

Alumni Newsletter

August 2018

Editor: Laudo M. Ogura, Associate Professor of Economics, GVSU



Economics Department

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or online at www.gvsu.edu/economics.

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Greetings from Grand Valley and welcome to the first edition of the Economics Alumni Newsletter! 2017-18 has been another busy year with a lot of developments in the department of Economics. We hired two outstanding assistant professors, both excellent teachers and researchers. We underwent a program review and are in the process of enhancing our curriculum to continue our commitment to excellence, student success and relevance. We hosted our first Careers in Economics Night, which was a great success. The economics faculty continued to publish widely, serve on the editorial board of and edit major economics journals, organize sessions and present at conferences globally.



For those who graduated in 2018 from GVSU Economics, congratulations on your hard work and perseverance. You make us proud!

We value our alumni and appreciate their importance in the continued success of our students and program. The annual alumni newsletter is our way of helping you stay connected with the department. Please reach out to our social media coordinator, Laudo M. Ogura (ogural@gvsu.edu) or me (dalmias@gvsu.edu) at any time if you have a question or suggestion for the newsletter or would like to share what you have been up to since graduation. We would love to hear from you.

Sonia Dalmia, Ph.D.

Economics Department Chair

Alumni News!

We would like to add **alumni news** on our website, Facebook/Twitter pages, and future alumni newsletters. If you have something cool to share (achievements, community involvement, etc.), let us know! Email our department's social media coordinator, Laudo M. Ogura, at ogural@gvsu.edu.

- **Shaun Carter** ('2013) worked until recently for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and occasionally wrote for the BLS Monthly Labor Review. You can read his articles at www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/author/carter-shaun.htm.

Get involved!

We would like to thank our alumni who continue to be involved in our programs and generously devote their time. We hope to have more alumni coming back to help our students succeed!

- **Nathan Biller** ('2009), who is now working on his own enterprises after many years at *Steelcase*, came back as a class speaker in the ECO336 Urban and Real Estate Economics course. He shared his past career and academic experiences and his knowledge on real estate investments with our students.
- **Jeff DenBraber** ('2008) is an Attorney at Wheeler Upham, P.C., in Grand Rapids and serves as a member of our Economics Department Advisory Board.
- **Phillip Lear** ('2009) is a Principal Data Scientist at *Kellogg Company* and Vice-President of our Economics Department Advisory Board. He will also be teaching our honors economic project course in the Winter 2019 semester.
- **Andrea Mannino** ('2010), who now works as an Attorney of Law at *Collins Einhorn* in Southfield-MI, came back as a class speaker in the ECO350 Economics of Gender course. She shared her experience with gender dynamics in the workplace with our students.
- **Dennis Schichtel** ('1983) is Vice President at Fifth Third Bank and President of our Economics Department Advisory Board. He also teaches economics as an Adjunct Professor at GVSU.

We would like to have more alumni interact with our students in classes, meetings, events, etc. Students very much appreciate learning about your career and professional knowledge and experiences. Please contact our department chair, Sonia Dalmia, at dalmias@gvsu.edu, for more information on how you can get involved in our activities.

2018 Careers in Economics Night

On February 20, 2018, we hosted our first **Careers in Economics** event. Over the course of two hours, students had roundtable conversations with local employer representatives to learn about career opportunities available to them. Over 70 students attended this very successful event.

We could not have done it without the help of the GVSU Career Center and representatives of 12 local employers:

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • <i>Colliers</i> | • <i>Fifth Third Bank</i> | • <i>New York Life Insurance</i> |
| • <i>Haworth</i> | • <i>Mercantile Bank</i> | • <i>Travelers Insurance</i> |
| • <i>Steelcase</i> | • <i>Huntington Bank</i> | • <i>The Right Place</i> |
| • <i>Kellogg's</i> | • <i>Northwestern Mutual</i> | • <i>Amway</i> |

Many of the employers' representatives were our own alumni. We thank them for their involvement and hope to count on them again in future events. We would also like to invite other alumni to our next event, which is scheduled for **February 12, 2019, Tuesday, from 5 to 7 p.m.**, at L. William Seidman Center building, 50 Front Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI (downtown campus). Please contact us if you want to participate in future events.

