

a Newsletter for ECU Economics Graduates

A View from the Chair



Welcome to another issue of the Department of Economics Alumni Newsletter. First off, many of you will not know who I am! I have been the Interim Chairman of the department this year while the department conducted a search for a new department chair (more on this in the Milestones column inside). I am an Associate Professor of Psychology here at ECU, and was Acting Chair for the Psychology Department last year. So the Dean asked if I would be willing to fill in this year in Economics, and I agreed to do so. It has been a very interesting and busy year here, and I appreciate the chance to work with the students, staff, faculty, and alumni in this department.

This has been a year of change here at ECU. Most of you know that we had a new Chancellor come on board last year (Dr. William Muse). Dr. Muse has refined the mission of the University to focus on four major areas of emphasis: Human health, teacher education, economic development, and

international prominence in the fine arts. Dr. Muse also appointed a new Provost (the chief academic officer of the University), Dr. William Swart, who joined us from Old Dominion University. Dr. Swart organized more than 19 Task Forces to make recommendations on everything from an honor code to three-year baccalaureate degrees to economic development. Adding to all this is the current state budget situation, so you can see that this has been a very busy year here!

Out of these changes have arisen some new opportunities for the Department of Economics. Because of the University's emphasis on assisting with regional economic development the department was able to develop a proposal to obtain an additional faculty member in the area of Resource Economics. The individual in this position will work with the Coastal Resources Management Ph.D. program, conducting research and providing an economist's perspective to the economic issues of our coastal resources. This provides us with a great opportunity for developing externally funded research grants and providing a unique perspective for decision-makers who decide how our coastal resources are used. So, if I count correctly, this new position gives the

Department a total of 14 full-time faculty members! Paralleling the growth in faculty members is the continued growth in the number of students who choose economics as a major. This year we had over 160 undergraduate majors and over 20 students enrolled in our graduate program. Students find that economics provides them with a sound foundation for work or graduate study. Our undergraduate degree options—the B. A. degree and the two B. S. degree options in applied economics or quantitative economics—offer several choices that can meet the varied needs of students. Students interested in law school are also finding Economics to be a useful major in preparation for graduate study.

Read about some of the other happenings from this year in the stories and features inside of this newsletter. In spite of all the changes here, remember that some things remain as they were when you were a student here—the commitment of the faculty to excellent teaching and scholarship and to the success of our students. We look forward each year to this opportunity to keep in touch with you. We ask that you keep in touch with us, also. Drop us a note and let us know what you are doing.

Michael B. Brown, Ph.D.
 Interim Chair - 2002-2003

MILESTONES

An article by **John W. Dawson** (B.S., 1990, Summa Cum Laude), "Institutions, Investment, and Growth: New Cross-Country and Panel Data Evidence," published in *Economic Inquiry*, is cited in the textbook for Dr. Zeager's new course on Economic Growth. We believe this is the first time a publication by an ECU Economics graduate has been cited in a textbook used by our current students. Congratulations, John!

Dr. Carson Bays stepped down after 16 years as Department Chair. Dr. Bays has been the only chair for the department since the establishment of a separate Economics Department. He has done a great job building the department into what it is today and is responsible for hiring most of the faculty members with whom you are familiar. Dr. Bays joins the other members of the faculty with "the best job there is" at ECU—a tenured full professor! We would like to thank him for everything he has done for the Department.

Dr. Richard Ericson will be joining the Department July 1 as the new Department Chair. Dr. Ericson is currently Professor of Economics at Columbia University in New York City. He received the bachelor's degree in International Studies from Georgetown University, a master's degree in Russian Area Studies from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of California at Berkeley. He has been a

Visiting Professor or instructor at a variety of universities, including Yale, Harvard, the University of Moscow, and Urals State University in Russia. He is widely published in the professional literature and continues his research program on the evolution of the Russian economy. We are delighted to have a scholar of his stature coming to ECU. You'll find out more about Dr. Ericson in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Dr. Lance Bachmeier joined the faculty this year as an Assistant Professor of Economics. He received a B.A. from Northern State University and a Ph.D. in Economics from Texas A & M University. Dr. Bachmeier's research interests include econometrics, applied macroeconomics, and forecasting. You'll learn more about Dr. Bachmeier in the next edition of the Alumni Newsletter. We are pleased to have him as a member of our Department!

Haiyong Liu will be joining the Department in the Fall as an Assistant Professor of Economics. Dr. Liu received the B. S. degree in Economic Geography from Peking University and is completing the Ph.D. in Economics at the University of North Carolina. His research area is applied econometrics, applied microeconomics, and labor economics. He will be teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in Economics. Welcome Haiyong!

