

Issue 61, Spring 2017

“KEYSTONE KOPS” AND CRIME THEORIES

By Dr. James J. Jozefowicz and Zackary T. Nelson



Editor’s Note: This is a summary of “‘Keystone Kops’ and Crime Theories: A Panel Data Analysis of Pennsylvania County Crime Rates,” an article that was co-authored by Zackary T. Nelson (’14) and James J. Jozefowicz and published in the *Pennsylvania Economic Review*, 2015, 22(1), pp. 1-23 (Spring).

In a recent alumni newsletter article (Spring 2016), my colleague Dr. Chris Jeffords discussed an analysis of the relationship between economic growth and the criminal victimization of environmental activists that he and colleague Dr. Alexi Thompson conducted. Continuing with this line of inquiry, this article reports on an analysis that alumnus Zac Nelson (’14) and I undertook of how different crime theories explain criminal behavior in Pennsylvania counties.

As can be seen in Figure 1 below, at the beginning of the 1980s and into the 1990s, the United States experienced a steep increase in violent crimes, while Pennsylvania had a much smaller increase in violent crimes throughout the decade. At its peak in 1991, the U.S. violent crime rate was 758.2 per 100,000 people, but it had declined by nearly half to 386.9 in 2012. In contrast, Pennsylvania has witnessed a flatter decline in the violent crime rate from its peak of 449.9 per 100,000 people in 1991 to a more modest 348.6 in 2012. Although Pennsylvania’s violent crime rate remains below the national average, it has been more persistent throughout the last two decades and experienced a slower rate of decline than the U.S. Clearly, crime in Pennsylvania remains an important phenomenon to understand.

In this issue:

“Keystone Kops” and Crime Theories:
Dr. James J. Jozefowicz
and Zackary T. Nelson 1

Greetings from the Chair:
Dr. David B. Yerger 3

Scholarships: How You
Can Help 4

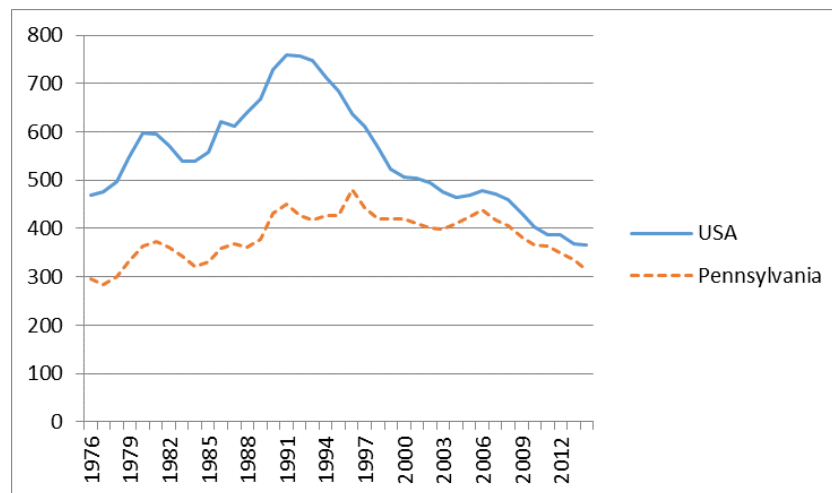
Faculty Notes 6

Student Notes 8

Editor:

Dr. David B. Yerger

Figure 1



Economists, among other academicians, investigate the determinants of the crime rate and the implications of their findings have the potential to inform policymakers as they target at-risk groups and seek to prevent outbreaks of criminal behavior. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania offers interesting data to analyze due to the wide socioeconomic and demographic breadth across the state. Pennsylvania’s geography varies from metropolitan hubs, like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh; to midlevel or growing cities, such as Allentown and Easton; to rural areas, like Clearfield and Crawford Counties. Our study aims to provide a better understanding of Pennsylvania county-specific traits that influence crime rates.

