



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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Contents this week:

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Households that cannot pay utilities likely poorer than those with housing hardship

ECONOMY

World Bank forecasts evolving, not collapsing workforce

Numbers in gig workforce rose with Great Recession, now in decline

EDUCATION

Report: 71% of DACA students also work vs. 43% of all undergrads

How science assessments are administered by different states

EMPLOYMENT

'Robots are reducing the demand for workers and weighing down wages'

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Feasibility study pans a state-owned cannabis bank as a legal, financial risk

HEALTH

Medicaid expansion pulled 690,000 Americans out of poverty

HUMAN SERVICES

GAO recommendations on SNAP Employment and Training program

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Past Due: Combinations of Utility and Housing Hardship in the United States. By Ryan Finnigan, et al. *Sociological Perspectives*. Online ahead of print. June 28, 2018. 36 p.

Brief: https://poverty.ucdavis.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/finnigan_housing_hardship_final.pdf

Article: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0731121418782927?journalCode=spxb> (Available from the California Research Bureau)

"Housing and utility costs consume the majority of monthly incomes for millions of families in the United States.... Between 14 and 16% of the U.S. population experiences utility and/or housing hardship each year, defined as the inability to make full and on-time payments.... [U]tility hardship is more common and persistent than housing hardship ... [H]ouseholds may prioritize housing over utility payments due to the substantial threat of eviction.... Households that experience only utility hardship are notably more

disadvantaged than those with only housing hardship.... The results ... suggest that utility subsidies ... could help reduce multiple forms of hardship.” ([UC Davis Center for Poverty Research](#), Nov. 2018).

ECONOMY

***The Changing Nature of Work 2019.* World Bank. Jan. 2019. 151 p.**
<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/816281518818814423/2019-WDR-Report.pdf>

“In its report, the World Bank instead stresses that the nature of work in the future will evolve. Although technological advances in automation are starting to handle thousands of routine tasks and will eliminate many low-skill jobs in advanced economies and developing countries, they are also creating opportunities for different, more productive and more creative jobs.... In the future, workers are more likely to have many jobs over the course of their careers, largely because of the rise of the gig economy, instead of holding down a position with the same employer for decades, according to the World Bank. And different skills will be increasingly important, the report says. Instead of less advanced skills that can be replaced by technology, employers will increasingly be looking to hire people with advanced cognitive skills, such as complex problem-solving, teamwork, reasoning and communication talents.” ([Los Angeles Times](#), Jan. 4, 2019).

***Understanding Trends in Alternative Work Arrangements in the United States.* By Lawrence F. Katz, et al. NBER. Jan. 2019. 29 p.**
<https://www.nber.org/papers/w25425> (Available to .gov accounts or from the California Research Bureau)

“Katz and Krueger have now revisited the subject four years later, and their latest results suggest that the number of workers in alternative jobs actually has not been growing at all.... What's going on here? Part of the answer seems to be that the labor market was improving from 2015 to 2017, and so more people moved into traditional jobs. Other differences have to do with the extent to which surveys were answered by workers directly, or by others in the family, and whether the 2015 survey for some reason ended up with an oversample of people holding multiple jobs. But bottom line, the current view is that the number of alternative workers may have risen during the Great Recession and its aftermath, but has since declined back to about where it was before the recession.” ([Conversable Economist](#), Jan. 29, 2019).

EDUCATION

***In Their Own Words: Higher Education, DACA, and TPS.* By Jose Magaña-Salgado, et al. TheDream.US. Oct. 2018. 38 p.**
<https://www.thedream.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TheDream.US-In-Their-Own-Words-Report-Oct-2018-1-2.pdf>

“A study conducted last spring by an organization that supports such students with scholarships found that 71% of DACA students work in some capacity while attending college and 29% work full time. Of the employed students, approximately 89% are also full-time students.... By contrast, 43% of all undergraduates work in some capacity.... Based on the study's findings, TheDream.US's primary recommendation for colleges and universities is to establish resource centers with staff members who can provide professional, academic, and legal counseling specific to the needs of undocumented students.” ([Chronicle of Higher Ed](#), Oct. 22, 2018).

