



Department of Economics Newsletter

July 2016

GENERAL DEPARTMENT NEWS

It has been another busy year for the Economics Department at Johns Hopkins, but the biggest news for those of us here has been the move of the Department to a new building. The Department had been in Mergenthaler Hall since 1986, when it moved from Gilman Hall. In January of this year, the Department mostly moved to the Wyman Park Building, leaving behind only the seminar room, computer lab, and the library and graduate student study room. Those rooms will be moved over to Wyman Park after renovations are completed in the next two or three months.



While the Wyman Park Building is not as close to the center of campus as it was before, the Department is being given more square feet of space and is moving into a space that has been recently renovated. In addition, the computer lab is larger than the one in Mergenthaler and will have better functionality, the new seminar room will

have up-to-date technology, and there will be several new study spaces for graduate students. Moving an entire Department that had been in one location for 30 years to a new location was not easy, but with the assistance of our long-time Administrator, Donna Althoff, our IT Administrator, Nina Agopian, and staff Jennifer Miller and Maggie Potts, everyone survived the move.

On other news, I am also happy to report that **Professor John Quah** joined the Department in January, coming to us from Oxford. Professor Quah is an economic theorist with many major works to his credit and is an outstanding addition to the Department. After a temporary period with only three microeconomic theorists, we are now back up to four, including **Ying Chen**, **Edi Karni**, and **Ali Khan**. At the same time, the Department has further restructured its first-year sequence in micro theory, following an initial restructuring two years ago, together with a new and improved Math Camp for entering first-year students. The new structure will be implemented in 2016-2017.

We welcomed back **Chris Carroll** in September after an extended leave as the Assistant Director and Chief Economist for the Office of Research of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Chris has resumed his research, advising, and teaching duties, including his traditional macro course for first-year students.

We have had a big year at **the Center for Financial Economics**. Graduation saw the granting of roughly 16 financial economics minors. We are now getting a steady stream of students drawn to the area by the introduction to the finance side of macro in the Introductory Macro course taught by **Bob Barbera**. The CFE's classes continue to be among the most highly rated in the

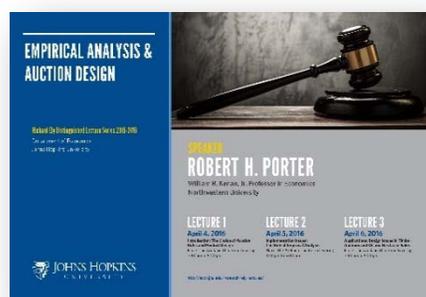
department and continue to be heavily oversubscribed. The CFE faculty also continue to post regular commentary on monetary policy and related topics on the CFE website, which you are invited to follow, as a growing number of students, Fed watchers, the financial press, and others are. Go to <http://cfe.econ.jhu.edu/>. And the CFE has continued its *reality round table*, which started as an informal lunch group of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates gathering to discuss developments in the world of finance today but which has evolved into a course for credit for undergraduates. The free-flowing conversation among faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates that has emerged is unique.

The Department also hosted an annual econometrics conference which each year draws econometricians from up and down the East Coast for a day of presentations and discussions on topics in econometrics. It took place on March 5 and drew over 20 junior and senior econometricians to Johns Hopkins, and was ably organized by **Yuya Sasaki**. Details can be found at <http://econ.jhu.edu/2016/02/29/11th-greater-new-york-metropolitan-area-econometrics-colloquium/>.

The Department was well represented at the AEA Meetings in January, 2016 in San Francisco. Among the faculty, **Jorge Balat**, **Chris Carroll**, **Greg Duffee**, **Olivier Jeanne**, **Anton Korinek**, and **Jonathan Wright** were on the program (Anton was on the program in six different places). The traditional cocktail party and reception also drew a number of current and former graduate students and faculty. We will be having another in January, 2017 in Chicago. Mark it on your calendars.

Our annual Richard T. Ely Lecture this year was given by **Robert Porter** (photo and

poster below) from Northwestern University, who gave three stimulating lectures on "Empirical Analysis and Auction Design." For more details, see <http://econ.jhu.edu/research/ely-lectures/richard-ely-distinguished-lecture-series-2015-2016/>.



