



## Letter from the Chair

Hello and greetings, Students and Alumni!

We are keeping our tradition going here by having another letter from the chair! It's been an eventful year but nowhere near as busy as the past year. The Economics Department continues to work with the UCCS Economic Forum and helped prepare a report. Take a look [here](#). I served as the MC this year and perhaps my favorite part was getting a chance to talk to Mayor Yemi (pictured to the right).



This past year we also had our third annual mixer, and we hope to continue the trend. We included a group photo of the event (below). Thanks again to Chris Franquemont '14 and Isaac Hanes '21 for the alcohol funds that continue to allow us to hold the event!



In continuing with our outreach to faculty, alumni, and students, we held our annual department holiday party hosted at the Liefer-Espy-Craig household. Faculty and family members gathered at my place to celebrate the upcoming winter break. As promised last year, we also held a graduation party open to faculty and graduates as well as their families. Seniors take note: we will be having the get together again this year! Pictures of the holiday party and graduation party are found below.



Finally, for our current students we had our first ever Networking how to event where we learned from Etiquette Coach [Candace Smith](#) (wife of Nobel Laureate [Vernon Smith](#)). I can't even tell you how much I learned. I also left with hand cramps (ever tried holding your wine glass and food plate in one hand for an hour?). For our current students, be on the lookout for this event again this year. To whet your appetite, I'm including the blurb from last year (and because I enjoyed writing it so much!):



*Hey Students! Do you know how to hold food, drink, a conversation, and not to drop it all? Do you have a plan for how to network at work events. Regardless of your experience with socializing at professional events, we've got you covered. Renowned etiquette coach Candace Smith will be sharing her expertise so that you can feel confident at networking events. The event is at Hacienda Colorado Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Check in begins at 5:30 PM, event starting*

*at 6:00 PM sharp! Speaking of sharp, business casual or professional is highly recommended as local business leaders will also be in attendance ready to network with you.*

## Larry Eubanks, Retirement Dedication

By Glenn L. Furton

Despite being a professor, Larry Eubanks rarely lectured. Instead, he led an intellectual voyage, guiding each of us to discover ideas rather than depositing information into our heads. Courses like Constitution and the Economy and Economic Freedom reshaped my understanding of individual liberty and government power, and Larry's Socratic style sparked in me—and countless others—a lifelong curiosity about the nature of ideas. "We're here to discuss economic ideas," he'd remind us, and for Larry, these ideas were a matter of principle, not pretense. Questions in his classroom weren't just answered; they were dissected, reassembled, and handed back to us as puzzles worthy of pondering.



When class time proved too limited, a few of us began meeting at Larry's home every other Sunday, commuting over an hour to soak in more of his wisdom. Around his kitchen table—over pizza, snacks, and stacks of books on economics, history, and philosophy—Larry treated us as equals, welcoming our questions, yet challenging us all the while. Those Sunday sessions taught us more than any classroom, instilling a respect for ideas and a healthy balance of both curiosity and skepticism.

After graduating, Larry's influence on me lingered. Though I moved on to different jobs, I often found myself back at his kitchen table, seeking his insights. Eventually, I realized my interest in economics was no passing phase. When I broached the idea of graduate school, Larry's response was uncharacteristically blunt, warning me of the demands and sacrifices of academia. It was classic Larry—unvarnished, principled, and sincere. I considered his warning, but within the year, I had asked him for a letter of recommendation for graduate school.

Years passed, and we maintained contact. As I completed my PhD, we began collaborating more regularly, merging his long-held knowledge and wisdom in environmental economics with more recent developments I'd encountered in my training. Our regular conversations became a lifeline, especially during the pandemic when we met virtually twice a week. By then, Larry was not just a mentor; he was a friend, a trusted confidant, and a model of how to live by one's principles. We wrote together, argued over ideas, and ultimately forged a partnership, publishing a scholarly paper and collaborating on future projects. We still meet to discuss ideas every week.

For those lucky enough to have sat in Larry's classroom, this occasion doesn't just mark a professor's retirement—it's a moment to recognize a rare breed of educator who refused to compromise on truth, clarity, or intellectual honesty. Larry taught us to see the world through the lens of individualism and economic freedom, to recognize the power structures that shape our lives, and, most importantly, to think critically and live with integrity. I'm certain that others who have been similarly impacted by Larry will understand precisely what I mean. His retirement marks the end of an era, but his legacy lives on in each of us who was fortunate enough to learn from him. And for that, we are deeply, profoundly grateful.

