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Letter from the Editor | The Start of Something New

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Letter from the Editor | The Start of Something New

Letter from the Editor

The Start of Something New

Welcome to Volume XXVII of the *Park Place Economist* (PPE)!

As I spend the last few months of my undergraduate years fine-tuning the edits for the current edition of the PPE, I start to reflect on the opportunities that are given to students in the Economics program at Illinois Wesleyan University. Surely, the rigorous coursework provides students like me a chance to develop our critical thinking skills and expand our own definitions of “hard-work”, and the professors are always available to help, guide, and motivate us throughout our four years as Economics students. However, it is the opportunities to work on research projects and economic journals that can really shape and define our studies.

These opportunities put our knowledge to test. They ask us what we know about the subject matter and open a million doors to what we did not already know. They give us the skills that we need to succeed, and turn us into more mature and capable thinkers without us realizing. More importantly, I truly believe each of these opportunities is a start of something new. The amount of knowledge that students can learn through conducting a research or editing a journal allows them to discover new focuses and topics of interest. Each project is also a chance for students to put their best foot forward and strive for high-quality papers or publications. Looking back, I believe this is a mindset that is well-incorporated in the current edition of the PPE.

Volume XXVII of the journal features unique research articles from IWU students, with various topics ranging from crime and business formation with a local focus to national and international perspectives on health economics, human capital development, innovation, and migration. Most of the authors of these articles are the peers that I have taken at least one class with. Through working on this journal, however, I began to see them as student researchers whose determination to produce quality work was clearly conveyed in the way they delved into their topics of interest.

On the other end of the editorial process, the current edition has received great transformations both in terms of physical appearances and technical aspects. The cover features the artwork of Hieu Vu '19, who combined digital and motion design techniques to produce a modern look that is well suited to the university-wide theme: *Changing Climates*. The formatting style of the current edition gives the journal a fresh and more professional look, as well as making it suitable for both web-viewing and printing. The editorial process has also been fully digitized to Google Drive to allow for instant editing and feedback.

All of these new changes, however, would not have been realized without the hard work of many individuals. I am extremely grateful to the editorial board members for the many hours of their personal

time that they put into this edition. I am also grateful to the professors of the Economics Department and our alumni who have supported us throughout the process. Their updates are featured at the beginning of the journal. I am additionally grateful to Dr. Amit Ghosh for his trust and support, as well as to Gary Schwartz from the IWU *Publications, Printing, and Mailing Services*, whose flexibility and reliability made this edition possible. Finally, I would like to dedicate this edition to the late Dr. Robert Leekley, whose advice and guidance will stay with me for many more years to come.

With incredibly humbling honor, I present to you Volume XXVII of the *Park Place Economist*. It is my hope that this edition will be enjoyable and inspiring to everyone whom it reaches.

Editor-in-Chief

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heidi Luu', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Heidi Luu