

Martin Anthony Vargas Alvines

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Citizenship: Peru

Last updated: October 2026

Email: mavargasalvines@vt.edu

Phone: +1-540-558-5660

Education

Ph.D. Economics, Virginia Tech

Expected May 2027

Dissertation Title – “Essays in Education and Labor Economics”

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND REFERENCES

Department of Economics, Virginia Tech, 880 West Campus Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24061

Professor [Suqin Ge](#) (Chair)

ges@vt.edu

Professor [Sudipta Sarangi](#) (Department Head)

ssarangi@vt.edu

Professor [Sergio Barrera](#)

sbarrera@vt.edu

Professor [Xu Lin](#)

xulin88@vt.edu

M.A. Economics, Virginia Tech

2023

B.A. Economics, Universidad de Piura

2019

Minor – Anthropology of Work and Family Studies

Honors – Salutatorian; Full Scholarship

Fields

Labor Economics, Economics of Education, Applied Microeconometrics

Research

Working Papers

1. “Internships and the School-to-Work Transition” (Job Market Paper)

This paper examines the relationship between undergraduate internship participation and early labor market outcomes. Using retrospective rich survey data from recent graduates of a public university in the eastern United States across diverse majors, I estimate associations between internship completion and outcomes including starting salary, job attainment, job–major match, and unemployment. Results show that completing at least one internship is associated with about 10% higher starting salaries and a greater likelihood of obtaining a job related to one’s major. These associations are robust across specifications and similar in magnitude to the limited causal estimates reported in the literature.

2. “Formal Entry, Informal Rents, and Labor Rationing” with [Paul J. Corcuera](#)

Abstract: This paper studies how formal firm creation influences informality through two mechanisms: changes in market power and labor rationing. We exploit the staggered rollout of Peru’s *Business Development Centers* (CDE) program, which encouraged the entry of formal firms across districts and industries. A simple framework highlights that informal firms rely on both paid and unpaid family labor and may possess market power. Increased formal entry can reduce informal rents in high-barrier sectors or reallocate underemployed workers toward formal jobs in labor-abundant areas. Using administrative CDE records and ENAHO microdata, we implement an event-study design, Jackknife IV, and Shift-Share IV to estimate the impacts on profits, unpaid labor, and employment transitions.

Research in Progress

1. “AI certificates as labor markets signals in the US”
2. “Peer networks and review session attendance” with Promit Chaudhuri and Hector Tzavellas
3. “From 20 to AD: Peru’s school enrollment-age reform and education results”

Teaching Experience

Instructor, Virginia Tech, Department of Economics

Principles of (Macro)Economics (ECON 2006), [Fall 2026]

Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 3204), [Summer II 2026]

Applied Econometrics (ECON 3254), [Spring 2026]

Instructor, Universidad de Piura, Department of Economics

Econometrics for Machine Learning and Big Data, [2024-I, 2025 Winter, 2025-II, 2026-II]

Informatics for Economists, [2025-II]

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Virginia Tech, Department of Economics

Economics of Race, Sergio Barrera, Fall 2025

Principles of Microeconomics, Jadrian Wooten and Erika Perdue, Fall 2022, Spring 2023

Teaching Assistant, Universidad de Piura, Department of Economics

Principles of Macroeconomics, Math for Economists, Game Theory, Industrial Organization, Econometrics, Microeconometrics, Macroeconomics I & II, Methodology for Economics Research, and Regional and Urban Economics, 2016 through 2023

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Virginia Tech, Department of Economics

Sergio Barrera, July 2023 through August 2024; January through April 2025

Sudipta Sarangi, Hector Tzavellas, and Matthew Kovach, Summer 2023

Research Assistant, J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean

Eliana La Ferrara, Michela Carlana, and Astrid Pineda, March through July 2022

Research Assistant, University of Virginia

Sheetal Sekhri and Ramiro Burga, May 2021 through May 2022

Internal and External Grants

Rising Scholar Research Award, Virginia Tech

2024

Seminars, Conferences and Events

2026 RIDGE Summer School, Barbados (participant)

2024 LACEA–LAMES Annual Meeting (participant), RIDGE Summer School, Uruguay (participant)

2023 Conference on Network Science and Economics (participant)

2021 96th Western Economic Association International Conference (presenter, virtual), Young Lives Seminar, GRADE (participant, full scholarship), Math, Micro & Metrics Summer Camp, Lima School of Economics (participant, partial scholarship)

2019 2nd Sustainability & Development Conference, University of Michigan (presenter; session moderator), LXVI Advanced Economics Summer Program, Central Reserve Bank of Peru (participant)

2018 Policy Design: Behavioral and Experimental Economics, Virginia Tech (participant)

Professional Experience

Ministry of Education of Peru (MINEDU), Lima	
Analyst, Planning and Budgeting Division	July 2021 – February 2022
Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Washington, D.C.	
Paid Intern, Education Division	Summer 2020
Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCRP), Piura Branch	
Paid Intern, Economic Studies	July – December 2019

Skills

Languages

Spanish (native), English (fluent), Italian (basic)

Programming

Proficient: Stata, Python (Jupyter, VS), L^AT_EX

Familiar: R, ArcGIS (with Python), Qualtrics, KoBo Toolbox

Teaching References

Professor [Jadrian Wooten](#)

Collegiate Associate Professor of Economics

Department of Economics, Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, VA 24061

jadrian@vt.edu

Professor [Sandro Navarro](#)

Head of the Department of Economics

Department of Economics, Universidad de Piura

Piura, Peru

sandro.navarro@udep.edu.pe