This year, 18 members volunteered 1,260 hours, and directly impacted 840 people.

That’s an average of over 70 hours volunteered and 46 people impacted per member.

We’re a small group making a big difference.
Students Who Enjoy Economic Thinking (SWEET) is a forum created for students, staff, faculty, and community members to share their passion for economics. SWEET has branched into a discussion group, a scholarship program called SWEET Scholars, and a lecture series.

The lecture series is one of the most wide-reaching branches of SWEET. Over the course of six years, SWEET has hosted 31 speakers, from U.S. senators to economists, who have addressed economic issues facing Alaska and the nation.

This year, SWEET hosted Dr. Pablo Blesa, who lectured on the European debt crisis. Dr. Blesa is an expert in political relations between Europe and the Arab world. SWEET also hosted, Dr. Nikolai Wenzel, who spoke about the microfoundations of the financial crisis, and Dr. Ninos Pierre Malek, who presented “Economics in Your Face!: A no-nonsense guide to the economic way of thinking.”

SWEET students are also involved in a summer reading program. During the summer of 2012, students are reading Keynes: The Return of the Master by Robert Skidelsky and Capitalism and Freedom by Milton Friedman.

Testimonials from two guest speakers:

“I in December 2011, I traveled to the University of Alaska Fairbanks, in response to Professor Sherri Wall’s invitation. I gave two lectures on the microeconomic foundations of the current economic crisis in federal monetary and regulatory policy, along with an introduction to Austrian Business Cycle Theory. The questions from Professor Wall’s students illustrated that although they are in principles classes, they already have more than a solid understanding of basic economics.

I was fortunate to meet some of the students and graduates Professor Wall has mentored over the years. I was simply blown away–and humbled–by their enthusiasm, the understanding of the principles of a free society, and the depths of their readings. Professor Wall has put together a dynamic undergraduate program on free-market economics and the free society; I am pleased to have watched it grow over the years, and am thrilled to see she continues to bring in dynamic speakers to help motivate students.”

Dr. Nikolai G. Wenzel
Assistant Professor of Economics, Lutgert College of Business
Wallace and Marion Reemelin Chair in Free-Market Economics,
Hillsdale College (on leave 2011-2012)
SWEET Guest Speaker, Fall 2011

“It was my pleasure to speak to the economics students and faculty at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I had two opportunities to deliver a lecture entitled “Economics in Your Face: A No-Nonsense Guide to the Economic Way of Thinking.” My goal was to show how important economics is to everyday life and how fun and insightful economics can be. I received positive feedback from many students.

I also participated in a student blog for the SWEET club at UAF. We discussed a book by economics professor Robert Frank entitled The Darwin Economy. This gave me a chance to interact with Professor Wall’s students.

I enjoyed my trip to Alaska. I met many wonderful people: the students were extremely hospitable and Professor Sherri Wall was an outstanding host. It was great to see how many students are interested in economics and it’s clear that Professor Wall has done an excellent job in promoting the value of economics to her students. More importantly, it’s clear she is a positive influence and role model in her students’ lives and they have a deep respect for her. I hope I have the privilege of returning to speak again.”

Dr. Ninos Pierre Malek
Department of Economics, San Jose State University
Department of Economics, De Anza College
SWEET Guest Speaker, Spring 2012
SWEET Scholars

SWEET Scholars is an academic scholarship program that provides students with a forum to investigate economic theories and concepts. SWEET Scholars maintain a blog and meet weekly to discuss and explore economic literature. This past year alone, SWEET scholars have written over 65,000 words discussing their readings.

Fall Semester:

Students read a series of articles written by Russell Roberts.
Week 1: “Incentives Matter”
Week 2: “Getting the Most Out of Life: The Concept of Opportunity Cost”
Week 3: “The Reality of Markets”
Week 4: “Where Do Prices Come From?”
Week 7: “A Marvel of Cooperation: How Order Emerges without a Conscious Planner”
Week 8: “Napsternomics: What’s the Most Effective Way to Protect Intellectual Property?”
Week 9: “Pigs Don’t Fly: The Economic Way of Thinking about Politics”

Spring Semester:

The Darwin Economy: Liberty, Competition, and the Common Good
by Robert Franks, H.J. Louis Professor of Management and Professor of Economics, Cornell University

A few words from our SWEET Scholars:

“My first semester with SWEET was eye-opening and amazing. I was able to constructively hash out my ideas with a number of peers…I really enjoyed the discussions.”
—Jack Hughes-Hagman
Business Administration

“My SWEET Scholars has taught me, not only the value of economics, but the value of an ordered and sound debate…SWEET scholars has become a large impact on my life, and has encouraged me to continue to read and understand economics to improve my own dynamic thinking of the world.”
—Casey Peterson
Accounting

“SWEET is a wonderful discussion group. Without SWEET, I do not believe I would have developed as a refined perspective on economics as I have.”
—Khrisstian Michael Burns Shafer
Mathematics

“SWEET Scholars has hooked me on economics. I’ve taken the red pill and I can’t go back.”
—Adam Levy
Statistics
A message from SWEET President Garrett Evridge:

Student Who Enjoy Economic Thinking (SWEET) has been the most intellectually productive activity I have been involved in while at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Through discussion, reading, and blogging we attempt to understand economics on a deeper level. The group is comprised of students from many different disciplines and levels of understanding. This results in an environment where students are able to learn from one another. Consequently, at the end of our semester long program, everyone has had their knowledge increased or sharpened.

Community members often attend our meetings, adding an element of real-world applicability to the theories we discuss. In addition to our meetings during the school year, SWEET hosts a summer reading club. Members read one book a month and meet to discuss the material.

I am thankful for the chance to be involved and have benefited greatly from my time spent with this group. I look forward to next year’s discussions and am thankful for the funding that has made SWEET possible.

Thank you for your support!

See the SWEET Scholars in action, read their blog at uafsweet.blogspot.com.
Over 195,000 words and counting!