

Spring 2019

The \$hort Run

Student News & Views from the Humboldt State Economics Department

Feature Article

Interview with Dr. Nicola Matthews!

Inside this issue:

Feature Article 1

TSR Staff 1

Glen Atkinson
contribution for
student success 2

Interviews of our
Award winner
recipients 3

Faculty updates 4

comic strip 4

TSR Staff

Editors– Michael Escobar

Faculty Advisor – Erick Eschker



Dr. Nicola Matthews

Can you tell me a bit about your background?

I am a Florida native who spent a large proportion of her early childhood at the beach. As I got older I was fortunate to attend a magnate high school concentrating in the arts. Along with the standard high school curriculum, I was able to take several classes in drawing, painting and sculpting. After attending a few different universities following high school, I was accepted to the School of Visual Arts in NYC. There I majored in fine arts with a focus in oil painting. Upon receiving my BFA, I decided to change career paths. I went on to receive a Master's in Economics and Finance from Buffalo State followed by a PhD in Economics from University of Missouri-Kansas City.

What brought you to teach at Humboldt State and how are you liking it?

I was interested in Humboldt State University and the economics department in particular for several reasons. In general, I am in agreement with HSU's commitment to the environment and its sustainability goals. I was also impressed with the emphasis and dedication to teaching excellence. The small classroom sizes, personal mentoring and the opportunity to collaborate with students also contributed to my decision. Finally, the department's multidisciplinary approach and its service learning were very appealing. Though still only a few months in, it has been a wonderful experience thus far. I have meet many great students already and the economic department has been remarkably welcoming and helpful in my transition.

Why did you choose to study and now teach economics?

I chose to study and teach economics because I saw the discipline as a way to help resolve some of our modern day problems. Economics is unique when compared to other social sciences in that it not only has far-reaching practicality by affecting each individual life concretely but it also contributes to personal belief systems. These narratives shape both our responses to events and our views on what we think is possible.

Do you have any advice for potential economics majors?

There are so many benefits to studying economics even apart from the different career opportunities it affords students. You will learn analytical skills, a variety of math skills including statistics, interpretative skills, modeling and sequential thinking. More than this though, economics will teach you how the modern world works and give you the tools to intelligently discuss the most pressing questions and issues of the day and hopefully contribute to the solutions.

Any advice for graduating seniors?

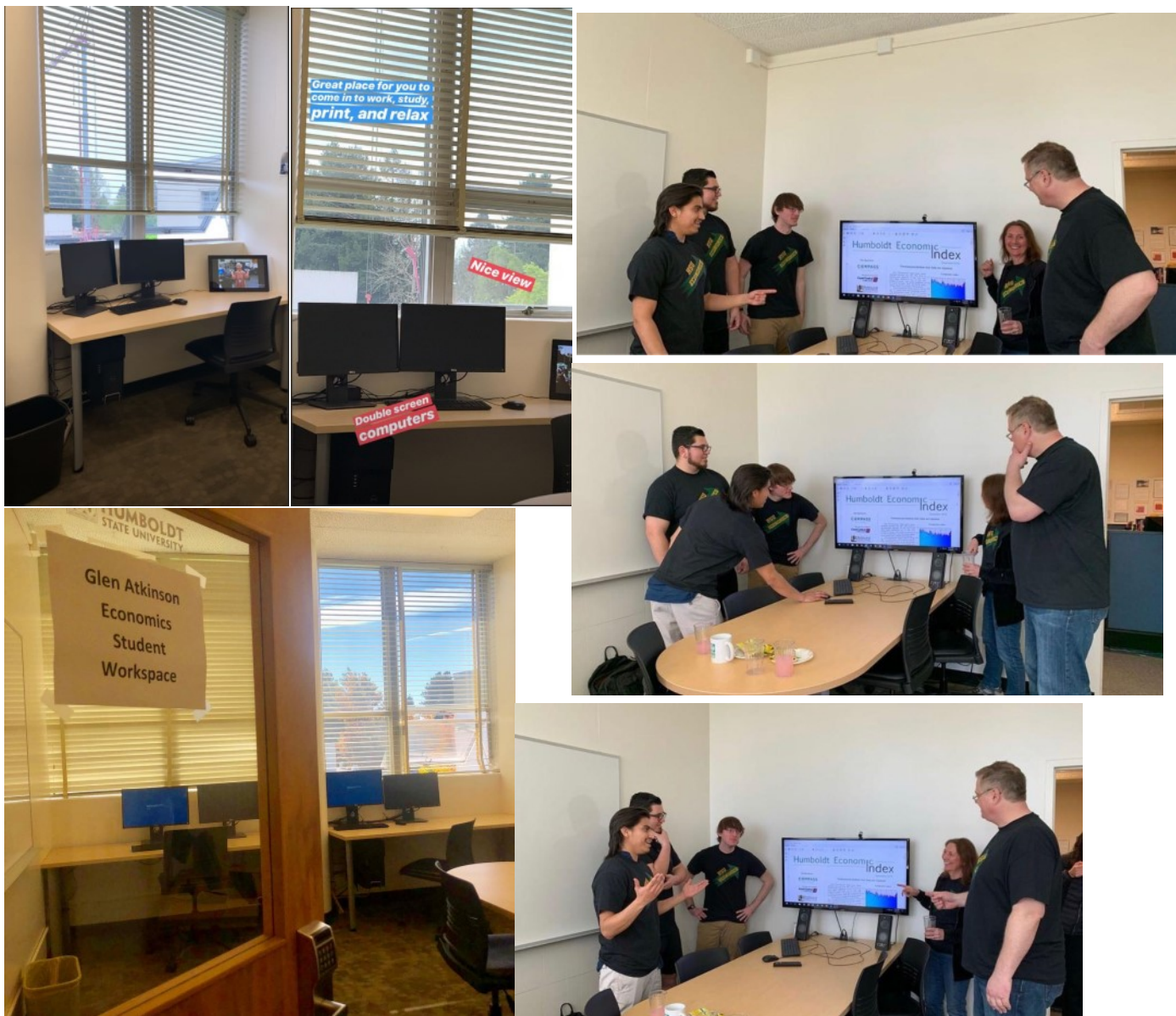
I would try to keep an open-mind, keep reading and learning and when and wherever possible utilize the available resources around you even if you don't think you need them.

