Dear alumni, former faculty, and friends of the Brandeis Economics Department,

Following the initiative of Rachel McCulloch, who preceded me as chair of the Economics Department (with my having immediately preceded her as chair), I am continuing to update our alumni with our annual Economics Department Alumni Newsletter.

We have been delighted by the enthusiastic response of our alumni to Rachel’s first three issues (August 2007, 2008, and 2009). This is our fourth issue, which may now qualify the Alumni Newsletter as a tradition. The past year has certainly been an eventful period at Brandeis, and there is plenty of news to report about the faculty, students, academic program, and of course the alumni. Despite the university’s well-publicized financial problems, I am happy to report that the Economics Department is alive and well—even if a little leaner than it was a year ago.

As in the past, this newsletter consists mostly of news that alumni won’t find elsewhere on the department’s website—or for that matter in The Boston Globe or The New York Times. If you have been out of touch for a while and want to learn more about today’s Brandeis Economics Department, I suggest that you begin with the recently redesigned and updated Economics Department Homepage. You will find information about current Econ faculty members (most with links to personal homepages and downloadable research papers), as well as course schedules and syllabi for recent semesters.

We are grateful to Rachel McCulloch for having taken the initiative to create this means of keeping in touch with so many of our Econ alumni. Regardless of who is chair, we in the Economics Department are always eager to hear from you. The Alumni Newsletter is circulated to our faculty; so news that you send us will be passed on to your former instructors. We appreciate the news offerings of those of you who are staying in touch.

Before offering updates about the state of the economics major, our graduating ceremonies and graduating class, and news of our current, past, and new faculty, I want to report on a particular highlight for the year.

During the spring semester, a Brandeis first-year student, aspiring economics major, and grandson of Nobel Laureate Robert Solow of MIT appeared in my office. Lewis Solow-Collins wanted his friends to meet his grandfather and hear him speak, but needed a place for an audience to gather. I assured Lewis that Brandeis and the economics department would be quite willing to provide the space – Wasserman Auditorium in Sachar – to host his granddad.
Not surprisingly, Professor Solow, long celebrated for his contributions to growth theory and growth accounting, was greeted with a wildly enthusiastic overflow capacity crowd.

He used this opportunity to share his interpretation of the causes of the global financial crisis and the regulatory initiatives that he believes are needed in its aftermath. The talk was followed by a small gathering with our economics faculty, including his former students – Linda Bui, Cathy Mann, and Peter Petri – and old friends – Tren Dolbear and Rachel McCulloch. All were delighted to see that the energy, acumen, and personal warmth of this extraordinary scholar and individual have survived well into his 9th decade.

If you did not receive this newsletter directly from the Economics Department, that means we don’t have your current email address.

Please email Meredith Robitaille, our Academic Administrator, if you would like to be added to our departmental database or if you have news for next year’s issue.

Best wishes for the year,
Gary Jefferson, Chair

NEWS ABOUT THE ECON MAJOR

As you might imagine, the Department has not been insulated from the initiatives that the University has taken to stabilize its fiscal condition against the background of the Great Recession. The initiative that is most likely to affect the Economics Department is the creation of a new business major, although its implications for economics remain unclear. While the new major is being administered by the International Business School, business majors are likely to be heavily enrolled in economics courses and in the economics minor. Some undetermined number of our undergraduates will wish to enroll as double majors in business and economics. We especially anticipate seeing a pattern of double majors for business majors specializing in finance, which requires many of the same prerequisites as the economics major itself. In principle, once the ranks of the business major have filled out, its annual enrollments will be limited to 100; last year 139 Brandeis seniors graduated as economics majors, continuing to mark it as the largest undergraduate major at Brandeis.

Last year was the first in which all graduating economics majors were required to complete a required course in econometrics. Having known of the new requirement since becoming first-year students, our majors seemed well prepared for the new addition, raising the total number courses required for the major from
nine to ten. We have actually been quite surprised by the number of students who have requested access to econometrics training beyond our basic econometrics offering, including econometrics courses now offered using linear algebra and graduate courses offered by the PhD program in IBS.

We continue to receive feedback from seniors on the job market and those applying to graduate school that potential employers and graduate programs are specifically taking notice of graduates with econometric skills.

**GRADUATION 2011**

The faculty speaker at this year’s Econ mini-commencement was Linda Bui, Associate Professor of Economics. While Professor Bui could not help but use the opportunity to deliver one last lecture on probability theory, she spiced her talk with far more than the usual philosophical content, e.g., “The absence of evidence is not evidence (or, proof) of absence.” Carl Sagan, astronomer. Following the lecture, all felt certain that our econ graduates were at that moment finally prepared to take on the murky world of statistical uncertainty and the vexing plethora of choice.

