



NEWS RELEASE:

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TO: Press Contact

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**The Southern Economic Association®
Honors Dhaval Dave, Monica Deza, and Brady Horn
With Its Georgescu-Roegen Prize**

Dhaval Dave (Bentley University), Monica Deza (Hunter College), and Brady Horn (The University of New Mexico) were recently honored with the prestigious Georgescu-Roegen Prize by the Southern Economic Association® (SEA). Presentation occurred November 21, 2021, during the SEA 91st Annual Meeting held in Houston, TX.

The Georgescu-Roegen Prize is awarded each year by the Southern Economic Association® for the best academic article published in the *Southern Economic Journal*®. Dave, Deza, and Horn were awarded the 2021 prize for their article “*Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs, Opioid Abuse, and Crime*,” published in Volume 87 of the *Southern Economic Journal*® (*SEJ*, Volume 87, Number 3, January 2021).

In this paper, the authors address one of the most important policy responses to the well-documented and substantial opioid epidemic in the United States: prescription drug monitoring programs, or PDMPs. Broadly speaking, these policies require physicians and other providers to access computerized systems that show what drugs a patient has previously been prescribed. A goal of these programs is to stop doctor shopping (which is very common) and reduce the over-prescribing of dangerous opioids. Most of the existing research asks whether PDMPs affect opioid use and health. In this paper, the authors evaluate whether these laws have had effects on crime. Using the extensive variation across states in the timing and variety of PDMP policies implemented, the authors estimate two-way fixed effects models that control for time invariant characteristics about places and for secular time effects. They match this approach with data on crimes from the Uniform Crime Reports.

The results in this paper are striking: they find that PDMPs with a ‘must access’ requirement – i.e., the strongest versions of these laws – reduce crime overall by five percent, with reductions mainly coming from assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. These effects are corroborated by event study analyses which confirm the assumption of no differential pre-trends leading up to adoption of must-access PDMPs. Interestingly, voluntary PDMPs (the weaker version without the must-access requirement) have no relationship with crime. As the economic literature on the effects of the opioid crisis continues to expand, this paper is likely to be widely cited, as it is one of the first to link PDMPs with an important downstream social outcome. Moreover, as many states have yet to increase the strength of their PDMP to ‘must access’, the results have clear policy relevance.

The SEA is most pleased to honor Dhaval Dave, Monica Deza, and Brady Horn as the 2021 recipients of the Georgescu-Roegen Prize.

For further information, contact:

Benjamin Powell, Secretary/Treasurer
Southern Economic Association®
Texas Tech University
Box 45059
Lubbock, TX 79409-5059
(806) 742-7138
sea@ttu.edu