

Brandeis University Department of Economics

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

August 2007

Dear Alumni, Former Faculty, and Friends of the Brandeis Economics Department,

Whenever I meet former students or former Economics Department faculty, they ask about the people they knew during their years at Brandeis. When a past student gets in touch with a former professor to share news about jobs, graduate school, marriages, and babies, we often pass this information along to others in the department who knew this person (very easy now, thanks to email). After I became department chair last year, I resolved to develop and maintain systematic ties with our alumni and other friends. This newsletter is an attempt to send department news to everyone who is likely to care, as well as to share news of our former students and faculty. I hope you will find at least something that interests you in this first issue. Even more important, I hope you will send some news of your own that we can include in our next issue of this newsletter.

For this first issue, we are using three methods to reach our target audience. First, we have added an Alumni link to the Econ Department website. Second, we have sent email to all alumni and former faculty for whom we have addresses. Finally, we have asked the Alumni Relations Office to send a message with a link to our website to all Econ Department alumni in their database. If you are reading this, at least one of those methods worked for you. Please forgive us for filling up your inbox if you received an email message about the newsletter directly from us and also from Alumni Relations.

In a first issue, there is much about the department that will be news to some alumni, especially those who graduated decades ago. For alumni who have been out of touch for a while and want to learn more about the Economics Department and the Brandeis Econ major today, I suggest beginning with the department's website:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/departments/economics/>.

There you can find information about the Econ faculty (in many cases with links to their personal homepages and downloads of their latest papers), course schedules and syllabi for recent semesters, and much more.

If it has been some years since your last visit to campus, you may wonder about the new photo on the Economics Department homepage. It shows the entrance, as seen from the path leading from the main campus, to the much-expanded building that serves as home to the Econ Department as well as the International Business School. A major project completed in 2003 added a whole new wing, officially the Lemberg Academic Center, to Sachar International Center. Sachar itself has undergone several renovations, most recently the conversion of Sachar 128 and 130 into office space for the growing Econ/IBS faculty and staff.

We at Brandeis are always eager to hear from you, and I hope this newsletter encourages you to keep in touch.

Best wishes,

Rachel McCulloch, Chair

NEWS ABOUT THE MAJOR

Although total numbers have been trending downward, Economics remains the largest major at Brandeis by a comfortable margin. That trend may accelerate a bit over the next two years as one significant change in requirements for the major takes effect. For students who have entered Brandeis since Fall 2006, completing the major requires ten rather than nine Econ courses. The increase reflects the addition of econometrics as a core course. But econometrics was already becoming a standard choice for our majors. During 2006-07, 97 students took an undergraduate econometrics course, up from a mere 24 in 1998-9. Although some students are taking econometrics in preparation for graduate work, the main reason for the econometrics boom is that more employers are now looking for graduates with econometric skills.

The trend toward double and triple majors, as well as multiple minors, continues. For Econ majors, frequent second majors include Politics, Psychology, Computer Science, and Math. The most popular minor is the new interdisciplinary Business minor. The majority of new graduates head into the job market, with consulting, investment banking, and other financial services among the major sectors represented. However, recent Econ graduating classes have included students heading for med school and graduate school in the sciences, as well as the more usual fields. At least three members of the 2007 graduating class are entering Ph.D. programs in Economics in fall 2007.

GRADUATION 2007

The faculty speaker at this year's Economics mini-commencement was Prof. Catherine

Mann. An international economist whose work on outsourcing keeps her name in the news, Prof. Mann came to Brandeis in 2006 after a long career in Washington DC.

Prof. Nidhiya Menon received cheers from the graduates as she presented this year's departmental prizes:

Morris and Anna Feldberg Prize:

Matthew Niedzwiecki

Sidney S. Cohen Award:

Daniel Fried

Carol Ann Steinfeld Memorial Prize:

Colleen O'Connor

Not part of our departmental prizes but another feather in the cap of this year's graduating class is the Fulbright award for research and study in Wuhan, China to **Stuart Kottle**.

See www.ericstraussphoto.com/brandeis for photos of the graduates by **Eric Strauss '04**.