We look forward to the Spring 2017 Ely Lectures as well, which will be given by Professor Debraj Ray of New York University.

Finally, I should announce that I assumed the Chairmanship of the Department on July 1, 2015.

To keep up with developments in the Department as they happen, keep track on the department website, <http://www.econ.jhu.edu/>.

FACULTY NEWS

Jorge Balat continues his work on auction models and production functions and presented his work at several universities and conferences this year, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Larry Ball visited the Reserve Bank of India in Summer 2015 to consult about inflation in

that country. He recently finished a long-term research project on the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, and he was one of five authors of the 2016 Geneva Report on the World Economy, which focused on monetary policy at the zero lower bound.

Ying Chen continues her work on communication games and on political economy and bargaining and has presented at several seminars and conferences. She was a visiting Assistant Professor at the Cowles Foundation at Yale in Fall, 2015.

Carl Christ, Professor Emeritus, and his wife Phyllis, who live close to campus, continue to stay in touch. They usually spend their summers at their Michigan cottage. Carl is a valuable link to many graduate alumni in our department.

Greg Duffee, the Carl Christ Professor of Economics, received the NASDAQ OMX Award for the Best Paper on Asset Pricing at the 2015 Western Finance Annual meeting. It came with a financial reward, which he has for some reason failed to share with his colleagues. He has also been appointed to a three-year term on the Federal Reserve System's Model Validation Council, a five-member member council which gives the Fed advice on the models used in stress tests for banking institutions.

Mark Gersovitz was on sabbatical leave for the 2015-2016 academic year. He continues his research on infectious diseases.

Bruce Hamilton, Professor Emeritus in the Department, continues to teach his popular undergraduate course in Antitrust as well as the major Principles of Microeconomics course and, in fact, taught the Antitrust course an extra time this year. He also advises many undergraduates and serves as the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The balance of his professional time is devoted to teaching history to high-school seniors at the Park School of Baltimore. He gave up coaching the softball team a few years ago when his doctor said he was too old to teach sliding. His wife, Nancy, says this is not what she thought retirement would be like.

Yingyao Hu continues to publish many papers in his field of econometrics and continues to serve on the boards of several journals. In addition, he was promoted by the University Board of Trustees to the rank of Professor, a well-deserved honor for a distinguished research record which will undoubtedly continue into the future.

Olivier Jeanne returned from spending the year as Resident Scholar in the Research Department of the International Monetary Fund. He organized a workshop at the NBER Summer Institute in July, 2015, on International Macroeconomics and Finance. He continues his work on macroprudential policies and other topics in international monetary policy.

Edi Karni, the Scott and Barbara Black Professor of Economics, was elected Economic Theory Fellow of the Society for the Advancement of Economic Theory and gave lectures and seminars in Paris, Milan, London, and Montreal.

Ali Khan, the Abram Hutzler Professor of Political Economy, was on sabbatical leave in the Spring, 2016 semester and visited several other universities. He published three papers in 2015 and has four more forthcoming.

Anton Korinek advanced his research on financial market imperfections and implications for the real economy. He published a paper on "Liquidity Trap and Excessive Leverage" (with Alp Simsek) in the March 2016 issue of the American Economic Review. In April, he also organized a festschrift conference on the economic implications of "Growing Up in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" to honor the first birthday of his daughter Elise.

Elena Krasnokutskaya has given several talks at seminars and conferences on issues in industrial organization and applied microeconomics.

Lou Maccini, Professor Emeritus, lives in Ann Arbor with his wife Carol to be close to his grandchildren and has now been retired for almost three years. He is enjoying seeing his grandchildren a couple of times a week rather than a couple of times a year. But he does miss the collegiality he enjoyed with faculty and students in the department as well as with faculty and administrators in other parts of the university. Lou is still very active in research. Last year, he published a paper co-authored with Adrian Pagan in *Macroeconomic Dynamics* on the role of input and output inventories in U.S. business cycles. He is currently finishing up a paper with George Hall and Adam Copland on the effects of changes in interest rates on the automobile market. And he is actively engaged in a project with Jim Kahn on time to build and investment in plant and equipment. He also attends regularly seminars in the Economics Department at the University of Michigan.

