

# Department of Economics Newsletter



## A Letter from the Department Chair

The Department of Economics had a very productive year in 2012-13. The faculty's energy was directed towards the department's central mission: to train students to think analytically about social issues and prepare them to be responsible and productive citizens in a dynamic and diverse world. Measured by our primary output, graduating seniors, we have had a highly successful year. We graduated 56 majors and 44 minors in 2013. Roughly a fifth of all Allegheny graduates had an economics major or minor. The quality of our students' senior projects was very high. I was first or second reader on many senior projects and was impressed with the writing, the economic analysis, and the presentation skills of our seniors. I congratulate all of our recent graduates and offer them the department's best wishes.

While the majority of the faculty's efforts were devoted to classroom teaching, we spent a lot of time and energy expanding our internship offerings, arranging visits and visitors, organizing other co-curricular activities, doing research, recruiting the next generation of Allegheny students, and hiring the next generation of Allegheny faculty. This newsletter provides an overview of this year's highlights. We thank all of the alumni and supporters of the department for providing mentoring, internship opportunities, and financial resources that allow us to continue these activities.

Tomas Nonnenmacher  
Professor and Chair, Department of Economics

### Contents:

Visitors, Visits &  
Lectures: p. 2-4

Internships,  
Community  
Service &  
Mentoring: p. 5

Department  
News: p. 6-7



ALLEGHENY  
COLLEGE



## 2012-13 Visitors

A number of entrepreneurs visited ECON 390, the Economics of Entrepreneurship II, to participate in a series of panel discussions. These included:

**Martin Pfinsgraff '77**,  
Founder of iJet and Deputy  
Comptroller of the Currency

**Jim DeFrancesco**,  
CEO of Acell, a tissue regen-  
eration company

**David Hilliker**,  
CEO of Chemdaq, a steriliza-  
tion monitoring company

**Bob Cornelia**,  
Executive VP of Operations of  
Chemdaq

**David Malone '76**,  
CEO of Gateway Financial

**Colman Wolfson**,  
Business Development  
Strategist at Innovationworks -  
The Ben Franklin Partnership

**John Gloninger '84**,  
trade and management  
consultant formerly of The  
World Bank

As a part of Janine Sickafuse's  
FS 101 class, **Adam Cromie**  
'05, the Director of Baseball  
Operations for the Washing-  
ton Nationals, visited in the  
fall semester.

## 2013 Executive Roundtable

# The Debt Alarm: Does America Face a Fiscal Crisis?



*Susan Offutt '76, chief economist at the Government Accountability Office, and  
Gus Faucher, senior economist at PNC Financial Services Group*

On April 8, the Department of Economics hosted its 12th Executive Roundtable: "The Debt Alarm: Does America Face a Fiscal Crisis?"

Our speakers were:

- **Gus Faucher**, Senior Economist, PNC Financial Services Group
- **David Malone '76**, President and CEO of Gateway Financial
- **Susan Offutt '76**, Chief Economist, Government Accountability Office
- **Sean Snaith '89**, Professor of Economics and Director of the Institute for Economic Competitiveness at the University of Central Florida

The roundtable was expertly moderated by Prof. Don Goldstein.

Funding for the annual roundtable comes from the Earl W. Adams, Jr. Endowment Fund, which was established by Bill and Ellen Brown in recognition of the high quality of teaching and leadership provided by Prof. Adams.



## Executive in Residence

On October 10, 2012, the Department of Economics welcomed this year's Executive in Residence, **Steve Levinsky '78**, to campus. Mr. Levinsky is a consultant with Wellesley Partners in Wellesley, Mass. Wellesley Partners is a management consulting firm that offers strategic advisory services and guides organizations in the areas of organizational development and information technology. Before his tenure with Wellesley Partners, he was senior vice president of human resources at Fidelity Investments.

During his visit to Allegheny, Mr. Levinsky attended several classes and mentored students. "It was a fun experience," said Elizabeth Moreno, a senior economics major. Mr. Levinsky also hosted a lunch presentation on the job market, and gave important tips on how students can succeed in the workplace. He met with students individually and gave them career advice. Mr. Levinsky said it was important for him to give back to the College that taught him "how to think and solve problems." A dinner also was held with Mr. Levinsky and some members of the local business community.

## 2013 Board of Visitors Meeting

On April 7-8, 2013, the Department of Economics hosted the Managerial Economics Board of Visitors (BoV) Meeting. The BoV held individual mentoring meetings and four larger breakout sessions. These were:

- Navigating Careers/Internships in Economics and Graduate School: What Skills Do Students Need to Succeed?
- Technology, Manufacturing and Entrepreneurship in America: Opportunities and Challenges
- The State of US Financial and Capital Markets
- Trends in the Global Economy and Implications for the United States



*Barrie Christman '74 (top) while leading a breakout seminar; Mark Hanson '83 (right) with a student during lunch; Sam Moss (below) offering his insight one-on-one with a student.*





## Human Rights Conference

The Departments of Economics, Political Science and Philosophy teamed with the Robert H. Jackson Center and the Center for Political Participation to sponsor a two-day conference entitled, "Human Rights, International Corporations, and American Law." The conference featured a number of events, including:

-On March 27, 2013, Professors Steve Onyeiwu and Eric Palmer gave a lecture on the business practices of Shell Oil in the Niger Delta.