BRANDEIS ALUMNI JOIN THE FACULTY

With just a few Econ majors each year entering Ph.D. programs in economics, a surprising number of Brandeis alumni are faculty members in economics departments and business schools around the country—including Brandeis.

Gustav Ranis '52, Frank Altschul Professor Emeritus of International Economics, Yale University.

Robert I. Lerman '65. Professor of Economics, American University.

Andrew Reschovsky '66, Professor of Public Affairs and Applied Economics, La Follette School of Public Affairs, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mary Stevenson '66, Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Boston.

Susan Feigenbaum '74, Professor of Economics, University of Missouri-Saint Louis.

Benjamin Gomes-Casseres '76, Professor of International Business, International Business School, Brandeis University.

Alan Siu '77, Associate Professor, School of Economics and Finance, University of Hong Kong.

Mary Lovely '78, Associate Professor of Economics, Syracuse University.

Rachel Connelly '79, Professor of Economics, Bowdoin College.

Steven Block '80, Associate Professor of International Economics, Fletcher School, Tufts University.

Michael Klein '80, Professor of International Economics, Fletcher School, Tufts University.

Joel Waldfogel '84, Ehrenkranz Family Professor and Chair, Business and Public Policy Department, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Suman Basuroy '86, Assistant Professor of Marketing, Florida Atlantic University.

Helen Connolly '88, Assistant Professor of Economics, Northeastern University.

Eva Nagypal '95 MA '96, Assistant Professor of Economics, Northwestern University.

Susanne Schennach '96, Professor of Economics, University of Chicago.

Christopher McKelvey '96, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Maryland-College Park.

Chrysostomos Tabakis '98, Assistant Professor of Economics, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal.

Navin Kartik '99, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of California-San Diego.

This list includes some alumni who were not Econ majors while at Brandeis. We will take credit for them anyway. Most say they were inspired by Econ 2a but enrolled in the course too late to become majors. On the other hand, the list does not include three alumni with 2007 Ph.D.s who are moving to assistant professor positions this fall.

BRANDEIS WEST?

Navin Kartik '99 joined the faculty of the Economics Department at the University of California-San Diego after completing his Ph.D. in Economics at Stanford in 2004. Despite the resort atmosphere of La Jolla, Navin has managed to get some work done during his years there. His paper on electoral competition (joint with Preston McAfee) appeared in the June 2007 *American Economic Review*. This year the UCSD Econ department made offers to two more Brandeis BA/Stanford Ph.D.s, **Andres Santos '00** and **Nageeb Ali '99**. Both accepted, so in 2007-8 *three* assistant professors of economics at UCSD will be

Brandeis alumni. (Rumor has it that they also tried to hire *Susanne Schennach '96*, who was recently promoted to professor at the University of Chicago.) The department also admitted several Brandeis alumni to its own Ph.D. program. *Matt Niedzwiecki '07* is beginning his Ph.D. work there this fall.

2008 AEA MEETING

The annual meeting of the American Economic Association usually provides some opportunities for current and past Brandeis faculty and students to get together. For 2008, we hope to formalize this long-standing tradition with a special Brandeis event. Please let us know if you will be attending the January 2008 AEA meeting in New Orleans. We'll let you know the details once plans have been made.

NEW FACULTY FOR 2007-8

The Economics Department welcomes two new members this fall.

Associate Professor Kathryn Graddy, who received her Ph.D. from Princeton in 1993, is a specialist in empirical industrial organization. She is best known for her research on the Fulton Fish Market in New York City. In addition to undergraduate courses in industrial organization and other micro areas, Prof. Graddy will teach micro theory and industrial organization in the IBS doctoral program.

Assistant Professor Elif Sisli Ciamarra has just completed her Ph.D. at New York University. In 2007-8, Prof. Sisli Ciamarra will teach corporate finance for undergraduates and IBS master's students.

The department also welcomes *Visiting Professor Andrew Seltzer*, an economic historian on sabbatical from Royal Holloway College, University of London. Thanks to Prof. Seltzer's presence, the department is able to offer a course in American Economic History for the first time in decades.

