
Altmann, David, ’84. Director of Decision Support Systems, CSG Systems, Omaha, Nebraska. Graduated with a masters degree from Purdue University in 1986. David is married to Sharon and has two daughters, Molly and Sarah, ages 8 and 4 respectively.


Bowers, Stacy, ’05; Working as a Research Associate for Chestnut Health Systems-Lighthouse Institute in Bloomington, Illinois.

Broshar, Scott, ’77. He and his wife, Wendy, live in Chelsea, Michigan.

Dunshee, Elizabeth, ’03. Liz is in her third year of law school at Iowa. She is spending the semester in Delaware working for a state Supreme Court Justice.

Edsill, Melissa, ’99. Staff Planner, Howard R. Green Company, consulting engineers. After graduation, worked as an Associate Planner and eventually the Economic Development Coordinator for the city of Waterloo. After leaving the city, had a brief stint in the private sector retail in St. Louis, Missouri. Returned to Iowa and is currently a staff planner with a consulting firm in Cedar Rapids. Recently graduated with an MBA from Upper Iowa University.

Gongol, Bill, ’05. Bill is in his first year in the Ph.D. program at Boston College.

Heany, Michael, ’93. Michael has finished his post-doctorate at Yale (after a PhD in public policy at the University of Chicago) and has accepted a tenure track position in the political science department at the University of Florida.

Larson, (Falor) Allison, ’89. Senior Communications Coordinator, Pioneer Hi Bred International Inc., Grimes, Iowa. Has worked for Pioneer for 14 years now—in customer service, inventory management, distribution, and communications. Currently writes speeches, newsletters, training materials and presentations plus develops videos and CD-Roms for various groups in the supply management division. She and her husband Steve have a 3 year old son, Sam, who keeps them very busy. Steve is currently working on his PhD. Allison obtained a master’s degree from Drake University in 1996 (Adult Education Training & Development major). They love to travel when they can find the time.

Lutz, Gregg, ’98. After graduation, Gregg worked as an Actuarial Analyst at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines. In 2002 he took a job at Nationwide in the Office of Investments in Columbus, Ohio. He is currently pursuing an MBA degree at The Ohio State University. Gregg and his wife, Chandra, live in Hilliard, Ohio, and have a son, Cole.

Miller, Mark, ’83. Agricultural Statistician, USDA National Ag Statistics Services, 1987-present. After trying two years of graduate studies at Iowa State, he took a position with the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (Remember “Trading Places” with Dan Akroyd and Eddie Murphy?) Mark worked in the Missouri and Ohio offices for five years each as an agricultural statistician. From 1998 to 2003 he was responsible for publishing the USDA’s weekly crop progress and conditions report. The last year and a half has been devoted to an Agricultural Land Values and Cash Rents estimating program.


Paar, Mike, ’76. Vice President, Government Sales, The HON Company. Mike has been in the contract furniture industry for more than 26 years and with The HON Company since 2001. He has managed The HON Company’s government sales for the past three years and has extensive experience working with the U.S. General Services Administration, as well as state and local governments. He was recently put in charge of the company’s education sales. Prior to joining The HON Company, Mike worked for Kimball Lodging Group, a division of Kimball International. He holds his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Northern Iowa, and is certified as a Master Hotel Supplier by the American Hotel & Lodging Association.

Mike has been on the Government Affairs Board for the Office Furniture Dealers Alliance the last 2 years. While on this board he has worked with dealers and other manufacturers to address various issues within the government marketplace.

Mike, has participated in several NeoCon® and Office Furniture Dealers Alliance panels over the years, and has sat on the Board of Exhibitors for many prominent hospitality trade shows.

Mike and his wife, Cathy, have five children.

Riley, Christopher, ’83. General Counsel at McLaughlin Gormley King Company in Edina, Minnesota.

Scudder, Jeff, ’03. Law School.

White, Barry, ’95. Securities Analyst for River Capital Advisors in Elmhurst, Illinois. Worked as a broker for American Express before going back to business school at the University of Iowa. Graduated Iowa’s MBA program in 2001 and began work with First Bank of Oak Park (FBOP Corporation) in August 2001. River Capital began investing in bonds for FBOP Corp and he started there in May 2002 and has been there since. Aside from his work, his interests and activities revolve around his wife, Dianna (UNI ’94) and their two children Sydney 4, and Olivia, 2.

ANOTHER FIELD FOR ECONOMISTS: THE FOOTBALL FIELD

You always hear me say that an economics major can do anything after graduation. Well, add yet another occupation to the list: NFL punter.

Derrick Frost, class of 2003, is currently the punter for the Washington Redskins of the National Football League. Derrick started his career with the Cleveland Browns and this year moved to Washington. Do you suppose that he visits with out-going Fed chair Alan Greenspan when he’s not practicing?
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ALUMNI-IN-RESIDENCE

The Alumni-in-Residence program has continued to be quite well received by our students. Started in 1992, the program brings an alum on campus for a day, usually in April, to visit with students and faculty. The alum shares post-graduate experiences with students by visiting classes and discussing what the real world is like and also how important undergraduate preparation is for a successful career.

A variety of events throughout the day provide the opportunity for the alum to share experiences and also offer insights into our program that we on the inside can not obtain. The day culminates with the Alumni-in-Residence assisting the department head in recognizing our top students at the annual Spring Recognition Banquet. We really enjoy the day and welcome the chance to hear the perspective of our graduates. If any graduates are interested in being an Alumni-in-Residence, please contact the department office.