-On April 1, 2013, Duane Windsor, Lynette S. Autry Professor of Management, Jones Graduate School of Business, Rice University on Multinational Business and Ethics, delivered a lunchtime lecture.

-On April 2, 2013, the conference featured keynote speaker David Scheffer, the Mayer Brown/Robert A. Helman Professor of Law at Northwestern University and the U.S. Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues from 1997 to 2001.

## Networking Trip to New York City



*Professor Steve Onyeiwu (far left) and Professor Don Goldstein (far right) were among those who led a contingent of Allegheny students to New York City on October 24-26, 2012.*

On October 24-26, 2012, the Department of Economics headed to New York City for its biennial visit. Approximately fifty students and eight faculty members attended this year. Students visited four firms, the American Museum of Finance and the NYSE. The Department of Economics also hosted an alumni event that gave our students the opportunity to network with many alumni living and working in the New York City area. The Department of Economics thanks Bruce Thompson '86, CFO of Bank of America, for making a multi-year pledge to support this trip, as well as the following people for arranging visits to their companies in New York City:

- Wendy Cooper '72: AXA Insurance.
- John Gregory '89: Wells Fargo.
- Bruce Thompson '86: Bank of America.
- Karen Ubelhart '77: Bloomberg.



# Internships, Community Service & Mentoring

## Community Service

Professor Martin was awarded a \$11,250 grant from the Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service to support the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

With that grant (and support from the Allison-France Fund) she hired a manager, Wayne Howard, to help organize this year's VITA program. Thirty-eight student volunteers and two Experiential Learning in Management Interns (Blayze Schindler and Trevor Colvin) helped file a total of 430 federal returns and an additional 25 state, local, and incomplete returns. Allegheny students performed a total of 1,160 volunteer tax preparation hours this season.

## Mentoring

In addition to encouraging more students to engage in internships, the Department of Economics has begun a career mentoring program for interested students. Pairing economics students with Board of Visitors members, the goal of the program is for mentors and mentees to communicate throughout the year and meet on-campus during the day of the annual Board of Visitors meeting.

## 2013 Internship Update

Professors Steve Onyeiwu and Don Goldstein have done a great job running the Department of Economics' for-credit internship program over the past ten years. Under their guidance, the number of credit-bearing internship opportunities in the department have expanded dramatically. This year, Professor Allison has taken the leadership role in the program. Professor Allison's many connections, including in the Pittsburgh business community and on Allegheny's Board of Trustees, combined with his limitless energy and passion for getting students jobs and internships made him a perfect person to continue the great work that has been taking place in the department. To those ends, he organized a series of eight lunch seminars on how to find and succeed in an internship and hired two student interns (Elizabeth Moreno and Tori Delzer) to help coordinate and advertise internships in the department.



*Chris Allison '83, Allegheny's Entrepreneur-in-Residence*

Fifty-five students received academic credit for internships completed between May 2012 and May 2013. Fifty-three students who responded to our fall survey reported completing an internship experience during the summer of 2012. A small sample of internships includes: Ainsworth Pet Nutrition (Meadville), BNY Mellon (Pittsburgh), Brown Brothers Harriman (Boston), Cornerstone Research (Boston), Erie Insurance Group (Erie), Merrill Lynch (Pittsburgh) and UPMC (Pittsburgh).

Thanks to funding provided by the George Andress Taaffe, Jr. Fund, the department was able to provide stipends to four students who did internships during the summer of 2012. Additional funding was provided by the Christian L. Allison '83 and Jane K. France Endowment Fund and the Allegheny College Collaborative Research and Experiential Learning Fund, funded by Erie Insurance.

To help advertise internships to the next generation of majors, several students delivered poster presentations on their summer 2012 internship experiences as a part of Allegheny's annual Gator Day programming. If you are an employer and would like to set up an internship for Allegheny students, please contact Jim Fitch: [jfitch@allegheny.edu](mailto:jfitch@allegheny.edu) at ACCEL or Professor Allison: [callison@allegheny.edu](mailto:callison@allegheny.edu).



## Retirement

Professor Afrasiabi taught for the last time in the spring 2011 semester at Allegheny. He has since retired and moved with his wife Kristin to Frederick, Md. His colleagues were sad to see him leave and miss both his constant, steady presence in the department and his expertise in econometrics! If you would like to get in contact with him, his email address is [bafraasia@allegheny.edu](mailto:bafraasia@allegheny.edu).

## In Brief

On April 11-12, 2013, Prof. Martin took eight students to present papers at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. These students presented research papers related to their senior seminars and senior projects.