(continued on page 2)

“Keystone Kops” and Crime Theories (cont.)

(continued from page 1)

Theories of Crime

Different theories to explain crime have been advanced by academic researchers over the last several decades. These include the economic, social disorganization, and strain theories of crime. A brief summary of each of these theories follows.

Economic Theory of Crime: Using a basic supply-and-demand model, Becker (1968) discusses the optimal policies to combat crime by measuring the social loss from criminal offenses. Furthermore, Becker seeks to understand exactly how many resources and how much punishment *should* be used to enforce different kinds of legislation. Becker concludes that criminals focus on the opportunity costs and utility of committing a crime, and whether or not the benefits of the crime outweigh the alternative legal avenues available. Becker also finds that there is a socially optimal level of crime that could be committed and that the punishment of individuals should equal the crime they committed.

Social Disorganization Theory: Shaw and McKay (1942) identify many distinct social factors that, when enhanced, cause the various networks of social control to weaken resulting in criminal activity. These factors include poverty, ethnic heterogeneity, family stability, and residential mobility that undermine a community’s ability and willingness to informally control its members.

Strain Theory: Merton (1938) proposed the idea of strain theory and argues that the higher the level of relative inequality in an area, the greater the proposed “strain” on the unsuccessful individual. These high levels of strain, in theory, encourage lower-status individuals to commit crimes due to their sense of alienation. This disenfranchisement is only enhanced by greater numbers of successful individuals in the presence of unsuccessful individuals.

Analysis

To conduct our analysis, we assembled panel data for the 67 counties of Pennsylvania across the period from 1990 to 2009. We measured our dependent variable, *crime*, using the Part I county crime rate, which includes murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

We used a variety of independent variables to represent each of the crime theories discussed above: 1) Income per capita, and the shares of the workforce employed in the manufacturing and service sectors represent the economic theory. 2) The social disorganization theory is proxied by population density, the percent of the county population that is not Caucasian, the shares of the county population born in the state and living in the same residence as 5 years earlier, and the female share of the county population with children under the age of seven. 3) The percent of the county population that is male, the percent of the county population that is between the ages of 18 and 24, the unemployment rate, the poverty rate, the high school dropout rate, and a proxy for income inequality serve as potential sources of strain. 4) Finally, law enforcement variables (police per capita, the arrest rate, and the clearance rate) are included to mitigate potential bias in the results.

Results

From our analysis, we find that all three crime theories play a role in explaining crime rates in Pennsylvania counties. For example, in support of the economic theory, a one-unit increase in the share of employment in the service sector will reduce the crime rate by 1.15% on average, *ceteris paribus*. Furthermore, reflecting the social disorganization theory, a one-unit increase in the share of the county female population with young children leads to an average 5.56% reduction in the crime rate, *ceteris paribus*, and a similar increase in the county population living in the same residence as 5 years earlier causes the crime rate to fall by 2.89% on average, all else equal. More of the



Dr. James Jozefowicz



Zac Nelson

(continued on page 5)

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR:

By Dr. David B. Yerger

Greetings Alumni,

This past January the Department of Economics found itself in the seldom experienced circumstance of breaking in a new inexperienced chairperson. As noted by Dr. Nicholas Karatjas in the Fall 2016 newsletter, he has retired from 38 years(!) of service at IUP to pursue such things as more intensive spoiling of his grandchildren, traveling, and whatever else he wants to do. Congratulations, Nick!

A common observation regarding economists and their forecasts is that the accuracy of these forecasts are inadequate, arguably woefully inadequate, to support the confidence with which economists make their forecasts. That said, I do confidently forecast that the downward trend in years of service for the economics department chairperson will continue. Younger alumni may not be aware that Drs. Walker and Karatjas chaired the department from 1969 to 1998 and from 1998 to 2016, respectively. No one should take the "over" on any offered over-under bet set at 18 years for my length of service.

