

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the 2009 edition of *The Park Place Economist*. This volume is the seventeenth publication of one of the few undergraduate economics journals in the entire country. While *The Park Place Economist* has certainly changed over the last seventeen years as past student staff members graduated and new ones took their places, it stays true to its purpose of exhibiting the best economics research conducted by students at Illinois Wesleyan University.

For those of you tired of hearing gloomy news about the state of the U.S. economy, I urge you not to despair. While we at *The Park Place Economist* may be students of the “dismal science,” I promise that there is nothing dismal in this journal. Instead, we feature nine articles covering a variety of topics reflecting the diverse interests of our students. Dan Cumming examines the market for taxi medallions in New York City. Alison Harford analyzes the factors that affect a female immigrant’s decision to participate in the labor market. Mallory Heydorn looks into what influences the difference in college graduation rates between athletes and non-athletes. Mujtaba Isani’s research tests the hypothesis that labor market discrimination against Middle Eastern immigrants increased after the attacks on September 11th. Anna Konradi studies whether politicians try to manipulate the business cycle in order to improve their chances of re-election. Kevin Lewis considers the pervasive problems of counterfeit goods and offers solutions to combat them. Paul Oehrlein explores the determinants of college graduates’ earnings. Nicole Spear examines whether individuals raised by adoptive parents differ from those raised by biological ones in terms of income and educational attainment. Lastly, Katie Stankiewicz studies the relationship between contract length and performance for professional baseball players.

This edition of *The Park Place Economist* would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of a number of people. First, I owe a great deal of thanks to the staff. Lindsey Haines, the Assistant Editor-in-Chief, specifically deserves praise for all of her help. I also need to single out for thanks all of my fellow employees in the Econ Lab: Amanda Clayton, Jessica Kong, Anna Konradi, Tian Mao, Teodora Petrova, and Katie Stankiewicz. When work needed to be done, I could always turn to any one of them. Next, I am thankful for Dr. Robert Leekley’s excellent guidance, advice, and support over the course of the year. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Gary Schwartz and Illinois Wesleyan’s Printing Services for handling the production of the journal.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *The Park Place Economist*!

Dan Wexler
Editor-in-Chief

GENERAL INFORMATION

Submissions to *The Park Place Economist* are always welcome, and we encourage students to participate in the creation of the journal. If you are interested in submitting an article or becoming a member of the staff, please contact Dr. Robert Leekley, the faculty advisor, at (309) 556-3178 or at bleekley@iwu.edu. Written queries can be addressed to:

The Park Place Economist
Attention: Dr. Robert M. Leekley
Illinois Wesleyan University
P.O. Box 2900
Bloomington, IL 61701