Robert Moffitt, the Krieger-Eisenhower Professor of Economics, has been appointed editor of Tax Policy and the Economy and continues to serve as Chair of the AEA Committee on Government Statistics. He published a book review in the Journal of Economic Literature entitled "Secrets of Economics Editors" which didn't reveal any secrets.

Barbara Morgan continues to co-direct the Johns Hopkins Baltimore Social Policy Fellows Program, placing students in internships in Baltimore, and teaches the interdisciplinary social policy course with faculty from Sociology and Political Science. She won this year's prestigious Excellence in Teaching Award, in competition with the entire faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences, based on numerous accolades provided by undergraduates. She also continues to do podcasts on inequality and has given testimony in Annapolis on workplace policies.

Nick Papageorge continues his research on medical innovation, risky behavior, human capital, and education. He has had papers accepted in the Review of Economic Studies and Quantitative Economics.

Yuya Sasaki had three papers published in econometrics journals in the 2015-2016 academic year. He has given several other seminars and conference presentations in the U.S. and internationally.

Yuya Takahashi has had papers accepted at Quantitative Economics and the Journal of Labor Economics and published his paper on "Estimating a War of Attrition: The Case of the U.S. Movie Industry" in the July 2015 issue of the American Economic Review. He has given several papers at conferences and seminars this academic year.

Jonathan Wright returned from sabbatical leave at the University of Pennsylvania and assumed the position of Director of Graduate Studies in the Department. He continues his research on forecasting and the term structure of interest rates and published a paper on "Weather Adjusting Economic Data" in the Fall 2015 Brookings Papers on Economic Activity. He organized an NBER workshop on Forecasting and Empirical Methods in Macro & Finance in Summer, 2015.

Last but not least, we have heard from former faculty member **Joseph Harrington**, who is now at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He has given several lectures and courses at a summer school in Greece, in London, Peru, and South

Africa. The 2nd Edition of his popular text, Games, Strategies, and Decision Making, has been published. He is now the Patrick T. Harker Professor at Wharton.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

The Department welcomed 14 incoming first-year students in September with a party which faculty and other graduate students attended. A photo gallery from the party is available at:

<http://econ.jhu.edu/2015/10/12/new-doctoral-students-welcome-party-2/>.



Graduate student activity this year continues to be extensive. Informal reading groups consisting primarily of advanced graduate students plus faculty members met periodically to read and discuss papers in labor economics, industrial organization, theory, macro and finance. These groups are popular because they allow graduate students to continue to meet and discuss papers in their area even after coursework has been completed.

As noted in previous newsletters, the Department has several funded awards to honor some of our most accomplished graduate students. The Eugenio and Patricia Castillo Award is given to the student who displayed the best performance in their first two years in the graduate program. The 2015-2016 recipient is **Edmund Crawley**.

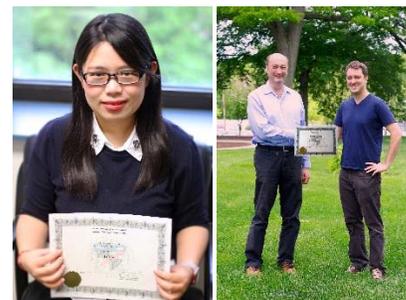
The Bruce Hamilton Research Seminar Award is given to the advanced graduate student who has demonstrated the best performance in one of the department's research workshops. Again funded by Eugenio and Patricia Castillo, it is named in honor of Professor Emeritus Bruce Hamilton who was well-known for his insightful and clever comments at seminars. This Spring's award went to **Sohini Mahapatra** for her

remarks, comments, and questions at our workshops.



Above: Photo of Sohini Mahapatra with Professor Wright.

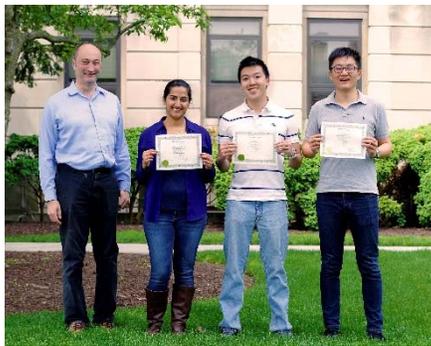
Two other awards were also given this year. **Yi Xin** received the Carl Christ award, given to an outstanding student at the dissertation level in the program. And **Victor Ronda** received the Guggenheimer Award, given to a student who has exhibited exceptional performance in his or her Ph.D. research.