Craig Landry also will be joining the Department this

Fall as an Assistant Professor of Economics. He is completing his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at the University of Maryland. His research interests include economic decision-making as it relates to the Atlantic coast barrier islands. He will be teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in Economics and working with the Coastal Resources Management Ph.D. program. Welcome Craig!

Dr. Jeff DeSimone will be leaving the Department after a three-year stint as an Assistant Professor of Economics. He will be moving to the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL as an Assistant Professor. Our best wishes to you and your family Jeff!

An **Economics Department Development Council** is being formed to build stronger relationships between the Department of Economics and our alumni. The Advancement Council will serve as an advocacy group both on and off campus. The members of the Council will use their influence and affluence to further the goals of the Department and participate in ensuring its future success. The Council will help promote a positive image and good relations for the Department, the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, and the rest of the University. Invitations have gone out to the charter members of the Council. If you are interested in being involved send a letter or email to Kim Moore and let us know of your interest.

GRADUATION Spring 2003

The Department of Economics held its annual Spring Graduation on May 9 in Hendrix Theatre. Fifty-four undergraduates and ten graduate students were recognized for completing their degree requirements. Amanda Zimmer received the Student Government Association's Outstanding Senior Award for Economics. Amanda has done a fine job here, and leaves us to attend law school at Wake Forest University (with a full scholarship no less!) Dr. Randy Parker was selected by the Economics Society as the Outstanding Faculty Member for 2002-2003.

Congratulations to both of you!

2003 Award Winners

Amanda Zimmer
Outstanding Senior

Dr. Randy Parker
Outstanding Faculty
Member



Graduates line up for the ceremony.

2003 BA/BS Graduates

Laura E. Allred
Ryan A. Baker
Nicholas M. Balzer
Ellis C. Barbour III
Jonathan Beaver
Lauren B. Bowers
Pete F. Csekovsky
Ricky V. Currie Jr.
Barrie H. DuBose
Sital J. Desai
Sarah E. Edmister
Brian M. Flory
Sherif Fouad
Brandee L. Freeman
Ashley D. Gray
Carlton R. Harper, Jr.
John L. Henderson
Terrance B. Henry
Michael T. Howell
Jee W. Hwang
Robert P. Jeffreys
Welton Jones
John S. Kranz
Robert E. Lutz
Gilbert K. Lynn
Jonathan B. Manuel
James D. McNeill
John F. McRoberts III
David L. Miller
Lloyd F. Miller
Kevin M. Nelson
Wallace R. Nuttycombe
River R. Pinkham
Lukisha C. Pittman
Landon A. Price
Christin R. Roberts
Kate A. Schnabel
Daniel B. Smith
Roderick J. Stevenson
Adrian L. Stewart
Thomas D. Stewart
Jason W. Sumner
Charles F. Switzer
Tewodros Tamerat
Danielle R. Thomas

James S. Tkach
Scott R. Ward
Douglas A. Whitlow II
Ashley B. Wilkie
Samuel D. Williamson
Christian L. Wirth
Jeffrey F. Woodall
James Yarborough, Jr.
Amanda S. Zimmer



Dr. Parker receives his award.

2003 MA Graduates

Kevin Barry
Joseph Bunting
Dwayne Carter
Samantha Clemmons
Michael Hopkins
Brett Joyal
Junhua Yu
Lucas Olinick
Xi Pan
Hemant Patil
Michael Schmidt
Yuan Zhou



A large crowd attended the Recognition Ceremony.

Profile of a Prof

Full Name: Okmyung Bin

Nicknames: Paul

Place of Birth:

Seoul, South Korea

Marital Status: married to JiYoung
Kin for 9 years

Children: one son, Andrew, age 8

Brothers and Sisters: two older
brothers

Educational Background: Oregon
State University (PhD), Korea
University (MS), Hankuk
University of Foreign Studies (BA)

Pets: Andrew dreams about getting
a puppy (Golden Retriever)

**Books or magazines you are
currently reading:** **Book:** The
Prayer of Jabez, by Bruce
Wilkinson

Favorite movie: Life is Beautiful
(Roberto Benigni, 1998), Cinema
Paradiso (1988)

Favorite television show:
Arthur and Dragon Tales, my wife
forbids us to watch TV weekdays at
home, otherwise I will spend my
time watching ESPN, ESPN2, and
Fox Sports

Favorite song: Time to Say
Goodbye (Sarah Brightman and
Andrea Bocelli)

Favorite musical performer:
Sumi Jo. Sumi is a native of Seoul,
Korea and a coloratura soprano.