Compared to some new chairs at IUP, I am stepping into an enviable position. The department has been well managed, productive, and collegial for many years. I will work hard at maintaining those same department characteristics. I have three key items of emphasis for the next few years. First, I have to keep the administrative ship running smoothly. Second, support my colleagues' many diverse scholarly activities and student mentoring efforts.

Lastly, work to further strengthen the department's communication network with its alumni. The more the department knows about the many interesting and important activities its alumni are doing, the better we can motivate students to consider economics as their major and provide them with relevant real-life examples of successful IUP economics graduates.

Because the faculty and student accomplishments flow has been so steady, it is easy to lose track of how much has been done. Department accomplishments since 2012 are numerous. Fifty-seven peer-reviewed academic journal articles or book chapters have been published. Outlets include high profile publishers such as Cambridge University Press and some journals ranked in the top ten percent of their subject areas based on citation impact rankings. Faculty gave 62 presentations or lectures in 13 U.S. states, Canada, Mali, Greece, and China. Faculty have received grant funding from state and federal agencies. Eighty-five undergraduates authored research presented at the IUP Undergraduate Scholars Forum, 15 of these students received awards. Off-campus research presentations were made by 19 students, with seven receiving awards. Some of our graduates began advanced studies in economics, business, and other fields at multiple institutions. Others moved directly to the workforce, some with placements at national firms, federal government agencies, the Federal Reserve System, and the armed services.

A successful department needs both committed faculty and committed students. I'm grateful to be chairing a department with both of these key ingredients and I look forward to the accomplishments of the department's students, alumni, and faculty over the next few years.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. David B. Yerger



Dr. David Yerger

SCHOLARSHIPS: HOW YOU CAN HELP

As current economics students juggle financing their college education with other responsibilities, they often look towards scholarships to help fill the gap. Through the support of generous alumni, faculty and staff members, emeriti professors, and friends, four scholarships are currently available to current economics students:

- 0505 - Karl A. McDermott Scholarship for Economics
- 0449 - Robert J. Stonebraker Scholarship for Economics
- 0359 - Donald A. Walker Department of Economics Scholarship
- 5351 - Economics Department Scholarship

The Donald A. Walker Department of Economics Scholarship and the Robert J. Stonebraker Scholarship for Economics were established to provide a lasting tribute to acknowledge the impact of these (emeriti) professors on economics students during their tenure at IUP. Scholarships can also be established by alumni. Dr. Karl McDermott set up an endowed scholarship to recognize the impact of his IUP education on his professional career and to provide scholarship assistance to future economics students. These funds will continue to supply annual scholarships for IUP students for years to come. The Economics Department Scholarship provides scholarships to students focusing their studies in the degrees/programs offered through the Department of Economics. However, to increase the impact of the annual scholarship payout, additional donations to these funds are needed. Your gift will assist in increasing the annual scholarship payout. You can support future economics students by designating your gift to any of these scholarship funds. Go to the IUP secure on-line giving form at www.iup.edu/giveagift to make your gift now. Be sure to select the "specific area at IUP" option and indicate your fund designation (see account numbers above) in the "other" area on the form.

For more information about how you can support one of these economics scholarships or to discuss the process of establishing your own scholarship, please contact: Chrystie Raymond, Development Officer, at (724) 357-1961 or chrystie.raymond@iup.edu.

**I would like to support scholarships for IUP students
in the Economics Department by making a gift to the Foundation for IUP.**

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- 0359 – Donald A. Walker Department of Economics Scholarship
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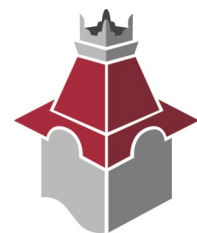
To make a one-time or recurring gift online, visit www.iup.edu/giveagift.

Please mail this form along with payment, if applicable to: Foundation for IUP, Sutton Hall, Room G1, 1011 South Drive, Indiana, PA 15705-1046. Or, to pay by credit card visit www.iup.edu/stonebraker.

