

# UCR Economics Newsletter

Spring 2023



## From the Chair's Corner

Steven M. Helfand

The Department of Economics is excited to release its fifth annual newsletter.

A few of the highlights include awards and recognition for our faculty members' research and teaching, inclusion of one of our graduate students in a competitive international conference, exciting Ph.D. job placements, a large external grant to facilitate research on labor markets here in our own backyard in the Inland Empire and across the state, the creation of a new degree program, and the retirement of two of our most revered faculty members.

Our new graduate degree program, a Master of Arts in Applied Economics, is a professional degree that allows students to specialize in an area of their choosing, including Business and Finance, Econometrics and Data Analysis, and Economics and Public Policy. Graduates will be equipped with analytical and quantitative skills to pursue careers as professional economists in the private and public sectors. We plan to welcome the inaugural class in Fall 2024. We are also in the process of creating a 4+1 option to make it even easier for our own undergraduates to complete the M.A. We are counting on our student, parent, faculty, staff, and alumni community to help us identify great candidates for the program.

A bittersweet part of university life is that faculty come and go. We were honored, yet sad, to say goodbye to Taradas Bandyopadhyay and Aman Ullah, who both retired in 2022. Bandyopadhyay and Ullah had the longest tenure in the department. Ullah became a Distinguished Professor of the Graduate Division and was kind enough to teach a graduate class this year.

The cycle of (professional) life has touched me as well. After six years, I will be stepping down as Chair in July. This has been a rewarding career experience. It has been an honor to contribute my energy to making the department and university a better place. I look forward to having more time for my research, including an exciting new project on climate change and drought in Brazil.

Don't be strangers. If you are in Riverside, please knock on our doors. If you are further afield, please visit our inboxes.



*Dr. Taradas Bandyopadhyay's retirement party on June 2, 2022.*

## Faculty News

Associate Professor of Teaching **Joab Corey** was accepted into the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT). Proving that economists can be well-rounded, Dr. Corey was also appointed as the interim president of the United States Intercollegiate Boxing Association (USIBA). Associate Professor of Teaching **Bree Lang** received the Honors Program Mentor of the Year Award awarded for the 2021/2022 academic year. Professor **Steven Helfand** was selected as a legendary member—*membro legendário* in Portuguese—or fellow of the Brazilian Society of Rural Economics, Administration and Sociology. This is the society's highest honor.

Emeritus Professor **Ronald Chilcote** was awarded the Silvert Lifetime Achievement Award by the Latin American Studies Association. Emeritus Professor **Prasanta K. Pattanaik** was appointed as an Honorary Distinguished Fellow of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (Mumbai).

Assistant Professor **Sarojini Hirshleifer** has a [new working paper](#) conducted in Pakistan at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic on responses by users of a social media platform to misinformation

## Establishment of UCR Labor and Community Center

Principal Investigator Dr. Ellen Reese (Sociology) and co-Principal Investigators Drs. Marissa Brooks (Political Science), Richard Rodriguez (Media Cultural Studies), and our very own **Michael Bates** were awarded \$500,000 per year to establish the UCR Labor and Community Center. Dr. Bates was intricately involved in grant writing, budgeting, negotiating with the administration, and meeting with local leaders to build community support. This center brings together workers, students, faculty, labor and community organizations, and policymakers to address critical issues in the Inland Empire and California. In Summer 2023, the center will launch a scholarship as well as an internship program. Reports on the Inland Empire labor market will also be available starting in the summer. In the coming months, the center will recruit an Executive Director and Research Director.

# Spring 2023

## Undergraduate Excellence

**Rebekah Wells** and **Eugene Baddonado** were awarded the Undergraduate Economics Student Achievement Award. **Medhar Sarkar** was awarded the Bruce McCormick Award for Excellence in Economics. Thanks, **Joab Corey**, for the fund's very first contribution.

