



AUBER

ASSOCIATION FOR UNIVERSITY BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

The AUBER newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Association for University Business and Economic Research.



64th Annual AUBER Conference

West Virginia University
Bureau of Business and Economic Research
October 16 - 19, 2010

The 64th Annual Association for University Business and Economic Research (AUBER) conference hosted by the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research will be held in Charleston, West Virginia, October 16-19, 2010.

Charleston, the state capitol, is a charming city with a relaxed atmosphere brimming with cultural, historic, and scenic attractions.

In the downtown village area, stroll the brick sidewalks and experience the flavor of old-time Charleston.

Enjoy unique shopping boutiques, large department stores, and a variety of restaurants with menus to please anyone's taste.

The conference will take place at the Embassy Suites Hotel, a AAA three-diamond hotel. Room rate of \$139 includes a spacious, two-room suite with a complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast, nightly Manager's Reception and airport transportation.

www.charlestonwv.com
www.embassysuitescharlestonwv.com



Bridge Day – New River Gorge
On this day, always the third Saturday in October, traffic is closed on the second largest and highest single span arch bridge.

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News from the President

Greetings from AUBER and best wishes for a happy 2010! Here's hoping that it will be better than 2009, which was a particularly difficult year for many of our members. The completed successful fall conference was hosted by the University of Austin at Texas. Turnout was down as you might expect, but the conference was able to earn a profit overall due to the efforts of Bruce Kellison and Coral Franke and the tremendous job that they did in assembling a large number of sponsorships.

Some of the footage from the fall conference is available on the AUBER Web site as part of AUBER TV. You can go there and view some of the keynote speeches and some clips and news from many of the sessions if you were unable to attend.

2009 also brought some sad news with the passing of Keith Schwer, former President of AUBER, and long-time director of the Center for Business and Economic Research, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Keith will be sadly missed by his family and his friends and colleagues in AUBER, where he was a wonderful leader and mentor to many of us over the years.

Plans are underway for the 2010 Fall conference which is going to be hosted by West Virginia University and take place in Charleston, West Virginia. The conference host and program directors are working very hard right now to put together a great program and we're looking forward to seeing you all, especially those of you that couldn't make it to Austin.

I'd also like to welcome Boise State University. Their Business Research & Economic Development Center is the newest member for AUBER. If you run into anyone from Boise State please give them a hardy AUBER welcome, and we look forward to them becoming an active member in our organization.



Sean Snaith
2009-2010
AUBER President

The University of Montana's Patrick Barkey has recently assumed the secretary/treasury role from Georgia Southern University and is responsible for publishing this newsletter. Also, Jen Whitfield at the University of West Florida has taken back the responsibility for the AUBER Web site and is working hard to smooth

out this process.

And, lastly, if you haven't been to the AUBER Web page, please pay it a visit. We have, as I mentioned, AUBER TV posted there. We also have some other initiatives underway to improve contact between AUBER and our members. There is an AUBER Facebook page and an AUBER Twitter account, and I would like to have you all become fans of the Facebook page and subscribe to the Twitter feed. We also have a list-serve that has been put together by The University of Montana.

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming conferences, and we look forward to staying in touch with you through the list-serve, Facebook, and Twitter accounts.

Thanks again for your support of AUBER.

Upcoming Events

The 44th Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Conference

Opportunities and Challenges in the Pacific Northwest Hinterlands

Missoula, Montana
Holiday Inn-Parkside
200 South Pattee Street
May 20-21, 2010

You are invited to join economists, analysts, students, and others alongside the Clark Fork River at the Holiday Inn-Parkside in Missoula, Montana.

The Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Conference will begin Thursday morning with Nigel Gault of Global Insight presenting the national outlook, followed by an economic outlook panel with forecasters from different states and provinces.

The conference theme is “Opportunities and Challenges in the Pacific Northwest Hinterlands.” We expect panel discussions and paper presentations in:

- energy
- tourism
- demographics
- health care
- trade
- resource use
- linkages with the urban core of the Pacific Northwest including British Columbia and Alberta.

The conference will end early Friday afternoon with the Tiebout Lecture by John Cromartie, a geographer with the USDA Economic Research Service.