I prefer not to have my name included in IUP's online donor listing (please initial).

The Foundation for IUP is a 501(c)(3) organization; gifts to The Foundation are tax deductible as per IRS regulations. The official registration and financial information of the Foundation for Indiana University of Pennsylvania may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. For calls which originate outside of Pennsylvania, the telephone number is 717-783-1720. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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“Keystone Kops” and Crime Theories (cont.)

(continued from page 2)

strain theory variables are highly significant relative to the variables in the other two theory groups. A one-percentage-point increase in the county unemployment rate will raise crime by 1.16% on average, *ceteris paribus*. Similarly, a one-unit increase in the poverty rate results in a 1.09% increase in the crime rate on average, all else equal. Since the time frame of this study encompasses the longest post-WWII expansion, which occurred in the 1990s, as well as a recession in 2001 and the entirety of the Great Recession, the analysis also reveals noteworthy differences between periods of economic growth (i.e., 1990-2000) and periods of economic recession (i.e., 2001-2009). Specifically, greater per capita income encourages crime during an economic expansion as the availability of potential victims increases, and a larger male population in a county raises crime rates during a period of prosperity perhaps due to enhanced motivation to engage in illegal activities. However, the male presence reduces criminal activity during downturns perhaps because of less opportunity to commit crimes as fewer people commute to and from their jobs, and also because men may spend more time at home guarding their belongings while out of work. Anecdotally, the Great Recession especially hurt employment in traditionally male-dominated industries, such as manufacturing and construction. There also appears to be more motivated youth offenders during times of slower economic growth.

Conclusion

With respect to policymaking in Pennsylvania, the significant negative relationship between the clearance rate (i.e., cases that actually lead to charges being filed) and the crime rate suggests that a policy of “setting an example” may be a valid deterrent to crime. Additionally, this research offers policy alternatives consistent with the theories of crime, which may be effective for reducing occurrences of criminal activity. The findings of this study indicate that lower population density is associated with higher crime rates. Given the extensive rural nature of Pennsylvania relative to many other states, crime-fighting policies should focus on urban counties and rural counties separately, as the same tactics in urban areas may not be as effective in rural areas.

In summary, the results of this article clearly suggest that fighting crime in Pennsylvania is more than a law enforcement endeavor. Traditional crime-fighting measures must be complemented by economic and social policies that address relevant underlying features of the communities served by the police. Further research should specifically investigate the relationship between economic activity and the crime rate. The differences in the determinants of the crime rate across rural and urban areas also should be analyzed in future studies.

References available upon request.

Keep in touch!



The faculty in the Department of Economics are always thrilled to hear from their former students. Please keep us posted on your work and well-being. Feel free to drop us a note via email, letter, or phone call. Or, complete the Alumni Information form on page 9. We would love to hear from you!

FACULTY NOTES

In an interview with WalletHub, **Dr. Todd B. Potts** discussed various aspects of the economics of professional football. In particular, his interview covered some of the challenges facing professional football in 2017 and the composition of a good football fan, among other interesting topics. For more information go to: <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-cities-for-football-fans/9691/#todd-b-potts>.

Dr. Yaya Sissoko presented a research paper entitled: "Is It Factor Accumulation or Total Factor Productivity Explaining the Economic Growth in ECOWAS?: An Empirical Assessment" (co-authored with Dr. Brian Sloboda) at the ICAPE Annual Conference held in Chicago, IL, on January 5-8, 2017.

On February 14, **Dr. Willard W. Radell** presented "Trade, Jobs, and Politics" in the Great Decisions Series sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association, St. Andrew's Village, and IUP's Office of Extended Studies.

Drs. James J. Jozefowicz and **Stephanie M. Jozefowicz** presented "Marriage: One Giant Constrained Optimization Problem" at the IUP Chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes' weekly meeting on Thursday, February 16, 2017.

