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Introduction

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Introduction

Welcome to Volume 18 of *Major Themes in Economics*. All papers in *Major Themes* are written by senior economics majors at the University of Northern Iowa.

One of Sycamore U's priorities is to recruit more students. It would therefore be helpful to know what factors influence the decision of admitted students to actually attend Sycamore U. **Trevor Draisey** uses a linear probability model to analyze data provided by Sycamore U's Department of Admissions. His results are likely to be useful, especially as a foundation for future research when the university is able to better integrate its own data systems.

Do immigrants to the United States take advantage of welfare more often than the native born? **Jessica Pabst** compares how frequently legal immigrants use Medicaid compared to the native born. She used a logit model to analyze almost two and a half million observations from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. She finds that in 2014, all else equal, legal immigrants are less likely to use Medicaid than natives.

To many people, salaries of the best professional baseball players appear to have lost touch with reality. How can any player be worth \$325 million dollars over thirteen years? **Jacob Oswald** asks if the Major League Baseball free-agent market is efficient. In other words, do the salaries paid accurately reflect the value of the players to the teams that pay them? His answer is a qualified yes.

A provision of the Affordable Care Act required many restaurants and similar establishments to post nutritional information about the food they served. The intent was to educate consumers about what they are eating and therefore induce them to make healthier choices. **Kevin McGee** uses an "almost ideal demand system" to investigate the issue. He does not find evidence that the law had the intended effect.

What are the characteristics of a highly-ranked undergraduate economics program? **Lindsey Pedersen** collected information from departments around the country and regression analysis to try to answer the question. She found that higher-ranked programs are more likely to require calculus in their coursework and are less likely to be located in business schools.

As health-care costs continue to rise, more ideas have been floated about how to bring them under control. One proposal is to create health-savings accounts. Proponents claim that such accounts, when coupled with high-deductible health insurance, might help reduce costs and increase the number of people insured. **Conrad Keezer** examines the evidence.

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