FACULTY NEWS

For information about the professional activities of our current faculty members, please visit the Econ homepage and click on Faculty. But here are a few things that you won't learn from the Econ homepage:

Two Econ/IBS faculty members spent part of their 2006-7 sabbaticals in China. China expert *Prof. Gary Jefferson* used his visit to advance joint research projects with colleagues at several Chinese universities and research institutes. *Prof. Peter Petri*, returning to the faculty after his role as the founding dean of the International Business School, was a visitor at Fudan University in Shanghai. He has also reactivated his research program with visits to the Bologna Center of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, the East-West Center in Honolulu, and the Asian Development Bank in Manila. In Shanghai, Prof. Petri had no trouble buying a bicycle, but he had to visit a special store catering to strange foreign tastes in order to acquire a bike helmet.

Meanwhile *Prof. Chad Bown* has left for Geneva, Switzerland, where he will spend his sabbatical year at the World Trade Organization. Maybe this will get the Doha Round back on track? Prof. Bown recently took time out from research on trade policy to report on his unique experiences in co-teaching a course with globalization guru

Prof. Thomas Friedman '75 for Bucknell's alumni quarterly (Prof. Bown and his wife are both Bucknell alumni). See "Grandma and Globalization"

<http://www.bucknell.edu/x36843.xml>

At 82, **Anne Carter** has been a professor emerita for many years, but she is not ready to retire from academic life. Prof. Carter is currently the senior honors coordinator for the Economics Department and also teaches a USEM. This summer she traveled to Istanbul, where she was installed as the first Senior Fellow of the International Input-Output Association. In September she will go to Paris to participate in a conference on "General Equilibrium as Knowledge." In addition to Prof. Carter, members of the "honorary committee" for the conference include Maurice Allais, John S. Chipman, Dale W. Jorgenson, Edmond Malinvaud, Herbert E. Scarf, Martin Shubik. Writes Prof. Carter, "Sounds like a French variant of ancestor worship." Between conferences, Prof. Carter stopped off at a Vermont music camp to play chamber music with her cello.

Faculty news would not be complete without a report on the Economics Department's recent baby boom. **Profs. Can Erbil, Paroma Sanyal, Nidhiya Menon, Laarni Bulan, Chad Bown, and Blake LeBaron** have all contributed to the boom during their years on the Brandeis faculty—with twins in the case of the last three listed. IBS finance **Prof. Robert Reitano** is also the father of twins, but his twin sons were born before he joined the Brandeis faculty and thus cannot be attributed to the special atmosphere of Brandeis Econ/IBS.

STAFF NEWS

For 23 years, Academic Administrator **Claire Cincotta** was often the first friendly

face our students encountered as Econ majors. Last December, Claire resigned from her full-time position and moved to a part-time position across campus in the Politics Department. **Nicole Haefner**, our new Academic Administrator, came to Brandeis from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, where she was Associate Registrar. Nicole holds an MA in Arts Administration from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and Tufts University.

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Geir Haarde '73 was installed as Prime Minister of Iceland in June 2006. He is the first Brandeis alumnus to serve as leader of a country.

Amy Kessler '89 MA '90 is a Managing Director, Principal at Bear Stearns in New York. After helping to build a successful business for the firm in Municipal Asset Securitization, Amy recently moved over to the Financial Analytics and Structured Transactions (FAST) group, where she is working on the firm's pension related businesses.

Alexander Hammer '95 is an economist at the U.S. International Trade Commission in Washington. Alex works in the Country and Regional Analysis Division and specializes in US- China/Asia trade.

Badal Malick '96 is in the MBA program at the Yale School of Management and hopes to pursue an entrepreneurial career after graduation. Prior to study at Yale, Badal completed a master's degree in economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and then worked for NERA Economic Consulting in telecommunications, antitrust,

and intellectual property. He later worked for the World Bank to facilitate public-private partnerships in the infrastructure sector in India. While in India, he initiated a program to improve public accountability in government-provided services. In January Badal married Ila Kapoor, a lawyer.