GVSU Economics Club

The GVSU **Economics Club** continues to be active every semester. Students meet to talk with external speakers or GVSU professors and to discuss economic issues or career-related opportunities. It would be great to have you back in one of the club's meetings to share your experiences! Please contact our department chair, Sonia Dalmia, at dalmias@gvsu.edu, if you want to help the Economics Club in some way.

2017-2018 Economics Department Updates

New Faculty

In the fall of 2017, we had two full-time faculty join our department.



Dr. Kuhelika De recently graduated from the University of Georgia with a Ph.D. in Economics. She previously studied at the University of Manchester (UK) for her M.A. in Economics and at the University of Delhi (India) for her B.A. (Honors) in Economics. Her research and teaching areas include Macroeconomics, Monetary Economics, Development Economics, and Time Series Econometrics.

Dr. Sebastian Linde recently graduated from Purdue University with a Ph.D. in Economics. He previously studied at Loyola University at Chicago for his M.Sc. in Mathematics, at the University of Cambridge (UK) for his M.Phil. in Economic Research, and at the Cardiff University (UK), for his B.Sc. in Economics. His research and teaching areas include Health Economics and Applied Microeconomics.



Faculty News



Over the 2017 summer **Dr. Kevin Callison** moved to Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in New Orleans, LA. Kevin taught Health Economics and Microeconomics at GVSU since the fall of 2013.

Dr. Aaron Lowen moved from the GVSU Economics Department Chair position to the Finance Department Chair position in May 2017 and in May 2018 he also assumed the Director of Accounting position at the Seidman College of Business. Nonetheless, he continues to teach courses for the Economics Department when his schedule allows.



Milestone



Dr. Paul Sicilian was recognized in February 2018 for his 30 years of service to Grand Valley State University.

Where is your professor now?

Some of the economics instructors have either left Grand Valley or have moved to another position within the Seidman College of Business. Here are a few updates since 2004

- **Dr. Paul Thorsnes** moved in 2004 to the University of Otago, in New Zealand, where he is now the Head of the Department of Economics.
- **Dr. Ayman Reda** moved in 2009 to the Lebanese American University in Lebanon. In 2015, he moved back to Michigan and now teaches at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.
- **Dr. Hari Singh** moved in 2012 to the Humboldt State University, in California, where he is now the Department Chair – M.B.A Faculty.
- **Dr. John Reifel** retired at the end of 2014 after serving as the Associate Dean and Interim Dean of the Seidman College of Business at GVSU.
- **Dr. Paul Isely** moved in 2015 to the Seidman College of Business Dean's office at GVSU. He now serves the college as the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs.
- **Dr. Brad Sturgill** moved in 2016 to Sewanee, The University of the South in Tennessee, where he teaches in the Economics Department.

Economics Department Advisory Board

Our Advisory Board members help us in a variety of ways, through strategy meetings, student mentoring, and/or participation in our events. The current members are the following. Some are alumni of GVSU's Economics programs (indicated by *). We hope to have other alumni serve on our advisory board in the future.

- **Jim Byrum** - President of the Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA).
- **Rick Chapla** - Vice President for Strategic Initiatives of The Right Place, Inc.
- **Jeff DenBraber*** ('2008) - Attorney at Wheeler Upham, P.C.
- **Bryson Jacques** - Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP) Process Manager at Steelcase.
- **John J. Kuiper** - President of Colliers International West Michigan.
- **Phillip Lear*** ('2009) - Principal Data Scientist at the Kellogg Company.
- **Marti Lolli** - Chief Marketing Officer and Senior Vice-President Consumer and Government Markets at Priority Health.
- **Kaushik Nag** - Director of Talent Acquisition, Global Change Management and Employee Benefits and Wellness for Amway Corporation.
- **Dennis Schichtel*** ('1983) - Vice President at Fifth Third Bank and Adjunct Professor of Economics at GVSU.
- **Mary Anne Wisinski-Rosely** – Partner and Office Specialist at NAI Wisinski of West Michigan.
- **Sonia Dalmia** - Full Professor of Economics, Chair of the Economics Department, and Director of Assessments at the Seidman College of Business at GVSU.
- **Daniel Giedeman** - Full Professor of Economics at GVSU and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Economic and Business History Society.
- **Gerry Simons** - Full Professor of Economics at GVSU.
- **Rachel E. Kalusniak** - Honors Economics major and Applied Statistics minor at GVSU.

