

July 2014

Dear Alumni,

We are well into the muggy summer months now, which means that the Social Sciences building may not be as abuzz with students, but the mosquitos are certainly out in full force. And though our fledgling economists may have left Durham en masse, things certainly haven't slowed down here in the Department of Economics. I would like to share with you updates from the last half-year as well as some highlights from the spring of 2014.

◆ **FACULTY NEWS**

New Faculty Members

I hope you will join me in welcoming four new faculty members to the Department.

Allan Collard-Wexler will start his associate professorship here this August. He is an industrial organization economist, and has research interests in applied econometrics and dynamic games. He most recently was an assistant professor at New York University's Stern School of Business and a Donald Harrington Faculty Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin. Collard-Wexler received his B.A. in economics from McGill University and his Ph.D. in economics from Northwestern University.

Robert Garlick works at the intersection of development economics, the economics of education, and labor economics. His current research focuses on the role of limited information in schooling decisions, job search, and employment outcomes. He also studies peer effects in education, focusing on methodological challenges in measuring peer group composition. Garlick previously worked at the World Bank's Development Research Group as a postdoctoral researcher. He holds a doctorate in economics and public policy in addition to master's degrees in economics and statistics from the University of Michigan, and a master's degree in economics as well as an undergraduate degree in economics and philosophy from the University of Cape Town.

Modibo Sidibe, formerly a postdoctoral student in our Department, will be continuing on as an Assistant Professor. His broad research interests are in applied microeconomics, with an emphasis on the formation of inequalities between individuals. Sidibe's recent work focuses on wide range of subjects, including segregation, housing

markets, education, and urban wage premia, and he is currently working on projects that explore individual job search in a system of cities, spillover effects in the wage-setting process, and the evaluation of enterprise zones in France. Sidibe received his Ph.D. in economics in 2011 from the University of Lyon. He is originally from Bamako, the capital of Mali in West Africa.

Juan Carlos Suarez Serrato is joining us after completing his Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley and a postdoctoral fellowship in Economic Policy Research at Stanford University. Juan Carlos specializes in Public Economics and focuses on regional effects of spending and taxation policies. His research analyzes the effects of government spending on short- and long-term measures of economic well-being, as well the effects of state corporate taxes on firm location decisions and the incidence of corporate taxation on workers, landowners, and firm owners. He is originally from Mexico City and is an alumnus of the 2005 AEA Summer Program at Duke University.

Faculty Awards

I am pleased to highlight three of our faculty members who have won awards this year.

[Charles Becker](#) was given the Dean's Award for Excellence in Mentoring from the Graduate School. He has steered many students — perhaps even you — toward successful academic and professional careers, and his enthusiasm for cutting-edge research and interdisciplinary learning has led to the creation of [another joint master's program, this time with the Department of Computer Science](#).

[James Roberts](#) began his academic career at Duke with the goal to become a great teacher and researcher. In less than five years on the Duke faculty, he has launched new courses, mentored numerous undergraduates through their honors theses, become a popular graduate-level instructor, and overseen eight dissertations (with 11 more in process). To honor him for this work, Trinity College bestowed him with the 2014 Howard D. Johnson Award for teaching.

[Vincent Conitzer](#), who is a professor in both the computer science and economics departments, was awarded the seventh Social Choice and Welfare Prize for his contributions in the field of computational social choice.

More [faculty news](#) can be found in our news archives.

◆ CENTERS & INITIATIVES

Center for the History of Political Economy

The Center for the History of Political Economy (CHOPE) hosted its fifth summer institute in June. Thirty-two students from around the world gathered at Duke for the two-week program. An award-winning cast of distinguished scholars, including Duke Professor Kevin Hoover and CHOPE Director Bruce Caldwell, gave lectures and led discussions on their areas of expertise. Learn more about the 2014 Summer Institute and the Center at the [CHOPE website](#).

Research & ERID Visitors Program

This spring, the Economic Research Initiative at Duke (ERID) hosted 11 academics as part of its [Visitors Program](#). These academics spent a week at Duke, visiting with students and faculty and giving lectures. To see a list of the visitors for this fall, check out the [ERID website](#).