As for me, it was both fate and a great fortune that placed me in his classroom nearly fifteen years ago—a chance encounter that would ultimately shape the course of my life. Since that day, Larry has been an unwavering mentor, never once denying me the chance to seek his insight or draw



from his hard-won wisdom. I can never repay the time he has given, the perspectives he has shared, or the profound, lasting influence he has had. And perhaps that is the truest mark of a mentor—one who gives so fully, so freely, leaving us forever grateful and fundamentally changed.

Thank you, Larry.  
Glenn L. Furton

It's been another amazing year! Thanks to all that attended the mixer and hope to see you all at future events!

Sincerely,



Joe Craig  
Associate Professor and Department Chair

## FACULTY

**Farida Khan** back from her sabbatical in May 2024 after spending four months in Bangladesh collecting information on water shortages and how they affect the livelihoods, wage work, and migration among indigenous populations in the north of the country. While in Asia, she visited Thailand, Sri Lanka, and South India and enjoyed small vacations in between work.

She and Josh Villanueva '22 presented their paper on the living conditions of garment workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh at the World Congress Conference of the Association of Social Economics (ASE) in Boston in June 2024. They are preparing it for submission to a journal this fall.

This year she is Vice President of the ASE and will rotate to President Elect next year. The Journal of Bangladesh Studies has contracted with a new publisher in Brill from the Netherlands. This will change her work as editor, and she now has a co-editor from UC-Berkeley who has helped the journal with a grant so that they can start 2025 with some degree of open access publishing with Brill.



**Anna Faria** welcomed Eloise to the world (pictured to the left) late October 22, 2024!

**Dale DeBoer** spent the last year on sabbatical. He reports that his sabbatical had two main goals: deepening his understanding of financial economics and developing open access educational materials. He spent time developing course materials that will incorporate his improved understanding in a manner appropriate for undergraduate students at both introductory and more advanced levels. He also gave several presentations focused on financial economics over the course of his sabbatical. I found the reception of these presentations to be quite positive, indicating that his attempt to synthesize these materials was successful.

He also reports he led his first 5.12B and is starting to have days he feels fully in the flow climbing.

**John Brock** took a total of 16 teacher/educators from 11 different states to the Baltics and Peru on two separate study tours. During the two-week Study Tour to the Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, we visited schools in the three countries, heard talks from Central Bank economists in each country, and visited several universities for lectures from their professors. I taught half-day teacher workshops in Vilnius and Tallinn. Photo from his dinner at a Lithuanian family's home during the "Pink Festival" in Vilnius to the right



**Dan Driscoll** Expanded his use of Open Educational Resources by adopting a new textbook for Introduction to Microeconomics. Revisions to that course included an online version of the course. He also began teaching Introduction to Macroeconomics in Spring to D20 high school students as part of Extended Studies Academic Outreach. He also Taught Economic Literacy Colorado course (Economics for Educators) over the summer with **Anna Faria**.

On a personal note, he graduated 2 kids (one college, one high school) in May, and celebrated his 25th wedding anniversary with a trip to Cancun.

**Dan Zuchegno** travelled went to South Africa last summer and went on safari and spent a week in Capetown. This provided him an opportunity to discover South African wine! Aside from his duties doing his radio show in Denver (of which **Joe Craig** was recently a guest), they started a second station in New Orleans and was nominated for a Josie music award for playing music from Independent artists. Not only does he talk economics, business and finance on the show, but I play jazz and blues music from independent musicians.



**Adam Evans** Added a fur baby to his Family! Her name is Zelda and she's 50 lbs. already at 5 months.

## ALUMINI and STUDENTS

**Tamara Trafton**, '04, is now a teaching professor of economics in the DU Dept. of Econ.

**Matt Van Essen**, '05, is a senior professor of economics at the Haslam College of Business at the University of Tennessee.

**Benjamin Westrich**, '19, is working on and will receive his Doctor of Philosophy – Ph.D. in Economics from the University of California, Irvine at the end of Spring 2025!

