

David S. Saurman

Provocative Lecture Series 2021–2022



John A. List, Ph.D.

*Kenneth C. Griffin Distinguished Service Professor in
Economics at the University of Chicago*

The Voltage Effect: How to Make Good Ideas Great and Great Ideas Scale

“Scale” is probably a term you’ve heard before—a buzzword amongst Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and tech start-up circles. But at its core, “to scale” simply means to achieve a desired outcome when you move from a small group—of customers, students, or citizens—to a much larger one. And it’s not just for start-ups. Scaling ideas underpins all social and technological progress, since the innovations that change the world are those that reach the largest number of people. Dr. List reveals why some ideas take off (or scale) and why others fail by using a mix of original research and real-world anecdotes from working with companies like Uber, Lyft, and Tinder.

Dr. List's work focuses on the inner-workings of markets and most recently on the gender earnings gap in the gig economy (using evidence from rideshare drivers). This has led to collaborative work with several different firms including: Lyft, Uber, United Airlines, Virgin Airlines, Humana, Sears, Kmart, Facebook, Google, General Motors, Tinder, Citadel, Walmart and several non-profits. List was elected a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2011, and a Fellow of the Econometric Society in 2015. List received the 2010 Kenneth Galbraith Award, and the 2008 Arrow Prize for Senior Economists for his research in behavioral economics in the field, and was the 2012 Yrjo Jahnsson Lecture Prize recipient. He is a current Editor of the *Journal of Political Economy*.

<https://voices.uchicago.edu/jlist/>

**Wednesday,
March 9, 2022
5:00–6:30pm (PST)**

**SJSU, Student
Union Theater**

www.sjsu.edu/economics/events/

The Department of Economics invites students, faculty, and the general public to consider intellectual arguments on controversial topics. This series fosters the tradition of higher education to challenge ideas and develop critical thinking in an environment of respect for intellectual discourse. Our goal is that you engage critical thinking skills to reach your own informed position on controversial issues. We invite you to attend, relax, ponder, and enjoy the thought process. For more information, please contact: Justin.Rietz@sjsu.edu

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