Above: Photo of Xi Yin and Victor Ronda with Professor Wright.

The Professor Joel Dean Undergraduate Teaching Award was established in 2009 to recognize graduate students who exhibited extraordinary performance in teaching Hopkins undergraduates. This award was creatively conceived by Professor Dean's son Joel and his wife Monia. Professor Dean received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago in 1936 and was a pioneer in applying economics to business decision-making. The 2015-2016 recipients are **Alanna Bjorklund-Young**, **Chang Ma**,

Sohini Mahapatra, Ryan Bush, and Kevin Yuan.



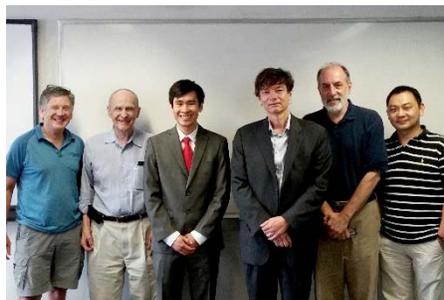
Above: Photo of Professor Wright, Sohini Mahapatra, Kevin Yuan and Chang Ma



Above: Photos of Ryan Bush, Alanna Bjorklund-Young.

Hearty congratulations to all these graduate students, who exemplify the best of the Johns Hopkins graduate program.

Eight students successfully defended their dissertations in oral examinations since our last Newsletter. They are **Ryan Bush, Marco Cornia, Emek Karaca, Gizem Kosar Karaca, Burcin Kisacikoglu, Hai Nguyen, Gwyn Pauley, Boqun Wang, and Sevcen Yesiltas**. A few pictures of the students and their examining committees are shown below.



This is visual proof that it is possible to successfully complete a dissertation.

The Department had nine students on the job market this year, including **Ryan Bush, Yajing Jiang, Burcin Kisacikoglu, Mikhail Smirnov, Metin Uyanik, Boqun Wang, Jiaxiong Yao, Sevcen Yesiltas, and Alexandria Zhang**. They have accepted positions throughout the country and around the world – at, respectively, the New York Fed, Charles River Associates, Bilkent University, CNA Corporation, the University of Rochester and University of Queensland, Bank of America, IMF, Koc University, and the Pew Research Center. We wish them the best in their future careers.

Many of our other graduate students had notable activities this academic year. **Victor Ronda** was one of a select number of Ph.D. students selected to attend the Western Economic Association International's 2015 Graduate Student Dissertation Workshop, and he attended the Fragile Families Workshop in June. **Delong Li** worked as a summer intern at the IMF in the Summer of 2015 and coauthored a paper with two senior economists there, and he worked as a visiting scholar there in the Spring of 2016. He and

Yajing Jiang were married in March, a happy event. **Shaiza Qayyum** has coauthored a paper, "Positively Aware? Expert Reviews, Demand for Pharmaceuticals and Health Outcomes" with Professors Balat and Papageorge, and she presented the paper at the North American Meetings of the Econometric Society in June. She also was married on December 19 to Ammar Farooq, an Economics Ph.D. student at Georgetown. **Jiaxiong Yao** presented a paper in Hong Kong at a Conference on Urbanization, Structural Change, and Employment. **Metin Uyanik** presented a paper, "On the Non-emptiness of the Alpha-Core and Beta-Core of Discontinuous Games: Transferable and Nontransferable Utilities" at the 15th Annual SAET Conference at the University of Cambridge in July, 2015. He also was married last October 31 in Turkey, and his wife's name is Sümeyra. **Boqun Wang** presented a paper "Consumption Habit, Growth Acceleration, and Capital Flows" at the April 2016 Chinese Economist Society North America Conference and presented a related paper in the Summer of 2015 at two other conferences.