Susanne Schennach '96, a theoretical econometrician, was recently promoted to Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Chicago. Susanne received her Ph.D. from MIT in 2000.

Umanga Pandey '98 MA '99 officiated at the marriage of **Petia Topalova '99** and Shawn Cole in June. About 20 Brandeis alumni attended the wedding in western Massachusetts. Petia and Shawn met as students in the Ph.D. program at MIT. Petia now works at the International Monetary Fund in Washington.

Poh Boon Ung '99 is Senior Economist at Triangle Economic Research, an ARCADIS Company. He earned an MA in economics at the University of Michigan. Poh Boon manages projects related to water and air regulatory programs. He has prepared numerous cost-benefit assessments and conducted natural resource damage assessments and other economic analyses throughout the U.S. He also develops quantitative decision models and statistical models to help clients deal with economic and environmental issues.

Ricci Wolman '00 recently completed her MBA at Harvard and now works at the corporate offices of Stop and Shop.

Dan Lustig '02 MA '03 has been working in Real Estate Investment Banking at Merrill Lynch. In September he will join Broadway

Partners (www.broadwaypartners.com), a private equity firm in New York.

Uttam Sharma '02 is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. Uttam has been working as a research assistant at the Minnesota Population Center, which analyzes and harmonizes large census datasets from different countries. Uttam's current interest is the economics of education.

George Triantafyllou '03 is an MBA student at the Sloan School at MIT. Prior to beginning his graduate work at Sloan, George worked at Cornerstone Research in Boston.

Trang Nguyen '03 is a Ph.D. candidate in development economics at MIT. Trang has been conducting field research in Madagascar on ways to inform rural families about the returns to education.

Daniel Shapiro '03 has recently finished a 4-month trip around Southeast Asia and India. He writes, "I've learned so much over these last few months; seeing the different cultures firsthand and meeting people from all over the world has given me a better understanding of the shared values people have (e.g., family, community, prosperity), and how the economy plays a part in that." This trip has been preparation for Daniel's upcoming graduate studies in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Program in Public Policy (Mundus MAPP), a 2-year international masters public policy course sponsored by the European Commission. Daniel will spend the first year at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, Netherlands and the second year at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

Josh Center '04 is coordinator of new media communications for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in Indianapolis. Josh recently married Jaye-Lacey Pearlman '04.

Steven Dupree '04 is International Marketing Director for LogMeIn.com. Steve is currently based at the company's European headquarters in Budapest, Hungary.

Matthew Mauro '04 is a student at the Johnson School of Business at Cornell University, where he is pursuing an MBA with a focus on consulting.

Benjamin Shiller '04 is a Ph.D. student in the Business and Public Policy Department at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

David Dreszer '05 works at Charles River Associates in New York City. David is in the Business Consulting practice and focuses on the chemicals and petroleum industries.

Gloria Sheu '05 is a Ph.D. candidate in economics at Harvard.

James Keith '06 is an Associate Analyst at NERA Economic Consulting in Manhattan. He works in the Antitrust/Competition practice.

Karol Szwagrak '06 is entering the Ph.D. program in economics at the University of Rochester this fall.

Tulsi Rao '07 is an analyst at Morgan Stanley in New York and is enjoying living in the city.

Jin Kim '07 reports that a sizeable crowd of Brandeis students and recent graduates

attended a July going-away party in New York City for **David White '07** and **Jeremy Sisselman '07**. Dave and Jeremy were about to leave for a Deutsche Bank training program in London.

Matt Niedzwiecki '07 is entering the Ph.D. program in Economics at the University of California-San Diego this fall. During the summer he worked as a research assistant at the World Bank.

David Weiss '07 is entering the Ph.D. program in Economics at the University of Pennsylvania this fall.

Sam Yospe '07 is a student at George Washington University Law School.

Please send your own news to our alumni mailbox:

econalumni@courier.brandeis.edu

We will publish your news in the next alumni newsletter. We also welcome suggestions for the kind of information you would like to see in future issues of the newsletter.