2018 Outstanding Student Awards

Every year, GVSU recognizes the efforts of our best students. Our 2018 outstanding student awardees are:



Brody T. Cragg, for the **B.A. or B.S. in Economics** degree. Brody graduated in April 2018 with a B.S. in Economics with an Honors Emphasis and a Minor in Environmental Studies. Brody participated in study abroad programs in four countries (Sweden, Norway, The Netherlands, and Costa Rica). His Honors Thesis was on the comparison of the U.S. and Scandinavian economic systems.

Zachary C. Decker, for the **B.B.A. in Business Economics** degree. Zach graduated in April 2018 with a B.B.A. in Business Economics with an Honors Emphasis. In addition to the regular economics and honors classes, he pursued an independent study on the economic impact of the growth of the craft beer industry.



Both students had internships in business data analysis and are continuing to work in that field.

2018 Omicron Delta Epsilon Economics Honors Society

The Omicron Delta Epsilon (ODE) is the International Honors Society in Economics. The GVSU chapter started in 2005. Since then, it has inducted a total of 266 GVSU students.

This year, **Gavin P. Hunter**, a B.B.A in Business Economics and Finance student, was inducted to the ODE. Gavin will also be the new President of the GVSU Economics Club starting in the Fall 2018 semester.

Economics Scholarship Awards

The university offers a few scholarships that are exclusive to our economics majors. The following students were awarded scholarships for the 2018-19 academic year

- **Economics Department Faculty Scholarship**
Taylor Slais
- **John W. and Virginia M. Reifel Economics Scholarship**,
Dedrick Bauer
Steve Henley
Rachel Kalusniak
Jacob Seckinger
Taylor Slais

Our students will welcome donations to add to these and other scholarship funds! Gifts can be submitted at www.gvsu.edu/giving. You may also start your own alumni scholarship fund! For details, contact the *University Development* office at 616-331-6000 or universitydevelopment@gvsu.edu.

Economics Honors Program

A few years ago, the Economics Department started offering an **honors program** in conjunction with the GVSU Honors College. Since then, we have focused on providing more advanced academic opportunities to our honors students. Subsequently, starting in the Fall 2018 semester, we will be offering two new honors courses.

- In **fall semesters** honors students can elect to enroll in an **advanced monetary policy course** that is taught in conjunction with the **Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's Fed Challenge**, which is an intercollegiate monetary policy competition. A team of students will be selected to participate in the Fed Challenge competition in November.



GVSU Fed Challenge Team, November 2017, Chicago-IL.

- In **winter semesters** honors students can elect to enroll in a **project-based course** in which they will work on real-world economic analysis projects with the *Kellogg Company*.

Alumni Spotlight!



Phillip Lear, a 2009 Alumnus of GVSU and a Principal Data Scientist at *Kellogg Company* will be leading the project-based honors course in Winter 2019.

Students enrolled in the course will learn modern data science techniques for analyzing real world sales and marketing questions. Using R and the Tidyverse package, students will learn how to access, explore and understand data to subsequently communicate insights derived from the data using these tools. Once the basic data science framework is covered, students will begin consulting on a current business problem using Kellogg data and presenting their findings to a team from Kellogg.

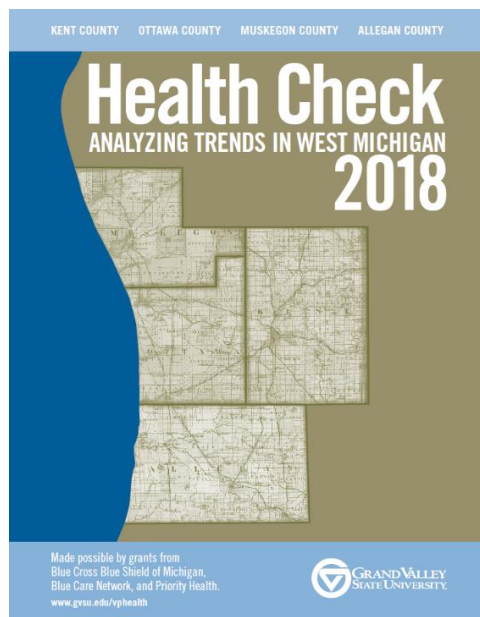
We hope to have more alumni involved in our honors program in the future, so that our students can have further opportunities to work on real-world hands-on economic projects. Please contact our department chair, Sonia Dalmia, at dalmias@gvsu.edu, for more information.