Graduate students **Emek Karaca** and **Gizem Kosar Karaca** returned to campus for the Ph.D. hooding ceremony on May 17 and were duly hooded by Professor Robert Moffitt.

Several students attended the January 2016 meetings of the AEA in San Francisco and came to the Departmental Reception.

ALUMNI NEWS

Savas Alpay (Ph.D., 1997) joined the Islamic Development Bank as Chief Economist in 2015, after serving as the Director General of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries between 2006 and 2016.

Danny Barth (Ph.D., 2012) has moved to the Office of Financial Research in the Department of Treasury. He has had a paper with Stephen Shore and Shane Jensen, "Identifying Idiosyncratic Career Taste and Skill with Income Risk," accepted in *Quantitative Economics*.

Dennis Capozza (Ph.D., 1972) became Professor Emeritus at the University of Michigan last October.

Paul Decker (Ph.D., 1988) is in his tenth year as President of Mathematica (and 28th year as an employee). Mathematica continues to

grow, surpassing 1,200 employees this year and adding a new survey operations center in Tuscon.

Jaime De Melo (Ph.D., 1976) is enjoying retirement and family life but is still working and doing occasional teaching, and has done work on climate change. See <http://voxeu.org/article/towards-workable-and-effective-climate-regime>.

Berna Demiralp (Ph.D., 2006) and her husband Jim Foreman had a baby girl, Mira, in February.

Pierangelo De Pace (Ph.D., 2009) was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure at Pomona College, effective July 1, 2015. Just prior to that, he spent a month in Jakarta as part of a consultancy for an Australian-Indonesian Partnership program at the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Trade.

Emmanuel De Veirman (Ph.D., 2008) has been working in research at the Dutch central bank, in Amsterdam for nearly four years. His paper "Cyclical Changes in Firm Volatility" is forthcoming in the JMCB. His finding that firm uncertainty has a smaller effect on the macroeconomy than is currently believed is good news for policymakers: they do not need to look for a way to affect firm-specific volatility, which would be a challenge indeed. See this [VoxEU](#) article for more.

Cris deRitis (Ph.D., 2001) has been with Moody's Analytics in West Chester, Pennsylvania, for eight years in their Economics division, focusing on consumer credit risk modeling and housing policy analysis, among other topics.

Stanley Engerman (Ph.D., 1962) became Professor Emeritus at the University of Rochester on June 30 but will continue part-time teaching for several more years.

Marc Hofstetter Gascon (Ph.D., 2005) has been promoted to Full Professor in the Department of Economics, Universidad de los Andes, Columbia.

Danny Gubits (Ph.D., 2008) is still working at Abt Associates in Bethesda, Maryland, doing research on interventions that serve homeless families and on the SSDI program. He and his wife Sarah have a 2-year-old daughter, Natalie who will be starting preschool in the Fall.

Abhishek Gupta (Ph.D., 2010) taught at Gettysburg college until 2011. Since 2013, he has been working at DSP Merrill Lynch based

out of Mumbai, India as an Economist covering India. One of his thesis chapters, "A Forecasting Metric for Evaluating DSGE Models for Policy Analysis," was published in the March 2016 issue of the IJCB. He was married in February 2015 to Kriti Mittal.

G.S. Gupta (Ph.D., 1971) reports that his daughter, Jaya R. Trivedi, born while he was a graduate student and blessed by Carl Christ and Jurg Niehans, is now Full Professor of Neurology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

John Hartwick (Ph.D., 1969) collected classic articles on national accounting for an Edward Elgar volume this year that has just been produced. He also contributed a fifty-page introduction and overview.

Sandeep Mazumder (Ph.D., 2009) was tenured last year at Wake Forest and has been appointed Associate Chair of the Economics Department.

Jacques Miniane (Ph.D., 2003) is still at the IMF, where he is mission chief for Kosovo, with responsibility for designing, negotiating, and implementing the program. He is also Deputy Head of the unit that has the Ukraine and Romania as well as Kosovo. Jacques is still happily married and enjoying watching his two children grow up.

