

# Francisco del Villar

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## EDUCATION

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**The University of Chicago**, Ph.D. in Economics (M.A. 2017) **2016–2022**

- Created a statistical method to detect irregular judicial case-to-judge assignments without training data, scraped 2 million assignments in Ecuador, and found irregularities in at least 2.9% of assignments, concentrated in 2% of courts.
- Rewrote in NumPy and IPOPT the code for a nonlinear optimization problem to locate lost Bronze Age cities in Turkey and tuned the university's computing cluster, enabling the estimation to run in 260 parallel jobs with 5,200 starting values to search for the global optimum. The paper appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
- Organized the 2018 and 2019 editions of the UChicago–Northwestern Empirics and Methods in Economics Conference, reviewing around 50 papers a year and helping secure Nobel laureate Joshua Angrist as keynote speaker in 2019.
- Adapted a survey-correction method so the government of Mexico City could estimate the true COVID-19 infection rate without paying people to get tested.

**Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México**, B.A. in Economics **2010–2014**

- Graduated with honors (*mención honorífica*).
- Started a produce marketplace, won a competition to enter MIT's startup accelerator, and pitched at Demo Day.
- Studied philosophy concurrently at UNAM (2013–2014).

## EXPERIENCE

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**BAN CARBON (formerly Ultra Civic)**, Executive Director **2024–Present**

BAN CARBON cuts the emissions of US power plants by retiring their government-issued CO<sub>2</sub> allowances.

- Found that retiring allowances from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) cuts CO<sub>2</sub> for under \$40 per ton, versus \$300–\$1,000 through carbon removal.
- Registered with RGGI and set up BAN CARBON to retire allowances with tax-deductible US and UK donations.

**Independent Researcher** **2023–2024**

- Designed a mechanism through which naive funders can finance public goods cost-effectively ([paper](#)).

**Meta Platforms**, Research Scientist **2022**

- Helped design surveys to inform product decisions at the Menlo Park, CA, headquarters.

**Qué Funciona para el Desarrollo**, Senior Quantitative Analyst **2015–2016**

- Coded an SMS health app for pregnant beneficiaries of PROSPERA, Mexico's conditional cash-transfer program.
- Randomly assigned access to the app to measure its causal effect on health outcomes.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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**Programming:** proficient in Python; familiar with R and SQL; use Debian GNU/Linux daily; built an airline AI agent that runs auctions to find passengers on overbooked flights willing to take a later flight.

**Languages:** Spanish (native), English (fluent), French (fluent).

**Public speaking:** TEDx talk (2014), about 600,000 views, in the top 1% of TEDx talks worldwide.

**Volunteering:** IT support for the Missionaries of Charity, Casa Hogar Paz y Alegría, Mexico City (2023–Present).

**Hobbies:** driving and repairing a 1973 VW Bug (longest road trip: Mexico City to Nicaragua to San Francisco to Mexico City), cooking themed feasts for 10–25 people, climbing mountains, and solo and partner dancing.