Prof. H. Michael Coiner presented departmental prizes for outstanding academic achievement to three 2010 graduates. These were:

Morris and Anna Feldberg Prize: **Tamar Ariel**

Sidney S. Cohen Award: **Elizabeth Setren**

Carol Ann Steinfeld Memorial Prize: **Rebecca Loren**

For photos from the Econ mini-commencement (as well as the IBS mini), see [Graduation 2010](#).

**NEW GRAD PLANS**

In April, Meredith Robitaille, our department’s Academic Administrator, surveyed Econ seniors to learn about their post-graduation plans. At that point many students were still job-hunting, but among those responding with definite plans, a substantial number were heading for positions in the private sector, mainly finance, banking, and consulting. These included Avi Binyamin (Associate, Economic and Valuation Services KPMG LLP), Nadir Daudi (Analyst, Analysis Group), Jessica Fialkoff (Analyst, AdMedia Partners), Joel Freeman (Associate Software Engineer, Amadeus), Debby Frisch (Case Assistant, Goodwin Procter), Sarah C. Gross (Real Estate Consultant, Downing Frye Realty, Inc), Greg Joondeph-Breidbart (Marketing Programs Associate, TechTarget), Noam Kagedan (Finance Analyst Development Program, JPMorgan Chase), Jeremy Karp (Analyst, Cornerstone Research), Anna Kaufman (Leadership Development Program, Sun Life Financial), Matthew A. Kessler (Risk Management Associate, Macquarie Group), Noor Narula (Campaign Analyst Staples, Inc.), Andrew Ng (Rotational Leadership Development, Sun Life Financial), Benjamin Stein (Operations Analyst, Goldman Sachs), and Daniel Wengrovitz (Associate Consultant, eLoyalty).

Outside the corporate world, Rosa Alchanati is working for the McLean Hospital in Belmont, Geoffrey Cohen will be teaching English in Clermont-Ferrand,
France, *Ari Jadwin* will continue studying the Chinese language in China, and *Ben Sacks* will be spending the next two years teaching High School math in the Philadelphia school district as a Teach For America corps member.

Although our graduating seniors' job search focuses mainly on opportunities in the business sector, at least six of our 2010 Econ graduates have moved to public-policy positions: *Ezra Fishman* (Research Assistant, MDRC), *Jarrad Kirsh* (Research Assistant, Institute for Defense Analyses), *Stephanie Marshak* (Quality Assurance Analyst, Federal Reserve Board), *Alexander Prairie* (Research Assistant, Federal Reserve Board of Governors), *Elizabeth Setren* (Research Associate, Federal Reserve Bank of New York), and *Seth Werfel* (Research Associate, Federal Reserve Bank of New York).

Twenty-four students reported that they would be continuing their education next year. Those intending to complete an MAief in the Brandeis International Business School next year include *Julia Cohen, Rachael Cotter, Matthew Feinberg, Richard Magee, Josh Magid, Amy Qiu* and *Vasin Vongcharoenrat*. Others continuing their study of economics and related subjects include *Andrew Brandess*, who will be attending Colorado State University to study Agricultural Economics and Biofuels, *Evan Green-Lowe*, who will enter the M.A. program in International and Development Economics at Yale University, *Igor Karagodsky*, who will enter the Ph.D. program in economics at Boston College, *Daniel Litwok*, who will be continuing his studies this fall as a PhD student at Michigan State University and *Rebecca Loren*, who will enter the Ph.D. program in economics at Duke University.

Six 2010 Econ graduates reported plans to enter law school: *Julia Belagorudsky* (University of Connecticut School of Law), *Michael Bergman* (Fordham Law), *Alana Heumann* (Brooklyn Law School), *Chao Huang* (Columbia Law School), *Sri Kuehnlenz* (Yale Law School), and *Bruce Strong* (Georgetown Law School).

*Andrew Karasick* will be attending Jefferson Medical College’s joint MD-MBA program and *Shilpa Mukundra* will enter the MD program at New York University. *Shira Androphy* is attending the Harvard Graduate School of Education to obtain an EdM in Secondary Education with a focus on history. *Maira Braga* is entering the Fashion Marketing program at Parsons The New School for Design. *Mariel Gruszko* will enter the Masters of Arts Program in the Social Sciences at the University of Chicago and *Edmund Roy Handjaja* will be attending Boston University to obtain a Masters degree in Administrative Studies.