Glen Atkinson Student Workspace

Alumnus Gift Creates Student Collaboration Room and Opportunities for Student Research

Recently, Glen Atkinson has given a very generous gift for student success. This includes hiring student researchers and others. Last fall, Glen's previous donation allowed for the renovation of our study space which is now the Atkinson Economics Room. This is a beautiful workspace with computers, table, and video conferencing capabilities. The workspace also includes a video monitor highlighting special past moments in the econ department. Econ students can also print for free & there are two enormous whiteboards ready for writing up math equations or supply/demand graphs.

The student workspace has been invaluable for many students as it allows an uncongested area to study especially during the busiest of times at the library. It is also the perfect place for collaboration and group work. Students also have access to their professors right next door.





Award Winner Recipients! **Academic Achievement Award**



2018-2019 Recipient Darby Lawrence



Darby Lawrence

1.) This award is a recognition for outstanding academic achievement in our department. Can you tell us about your time (and achievements) here at HSU thus far?

I have absolutely loved my time here at HSU. I met so many wonderful professors, students, staff members, and members of the local community in these past two years. I not only have grown as a student, but grown as a person and I am so grateful for the experiences that allowed for that to happen. I have gained a lot of hands-on experience working on my internship with the Humboldt Economic Index, my Service Learning Project with the City of Arcata, and the Humboldt CPI, which was my capstone project. In addition, I served as the Business and Economics Club president, a tutor for Economics at the Learning Center and the first Student Ambassador for the Economics Department. Each of these projects that I've worked on and positions I've held have given me so much. I am sad to go, but excited for the next chapter of my life.

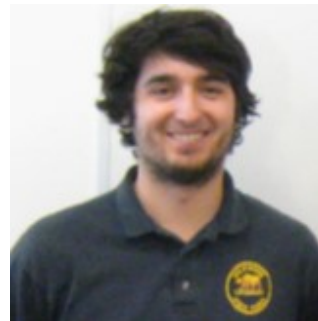
2.) How/why did you choose HSU and the Econ degree?

I chose HSU because I appreciated that their Econ program focused a lot on sustainability and that it had a tight knit Econ department. I loved the course options on their website and was excited to continue my academic career here at HSU. I chose Economics as my major because it is at the core of why societal structures are the way they are today. It provides so much context for what is happening around us in the world today. Not only that, it gives you a versatile and highly desirable skill set that employers love to see.

3.) What are your plans after graduation?

I want to get experience in the job market before applying to grad school. I am still deciding whether I want to go for a PhD or Masters in Economics, and getting some career experience will be great for helping inform that decision.

2018-2019 Recipient Carlos Rodgers



Carlos Rodgers

1.) This award is a recognition for outstanding academic achievement in our department. Can you tell us about your time (and achievements) here at HSU thus far?

I have been in college off and on for the last nine(!) years and have never done better academically than I have at HSU. The professors of the Econ department have been instrumental for me to be a successful student. Not only are the classes they teach interesting and relevant to the modern world but their commitment to professor-student access is second to none.

2.) How/why did you choose HSU and the Econ degree?

I chose HSU to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. The nature that surrounds us at HSU is crucial for de-stressing and re-charging the mind. The exercise from hiking and exploring is also key to staying healthy physically and mentally. I chose econ after switching from a physics degree about two years into college. I enjoy math, writing, puzzles and general problem solving which economics utilizes heavily. I also enjoy the social and political nature and implications of economics.

3.) What are your plans after graduation?

I plan on working as some kind of data analyst and eventually data scientist. I am interested in pulling meaning out of seemingly meaningless data to help people and their businesses make better decisions. I would eventually like to get a master's degree in statistics, computer science, data science or maybe an MBA.

Adam Smith Award Winner Recipient!



