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Summer 2012 Economics Newsletter

Economics Department

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the economics newsletter

FROM THE CHAIR

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2012! We wish you the best as you begin your new careers, and encourage you to keep in touch with the department and other alumni. In addition to the Economics Newsletter (note the new name and format), there is also the SCSU Economics Department Facebook page and the SCSU Economics Association Facebook open group. The Repository at SCSU also makes faculty publications, working papers, newsletters, seminar series presentations, and the St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report available online at <http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/econ>.

This year eight students presented their research at the annual SCSU Student Research Colloquium. Wen Lian won an Honorable Mention (and \$150) for her paper titled "Importance of Being First: First Generation College Students and Academic Achievement" under the supervision of Ken Rebeck.

Little Falls Community High School of Little Falls, MN placed first in the David Ricardo division of an exciting quiz bowl to become the national champions of the 2012 National Economics Challenge, presented by the Council for Economic Education (CEE). Details can be found at <http://www.councilforeconed.org/tag/economics-challenge/>.

The Economics Association is starting a fantasy football league in the fall; if you're interested in joining, the details are provided on their Facebook page. In addition to football, eleven members of the economics association traveled to the Midwest Economics Association Annual meetings in Evanston, Illinois in March. Although a mere 30 minutes from downtown Chicago, they returned with new topic ideas for senior seminar. We wrapped up the year with the association's annual banquet at RJ's, with Arta Ratha voted teacher of the year.

Next year you can expect to see more online courses, more hybrid courses, the development of the Public Administration Master's Program in the Fall of 2013, and of course the Winter Institute. We welcome your ideas to promote greater attendance at next year's WI. The theme of business ethics has been tentatively proposed, but Ming Lo (mclo@stcloudstate.edu) would like to hear your ideas to increase alumni and community participation.

MEET THE PROFESSOR



The academic year 2012-2013 will mark Associate Professor **Ming Chien Lo's** 10th year of service at the department. Before Minnesota, he was a visiting assistant professor at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. A few days before his visit to SCSU, he was told by Professor Mary Edwards, the chairperson of the recruitment committee for the macroeconomics position, the weather would be nice and the temperature would be "13 degrees". This confused him because he did not know whether she was using Celsius or she would consider 13F "nice". He now resides in Minneapolis with his cat Casper and is often found carpooling with two other colleagues in the department. He is currently busy serving as the graduate director of the M.S. Applied Economics program as well as the director of the Winter Institute. He is also very active in research and is writing a forecasting textbook, which hopefully will appear on bookshelves in 2014.

ALUMNI

Andrew Kamara, his wife Josephine, and son Moses, welcomed twin daughters Mariah Edora Alexis and Olive Ndidi Alexia into the world in November. Andrew is a 2008 graduate from our Master's in Applied Economics program and is currently employed by US Bancorp as a Basel Validations Analyst. Congratulations!

Jonathan (Jack) Nelson, a 2007 graduate, is currently employed by Foam Industries, Inc., a family owned company that fabricates foam, wood, and plastic for custom packaging solutions. Jack has been employed there for 12 months and helped the company move, change accounting systems, and start-up their sewing division. His wife, Jen, is also a 2007 SCSU graduate and they are expecting the first addition to their family in July.

Ryan Langsev, a 1985 graduate, is currently the founding attorney of the Langsev Law Firm LLC located in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Christopher Hunt, a 2007 graduate, is currently the Manager of Acquisition Modeling for Jefferson Capital Systems, LLC.

Sarah Larson, a 2009 graduate from our Master's in Applied Economics program, is currently employed by US Bancorp as a Fraud Prevention Analyst in their Retail Payment Solutions department.

Yotiaud (Vivien) Apoutou, a 2011 graduate from our Master's in Applied Economics program, is a Graduate Development Officer with the Western Australia Office of Energy in Perth. Vivien writes, "Life in Perth is getting better. I have already met some nice people and also resumed my Aikido classes. There are many beautiful places we plan to visit as it is currently the summer. I am working at the Government of Western Australia Office of Energy where I am undertaking research and analysis on a range of projects and tasks as well as participating in project and policy teams. In addition, the Office of Energy will become the Office of Public Utilities starting in April to include water-related policy issues and I am really excited to take on these new challenges."

Vivien's wife, **Poorni Gawarammana**, is a 2008 graduate of our Master's in Applied Economics program.

Andrew Godziek, a 2012 graduate, will pursue his MA in International Studies at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver this fall. Andrew writes, "Foreign Policy ranked the school 9th in the U.S. in 2007 and 11th in the world in 2012."

Marta Podemska, a 2008 graduate from our Master's in Applied Economics program, received the "Vernon Smith Prize" from the European Center of Austrian Economics Foundation (ECAEF) for one of her dissertation essays, "The Lost Consensus: Liberum Veto of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth". Marta writes, "I'm currently finishing up my dissertation and I'm on the job market. My dissertation is in the field of constitutional political economy, I'm looking at the rise and fall of democracy in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (16-17th century)." Congratulations Marta!

Mark Heurung, a 1990 graduate, presented at SCSU in April. Mark is a Managing Partner with Northwestern Mutual, The Columns Resource Group.

