

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: SHAWNA KOLKA

Shawna began with LEO in July of 2014 as a Senior Research Associate. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 2012, where she studied Economics and Sociology. During college she enjoyed working with service agencies like Indiana Legal Services, the Family Justice Center of South Bend and the Newark Boys and Girls Club. After spending a few years after college working in financial services in Chicago, Shawna began looking for opportunities to become more involved in the nonprofit sphere again. She was drawn to LEO's focus on helping service providers and policymakers figure out how to use their limited resources to have the maximum impact on the lives of those they serve.



What is your role at the Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities?

The biggest part of my job is managing the day-to-day operations of research projects, including communicating with agencies, developing and implementing research protocols, and overseeing data collection and analysis. LEO is still fairly new and small, allowing me the opportunity to take on a lot of different tasks, including planning our conference last spring, recruiting, and managing our research assistants.

What projects are you involved in at LEO?

My two biggest projects at the moment are the Padua Pilot and Nightingale. The Padua Pilot is an evaluation of Catholic Charities Fort Worth's intensive case management program. Over the last year we developed and fielded a survey for the project and began enrollment. Right now we are in the early preparations for the first round of follow-up surveys. Nightingale is a respite center for homeless patients run by Catholic Charities Santa Rosa. We are currently working with several local project partners to finalize the research plan, and we hope to start enrolling patients in the late fall.

What is your involvement with LEO's Undergraduate Research Assistants?

I oversee the RA schedules and provide guidance on assignments. Our Undergraduate Research Assistants are an integral part of all of LEO's research projects - they help out on everything from background research to data entry and analysis! They've continually impressed us with their ability to not just quickly complete tasks but to thoughtfully take ownership of projects and add their own ideas and insights.



LEO is proud to announce our participation in the Notre Dame Department of Economics' Shamrock Series Lecture! Along with panelists from the Notre Dame Department of Economics, Catholic Charities Fort Worth, Catholic Relief Services and Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, LEO co-founders will discuss our research initiatives. This event is free and open to the public.

COMBINING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE TO SERVE THE POOR
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2015
BOSTON MARRIOTT COPLEY PLACE, WELLESLEY MEETING ROOM
3:00-4:15 PM

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#ShamrockSeriesND