**Hot topic you couldn't care less
about:** North Korea

**What your friends say about you
behind your back:** We have never
dreamed about him being a
professor.

Hobbies: playing with Andrew

Favorite meal: sushi and clam
chowder at Mo's

Least liked food: North Carolina
style pork Barbeque

**When you want to get away from
it all, where do you go?** beach

Favorite item of clothing: T-shirts
and short pants

Best present you ever received:
A card that JiYoung gave to me
when we dated, it had about 100 of
her favorite things and her favorite
was me.

**What one moment in your life
would you like to do over again?**
The wedding night. I was so drunk
that night(thanks to my friends), I
couldn't remember anything.

One little-known fact about you:
Play electric guitar in a band
sometimes

One thing you would never do:
Bungee jumping

Secret Ambition: second baby
(Andrew's sister)

**Achievement of which you are
most proud:** most valuable soccer
player in middle school

Favorite way to blow off steam:
Sleeping for 16 hours

**Most valuable lesson you've
learned so far:**
"Constant practice devoted to one
subject often outdoes both
intelligence and skill."

**Person you'd give the most to
meet:** Tom Brokaw

**One thing you do better than
anyone else:** Delaying things until
the last moment

**One thing you've never been able
to do:** three pointers at the
intramural basketball games

What gives you the creeps?
To have a flat tire, no water, and no
cell phone in the middle of the
desert in Nevada.

**Best advice your father ever gave
you:** "never forget what you learned
in Kindergarten"

**One thing you would change
about yourself:** delaying things
until the last moment

**People who knew you in high
school thought you were:** "what a
pimply boy!"

**Who would you like to trade
places with for a day?**
NBC nightly news anchor

**What would be your perfect
evening?** Camping out at Yosemite
with barbeque and marshmallows



Macro Corner

Hello again there boys and girls this is your old pals Drs. Parker and Rothman once again in this august forum to spout our lies. Did we miss something or has World War III really just begun? This is what Tom Friedman of the New York Times calls it as well as the “war of the world of order versus the world of disorder.” We do not disagree as this seems spot on to us. Now for some historical perspective. This war with Islam, as the Islamic world wishes to paint it, is little more than a continuation of the war between the West and Islam that has gone on for centuries. Mohammad was born around 570 A.D. (or C.E. if you like) and the spread of Islam in Europe was arrested in 732 by Charles Martel and his armies during the battle of Tours (or what is today west central France. *Oui!*, the French have won some battles after all). Thereafter, people in the West battled Islamic forces until the Muslims were ejected from their last European holding, the Spanish port of Grenada, in 1492. Yes that was a watershed year. The West turned their attention to the newly discovered world, the fight with Islam went on hold, the Middle East was controlled by the Ottoman empire (i.e., modern day Turkey), and an equilibrium was maintained until World War I. The defeat of the Ottoman empire in World War I handed the Middle East over to the British which thereafter carved the area up into the nation-states we know today. These nations-

states over the course of the 20th century had leadership that evolved into the thugs that they are currently, and the 509 year time out we had in the war with Islam was back on starting September 11, 2001. And here we are. The only difference is that now the battle is not with horses and swords. The institutions and ideas that we hold dear, freedom, the rule of law and competitive capitalism to name three, won the battles of the 20th century. We need to win the battles of the 21st century. The world of “normal” before September 11, 2001 is gone forever. This is the new normal. It reminds us of a quote from former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Perez: “If a problem has no solution then perhaps it is not a problem but a fact. Not something to be solved, but rather, something that must be coped with over a prolonged period of time.” Prepare to cope for decades to come and pray we are wrong.

So, where does this leave the economy? Well, the recession was over in November of 2001. The recovery is sluggish, but if you remember Macro Corner last year, we indicated that recoveries by nature are now more anemic than at any time after World War II. They take longer because of the behavior of productivity and information technology and inventory behavior. This recovery is just like the one after the 90-91 recession: Slow, weak, and on the order of over two years. We are confident that if the war does not take long (as we write this on April 9, we are in

downtown Baghdad and oil futures fell \$6.00/barrel last week) the economy will briskly rebound by first quarter next year and your 2004 will be much better than 2002 or 2003. Stay tuned, Kim Jung Il may have something to say about that (always a surplus of jerks in the world eh?).

Anyway, our old friend the deficit has returned. Whaling and gnashing of teeth in Washington has come back too. This gets old, but one more history lesson. The two biggest reasons we have had deficits in our existence is because of wars and recessions. What do we have now? That’s right a war and a sluggish economy after a recession. What’s the big deal? Additionally, we have the chance to end double taxation of dividends. We can’t imagine any sane arguments for not seizing this opportunity. While we are at it, what is wrong with enacting the cuts in the top marginal tax rates that are already passed but don’t come into effect for many years (remember intertemporal substitution?)? Nope, don’t wanna do it. They reverse the “temporary” 10% tax surcharge that Clinton’s tax increase gave us in 1994 that jacked the top rate up to 39.6%. If it was temporary, then get rid of it. Nope, don’t wanna do it. We recall that Tom Daschle has said that if he had the support he would undo the damage that Reagan’s 1981 Tax Reform Act has done to our country (remembering that this cut the top marginal tax rate down to 50% from a high of 70%). We wonder if he is living in the same world.

