



PHD DISSERTATION DEFENSE

THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND INCENTIVES IN VOLUNTARY CORPORATE PROVISION OF PUBLIC GOODS



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ABSTRACT This research program examines both external incentives for firms to engage in strategic provision of social and environmental goods and information strategies to harness sustainability motivations and influence perceptions among employees and other stakeholder groups. The dissertation consists of four chapters, each comprising a standalone empirical research study grounded in strategic management, economics, and behavioral theories. The first two studies use field experimental methods to examine the tendency for individuals to alter attitudes and behavior in response to information about relevant peers; the first study in a residential community and the second in a corporate workplace. The third study extends these behavioral phenomena to corporations, evaluating the degree to which more profitable or more rivalrous industry peers influence firms' engagement in corporate social responsibility initiatives. The final study examines microdata contained within a prominent third-party corporate greenhouse gas emissions disclosure program, finding evidence of widespread reporting inconsistencies that suggest systematic efforts by companies to mislead stakeholders about actual carbon management performance. The outcomes of this research program inform corporate strategies for leveraging social and environmental goods for improved financial performance — the triple bottom line — and policy prescriptions to enhance incentives for companies to provide truthful disclosures of environmental performance.

BIO Patrick is a PhD Candidate in the Economics and Environmental Science (EES) emphasis at the Bren School and Department of Economics. His research explores the effect of information and incentives on strategic corporate behavior, often in the context of corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability strategies. He has published research in business management and finance journals and frequently presented research at global management conferences. He has taught courses in business strategy at UCSB's Technology Management Program and corporate financial management at the Bren School. Prior to his PhD studies, he worked in varied business management roles at a Fortune 100 firm, multiple start-up companies, and an investment bank. He previously earned an MBA degree in strategy and finance from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley, a graduate engineering degree from the University of Michigan, and an undergraduate engineering degree from Boston University.

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