***Transforming Science Assessment.* Achieve, Inc. 2018.**
<https://www.achieve.org/transforming-science-assessment-systems-for-innovation>

This report is a “series of resources designed to provide state education leaders with 1) information about how states are currently pursuing statewide assessment systems in science; 2) analyses of what features

influence different approaches, with an eye to supporting state leaders as they make their own decisions regarding science assessment systems; 3) detailed state profiles that highlight how and why some states have made decisions regarding designing and enacting different examples of systems of assessment; and 4) a how-to guide for policymakers looking to enact systems of assessment in science.” It includes spotlights on Kentucky, Michigan and Nebraska’s science assessment systems.

EMPLOYMENT

Automation and New Tasks: The Implications of the Task Content of Production for Labor Demand. By Daron Acemoglu, et al. MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy. Nov. 2018. 49 p.
<https://economics.mit.edu/files/16338>

“Recent research has concluded that robots are reducing the demand for workers and weighing down wages, which have been rising more slowly than the productivity of workers. Some economists have concluded that the use of robots explains the decline in the share of national income going into workers’ paychecks over the last three decades. Because it pushes workers to the less productive parts of the economy, automation also helps explain one of the economy’s thorniest paradoxes: Despite the spread of information technology, robots and artificial intelligence breakthroughs, overall productivity growth remains sluggish.” (*New York Times*, Feb. 4, 2019).

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

State-Backed Financial Institution Serving the Cannabis Industry: Feasibility Study Report. Level 4 Ventures. Cannabis Banking Working Group. Dec. 27, 2018. 19 p.
<https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/comm-external-urls/cannabis-feasibility-summary-report.pdf>

“Since [marijuana] is illegal under federal law, any bank that handles marijuana money [can be charged with money laundering](#), which forces the industry to deal with large amounts of cash, making them targets for violent crime. To alleviate the problem, the notion of creating a state-run public bank to handle cannabis business accounts has been floated in several states, including California, Colorado, Michigan, New Jersey and Washington.... [This report] panned the idea, concluding that a public pot bank would pose too great of a legal and financial risk to the state. ... [S]tart-up costs for a public bank in California would cost the state \$35 million over six years. And that money would be wasted unless federal regulators granted the necessary approvals for the bank to conduct wire transfers, which would be highly unlikely.” (*Governing*, Jan. 18, 2019).

HEALTH

“Antipoverty Impact of Medicaid Growing with State Expansions over Time.” *Health Affairs*, vol. 38 no. 1 (Jan. 2019) 7 p.
<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05155> (Available from the California Research Bureau)

“The expansion of Medicaid under the ACA significantly reduced the burden of poverty in the United States. After controlling for broader economic and demographic trends, we found that the expansion reduced the rate of poverty by just under 1 percentage point and was concentrated among the nonelderly adults whom the policy was intended to affect.... By evaluating trends in the antipoverty effects of Medicaid coverage, we found that the magnitude of the effect increased alongside the growing importance of the program in the years since expansion. If out-of-pocket spending continues to grow—through increases in prices of medical care or premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket maximums in private insurance—so too will the economic consequences of cutting Medicaid. Thus, in the face of rising

medical spending, future expansions or retractions of public health care coverage are likely to produce corresponding effects on poverty.”

HUMAN SERVICES

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: More Complete and Accurate Information Needed on Employment and Training Programs. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Nov. 2018. 49 p.
<https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/695632.pdf>

Certain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients must comply with the program’s work requirements, which may include participating in a state’s SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program if required by the state. “This report examines (1) what is known about SNAP E&T program participants and outcomes over time and (2) the extent to which state SNAP E&T programs have partnered with other programs offering similar services.... GAO is making four recommendations, including that USDA take additional steps to address SNAP E&T data reliability issues and to help states leverage available workforce development system resources.”

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