GRADUATES

Fall 2011

Phoebe Cole
Jack Dold
Derek Drier
Lucas Edberg
Nicholas Feldewerd
Amy Finsky
Chris Gliadon
Frank Hancock
Justin Hauer
Sarah Kaufman
Eric Mahowald
Travis Przybilla
Benneth Sheeley
John Smith
Melanie Stockman*
Hangnile Tiawara

* indicates graduate student

DEAN'S LIST

School of Public Affairs
Fall 2011

David Boike
James Borchert
Amy Finsky
Andrew Godziek
Matthew Hansmann
Chad Johnson
Laura Kachelmyer
Donald Kellar
Pei Young Koh
Joseph Kucan
Chadwick Kunkel
Wen Lian
Zeqing Lu
Eric Marshall
Michael Rajewsky
Keith Sand
Samuel Swedberg

SCHOLARSHIPS

Thank you to all who donated!

This year we were able to award a total of \$2690 to the following students.

Rose Marie Gamber
Scholarship in Economics
Donald Kellar
Chadwick Kunkel
Zeqing Lu

Economics Department Scholarship
Wen Lian
Zeqing Lu
Eric Marshall

Michael D. White
Economics Fellowship
Randi De Mel
Wenjing Li
Yue Li

Additionally, \$2550 was awarded to the following Economics and Finance students.

Robert and Ronald Besonen
Endowed Scholarship
Ziyi Zhu

Crompton Farrell Finance
and Economics Scholarship
Eric Marshall

Congratulations!!!

STUDENT RESEARCH

8 undergraduate students presented their research findings at the 15th Annual Student Research Colloquium. **Reuben Aleckson** *Major Default: Are Student Loan Default Rates Impacted by Your Choice of Degree?*; **Nicollet Buchmayer** *Entertainment or Economics*; **Chad Johnson** *Local Government Budgets and the Great Recession*; **Chadwick Kunkel** *Student Loan Default Rates: Are They Headed Towards a Financial Crisis?*; **Wen Lian** *Importance of Being First: First Generation College Students and Academic Achievement (Honorable Mention)*; **Zeqing Lu** *To Stay or Not To Stay: Labor Markets and International Students' Propensity to Stay in the United States*; **Michael Rajewsky** *The Economic Impact of Professional Sports Franchises: Are They Worth Public Subsidization?*; **Joseph Spann** *How Crude is the Price You Pay at the Pump?*

We love correspondence from our alumni! Please keep in touch with us—we would like to know what you are doing now, along with learning about exciting events in your life. We welcome new information to include in upcoming newsletters.

Internships

We are always trying to expand our internship program. Let us know if your company offers internships and we will share this information with our majors.

Donations

Please consider giving; no donation is too small. Donating provides both financial support and encouragement to student recipients. We have several accounts to choose from: **Economics Scholarship** (*undergraduate scholarships*), **Rose Marie Gamber Scholarship in Economics** (*undergraduate scholarships*), **Michael D. White Economics Fellowship** (*graduate scholarships*), **Economics Foundation** (*student and department research/activities*). Information on ways to give can be found at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/foundation/waystogive/>.

FACULTY

Lynn MacDonald and **Ken Rebeck** secured a restricted-use data license agreement with the National Center for Education Statistics. Professor MacDonald's research will examine the link between child support payments and compliance on children's early educational outcomes. Professor Rebeck's research will examine enrollment trends in high school economics courses in the United States and relates these trends to efforts of increasing state standards, testing, and graduation requirements for economics.

Mónica García-Pérez was featured in the Winter 2012 edition of the *St. Cloud State University Outlook* magazine, published by the SCSU Foundation. The article focuses on Monica's education and research in the field of immigrant health issues. You may view the article online at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/news/outlook/story.asp?storyID=38136&issueID=33012>.

Mónica García-Pérez was a panel participant at the *The Social Status of Latinos in Today's Minnesota* presentation for the *Global Goes Local Conference* held at SCSU in April.

Arta Ratha was awarded the Faculty Member of the year award from the student Economics Association at their banquet in April. The award is in appreciation of dedicated service and excellence in teaching economics.

David Switzer participated in one of SCSU's Faculty Learning Communities this year. His was focused on Improving Community in Online Courses. Nine professors from different disciplines met every three weeks to discuss best practices in online courses, focusing on how to make the discussion part of online courses more like a face-to-face course, and each redesigned their courses in Spring 2012. The group will be presenting their work at the Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching in Washington, D.C. this May. Dr. Switzer created small groups in his course and changed the way he graded discussion and the result was a doubling of the average number of comments per student, as well as an increase in the length and quality of the average comment. This summer, he'll do detailed analysis of class surveys and grades to determine how to improve his online courses even more.

Dr. King Banaian

Dr. Örn Bodvarsson

Dr. Mónica García-Pérez

Dr. N. Eric Hampton

Dr. Patricia Hughes (*chair*)

Dr. Eungmin Kang

Dr. Mana Komai

Dr. Ming Chien Lo

Dr. Lynn MacDonald

Dr. Richard MacDonald

Dr. Masoud Moghaddam

Dr. Artatrana Ratha

Dr. Ken Rebeck

Dr. David Switzer

The goal of our newsletter is to maintain communication between our alumni, faculty, and current students.

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