IUP hosted its sixth cohort of visiting professors from its Chinese partner, Hebei University (HBU) located in Baoding. The professors were at IUP from January through May to explore different pedagogical styles, observe courses in their academic disciplines, and conduct research. The IUP Office of International Education (OIE) connects IUP faculty with the visiting professors in hope of providing a mutually beneficial experience. **Dr. James J. Jozefowicz** and **Dr. Yaya Sissoko** (pictured at right) were mentors to two of the visiting professors.



Dr. James Jozefowicz and Dr. Yaya Sissoko with visiting Chinese professors Dr. Yuan Gao and Dr. Zhanhua Sha.

The partnered faculty then met periodically during the semester and the visiting professors observed IUP classes. The OIE hosted a luncheon for IUP and HBU partners in February.

On February 28, 2017, **Dr. Christopher R. Jeffords** presented his research on constitutional environmental rights and law to the IUP SEEDS Club. His discussion focused on the prevalence of constitutionally entrenched environmental rights (at the country level) and the avenues through which these rights may (or may not) impact environmental outcomes.

"A Panel Data Analysis of the Gender Wage Gap in Pennsylvania Counties: Rural-Urban Differences," co-authored by honors-track economics alumna **Erica Sittig ('15)** and **Dr. James J. Jozefowicz**, has been published in the *Pennsylvania Economic Review*. You can read the article online at <http://www.econpea.org/pub/PER-23-1-2016.pdf>.

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FACULTY NOTES (cont.)

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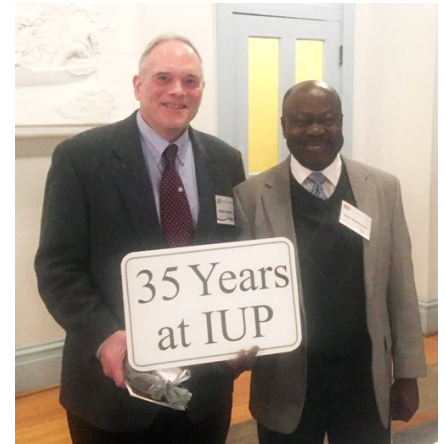
Dr. Stephanie M. Jozefowicz conducted Résumé Night for the Economics Club on Wednesday, March 1, 2017.

Dr. Brandon C. Vick presented his work over the past two years with the Appalachian Teaching Project (ATP) at the Development District Association of Appalachia Annual Conference in Washington, DC, on March 19, 2017. He was asked by the Appalachian Regional Commission to participate in their session on leadership development and encouraged regional development planners to utilize university students in their projects and give students an active role in improving their communities. He joined a panel of other ATP faculty from Auburn University, East Tennessee State University, and the University of North Georgia.

Congratulations to **Dr. Willard W. Radell** who was honored for his 35 years of service to the university at the annual Service Awards Luncheon held in the Blue Room in Sutton Hall on March 22, 2017 (see picture on right).

Dr. Brandon C. Vick recently published an article titled “Gender Differences in Career Dissatisfaction Among Pennsylvanian Physicians” in the *Journal of Hospital Administration*, Vol. 6(2).

Dr. Yaya Sissoko presented a research paper entitled: “Is It Factor Accumulation or Total Factor Productivity Explaining the Economic Growth in ECOWAS?: An Empirical Assessment” (co-authored with Dr. Brian Sloboda) at the Midwest Economics Association (MEA) Annual Conference held in Cincinnati, OH, on March 30-April 2, 2017. Dr. Sissoko also chaired and discussed a paper in “Session 3H: Growth in Europe” at the MEA Conference.



Dr. Willard Radell with Dean Yaw Asamoah at the awards luncheon.

“Measuring Links Between Labor Monopsony and the Gender Pay Gap in Brazil,” authored by **Dr. Brandon C. Vick**, will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *IZA Journal of Labor & Development*.