**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 highlights that you won’t learn from the Econ homepage:

*Prof. Chad Bown*, still on leave in D.C., has moved his office from the World Bank to the President’s Council of Economic Advisors where he will provide sage counsel regarding the nation’s trade issues and policies. This year, following the promotion review procedure involving senior external professors in his field, Chad was promoted to Full Professor at Brandeis. Meanwhile, *Prof. Stephen Cecchetti* continues his stint as Economic Adviser and Head of the Monetary and Economic Department at the
Bank for International Settlements in Basel, Switzerland. While we are proud of the contributions Chad and Steve are making to the recovery of our global economy, we continue to hope for the return of these popular professors to Brandeis.

In 2010-11, several of our faculty will receive well-earned sabbaticals. Professor Linda Bui will be working on a new research project in which she will be assessing the health impacts, particularly for children and infants, of environmental regulation. Prof. H. Michael Coiner will be working on updating two of his elective offerings – the Economics of Education and Economics of the Public Sector. It is difficult to imagine that these highly acclaimed courses can be burnished more than they already have been. Finally, Prof. Nidhiya Menon will be off for the full year as a Research Scholar at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College. A major portion of her research will focus on the effect of water quality on maternal and infant health in India.

**NEW FACULTY**

This fall the Economics Department welcomes Raphael Schoenle, Assistant Professor of Economics. Having completed his Ph.D. at Princeton this past spring, Professor Schoenle, studies how firm-level behavior, in particular price-setting behavior, interacts with macroeconomic activity and public policy. We are delighted to welcome Professor Schoenle, who will be teaching sections of intermediate macro theory (82b) in the spring.

We will also welcome Peter DeScioli, who will be visiting Brandeis on a two-year Florence Levy Kay Postdoctoral Fellowship with a joint appointment in economics and psychology. Peter’s work includes experimental economics in which he studies how the human mind uses principles of strategy to solve problems in the social world. His current work looks at the processes by which people establish and secure ownership and property rights. Dr. DeScioli will be offering a course in the Department on experimental economics, a course which is already inspiring enthusiastic anticipation among our students.

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

Alumni returning to campus often want to visit the faculty members they knew while they were students—including some who are no longer at Brandeis. Here is information about some past faculty members (see earlier issues for many more):

While the Economics Department experiences regular faculty and staff turnover, we are particularly sad that Paroma Sanyal, a valued colleague and much-admired instructor, is leaving the Department. Many of you have had classes with Professor Sanyal in micro, econometrics, and industrial organization and regulation. Paroma is joining Data for Decisions in Weston, MA.

Atreya (Chuck) Chakraborty is an Associate Professor of Finance at the UMass Boston College of Management.

Tanseli Savaser returned to Brandeis as a Visiting Professor during the spring semester. She will be returning to her position as Assistant Professor of Economics at Williams College in the fall.

Please feel free to suggest other former Econ faculty members you would like to read about in our next issue. If we don’t
know where they are, we’ll do our best to track them down!

**ALUMNI NEWS**

**Haile Menkerios ’70** is Special Representative of the Secretary General (UN) in Sudan, and head of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). Subsequent to a peace deal that ended decades of war where more than 2 million people lost their lives, the southern part of the country (South Sudan) is to vote, with UN assistance, in a referendum in January 2011 on independence or continued unity with the North. The outcome will have significant implications for the future of Sudan, the region and Africa.

**Ilene Leopold Persoff ’75** received the 2010 Long Island University Award for Excellence in Teaching. She credits Barney Schwalberg’s long-ago classes for waking students at 8am!!

**Mary E. Lovely ’78** has been promoted to full professor at Syracuse University, where she specializes in the study of international trade and investment.

**Michael Klein ’80** continues his two-year leave from the Fletcher School at Tufts University, where he is the William L. Clayton Professor of International Affairs. During this time is serving as the Chief Economist in the Division of International Affairs in the US Treasury in Washington. He also published a book "Exchange Rate Regimes in the Modern Era" (co-authored with Jay Shambaugh) with MIT Press in December 2009. MIT Press will also publish his novel, "Something for Nothing" in the summer / autumn of 2011.

**Martin Milkman ’82** is a Professor of Economics and BB&T Fellow at Murray State University.

**Paul Lumsden ’85** is a partner at the law firm, Maples and Calder in the Cayman Islands. Paul is head of the firm's Corporate Department.

**Michelle Leder ‘88** sold her website, footnoted.org, to Morningstar this past February. Footnoted uncovers the things companies try to bury in their routine Securities and Exchange Commission filings. She continues to run the site for Morningstar.

**Barri (Berk) Harris ‘90** continues to work as a Performance Consultant for Cisco Systems Inc. global sales learning organization. She and her husband Steve love hiking with their 2 boys in and around Vancouver, BC.

**Badal Malick ’96** continues to work at McKinsey & Company in NYC. He has recently been moonlighting with a city rock band.