2018-2019 Recipient Michael Escobar

1.) This award is a recognition for outstanding achievement and professional promise in the field of Economics. Can you tell us about your time (and achievements) here at HSU thus far?

I came to HSU as a freshman living at the freshman dorms (The Hill!) and have matriculated well here. I told myself the instant I got here that I was going to try my hardest and see what happens. Turns out, hard work does pay off! I love HSU because of the abundant amount of opportunities. I impressed my Econ 210 professor, Kristen Luke and became her grader for 2 semesters. After that, I did Supplemental Instruction for Econ 210L which has been an amazing experience. I also graded for Nicola Matthews who is so awesome to talk to!!!! I've won the Adam Smith award twice now, and I thank the department for always believing in me and being such a positive reinforcement to my academic life.

2.) How/why did you choose HSU and the Econ degree?

I chose HSU because I wanted that rural experience of being surrounded by nature, farmlands, tranquility, and friendliness from people who actually take the time to know you. I actually started out as an English major but found the lack of concrete answers bothersome. So, I decided to look for a minor that was more quantitative and I chose Economics. I was so stunned with my success in Econ 210. Also, Kristen Luke was an awesome professor! I made the switch during advising week of that semester and never looked back!

3.) What are your plans after graduation?

I will be attending California Lutheran University's Masters of Science in Quantitative Economics program on a \$14,340 fellowship (the largest in CLU history) which includes a graduate assistantship position (G.A) at their forecasting center. I am so beyond excited to enter this one year program and I couldn't be happier with the package I've received. After this, I plan to work in the private sector as a data scientist or a quantitative modeler. I'd also like to settle down more and maybe get back into creative writing.

Bob R. Kittleson Scholarship Recipient!

2018-2019 Recipient Diana Naal

1.) This scholarship is awarded to a student who has demonstrated outstanding ability, especially relating to the study and understanding of the local economy and the issues of local economic growth. Can you explain to us why local economic growth is so important and what the local economy means to you?

As a low-income rural community there are many observable issues that Humboldt County is affected by and is thus an interesting initial point for observing developmental issues. Through my work with Jefferson Community Center and as I continue analysis under RREDEC, or the Redwood Region Economic Development Commission, I look forward to understanding the complex nature of the county and I hope to be able to assist in guiding Housing developments towards an optimal development strategy whose effects will be observable in the future. Economic development here, as I have observed, will be slow but steady and initially opposed but ultimately accepted.

2.) How/why did you choose HSU and the Econ degree?

My high school introductory course led me to economics since it quickly engaged me, genuinely interested me, and gave me a purpose. Observing the financial distress of my hometown in Southern California made me want to understand what was going on that lead areas of concentration for people of similar incomes. Not only will economics help me, but my knowledge will also serve the people around me as I plan to work on assisting in the sustainable economic development of a region as I have seen done here in Humboldt County.

3.) What are your plans after graduation?

I haven't planned for anything at this point, so I have been open to different career paths and still am as I enter my final year of college. As of the end of the 2019 spring semester, I am considering involvement in economic development to help areas in need with the knowledge I've gathered here at HSU.

Faculty Updates!

A look into what new things our professors have been up to this year!



Beth Wilson has been especially active with the International Studies program this year since the program director is on sabbatical. She taught INTL 410 (Global Issues Analysis) in the fall and is teaching INTL 490 (Senior Capstone) this spring. In addition, she co-directed the International Education Week (IEW) in February. This event drew more than 300 attendees and had 35 presentations and events, including faculty lectures, an award-winning keynote speaker, and the State Department's Diplomat in Residence. In Economics, Beth is teaching her service-learning course on sustainable rural economic development and she will step up as Chair of the Economics Department in the fall!!! How exciting!



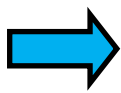
William Fisher worked on a grant received by Laurie Richmond to evaluate the oyster farms here at Humboldt bay. Professor Fisher helped to create a survey with 6 major oyster companies responding. They responded to questions regarding the number of oysters, whole oysters' vs juvenile oysters, and general info on the industry. Did you know that baby oysters start off as microscopic larvae, who knew! Will Fisher found out that Humboldt bay has a comparative advantage in baby oyster production as compared to other regions—because we have the technology to measure acidity of the bay really well. Because of climate change, ocean acidification is rising which prevents oysters from forming new shells. We grow oyster “seed” which is basically juvenile oysters; this is a multimillion dollar industry and if we can, we'd like to expand seed production in our area.

Will Fisher hopes to submit his research for publication this summer. It will be a descriptive analysis based on his survey results.



Nicola Matthews gave a talk on money, “Re-Abstracting Money,” or “Making Visible the Unknowns of Supposed Money Known-ness.” This talk was put on by the Economics department and was held at the UC banquet room on April 12. Nicola spoke about signs and how semiotics can be used to describe the nature of money.

Funny Economics Comic



HSU Econ alums! Stay connected through Facebook and LinkedIn. Join current students, faculty, and other econ alums by clicking "like" on [Facebook](#) or "connect" through [LinkedIn](#).



Facebook Like:
HSU Economics



Join:
Humboldt State
Economics Alumni

