

Speaker: *Max Kapustin*

Presentation title: Predicting and Preventing Gun Violence: An Experimental Evaluation of READI Chicago

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A relatively small share of residents concentrated within a handful of neighborhoods account for most shootings in Chicago. This concentration of risk raises the possibility that narrowly targeting the individuals who face the very highest risk of shooting involvement could have a dramatic impact on serious violence. This project is a randomized controlled trial of a new intervention for those at the highest risk of gun violence, designed to test a non-law enforcement, social service-based approach. The Rapid Employment and Development Initiative (READI) uses three different methods of identifying individuals in Chicago at the highest risk of being involved in a shooting: machine learning prediction based on administrative arrest and victimization records, referrals from the street outreach staff who work in the relevant neighborhoods, and screening among those leaving prison and jail, who might be at a key transition point. It then provides them with 18 months of supported, subsidized work alongside cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and personal development programming. Though this experiment is still in the field, we are able to present two sets of results: how well each prediction method anticipates actual shooting and violence involvement, as well as initial impact results on serious violence involvement and other criminal behavior, measured using administrative arrest and victimization records. Since there could be a trade-off between a participant's risk level and their responsiveness to treatment, we will also analyze what variation in risk, take-up rates, and program impacts across recruitment methods teach us about socially optimal targeting.