Dr. James J. Jozefowicz organized the Undergraduate Scholars Forum session “Applied Economic Analysis.” **Drs. Stephanie Jozefowicz** and **Yaya Sissoko** judged the session. In addition, **Dr. Yaya Sissoko** organized the Undergraduate Scholars Forum session “Economic Development.” **Drs. James J. Jozefowicz** and **Todd B. Potts** judged the session. The Undergraduate Scholars Forum was held on Tuesday, April 4, 2017.

The Pan African Student Association (PASA) hosted its annual African Night on April 8, 2017, at the HUB Ohio Room. PASA aims to share African culture, tradition, food, and to create awareness about Africa in general. African Night is educational and entertaining, and is offered to the Indiana community and its surroundings by PASA. **Dr. Yaya Sissoko** is the faculty advisor of PASA and the coordinator of African Night 2017.

The Ambassador of Mali to the U.S., his Excellency Tiena Coulibaly, visited the IUP campus on Wednesday, April 12, 2017. He had dinner with Dr. Marveta Ryan-Sams, coordinator of the Pan-African Studies Program; **Dr. Yaya Sissoko**, faculty adviser of the Pan-African Student Association; **Dr. David B. Yerger**; along with some students. See picture on right.



The Ambassador of Mali to the U.S., his Excellency Tiena Coulibaly (fourth from left), visited IUP in April.

Retired economics professor and chairperson **Dr. Nicholas Karatjas** will be the featured speaker at a reception for alumni to be held at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, PA, on May 18, 2017. He will discuss the importance of different aspects of a college education.

STUDENT NOTES

Congratulations to **Caleb King**, a Mathematics and Economics double major, who was appointed as the student trustee on the IUP Council of Trustees for 2017-18. Members of the Council of Trustees are volunteers appointed by the governor to be responsible for financial oversight of the university and for ensuring compliance of university policy with state law. The Council of Trustees meets quarterly and other times as needed.

Economics major **Jordan Gwinn** was recently chosen from among hundreds of nominations for inclusion in the *Top 100 People in Business* list published by Pennsylvania Business Central. Jordan currently is the director of operations for Disobedient Spirits Craft Distillery in Homer City, PA, and is president of the Homer City Business Association, a member of the Indiana County Tourist Bureau board of directors, and a member of the Indiana County Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Indiana.

Congratulations to Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference-honored scholar-athletes **Jacobo Diaz** and **Lauren Wolosik**, who are both economics majors and basketball players. Jacobo, recognized as one of the best players in the Atlantic Region and in the entirety of Division II, was named the 2017 PSAC West Athlete of the Year. In January 2017, he was one of 100 players named to the Bevo Francis Award Watch List, which honors the best player in Division II, Division III, and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. Lauren, a guard for the PSAC Champion IUP women's basketball team, earned her first postseason award being named to the 2017 All-PSAC West second team.

Dr. James J. Jozefowicz and economics major **Olivia Habacivch** participated in the annual IUP Majors Fair on Thursday, March 9, 2017. The purpose of the Majors Fair is to provide all students with the opportunity to explore different majors and courses of study available to them at IUP.

Congratulations to honors-track economics major **Robert Stock** who was awarded the Tim Riordan Scholarship for the 2016-2017 academic year in recognition of his academic performance, leadership skills, kindness, and athletic abilities. Stock plays goalie for the IUP men's ice hockey team.

Jacobo Diaz, forward for the IUP men's basketball team, was the youngest player named to the National Association of Basketball Coaches All-Atlantic District first team, and he earned first team recognition in the All-Atlantic Region by the Conference Commissioners Association. Jacobo also received Honorable Mention on the 2016-2017 Division II Bulletin All-American Team, and he was named the PSAC West Athlete of the Year. *Congratulations, Cobo!*

Congratulations to sophomore, **Anthony Maticic**, and his business honors program colleagues, who won the Eberly College of Business and Information Technology Dean's Award for their case study entitled, "Chipotle Analysis," at the 2017 Undergraduate Scholars Forum. Anthony is pursuing dual baccalaureate study in economics and accounting.

