DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

Established in 1985, the Department of Economics Distinguished Alumnus award recognizes an alumnus or alumna whose professional achievements and cumulative contributions have brought personal distinction, enhanced the profession, improved the welfare of the general public, and brought honor to their alma mater.

The award is presented each June at the economics undergraduate graduation celebration, at which time the awardee delivers the commencement address. The selection committee, comprised of Department leadership and members of the Economics Visiting Committee, strive to distribute the award equally between academic and industry leaders.

The Department is proud to have many distinguished alumni among its thousands of graduates. Collectively, our alumni have had a profound impact in the public and private sectors of the state, the nation, and the world. Indeed, the following list includes leaders from all walks of life representing the breadth and depth of a liberal arts education in training future trailblazers.

2020 ECONOMICS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

Ramanan Laxminarayan
UW Economics PhD ‘99
Founder and Director, Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy (CDDEP)
Senior Research Scholar and Lecturer, Princeton Environmental Institute at Princeton University

PAST Awardees:

2019 Jeffrey Smith
UW Economics BA ’85
Paul T. Heyne Distinguished Chair in Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2018 Jeff Roe
UW Economics BA ’88
President and Chief Executive Officer at Premera Blue Cross

2017 Gita Gopinath,
UW Economics MA ’96
Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and Economics at Harvard University

2016 Timothy Jenkins,
UW Economics BA ’86
Co-Founder, Point B

2015 Dr. Richard Sutch
UW Economics BA ’63
Edward A. Dickson Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Economics University of California, Riverside and Berkeley

2014 Dr. George N. Carlson
UW Economics BA ’64
Former Director, Deloitte Tax LLP

2013 Dr. Suzanne Scotchmer (deceased)
UW Economics BA ’70
Professor of Economics, Law, and Public Policy, UC Berkeley

2012 Dr. Charles C. Cox, BA ’67
Senior Vice President, Compass Lexecon

2011 Dr. Curtis R. Taylor, BA ’86
Professor of Economics, Duke University

2010 Robert M. McKenna, BA ’85
Former Attorney General, Washington State

2009 Dr. Robert J. Willis, PhD ’71
Professor of Economics, University of Michigan

2008 Haruyuki Niimi (deceased), BA ’59
Chairman & President, Showa Shell Sekiyu, Tokyo

2007 Alan D. Frazier, BA ’75
Managing Partner, Frazier Healthcare

2006 Stanley Savage, BA ’67
Chairman, President, & CEO, The Commerce Bank
Founding member, Economics Visiting Committee

2005 Dr. Robert L. Joss, BA ’63
Former Dean, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University

2004, Kathy Gehrt (deceased), MA ’77, BA ’75
Executive, AT&T

2003 Dr. Thomas E. MaCurdy, BA ’73
Professor of Economics, Stanford University
2002 Bryan C. Cressey, BA ’72
President, Cressey & Co.

2001 Gary L. Waterman, MA ’68, BA ’65
President, Waterman Limited

2000 Stanley H. Barer, BA ’61, JD ’63
Chairman Emeritus, Saltchuk Resources Inc.

1999 Robert R. Richards, BA ’61
Founder, President, and CEO of The Commerce Bank

1998 Stanley G. Freimuth, BA ’70
Executive Officer, Ragen Mackenzie Group (retired)

1997 Hon. R. B. Hutchinson, BA ’63
Justice, Supreme Court of British Columbia

1996, Dr. Andrew F. Brimmer (deceased), MA ’51, BA ’50
Governor, U.S. Federal Reserve Board

1995 Hon. Helen Sommers, MA ’70, BA ’69
House Representative, Washington State Legislature

1994 Dr. Douglass C. North, Faculty
Professor of Economics, Nobel Prize in Economics

1993, J. Parker Sroufe, BA ’64
Chairman, WebSea Group

1992 Dr. Grover W. Ensley, BA ’37
United States Senate

1991 David Williams, BA ’64
Vice-chairman, Security Pacific Bank Washington

1990 Norman K. Maleng (deceased), BA ’60
Seattle City Prosecutor

1989 James O. York (deceased), MA ’50, BA ’49
Real Estate Developer

1988 H. Jon Runstad, BA ’65
Co-founder, Chairman & CEO, Wright Runstad and Co

1987 Bruce A. Nordstrom, BA ’55
Chairman, Nordstrom Inc. (retired)

1986 Robert J. Behnke (deceased), BA ’43
Chairman, R.E.B. Enterprises

1985 John D. Mangels, BA ’50
Former Chairman & CEO, Security Pacific Bank Washington

You may also be interested in our notable alumni.

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