

“How Much is a Green Card Worth? Evidence from Mexican and Puerto Rican Men Who Marry Women Born in the U.S.”

Miao Chi

Rollins College and Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Scott Drewianka

Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Working Paper: Last Updated 2010

1 – 23

<http://globalnetwork.princeton.edu/publications/fulltext/2.pdf>

Themes: Fertility and Households

Regions: North America

Age Ranges: 18+

Keywords: Households, Work and Employment, Economic Status, Public Policy

Abstract: Recognizing that U.S. immigrants can acquire Permanent Resident status by marrying natives, we quantify the value of that status using the earnings premium received by Mexican-born men who marry U.S.-born women. Men born in Puerto Rico are a natural control group because they are U.S. citizens, but otherwise face similar challenges. IV estimates indicate that intermarried Mexicans earn a 30 percent premium, while intermarried Puerto Ricans receive no premium. The premium vanishes within ten years after immigration, consistent with waiting times for green cards. However, among Mexicans who immigrated less than six years ago, the estimated premium exceeds 100 percent.