On April 27, 2013, the Department of Economics hosted its annual Gator Innovation Challenge. Fifteen teams presented business ideas to a panel of four judges. The Gator Innovation Challenge is a business "pitch" competition. Each student team made a 10-minute PowerPoint pitch to prospective investors or donors. This year's competition had a special emphasis: social entrepreneurship.

Prof. Nonnenmacher will be on sabbatical during 2013-14.

## Onyeiwu Named Divisional Chair

· Professor Steve Onyeiwu was awarded the (well-earned) Teacher-Scholar Social Science Divisional Chair from the college, which grants the recipient six course releases. He will take all of those course releases in the 2013-14 academic year, so economics students will miss his expertise in the classroom. He will, however, be the chair of International Studies, so one can still expect to see him roaming the halls of Quigley.



*Prof. Steve Onyeiwu has been named the Teacher-Scholar Social Science Divisional Chair for the College for the 2013-14 academic year.*

## Economics Hires Three New Faculty

The Department of Economics hired three new faculty this year. These hires required a lot of our collective energy from November through March. Over 300 people applied for the positions, and the department interviewed 20 candidates at the annual American Economics Association meetings in San Diego, Calif., and had its offers accepted in March. The new faculty are:

- **Simon Bilo:** Ph.D., Economics, George Mason. Research focus is on macroeconomics and history of economic thought. Currently at NYU on a dissertation fellowship, Prof. Bilo will join the department in the fall of 2013.
- **Douglas Frank:** Ph.D., Managerial Economics & Strategy, Northwestern. Research focus is on organizational strategy and behavioral economics. Currently teaching at INSEAD in France, Prof. Frank will be on campus to teach a one-week short course in October 2013 titled "Europe in Crisis" before joining the department full-time in the fall of 2014.
- **Timothy Hodge:** Ph.D., Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State. Research focus is on public finance and urban and regional economics. Prof. Hodge will join the department on a two-year visiting position in the fall of 2013.

The Department of Economics is very excited about the teaching and research interests of these exceptional hires and looks forward to them joining the department.



## Student Honors

Eleven students graduated with Honors in Economics in May 2013: Kevin Breskvar, Noelle Brouillard, Tyler Danzey, John Douglas, Daniel Eiben, Colin Hartford, Denise Jones, Thomas Lynskey, Cory Rectenwald, Blayze Schindler, and Jessica Schneider.

In November 2012, two students, Nandha and Nivetha Ramasubramanian, participated in the University of Rochester Simon School of Business Early Leader Case Competition.

## Contact Us

### Department Address:

Allegheny College  
Department of Economics  
520 North Main Street  
Meadville, PA 16335  
Ph: (814) 332-3360

### Department Homepage:

[sites.allegheny.edu/econ](http://sites.allegheny.edu/econ)

### 2013-14 Acting Chairperson:

Don Goldstein  
225 Quigley Hall  
Ph: (814) 332-3340

Email: [dgoldste@allegheny.edu](mailto:dgoldste@allegheny.edu)

## Faculty Research & Publications

While teaching is the priority of all members of the economics faculty, faculty members also have active research agendas. Doing research keeps the faculty up-to-date with the current literature, maintains important contacts in the discipline, keeps Allegheny on the radar of academics and policymakers, and allows students to collaborate in the production of knowledge. A sample of recent research includes:



Profs. Goldstein and Liu co-authored a paper on renewable energy technology in China.

Casler, Stephen (2013) "Implicit Elasticities and Price Effects: An Updated Procedure," *Economic Systems Research*.

Casler, Stephen (forthcoming) "Cost Minimization and Elasticity Estimation: A Two Input, Two Time Period Analysis," *Journal of Economic Education*.

Liu, Jialu and Don Goldstein (2013) "Understanding China's Renewable Energy Technology Exports," *Energy Policy*.

Liu, Jialu and Steve Onyeiwu (2013) "Determinants of Income Poverty in Rural Kenya: An Empirical Analysis," *African Journal of Economic and Sustainable Development*.

Mattiace, Shannan and Tomas Nonnenmacher (forthcoming) "Stability and Change on Henequen Haciendas in Revolutionary Yucatan," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*.

Nonnenmacher, Tomas (2013) "The New Institutional Economics and Economic History," in Robert Whaples and Randall Parker (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Modern Economic History*.

Ormiston, Russ (forthcoming) "Attendance Effects of Star Pitchers in Major League Baseball," *Journal of Sports Economics*.

Prof. Baskan is working on a book entitled, "A Comprehensive Policy on Aging." Prof. Goldstein is researching the economic opportunities that may arise in NW-Pennsylvania as broader markets and policies evolve under the impact of climate change. Prof. Nonnenmacher is working on a textbook on the New Institutional Economics. Prof. Ormiston is researching the effects of occupational human capital on labor market outcomes for displaced workers. Prof. Onyeiwu is working on a textbook on African Economic Development.