**Registration is \$295 before May 1, 2010, or \$325 after April 30, 2010.
Register at www.pnrec.org or at www.bber.umt.edu**

Coming to..

Missoula!



DOES ANYONE DO AN ECONOMIC FORECAST FOR A RURAL AREA?

We are trying to create an economic forecast for a fairly rural part of the state. Unfortunately, the help-wanted ads are difficult to obtain. This region is not an MSA, so there is no record of manufacturing hours—and not too many manufacturers. Sales and use taxes are only provided yearly so resort and tourism is difficult to get a handle on. We are getting some data on electrical hookups and kilowatt hours, but many municipalities have their own public utility, and the quality and content of their bookkeeping is extremely variable. Any suggestions?

Please contact: Mary E. Edwards, Ph.D, Professor of Economics, St. Cloud State University. E-mail: meedwards@stcloudstate.edu.

SPONSORSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES

UHERO is in the process of evaluating our sponsorship and subscription packages. We are looking for examples of how other AUBER member groups around the country handle sponsorships and subscription services.

If your group uses sponsorships or subscriptions to support your work, please contact: Kimberly Burnett at the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization. E-mail: kburnett@hawaii.edu . Phone: 808.956.8068

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HIRING LOCALLY?

The University of South Alabama is about to start a study on why local businesses and workers should be favored on local projects and what benefits there are if such policy is adopted by the local community. This proposed policy is based on the assumption that local and outside businesses (and workers) are equally effective and the costs are the same.

If any of you have any information or publication on the subject, please contact: Semoon Chang at the University of South Alabama. Phone: 251.460.7388

The **AUBER** **CONNECTION**



WHAT TOPICS DO YOU WANT TO SEE COVERED IN THE 2010 AUBER RESEARCH SESSIONS?

We're making great progress on the program for the 2010 Conference. Stephen Smith, Carol Rogers, and Jen Whitfield have already started putting together some really good sessions on Web-based communication/publication. And we're talking to IMPLAN and Adobe about having them give presentations or sessions. We also have good ideas about research sessions, but need your input to make sure they are truly engaging and beneficial to attendees.

What are you focusing on in your research right now? What papers might you have just completed or have underway by next fall? Would you like to have assigned discussants? We could have a session or two where we require draft papers be submitted by a certain date so we could have discussants.

Is presenting a paper important when it comes to getting approval or funding for travel?

Please send your answers to these questions – and other thoughts you might have about research sessions – to Hart Hodges (hart.hodges@wwu.edu).

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESEARCH (CBER)

CBER seeks a dynamic and experienced forecaster and regional economist to become its next director. Housed in the College of Business, CBER is a state-mandated organization charged with: (1) making available academic expertise in research projects that assists in the development of the economy of Nevada, with special emphasis on the southern Nevada business community and (2) assisting local and state agencies and private-sector enterprises in economic and marketing data collection and analysis that contribute to the diversification and growth of the southern Nevada economy. The Center is highly visible in the Las Vegas community, hosting semiannual economic outlook conferences, conducting economic-impact studies, and performing a variety of policy-oriented research.

Submit a letter of interest, a detailed resume listing qualifications and experience, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least five professional references who may be contacted. Applicants should fully describe their qualifications and experience, with specific reference to each of the minimum and preferred qualifications because this is the information on which the initial review of materials will be based. The review of materials will begin February 19, 2010, and will continue until the position is filled. Materials should be addressed to Dean Paul Jarley, Search Committee Chair, and are to be submitted via online application at <https://hrsearch.unlv.edu>. For assistance with UNLV's online applicant portal, contact Jen Martens at (702) 895-2894 or hrsearch@unlv.edu.



New Data Tools Allow for In-Depth Analysis News from COPAFS

by Tom Witt, West Virginia University

AUBER is a member of the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS) with two representatives who attend the quarterly meetings. COPAFS' mission is to provide a dialog among its members and the federal statistical agencies. On behalf of its members, COPAFS' objectives are to:

- increase the level and scope of knowledge about developments affecting federal statistics;
- encourage discussion within member organizations to respond to important issues regarding federal statistics;
- bring the views of professional associations to influence decisions affecting federal statistical programs.