May was a busy month for ERID, which sponsored two conferences: [Charitable Giving: Theory and Evidence](#), held here at Duke, and the [ERID Conference on Macroeconomics and Finance](#) at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville, N.C.

I also encourage you to check out some of our [latest research](#) in the ERID working paper series.

◆ GRADUATION

I would like to extend special congratulations to our newest alums from the [class of 2014](#). This year we recognized 17 graduates with a Ph.D., 70 graduates with master's degrees, and approximately 230 graduates with an economics major. I chose [Roy Weintraub](#) to be our honorary faculty speaker, and he imparted great wisdom upon our students that I would like to share with you as well.

"Use wisely and with good purpose your knowledge that evidence is required to construct a good economic argument," Weintraub urged. "After employing this knowledge for a few years, it will become a real habit. Go forth ... and stamp out economic ignorance. Remember, friends don't let friends talk economic nonsense."

To [watch his speech](#) and the rest of the ceremony, check out our [YouTube channel](#).

◆ GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Our graduate programs continue to attract and develop excellent students. Among this year's graduating doctoral students is Yair Taylor, who won the "[Best Rising Star Paper Prize](#)" by the [Industrial Organization Society](#). Taylor will be working for the Economic Analysis Group of the Antitrust Division at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. Other [Ph.D. placements](#) include Arizona State University, Goucher College, Indiana University, National Taiwan University, Notre Dame University, Syracuse University, University of Colorado at Denver, University of Kentucky, University of St. Thomas, the Federal Reserve Board, Moody's Analytics, and the World Bank.

Many of our graduate students from the master's programs will be pursuing doctoral studies this coming year in agricultural economics, business economics, economics, finance, health policy, political science, and statistics. They are headed to Cornell, Harvard, Stanford, and Yale, among other places, and we've been honored to place some of them here at Duke, in our own Department as well as at the Department of Statistical Science and Fuqua School of Business. Those on the professional track will be joining organizations such as Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Wood Mackenzie, and the World Bank.

With a new master's program, the M.S. in Economics and Computation, on deck, and our largest incoming M.A. class to date, we'll definitely have our hands full come fall!

◆ UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

Last March three of our Duke undergraduates won the Atlanta Hedge Fund Challenge. At the competition, Tim Evans ('14), Cylan Gamre ('14), and Wes Koorbusch ('15) pitched their alternative investment idea: hedge funds would buy out student loans in exchange for an equity stake in a student's future earnings. The idea won them [first place and a \\$10,000 check!](#)

This year 29 students participated in our [Honors Program](#). The culmination of the program is a [poster session](#) and symposium where students present their research. Many of the honors students go on to publish their research in the [Duke Journal of Economics](#).

◆ ALUMNI

This year, the Graduate School's Distinguished Alumni Award was given to Dr. Evelyn F. Murphy, who completed her Ph.D. in economics in 1965. Dr. Murphy was the first woman to hold constitutional office in Massachusetts, and throughout her career has helped to advance environmental causes and has fought against pay discrimination for women. You can learn more about her amazing career and read her remarks from the Ph.D. hooding ceremony by visiting our [website](#).

You can also catch up with alums [Dan Taylor](#) and [Jane Cooley Fruehwirth](#) by reading our alumni spotlight articles.

◆ **STAYING CONNECTED**

If you're still reading: Congratulations, you've made it to the end! You deserve another Duke diploma — or at the very least, some free [swag](#).

Our goal is to email you once or twice per year so that we can remain connected. We hope you find these emails valuable. Please feel free to contact our communications specialist, [Sarah Tung](#), or [me](#) at any time with suggestions for the Department.

Consider joining the more than 1,000 of us in the Duke Economics LinkedIn network, if you haven't already, and please know our Facebook page is also available for interactive communication.

Wishing you an enjoyable summer,

[Patrick Bayer](#)

Chair, Department of Economics