6-11-2007

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Acclaimed Sports Economist Dies at 62

06.11.2007 | Faculty  Larry Hadley, co-author of a much-publicized and controversial study that determined taxpayer dollars are not needed to build new Major League Baseball stadiums, died Saturday, June 9. He was 62.

Many have credited Hadley, a University of Dayton associate professor of economics, member of the editorial board of the Journal of Sports Economics and internationally known sports economist, for helping grow that discipline. He taught and conducted research at UD for 30 years.

Dan Marburger, an Arkansas State University economics professor, recalled a time when the Western Economics Association meeting lacked sessions on sports economics.

"There were only a small handful of us presenting papers at the time (1996). Since then, the sports econ sessions at the Westerns have ballooned to a dozen or so sessions. We have a sports economics journal, two textbooks and an international scholarly association," Marburger wrote on a sports economics list serve. "I question if any of those would have come to fruition without Larry's efforts to promote the economics of sports. He will be greatly missed."

In 2004, Hadley and UD colleague Marc Poitras wrote "Do Major League Baseball Stadiums Pay for Themselves?" The University of Chicago's Journal of Business published the article, which found "new ballparks probably do generate sufficient revenue to pay for themselves. At the very least, they should cover the lion's share of the cost."

About 70 media outlets nationwide picked up the Associated Press story about the study, including USA Today, The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and the Los Angeles Times. It also attracted support in columns and editorials in markets like Seattle, northern Virginia and Minneapolis, where stadium funding is a hot topic.

Other research about baseball player salaries and revenue sharing also attracted significant media attention.

Hadley joined the UD School of Business Administration faculty in 1977 and retired earlier this year. He also served as the economics department chair in the 1980s.

"Larry was just a magnificent colleague," said Elizabeth Gustafson, a UD assistant economics professor and one-time department chair who conducted research and edited books and papers with Hadley. "He was a very creative thinker in sports economics. He created our sports economics class and students really enjoyed it a lot."

Visitation will be 5-8 p.m. Thursday, June 14, at Routson Funeral Home in Kettering, Ohio. A funeral Mass will be at 10 a.m. Friday, June 15, at UD's Immaculate Conception Chapel.

For more information, contact Shawn Robinson at 937-229-3391.