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Dr. Diana Thomas Researches How Political Entrepreneurs Affect Rules of Economic Exchange

The research interests of Dr. Diana Thomas stretch across the globe.

A German native, she has published papers on the regulation of late medieval German beer markets, on informal property rights institutions among taxi cab drivers in Trujillo, Peru, and even on the Aggie Blue Bikes program at Utah State!

She was named Researcher of the Year at the Huntsman School last spring, and that has brought more attention to her work. An assistant professor of economics and finance, she was recognized for her work exploring the role political entrepreneurs play in changing the formal and informal rules that govern economic exchange and society more generally.

For example, she shows in one paper written with her Huntsman colleagues Tyler Brough and Ben Blau that the 2008 Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) was an example of redistribution in favor of special interests; specifically, for every dollar a bank spent on lobbying in the five years prior to the bailout, that bank received roughly \$500 more in TARP money.

Dr. Thomas earned her Diploma in Business Administration from Fachhochschule Aachen and her B.S. degree in finance from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. She returned to George Mason University to complete an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics in 2005.