

# Cynthia Boruchowicz

## AY 2017-18 All-S.T.A.R. Fellow

School of Public Policy

Department of Public Policy

3<sup>rd</sup> year Graduate Student, RA



Part of my PhD experience at the Maryland School of Public Policy (SPP) involves working as a graduate assistant with my advisor, Professor Phillip Swagel.

My work with him for the last two years has been spent analyzing tax and spending policies in the United States, focusing especially on their incentives for labor supply, and then thinking about potential policy changes that can be implemented to promote greater equality and improved earnings for those at the bottom. The outcome of this research process so far is a paper titled, "Policies to Address Income Inequality and Increase Economic Opportunities at the Bottom of the Distribution," which I co-authored with Professor Swagel and that is now in the pipeline for

publication through the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

Being able to co-author such a paper so early in my PhD studies incentivized me to start thinking about my own research. In particular, I am interested in ways in which welfare programs can be designed to promote work in the formal sector in the developing world. My current research revolves around the idea that poorly designed welfare policies in Latin America lead low-skilled workers to work less and to stay in off the books jobs that leave them outside the formal economy. Better-designed policies with improved work incentives can avoid these negative impacts while providing appropriate support for families most in need of assistance. Co-authoring the research paper as part of my graduate assistant responsibilities has been especially helpful in developing my own research agenda.