Whatever the case, we remain optimistic because the ratio of government spending to GDP appears to be stuck at 40%. If you add the cost of regulation and observing the laws of the government, it is probably close to 50%. Yet, as it were, with one arm tied behind our backs, our system of competitive capitalism is able to produce better and better standards of living for greater numbers of people. Additionally, if you took today's poverty level and

deflated it into the year 1900 dollars, what percent of the population do you think was below today's definition of poverty at the turn of the 20th century? Answer: 90%. Today 12% of the population is in poverty and that is still too high. But the 20th century saw the U.S. economy extricate 78% of our population out the realm of poverty and that is no reason for us to hide our faces. Lastly, we are optimistic because the people who hate us in the world do so because

they are either jealous (the French) or despotic thugs (Sadaam and Kim Jung Il). They despise the principles that are expressed in the Gettysburg Address, and they fear them more than anything. We think they are worth defending. We are proud to be Americans. We hope you are too.

Take care until next time,
Best Regards,
Drs. Parker and Rothman

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in the Department of Economics!**

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**College of Arts and Sciences
Named for Thomas Harriot**

The College of Arts and Sciences at East Carolina University has a new name—The Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences. The ECU Board of Trustees recently granted permission for the name change which took place in May. Thomas Harriot was a multifaceted scientist—a mathematician, astronomer, oceanographer, and surveyor. He was chosen by Sir Walter Raleigh to head a scientific team headed for the New World. His assignment was to determine to commercial potential of the New World. His report on his findings, called *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* cataloged what is now North Carolina and remains one of the major scientific works of the time. Harriot set up what must have been the first scientific laboratory in the New World, analyzing the indigenous minerals and plants. A short article on Harriot appearing in the May, 2003 issue of *National Geographic* describes him as the most accomplished scientist you never heard of.

Naming the College for Thomas Harriot is the culmination of years of advocacy by Dean W. Keats Sparrow and is a tribute to the emphasis that is placed on scholarship in the Harriot College.

Alumni News

**Your name could
appear here!**

But only if we know
what you're doing!
Please keep in touch
with us by sending
your news, updates
and happenings.

Send information to:
Dr. Carson Bays
Alumni Contact
Economics
Department ECU
Greenville, NC 27858
baysc@mail.ecu.edu

Profile of a Prof

Full Name: Nicholas G. Rupp
Nicknames: Nick

Place of Birth: Coral Gables, Florida

Marital Status: married

Children: 3 (Courtney, Madison, Jenna)

Brothers and Sisters: 4

Educational Background:
-Ph.D. Texas A&M, M.A. UNC-Greensboro, B.A. UNC-Chapel Hill

What words come to mind when you look in the mirror? Where did my hair go?

Favorite childhood memory: growing up in Boone, NC

Books or magazines you are currently reading: **Book:** *D-Day*
Magazine: *Time*

Favorite television shows: UNC Basketball

Favorite musical performer: Tom Petty

Hot topic you couldn't care less about: The Oscar Ceremony

What your friends say about you behind you back:

Hobbies: Chasing my girls around the house

Strangest job you have ever held: Washing dishes

What makes you laugh? my wife and kids

Favorite meal: Thanksgiving at home

Least liked food: Sodas

When you want to get away from it all, where do you go? Camping

Favorite way to splurge: see a movie

Favorite item of clothing: Bathing suit

Best present you ever received: Twins (thanks to my wife)

What one moment in your life would you like to do over again? No regrets

One little-known fact about you: I was voted the best athlete" of my 8th grade class.

One thing you would never do: Become a university administrator.

Secret Ambition: To never speak again at a faculty meeting.

One thing you can't resist: Becoming catatonic at the sight of Elizabeth Taylor in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

Achievement of which you are most proud: Getting out of bed in the morning.

Pet peeve: Econometrics homework assignments (yes, including the equations!!) must be typed.

Favorite way to blow off steam: Talk about it.

Most valuable lesson you've learned so far: respect and appreciate your parents

One thing you do better than anyone else: Organizing sports teams

One thing you've never been able to do: Jump out of an airplane

What gives you the creeps? Spiders and snakes

One thing you would change about yourself: Nothing

People who knew you in high school thought you were: A funny guy and immature.

Who would you like to trade places with for a day? George Bush

Personal Strength: Organization

Personal Weakness: Too organized

What would be your perfect evening? Dinner and a movie with my wife





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