**Grace Kim** and **Sandy Su** were awarded CHASS At Home in the World Fund scholarships for Summer & Fall 2022.

## New Faces

During AY 2022/2023, Assistant Professor of Teaching **Veronica Sovero** joined the Department. Dr. Sovero earned her Ph.D. in Economics at the University of California, Los Angeles. She began her professional academic career at Wake Forest University and joins our department from San Francisco State University. Dr. Sovero is a labor economist with research on higher education institutions. Her courses include Economic Mobility and Data Analysis in Economics.

We also welcome **Glenn Jones** who joins our staff as a Financial Analyst.

## Rock the Classroom

Assistant Professor **Carolyn Sloane** thanks guest speakers to Econ 150 Rockonomics: Jamie Kitman (Hornblow), Emma Swift (Tiny Ghost Records), Richard Edwards, Broc Barnes (Third Man Pressing), Lew Prince (Vintage Vinyl), Adam Oke (Stagelt), Kaley Caperton, Joshua Epstein, and Marissa R. Moss. In the news: Dr. Sloane was interviewed by *Pitchfork*, *NPR*, *The Hill*, *KCBS San Francisco*, *The Nikki Meddoro Show* and *Bloomberg* discussing the live event ticketing market.



*Dr. Aman Ullah gives a toast at Dr. Taradas Bandyopadhyay's retirement party on June 2, 2022.*

## Graduate Student Placements

Congrats to our students and thanks to placement officer **Sarojini Hirshleifer**.

**Justin Dang (2022)**: Assistant Professor, the University of San Diego.

**Ryoji Jinushi (2023)**: Assistant Professor, Seikei University.

**Opinder Kaur (2023)**: Assistant Professor, SUNY Buffalo.

**Tao Wang (2022)**: Assistant Professor, the University of Victoria.

**Quanfeng Zhou (2022)**: Assistant Professor, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics.

**Yanchao Yang (2022)**: Clinical Instructor, DePaul University.

**Saman Banafiti (2022)**: Economist, Amazon.

**Taghi Farzad (2022)**: Economist, Fannie Mae.

**Zhaozhen Zhao (2022)**: Economist, Digonex.

## Master of Arts in Applied Economics

Starting Fall 2024, we will offer a Masters of Arts with a concentration in Applied Economics geared towards preparing students for careers in the private sector, government, and international agencies.

It can also prepare students for Ph.D. programs in economics. In the future, we hope to include a 4+1 option for UCR undergraduates. If you know someone who is a great candidate, please encourage them to apply for our inaugural class.

## Returning

After 10 years as founding dean of the UCR School of Public Policy, Professor **Anil Deolalikar** will be returning as faculty to the department effective January 1, 2023. Following a sabbatical, he will resume teaching in the field of development economics. The students and faculty are ecstatic to have Dr. Deolalikar back in Sproul Hall.

## Promotion

During the 2021-2021 Academic Year, labor economist Dr. **Ozkan Eren** was promoted to Full Professor. Dr. Eren earned his Ph.D. in Economics at Southern Methodist University. He began his career at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and joined our department in 2018 from Louisiana State University. Dr. Eren is a labor economist with research in the areas of education, health, and crime. He teaches an undergraduate course on the Economics of Education and a graduate course on Empirical Methods on Applied Economics. He also serves as a Research Affiliate at the Robert Presley Center of Crime and Justice Studies.

## Retirements

We are happy for Professor **Taradas Bandyopadhyay** and former Department Chair Distinguished Professor **Aman Ullah** as they enter retirement. Dr. Bandyopadhyay is a microeconomist who has published papers on everything from strategic voting to monetary growth. Dr. Ullah is an econometrician who has made important contributions to research on non-parametric, semi-parametric, and finite sample econometrics. In June 2022, we celebrated Dr. Bandyopadhyay. In May 2023, we will host a conference in honor of Dr. Ullah. Dr. Ullah has also been named as a Distinguished Professor of the Graduate Division for Academic Years 2022-25.

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