Economics Curriculum Update

Effective 2019,

- **ECO342 Strategic Games** and **ECO355 Business, Antitrust, and Regulation** will be replaced by a new course, **ECO355 Markets, Strategy, and Government Policy**, which will focus on the application of game theory to the study of market competition, antitrust, and regulation.
- **ECO 350 Economics of Gender** and **ECO 360 Employment, Wages and Productivity** will be replaced by a new course, **ECO 360 Economics of the Family and Household**.

2018 West Michigan Healthcare Economic Forecast



Every year some of our faculty work on a project in conjunction with the Office of the Vice Provost for Health at GVSU. They publish an annual report called the **West Michigan Healthcare Economic Forecast**. You can get a copy or watch the webcast at www.gvsu.edu/vphealth.

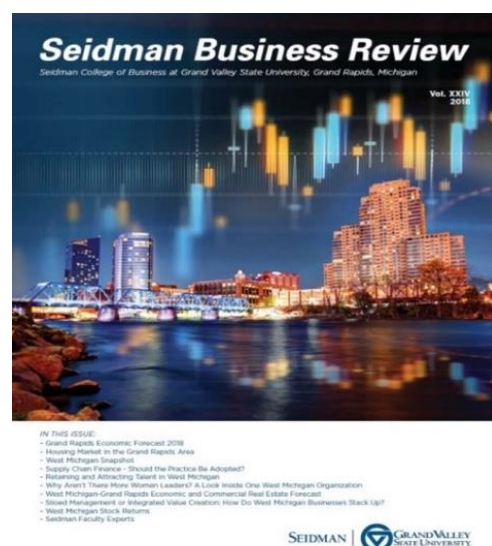
2018 Seidman Business Review

Every winter the Seidman College of Business publishes the **Seidman Business Review**, a collection of articles on the West Michigan economy written by the college's faculty.

This year, our faculty made the following contributions:

- **Grand Rapids Economic Forecast 2018**, by Paul Isely, Ph.D., Richa Bhurtel, Graduate Assistant, Gerry Simons, Ph.D., and Wei Sun, Ph.D.
- **Housing Market in the Grand Rapids Area**, by Laudo M. Ogura, Ph.D., and Paul Isely, Ph.D.
- **West Michigan Snapshot**, by Gerry Simons, Ph.D.
- **Why Aren't There More Women Leaders? A Look Inside One West Michigan Organization**, by Carol Sánchez, Ph.D., and Sonia Dalmia, Ph.D.

You can get a copy of the 2018 edition, as well as previous editions, at www.gvsu.edu/seidman/seidman-business-review-59.htm.



Economic Impact Studies

Our faculty members continue to work on economic impact studies that help local community partners to better understand the value of their activities. In 2017, our faculty published the following studies:

- Economic Impact of the **2016 National Cherry Festival** (Traverse City, MI), by Christian Glupker, MBA, who is a Clinical Affiliate Professor in Economics;
- Economic impact of **tourism in Grand Haven, MI**, over the 2016 summer, by Paul Isely, Ph.D., and Christian Glupker, MBA, together with faculty members from the GVSU Department of Statistics and from the Hospitality & Tourism Management program;
- Economic Impact of the **Huron River**, which flows through a five-county region in southeast Michigan, by Paul Isely, Ph.D., Christian Glupker, MBA, and Erik Nordman, Ph.D. (Erik teaches our Environmental & Resource Economics course);
- Economic Impact of the **Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park** (Kent County, MI), by Paul Isely, Ph.D., and Christian Glupker, MBA.

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