Reflections from Melissa, ‘99

How has my Econ degree helped me?? I don't know where to start! I definitely think that the most important thing that my economics degree has taught me is how to think outside the box. I often times choose to illustrate my point in a public meeting or even an internal meeting, using the "assuming all things are held constant". Trust me, the ability to think in the abstract is not a right, it’s a gift!

In the property redevelopments that I work with, the battle we often face is how to assist a development so that the cost/benefit analysis of redeveloping a brownfields site is more favorable than building on a new greenfield site on the edge of town. The courses outside of the typical economics courses required for the Community Economic Development emphasis opened my eyes to other areas where I could pursue careers once I joined the "real world". I feel like I gained the best of both worlds - I was allowed to take other courses outside the business college and yet still earn a degree from the College of Business.

Another great aspect of the Community Economic Development emphasis was the required internship. This internship allowed me to be exposed to experience that wouldn't have necessarily been opened without this internship. My internship not only taught me so much, but it also allowed me to make contacts and gain experience that have helped me throughout my career. The knowledge gained from my internship was something that could not have been gained through a textbook; I was lucky to have the opportunity.

Trade my economics degree, never! Where else on campus can you see a professor so excited about the material he's teaching that he runs across the front of the room and jumps on chairs?? Who says that you have to go to class to sit through a boring lecture every session?

Reflections from Tom, ‘86

I graduated from UNI in 1986 majoring in Economics. I then moved to Chicago to pursue my interest in commodity trading at the Chicago Board of Trade. I feel the classes that I took through the Economic department provided a solid foundation for understanding markets. Examples would include the ability to correctly anticipate the direction of bond prices upon release government data such as unemployment reports or retail sales. I also found that understanding this information benefitted me in many areas of my personal life, such as choosing a mortgage for my home.

Not only have I been impressed with quality of education that I received from the Economic department, I am equally impressed with the continued commitment and support the department shows their alumni. After twenty years of commodity trading the economic department assisted me in a career change. I have recently started a new career in the field of banking as a Commercial Loaning Officer. Although I do not anticipate any further career changes, I am comforted knowing that my economics major will continue to provide me with good quality job opportunities.
How my economics major served me in my career and in life...

“...and so, in closing, that is the reason the XYZ product didn’t sell.” A tiny F-Dot appeared on my left shoulder, animatedly urging me to speak up—to save this presenter from his under-researched, over-simplified conclusions. “Kim, are you going to stand for that?! Didn’t I teach you better than that?!” (as we all know, most of F-Dot’s sentences tend to be exclamatory).

“Um, excuse me.” I said, timidly (for timid is my very nature) from the far end of the conference table. I cleared my throat, adjusted my pocket protector, and continued: “What other factors did you research? Did you run a multivariate regression analysis on all the possible factors to determine that was, in fact, the primary reason? And, do you know to what extent other factors may have contributed?” Snickers erupted around me. Accounting majors all, likely.

“Kim, what the hell are you muttering about this time? Last week, you went on a tear about determining the point at which ‘diminishing marginal returns’ impacts the continued viability of our process...what is wrong with you?” my colleague challenged me.

Alas, graduating with a degree in economics often has left me alone in a sea of clueless faces. Mention economics, and the vast majority will shiver with the memory of a macro-econ course gone awry. Heck, I’d even guess that only 20% of the population holds 80% of the love for the study of economics.

When I graduated (quite a few moons ago), I began searching for a job as an ‘economist.’ I was, quite frankly, taken aback when I realized that those jobs were few and far between...and most reigning economists, were surprised that a 22-year old girl would consider herself worthy of the title!

And, so, I found myself in a job that I considered both temporary and a far cry from my heart’s desire to work in my chosen field. Now several years later, still in the same profession--one that is typically staffed by industrial engineers--I’m proud to say that I’m an everyday practitioner of economics.

For instance, most businesses have heard the strong message that there’s money to be had by retaining customers. Companies, including mine, are developing processes to identify at-risk clients and roles to determine and address client frustrations. However, as with any emerging school of thought, we can often be a bit myopic. If the message is ‘client retention is good’, no one wants to hear that it might not always be good. In fact, it might sometimes just be too darn much effort for the potential return. I am in the midst of collecting data to identify the potential value of an at-risk client that is retained, and weigh it against the cost of that retention effort. For unsuccessful retention efforts, I’m gathering information regarding why clients leave—is it a demographic issue? And, which demographics? Is it a service issue? Which issues? Is it related to the size of the asset they held with us? Once we know this, we can target our efforts to those clients we can most successfully retain, and we can design a process that ensures costs don’t exceed the value of the effort. Of course, my economics background will provide the framework from which I’ll approach my investigation and the tools to depict my findings.

I’m grateful for my education in economics. Economics teaches a way of thinking...more than just a set of formulae or rules. I’ve used my economics background in ways I never expected. F-Dot, while I’ve never had to calculate the value of a life in the event of a wrongful death, I’ve certainly used the related thought processes to determine the potential value and costs of any given business idea.

And, now I must go. I believe I just heard someone use the concepts of ‘change in demand’ and ‘change in quantity demanded’ interchangeably...

Kim Berthusen, ‘87
Sr. Consultant
The Principal Financial Group
Des Moines, IA

Nicholas Sly, ‘04

Nick won the 2004 McElroy Trust Ph.D. Fellowship, making him the fifth UNI recipient in the history of the fellowship and the second UNI economics major to receive it. Nick will receive $10,000 a year for three years to attend Michigan State University for his Ph.D. in Economics. Nick is shown here with his mother, Ann Sears, his fiancee Jill Pedretti and UNI President Bob Koob.