**AJ Hecker**, '24, reports: “I just wanted to reach out and thank you all for the wonderful education you've provided me with at UCCS. I've thoroughly enjoyed each and every one of your classes, and I'm excited to see what the future holds for my family and I going on from here! I've attached some photos of my twin girls to this email. They arrived on June 13, 2024, and are a little over 2 months old! One is named Kalisi Anastasia Rose, and the other is Jaycee Angelina Faie. It's been hard work, but so rewarding!”



**Sterling Kunau**, '24, opened a THIRD service Branch in Oregon for [D3/A-OK](#).

**Graeme Slack**, '23, started his master's in computer science this semester, I got a job as a radio frequency engineer, I bought a house, got a dog and bought a truck.

**Glenn Furton**, '13, Assistant Professor of Economics at MSU Denver Published a [paper](#) with our own **Larry Eubanks**.

**Lauren Bishop**, '23, is back at UCCS pursuing a Master of Public Administration. She also started working for El Paso County doing office management and helping customers acquire various permits and licenses. She also traveled to the Meow Wolf in Santa Fe, NM and finally got to visit Chicago.



**Elisia Collins**, '25, reports that “I'm officially a mom to a healthy baby boy as of July 25th of this year! Woohoo!!”



**Adele Blum** (née Griffin), '23, reports: Caden and I got married in July in Wisconsin and it was super fun. The work (of which there was wayyyy more than I was expecting) paid off, and we had the wedding on Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup>, before getting back in the Penske truck and driving to Boston. Caden started his program at Boston College in August, and I started the MBA program the first week of September.

The program is incredible! It takes machine learning and optimization to provide a robust education for the 80 of us. Everyone else in the program, and the faculty, are amazing! They are from all over the world, and it's been great to see how the different backgrounds play into people's views on economics. It's extremely fast paced, but going well so far! I included a picture of the people in my program just for fun!"



**Joanna Mathias**, '11, presented her work *Patterns in Student's Use of Transfer Information* at [SREE!](#)

**Robert Case**, '22, says: Life got busy after I graduated from UCCS. I was able to find a job as a recruiter (for IT, Finance, HR, Accounting, Executive, etc.) and I've been with my company since graduation in May of 2022. Recruiting is an interesting industry as sometimes it can be busy and sometimes not - regardless of our efforts.

Outside of work, I got married this year and also just recently bought a house! I met my wife at UCCS when she was a nursing student. I graduated before her while she went to Arapahoe Community College to get her RN. She then went back to UCCS for her final year and graduated in December of 2023 with her BSN. We got engaged in December of 2022 and we got married on June 1st of this year. We weren't anticipating doing it this soon, but a great opportunity opened up, so we bought our first house in Elizabeth and closed on it at the end of August.



**Declan Domyan**, '24, Started his new job as an Analyst at Aspirion.

**Olivia Ryan** (née Santonastaso), '24, started a new job with a nonprofit called ACE Scholarships and has been working with their program specialist and expense team. Her husband and she also completed the Snow Mountain Ranch Trail Festival 10k in Granby.

**Delzie Gamez**, '26, let me include this past accomplishment:



**Josh Hawkins**, '22, gave me a quick hit list:

- Commissioned into the United States Army as an Infantry Officer
- Graduated Airborne School and received orders to Vicenza Italy
- Conducted Airborne Operations in Italy, Germany, France, and North Macedonia
- Jumped into Normandy the same Dropzone utilized during D-Day
- Met my now Wife here in Italy
- Conducted large scale Joint Exercises with multiple NATO Partners to include- Italy, Germany, North Macedonia, France, Slovenia, and the Netherlands



**Kevin O'Brien**, '25, was awarded the Franka Endowed Fund for Economics Scholarship courtesy of a gift from Chris Franquemont, '14.

**Jack Carpenter**, '24, was a co-recipient of UCCS's 2024 LAS Outstanding Leader Award.

And last, but certainly not least, our Bruni scholarship winners for the 2023-2024 academic year were:

**Blake Smith** – Outstanding Student, Intro to Microeconomics, Fall 2023

**Sarah Bates** – Outstanding Student, Intro to Microeconomics, Fall 2023

**John Cinnamon** – Outstanding Student, Intro to Macroeconomics, Fall 2023

**Olivia Ryan** (née Santonastaso) - JV Bruni Outstanding Graduate in Economics, AY 2024