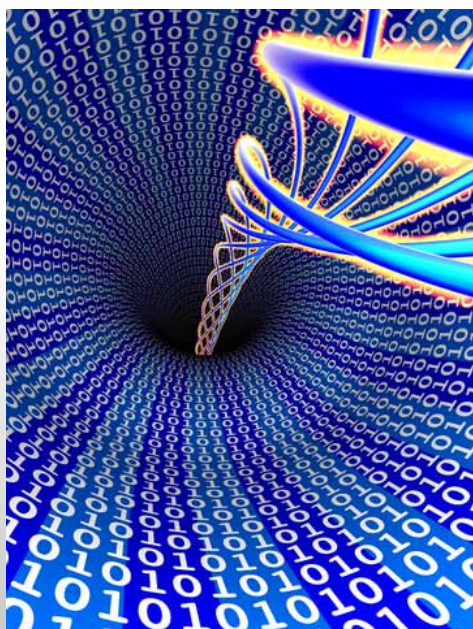
This year's AUBER representatives are William Shobe (University of Virginia) and Tom Witt (West Virginia University).

At the December 2009 quarterly meeting, several presentations might have been of interest to AUBER members. One presentation covered the Office of Management and Budget's Web site (Data.gov), which is designed to be a single portal to the vast number of databases and programs in federal government. There are three major data catalogs within the portal. The "raw" data catalog allows one to search for machine-readable data by subject area and file type. The tools data catalog allows one to search for hyperlinks to appropriate agency tools or agency Web sites. The geodata catalog allows one to search for geocoded data by subject area.

Another presentation discussed OnTheMap Version 4, which is the Census Bureau's online dynamic mapping and reporting tool. It allows one to examine the detailed dynamics of local labor markets. Among the types of data provided down to the census block level are residence of workers, work location of residents, cross-state commuting flows, and details by age, earnings, and industry. For AUBER units engaged in labor market studies, this is a very rich source of information.

A third presentation by Ron Jarmin, Census Bureau, reported on research undertaken on the question of whether small or large firms create jobs. Finally, Lauren Harris-Kojetin, National Center for Health Statistics, reported on the National Survey of Residential Care Facilities.

AUBER members who have federal statistical issues to raise with COPAFS should contact the AUBER representatives.





R. Keith Schwer 1943-2009

by Paul E. Polzin, University of Montana

University of Nevada at Las Vegas Center for Business and Economic Research Director Keith Schwer passed away on December 3, 2009, and AUBER lost one of its treasures. Here are just a few of the dimensions of his incredible life and career that touched us all.

Keith and AUBER

The record of Keith's enormous contributions to our organization is clear. Keith was a member of the Board from 1993 to 1997. In 1998 he entered the presidential track and became AUBER president for the 2000 Fall Meeting in Chicago. But the official record does not fully reflect Keith's contribution to AUBER. He was present and contributed at every Board meeting that I can remember throughout the 1990s and 2000s. When he wasn't serving at a Board member or officer, Keith served in

other capacities, such as the liaison with other organizations. Keith was one of the initial recipients of the AUBER Fellow award in 2004 and received the prestigious R. Thayne Robson Award in 2006.

Any of the dozens of center directors and research communicators who have joined AUBER in the last two decades will tell you that Keith Schwer was a giant in our organization. He was a year-round pillar of support for new and experienced AUBERites who faced tough decisions in their own organizations. His wisdom, and the generosity with which he shared it, was something that made AUBER so valuable to all of us.

Throughout his tenure, Keith persistently pressured AUBER to look outward and to broaden its horizons. As president Keith forged the initial relationship with NABE and thereby changed and strengthened our spring

meetings. Keith also reached out at established relationships with the Western Regional Science Association, the Western Economic Association, and the Western Social Science Association.

