



# Iowa State University Department of Economics

Friday, December 18, 2020 (Next newsletter January 8, 2021)

## **Announcements**

### **Heady Hall office hours for winter break**

Dec. 11, 2020 – Jan. 18, 2021: CLOSED. Heady Hall will be considered locked but occupied during this extended period. If you plan to work during this time, you will be able to enter the building with your access card.

### **Opening for Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

This position is now posted. It is open to all tenured associate or full professors at ISU. Here is the [link to the posting](#).

## **Department Highlights**

### **Wells Fargo grants \$500,000 to Iowa microfinance programs**

Iowa Community Capital (ICC) received a \$500,000 grant award from the Open for Business CDFI Program funded by Wells Fargo with a portion of the \$400 million in fees earned from processing Paycheck Protection Program loans related to COVID-19 pandemic emergency relief response last spring and summer.

### **Recent presentation, media contact by Zhang**

Wendong Zhang, assistant professor, made a presentation at the Iowa Learning Farms Webinar titled “The Cost and Benefits of Agricultural Water Conservation: An Economist’s Perspective” on Dec. 9.

### **Smith awarded Ahrenholz scholarship**

PhD student Timothy “Jake” Smith, is the recipient of the Cathryn Jacobson Ahrenholz Scholarship. This award recognizes a graduate student in the Department of Economics who has a strong record of academic achievement, shows exceptional promise, and has a dissertation interest in agriculture.

### **Zhang: Iowa land values stable in turbulent year**

According to the 2020 Iowa Land Values Survey, favorable interest rates, a strong demand for land, and substantial government payments helped stabilize Iowa’s farmland market in a year in which Iowa’s farmers faced the destructive onslaught of a derecho, significant uncertainties in US agricultural trade, and a pandemic that significantly altered market demand.

### **Climate change and Iowa: Swenson**

David Swenson, research scientist, was quoted in the Dec. 14 *Quad-City Times* story, “Climate change is making Iowa and Illinois hotter, wetter and more humid. Do you know what that means for your business?”

## **Meyer named new USDA chief economist**

Seth Meyer (MS economics) will be returning to the Department of Agriculture to assume the position of chief economist.

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