**Sebastian Castro-Malaspina ’02, MAief ’03** is a category manager in the fragrance business working for Coty Inc in Manhattan. Sebastian recently came back from a trip to South Africa to cheer the USA on during the 2010 World Cup.

**Ben Schlesinger ’02** completed his MBA at the MIT Sloan School of Management. In September Ben will join Brightstar Corporation as a Manager of Strategy and Business Development.

**Celicia Chaung Zhao ’03, MAief ’04** is a senior analyst at Balter Capital Management in Boston, MA. Celicia and her husband Ken recently snowboarded and conquered
Revelstoke Mountain in Revelstoke, BC, Canada. Revelstoke offers the highest vertical descent of any mountain resort in North America.

Steven Dupree ’04 left LogMeIn, Inc. in April, after six years, in order to travel westward around the world and learn Spanish in Guatemala. He will be pursuing an MBA at the Stanford Graduate School of Business in September.

After graduation, Ilia Iovtchev ’04 worked for Fidelity Investments for five years as Product Manager. In 2009, Ilia went back to Bulgaria -and after spending a few months with Deloitte as a Consultant advising the Bulgarian Energy Holding on their gas supply negotiations with Gazprom, accepted an offer to join Eurobank EFG as Business Development Manager and Head of the Sales Department. Ilia enjoys bungee jumping, parachute diving, and mountain climbing.

Rachael (Oppenheimer) Granby ’05 is a senior editor for the financial website Seeking Alpha (www.seekingalpha.com). She's in the middle of getting her M.S. in applied economics, and lives in Jerusalem with her husband Jonny and their son Gabriel.

Annie LePard ’05 graduated from Boston College in May with a master's degree in nursing and is now working as a nurse in the cardiology department at Children's Hospital.

Anna Rakhman ’05 is at George Washington University, finishing up her PhD in economics.

Gloria Sheu ’05 has recently earned her PhD in economics from Harvard University. She is joining the Economic Analysis Group of the US Department of Justice, Antitrust Division, this fall.

Ken Goff ’06, MAief ’07 is Director of Investor Relations for Higher One, a financial technology company focused on helping facilitate electronic payments, disbursements, and banking services for higher education institutions and students. Ken joined Higher One in February of 2010 to work on the company's IPO, which took place in mid-June.

After two and a half years of working in equity capital markets in an investment bank in New York, Mauro Levi D’Ancona ’07 moved back to Brazil to join an advisor/hedge fund called Olimpia Partners. Mauro can serve as a contact to alumni who are interested in investment banking either in New York or Brazil.

Aaron Gaynor ’07 just completed his first year at Cardozo School of Law in New York.

Jennifer Gordon ’07 is on the Investment Banking Department Analyst Recruiting team at UBS and is training for the 2010 NYC marathon.

Melissa Kampner ’07 moved back to New York from Boston in January, and works at JP Morgan Asset Management as an Investment Assistant.

Sam Yospe ’07 graduated with a J.D. from Columbia Law School. He will begin working as an associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York this fall.

John Farr ’08 is working in economic consulting at Analysis Group in Washington DC. He's planning on going back to school eventually, but so far thinks that the "real
world" is much better than he was led to believe.

Stephen Hill ‘08, MAief ‘09 recently completed his first year of Teach for America in Dallas. He taught algebra one to ninth graders and will be head coaching the jayvee basketball team this coming fall.

Ben Luxenberg '08 is a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps and is attending the basic officer course in Quantico, VA.

Matthew Rosen '08 is returning home to New Jersey after 2 years in Peru as a Small Business Developer Volunteer with the Peace Corps to attend Rutgers School of Law.

Erik Blutinger '09 will pursue his studies as an MD/MPH student at the George Washington University Medical School this fall. He recently ventured into Alaska for a two week span.

Andrew Brooks '09 is a corps member with Teach For America and will be teaching at Delaware College Preparatory Academy starting in August. Andrew is also continuing his studies as a M.Ed. student at Wilmington University and as an M.S. student at the University of Pennsylvania.

Eli Finkelshteyn '09 was recently hired as a software developer in the Content Collection Services group at FactSet Information Systems in New York City.

Maurice Goldstein '09 is currently a Policy Advisor for the NYC Department of Small Business Services and recently completed a fellowship in public affairs with the Coro New York Leadership Center.

Please send your own news to the Academic Administrator of the Economics Department, Meredith Robitaille:

mrobitai@brandeis.edu

We will publish your news in next year’s alumni newsletter. We also welcome suggestions for the kind of information you would like to see in future issues of the newsletter. If you did not receive this newsletter directly from the Economics Department, please contact Meredith to add your name, year, and contact information to our e-mail list.