

Mentoring Women Economists

Bringing gender-related issues to the forefront of economics

Tuesday, March 8, 2022



REAGAN BAUGHMAN IS A HEALTH, LABOR AND PUBLIC POLICY ECONOMIST WITH THE PETER T. PAUL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS.

For Associate Professor of [Economics Reagan Baughman](#), there is pure joy in seeing the students she has mentored walk as they get their degree at commencement.

“Seeing them learn things they could not do when they started, and where they end up, is why I do what I do,” she says. “Their successes are my successes.”

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Baughman is a health, labor and public policy economist whose research interests span a range of topics including health insurance coverage patterns, economic determinants of child health, the evaluation of income support programs and the market for long-term care in the U.S. She enjoys teaching all students but takes pride in and recognizes the importance of mentoring female undergraduate and graduate students. The field of economics is predominantly a male field, with only 10% of full professors being women, so graduating more women into the profession is paramount.

Baughman had a female mentor herself, and while she acknowledges she also had great male mentors, “She was someone I could identify with easily and I was able to closely connect with her work. I'm not sure if that had to do with gender, but I could just identify with it and see what her life was like—I could see the path that she had gotten through for graduate school, onto getting a job.”

At Paul College, Baughman currently mentors three aspiring women economists—doctoral candidate Tam Nguyen and undergraduate honors students Emily Bolognino and Nicole Justras.

Nguyen’s primary paper is focused on Medicaid laws and how they impact the health of mothers who have C-sections and infants at birth.

Justras is looking at the effects of vocational training on wages of workers in Germany, while

Bolognino is exploring the effects of mandating in vitro fertilization coverage in health insurance policies on employment outcomes of women.

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Baughman says students, like many professors, are drawn to working on things they are passionate about and that they may feel personally connected to. Women economists may be moved to explore issues that differ from the interests of their male colleagues.

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— motherhood and work, female

health, child health, those sorts of things. Showing students, especially at the undergrad level, that economists do these things is so important. We have economists who do work in international currency markets, but we also have people like me who got into the field not to do that type of stuff, but to work on issues related to women and families.”

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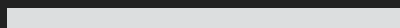
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