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The Economics Society: "Best Club on Campus"

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The Economics Society: "Best Club on Campus"

Economics Department at Illinois Wesleyan for helping them complete their research. They are not only thankful to their senior research committee chairs and Professor Seeborg, but also to faculty from other departments. Both Jaynanne and Jennifer acknowledged that all of the professors in the Economics Department have helped with their research immensely because they are very good at listening and at giving suggestions. These seniors also gave much credit to faculty outside of the department. Jennifer said, "I am researching gender issues, and I have had help from unexpected sources. For example, I have received assistance from a Biology professor! The Economics Department and IWU faculty as a whole are very supportive of student research."

So what advice would these experienced seniors give to those students entering their senior research? They and Professor Seeborg all stressed that future students should pick a topic that interests them. Pat commented that if the topic excites you, it will not even feel like an assignment. "Definitely do not just do what is easy. Do what is fun and interesting to you." The seniors also suggested keeping up good communication with your professors throughout the project. Jaynanne said, "Talk about your research all along the way with both professors and friends who are not necessarily experts on your topic. The most useful comments will come from unexpected places."

Obviously, these seniors have gained invaluable experience from completing their projects and presenting them at the Memphis conference. According to Dr. Seeborg, "Research is a great adventure, with some risk, a lot of uncertainty, and many surprises. But in the end, there is this enduring satisfaction of having done something that no one else has done." And, as Jaynanne added, "The best part is the possibility that you have truly added something to the discipline and the general public's knowledge of your topic."

The Economics Society: "Best Club on Campus."

By Jaynanne Calaway

The Economics Society has been around for awhile. Unfortunately, its activity and membership levels have been waning in recent years. This year's leadership decided to turn that around, creating greater visibility for the society and generating enthusiasm for its renewed position as one of the best clubs on campus.

The purpose of a special interest society focused on a particular discipline is three-fold: to reinforce concepts taught in the classroom, to give students an opportunity for extra-curricular involvement, and to provide a setting in which people with similar interests can meet and forge friendships. As a brand new Executive Board this year, we decided to capitalize on all the benefits the Society had to offer. Our activities have been diverse and well attended, our officers creative and committed, and our faculty advisors resourceful and enthusiastic. In general, we hope we have been able to enrich our members' year at Illinois Wesleyan University both academically and socially.

Our co-curricular activities—that is, those designed to complement time spent in the classroom—have been huge successes. In the fall, we began semi-monthly informal luncheons, centered on either a faculty member or a special guest. Our first speaker was our own Dr. Carolyn Stumph, who mesmerized us with stories of the army and how she came to be an economics professor. This semester, one of the highlights was former IWU President Bob Eckley, who spoke on the global economy. This man is simply amazing, accomplishing more professionally since retirement than most people do in their lifetimes. Another highlight was Dr. Frank Gunter. Dr. Gunter served as Dr. Stumph's dissertation advisor at LeHigh. He entertained us with stories of working with the Chinese government.

The Society also worked with faculty to bring relevant and dynamic speakers for the Wednesday night extra credit sessions. As a result of our multiform marketing efforts, there were oftentimes as many people in the audience were who not receiving extra credit as those who were. Our biggest event of the year thus far, though, was the Society's trip to Chicago in January to visit the Fed, the Board of Trade, and the Mercantile Stock

Exchange. We filled a 15-passenger university van, and a good time was had by all. The purpose of these co-curricular events is to illustrate how textbook economics is applied in the real world.

Socially, the Society has had a ball. We kicked the year off with a pizza party, compliments of the Department, and got acquainted with one another. The highlight of the entire year, though, was Cosmic Bowling in January. We opened up the event to the entire campus and had a great turnout. And, of course, the best part was watching Dr. Leekley and Dr. Seeborg carry out the crazy bowling stunts Jenny Van Dyke engineered. Yes, our Editor-in-Chief is multi-talented.

Indeed, the entire leadership for the Economics Society this year has been phenomenal. They are people of integrity, diligence and vivacity. Esteban Lizano has been indispensable as our Treasurer. Because of his motivation, the Society now has a budget with Student Senate. Pat Holly is simply a genius at anything technical. Jenny Urbanus, Jackie Hood, and Julie Dusek have all been more than willing to help whenever a need arose. And, Nate Taulbee is truly any President's dream as a right-hand man.

In general, we have simultaneously become a close-knit group while also watching our membership and participation levels steadily increase over the course of the year. Thank you to all the students, faculty, alumnae and community members who have made the year such a success. As an Exec Board, we wish next year's leadership the best of luck and hope you will continue to promote both the Society and the discipline in your respective spheres of influence.

Global Construction Magnate Speaks to Students

By Mandy Watson

In the fall semester of 1998, Illinois Wesleyan University was honored to host Marvin J. Suomi on campus. Mr. Suomi is President and Chief Executive Officer of Kajima Urban

Development, LLC. He also serves as Executive Vice President and director of Kajima International and CEO of Kajima Construction Services. Kajima is the largest construction services company in the world, with annual revenues in excess of \$15 billion and operations in 30 countries. The company's business is centered around architecture, engineering, and construction.

The beginning of Mr. Suomi's successful career with Kajima, a Japanese company, was really just a matter of timing and luck. At Princeton, Suomi studied three years of Japanese, but realized he didn't know enough and would need to actually go to Japan to learn the language. He did so after graduation when he got a job with IBM. The company was beginning their market penetration of Japan. Suomi gained a great deal of first-hand experience in the decision-making process of transforming IBM from an American company to a multinational company.

Mr. Suomi returned to the United States to complete his graduate work at The University of Michigan. During this time, the Japanese began their penetration of the U.S. market. Because of his past experiences, Suomi took great interest in their crossover. After finishing his graduate studies, Mr. Suomi worked for the United States Government as part of the "Invest in U.S.A" program. This helped him gain more experience, as he was able to promote reverse investment all over the world. After this, Mr. Suomi went to New York. Suomi said, "I was going to do what most Princetonians do, and that is to become a banker." However, this is the point where the timing and luck took over. In New York, he met a Japanese gentleman who encouraged him to go to Japan and work for Kajima. At first Suomi wanted to decline the offer for two basic reasons: 1) working for a Japanese company would be too much work and 2) he knew nothing about construction. The gentleman continued to encourage him to go to Japan. He offered Suomi a month long trip to Japan, paid for by Kajima, to learn about the construction business. After this month, if he was intrigued, he could choose to work for a year at Kajima. On his initial trip, he realized the size of the Kajima operation and also the huge research and development sector of the company.