Congratulations to **Hannah Mercer** for being named IUP's 2016-17 Women's Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Hannah, a shortstop on the IUP softball team, set the IUP record for career hits and career runs in addition to being named PSAC Central Division Softball Athlete of the Week. She also received the Pennsylvania Sports Business Conference Research Award. *Congratulations, Hannah!*

Congratulations to **Patrick Edwards** and **Hannah Mercer** whose poster was one of four invited by the School of Graduate Studies and Research to represent IUP at the Undergraduate Research at the Capitol-Pennsylvania event held on April 25, 2017, in Harrisburg, PA. The students presented their award-winning project from the 2016 IUP Undergraduate Scholars Forum. Patrick and Hannah's paper was titled "An Analysis of Gender Inequality in Professional Tennis" and their faculty advisor was **Dr. James J. Jozefowicz**. In addition, Patrick and Hannah had the opportunity to discuss their work with **Representative Dave Reed ('00)**. See picture on right.

Economics major **Lucas Mafrica** will enroll in the Economics PhD program at Temple University this fall. He will be fully funded with a tuition waiver and stipend. *Congratulations, Lucas!*



Representative Dave Reed (right) with Patrick Edwards and Hannah Mercer.

STUDENT NOTES (CONT.)

(continued from page 10)

Twelve economics students gave oral presentations at the Undergraduate Scholars Forum on April 4, 2017. Student presentations from the Department of Economics at the Undergraduate Scholars Forum included:

Session Title: Economic Development

- **Edward Foley:** “The Failure of Economic Development Strategies Using Cultural Dimensions: Vietnam and Jamaica” (Advisor: Dr. Yaya Sissoko)
- **Samir Mahmoud Hasabou:** “Economic Development Challenge: Romania and Chile” (Advisor: Dr. Yaya Sissoko)
- **Nicholas Perini:** “Improving Education and Infrastructure in Argentina and Ghana” (Advisor: Dr. Yaya Sissoko)
- **Nathan Zisk:** “Economic Development in Southern Africa: A Case Study of Botswana and Zimbabwe” (Advisor: Dr. Yaya Sissoko)



The session judges were **Dr. James J. Jozefowicz** and **Dr. Todd B. Potts**; the student moderator was **Lauren Wolosik**.

Session Title: Applied Economic Analysis

- **Christopher Dombrowski:** “Did Bigotry Affect the 2016 Primary Election?” (Advisor: Dr. James J. Jozefowicz)
- **Gabrielle Gentilcore:** “Poverty Across the Globe: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the Underlying Causes” (Advisor: Dr. James J. Jozefowicz)
- **Jordan Gwinn and Robert Schwartz:** “A Hand Much Bitten: A Panel Data Analysis of State Dependency on Federal Funds and Voting Behavior” (Advisor: Dr. James J. Jozefowicz)
- **Gina LaRocca and Rosemary Tropeano:** “Partisan Effects on Funds Allocated to Defense Spending in the Federal Budget” (Advisor: Dr. James J. Jozefowicz)



The session judges were **Dr. Stephanie M. Jozefowicz** and **Dr. Yaya Sissoko**; the student moderator was **Andrew Mendlowitz**.

Session Title: Critical Reflection on Society and Government

- **Benjamin Ellis:** “A New Civil Rights Movement: How to Build It and Why It Is Necessary for a Sustainable Society” (Advisor: Dr. Christopher R. Jeffords)

Session Title: Gender and Racial Disparities in Society

- **Lucas Mafrika:** “The Appalachian Gender Wage Gap” (Advisor: Dr. Brandon C. Vick)

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Department of Economics
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In This Issue:

- **“Keystone Kops” and Crime Theories**
- **Greetings from the Chair**
- **Scholarships: How You Can Help**
- **Faculty, Alumni, and Student Notes**
- **And More!**