Keith and his UNLV colleagues hosted the 2002 AUBER Fall Meeting in Las Vegas. Only he could have arranged a helicopter trip down the Strip, stretch limos (with at least one featuring a hot tub) shuttling AUBERites to a reception, and a cocktail party overlooking Las Vegas. As always, the famous AUBER hospitality suite was going full blast at this meeting. Several AUBER stalwarts were still going strong at 3 a.m., and the next morning Keith awarded them "packing it in" awards for their endurance. (Receiving a partying award in Las Vegas was truly prestigious.)

Keith and fellow AUBER members Tom Witt, Rich Wobbekind, Tim Hogan and Rick Harper were



attending a NABE meeting at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. After the attack, Keith and others walked to the Morgan Stanley midtown headquarters, which was the location for NABE's rooftop reception the night before. Keith finally returned to Las Vegas days later after sharing a rental car with other 9/11 survivors.

Most long-time AUBER members have their own "Keith" stories. One former president recounts, "We were in New York and he said, 'I am going to take you to Heaven.' We walked for quite a long time and he took me to Carnegie Deli. I wanted to order a corn beef sandwich, but he insisted that I order a pastrami sandwich. You can imagine, those sandwiches are huge and I could only finish 1/3 of mine, but he finished all of his and the rest of mine. And then he said, 'Now you know why I wanted you to order a pastrami sandwich, I hate corn beef.'"

Keith as a Center Director

Keith was the Director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. The media looked first to him as the economic expert for Southern Nevada (or all Nevada, for that manner). The media trusted him and one reporter noted that even when he knew he was

ill, Keith gave out his home phone number and invited reporters to call him. Keith was inducted into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame in February 2010.

Within the Center, Keith's management style was to hire the best young economists he could find, nurture them for a few years, and then send them on their way. Among those he mentored are: Dan Rickman, now holds an endowed chair at Oklahoma State University; Ricardo Gazel, now with the World Bank; Bengte Evenson, now a consultant in California; Mary Riddle, now Associate Professor of Economics, UNLV and interim director of the Center; Constant Tra, now associate director of the Center.

When it came to frugality, Keith practiced what he preached. He criticized the public-sector use of resources for lunch at pricey restaurants. The center staff could not remember an instance where Keith invited them to lunch and charged it to UNLV.

Keith got tremendous energy from a last-minute preparation, and he was a night owl. This was especially true when preparing for the center's annual economic outlook conferences in December of each year. It was not unusual for him and rest of the center staff to still be working the night before and the morning of the conference.

Although he was always prepared, he waited until the last minute to load, aim, and charge.

Since 2000, Schwer served as the executive director of the Nevada KIDS COUNT project, one that he held dear to his heart. The primary purpose of Nevada KIDS COUNT is to be the authoritative source of key data about the status of children in Nevada.

Keith as a Regional Economist Colleague

Keith moved from Vermont to Nevada to become the center director in 1986. He lived through the Intermountain booms and busts as well as the gaming/tourist cycles of the late 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. He represented Nevada and actively participated in regional economic roundtables in Denver, San Francisco, Seattle and elsewhere. His expertise and analytical skills were not confined to reporting Nevada trends and forecasts. He was able to correctly identify and forecast trends and events that transcended individual cities or states and affected entire regions. When the roundtables were completed, most of the participants would adjourn to a local establishment. Keith was usually at the center of lively discussions of the day's events.



...Keith Schwer continued



Keith communicated with lay audiences. He explained complicated economic concepts and outcomes to the overflowing crowds at center's twice yearly economic outlook conferences. In addition, he traveled throughout the state to address everyone from state legislators to Rotary clubs.

Keith also strongly believed that researchers in his center must communicate with their colleagues

at professional meetings and in the academic journals. He not only attended economic meetings but he also presented papers at them. In addition, he had numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals.

While his career was important, Schwer was most proud of his wife, Kaye; his three daughters, Nancy, Amanda, and Michelle; his two sons in law, and his three grandchildren. In

recent years, Keith would bring one of his three grandchildren to D.C. for the AUBER-NABE spring meeting. In addition to the usual visits to the Capitol and Lincoln Memorial, the grandkids would accompany Keith to the receptions hosted by Swedish Embassy, Bloomberg Publications, and others.

His loss is difficult for all of us. But his wisdom and good deeds will be with us always.

WWW.AUBER.ORG

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