Kevin Moore (Ph.D., 2004) was promoted to Chief, Microeconomic Surveys Section at the Federal Reserve Board. His section's primary responsibility is conducting the Survey of Consumer Finances, a triennial household survey of household wealth. Kevin has worked at the Federal Reserve since leaving graduate school, and was principal economist prior to his new position. He also became a member of the NBER Conference on Research on Income and Wealth and the European Central Bank's Household Finance and Consumption Network (which includes JHU alumni Jiri Slacalek) this year.

Reid Nagle (1978) continues to train race horses full time in Florida and the mid-Atlantic (think Gulfstream Park, Tampa Bay Downs, Charles Town Races, Laurel Park, etc). The financial information business he founded in 1987, SNL Financial, was sold to McGraw Hill Financial in September of last year and his only connection now remains his admiration for and friendship with the wonderful people he hired and mentored who are thriving at its S&P Global successor company. In addition to training race horses, Reid has 2 other businesses: the largest manure removal business in the horse-centric Ocala, Florida area and the operation

of a racehorse training center facility located between Ocala and Gainesville. Reid continues his intensive study of the economics of marriage, having tied the knot 3 years ago with his long-time and long-suffering partner Sarah McCord. He has 3 children, ages 20-36, and 3 grandchildren, ages 4-8, who in their own charming way are as off-the-wall as he is.

Rui Ota (Ph.D., 2009) has moved to Yokohama City University, a small university in Japan that is ranked 16th in the Times Higher Educations' World's Best Small Universities 2016.

Christine Zhenwei Qiang (Ph.D., 2000) is still at the World Bank and enjoying her work. Her children (4, 6, and 8.5) are growing up fast.

Steffen Reinhold (Ph.D., 2007) is working at the economic consulting firm E.CA in Berlin. He and his wife Melanie, who works at the Brandenburg State Parliament, have three young children, Marlene, Leander, and Jasper.

Viplav Saini (Ph.D., 2009) was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Oberlin College effective July 1, 2015.

Marianne Wolf (Ph.D., 1980) participated in the historic California Wine Trade Mission to Cuba in February. In addition to her work on wine business research, she has made videos of Sky Road near her second home in Galway, Ireland (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnvtx289Htc>) and of a Zimbabwe Bull Elephant crashing into her son and son-in-law (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRdSWtUdawU>).

Xi Yang (Ph.D., 2013) will start as an Assistant Professor at the University of North Texas

I am sad to note the passing of **David Bigman** (Ph.D., 1978). He spent his career at the Hebrew University School of Agricultural Economics as well as at the World Bank and IMF.

I am also sad to have to report the tragic passing of **Molly Macauley** (Ph.D., 1983), who was killed in Baltimore while walking her dogs. Molly was Vice President for Research at Resources for the Future in Washington, DC and her career was continuing to blossom at the time of her death. More information, including comments by her thesis advisor, Bruce Hamilton, can be found at <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/marylan>

[d/crime/bs-md-ci-homicide-20160709-story.html](https://www.baltimorecity.gov/crime/bs-md-ci-homicide-20160709-story.html). We will miss her.

STAFF NEWS

Our superb office staff--**Donna Althoff, Jennifer Miller, Maggie Potts**, and IT Administrator **Nina Agopian**—continue to serve the department well. They have been exceptionally helpful with the move of the Department this year. Donna, our long-standing departmental administrator, began her 32nd year with the Department in January and, yes, she is still putting up with the faculty.

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Finally, I would like to thank those graduate alumni of the Department who have generously made gifts to the Department in the last year. They include **Nada Choueiri, Michael Frantantoni, Julie Hudson and Steve Holden, Bruce Jaffee, Richard Ludwick, Jacques Miniane, Catherine Schneider, Robert Seidman, Daniel Stone, Takeshi Senda, and Xue Song and Junfu Zhang**. These donations go directly to graduate student support for Research Assistant supplements, lunches for the graduate student reading groups, and related activities. The Department seems never to have sufficient funds to support these activities, so donations by our graduate alumni are especially useful.

Please consider a gift, which you can make by going to JHU Giving (<http://krieger.jhu.edu/giving>) and designating that your gift go to the Department of Economics of the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. If you choose to contribute online, please put "KSAS-Dept of Economics" in the "Other" field in the online form.

Larry Ball, Chair