San Diego, 2019.
 Clive Granger Fellowship for Promising Graduate Student Research, UC San Diego, 2016.
 Benjamin C. Horne Memorial Prize, UC San Diego, 2015.
 Lauchlin Currie Scholarship, Central Bank of Colombia, 2012–2016.
 DEEWR Prize for Applied Microeconometrics, Australain National University, 2008.
 Mario Galán Gómez Scholarship, Ecopetrol S.A. Bachilleres por Colombia program, 2004–2009.

SUPERVISED STUDENTS

Undergraduate Theses (ITAM)

- **David Baena Restrepo:** *Huyendo a otro infierno: Impacto del COVID-19 en el mercado laboral de migrantes venezolanos en Colombia*
- **Marcos Tonatiuh Santos de la Cruz:** *Discriminación en servicios de salud: Evidencia experimental para México*
- **Karina Itzel Gómez Medrano:** *¿En beneficio de la gente?: Evidencia de una provisión de libros de texto a gran escala en las pruebas de Tanzania*
- **Celia Inés Gehant:** *La transición de centrales eléctricas de combustóleo a gas natural y su impacto en la salud en México*
- **Guillermo Díaz de Rivera Laris:** *De estancias a transferencias: Consecuencias laborales del cambio de política en el cuidado infantil temprano en el caso mexicano*
- **Ilse Abigail Méndez Briones:** *Efecto de la contaminación en los resultados del COMIPEMS*
- **Jorge Enrique Méndez García:** *Impacto de los sistemas de incentivos al salario docente en el comportamiento del personal educativo en México. Winner of the Flecha al Aire Prize, 2024*
- **Leonela Simonne Arcos Sotelo:** *Análisis del impacto de la imposición de tarifas máximas en el sector ferroviario: Una evaluación de su efectividad en el control de precios de alimentos*
- **Adriana González Zorrilla:** *El impacto de la evaluación del desempeño docente, de la reforma educativa del 2013, en el aprendizaje estudiantil en el periodo 2015-2019*

Master Theses (ITAM)

- **Karina Itzel Gómez Medrano:** *Después del experimento: Impactos a mediano plazo de un programa de incentivos para profesores en Tanzania*

Ph.D. Theses

- **Martina Jakob (University of Bern):** *Using Field Experiments and Machine Learning to Bridge the Global Learning Gap*

OTHER INFORMATION

Citizenship: Colombia
 Languages: Spanish (native), English (proficient), Italian (basic)