

Economy of Scale

Evolving from undergraduate to assistant professor, Danny Soques '10 proves that a little interest goes a long way *by Tricia Vance*

Like many college students, **Danny Soques '10** came to UNCW without any particular major in mind. But after taking an economics class to fulfill a general education requirement, everything added up.

"Dr. Schuhmann changed my way of thinking about economics," Soques said, referring to his professor of economics – and now colleague – Peter Schuhmann. "He opened my eyes to how broad the subject is."

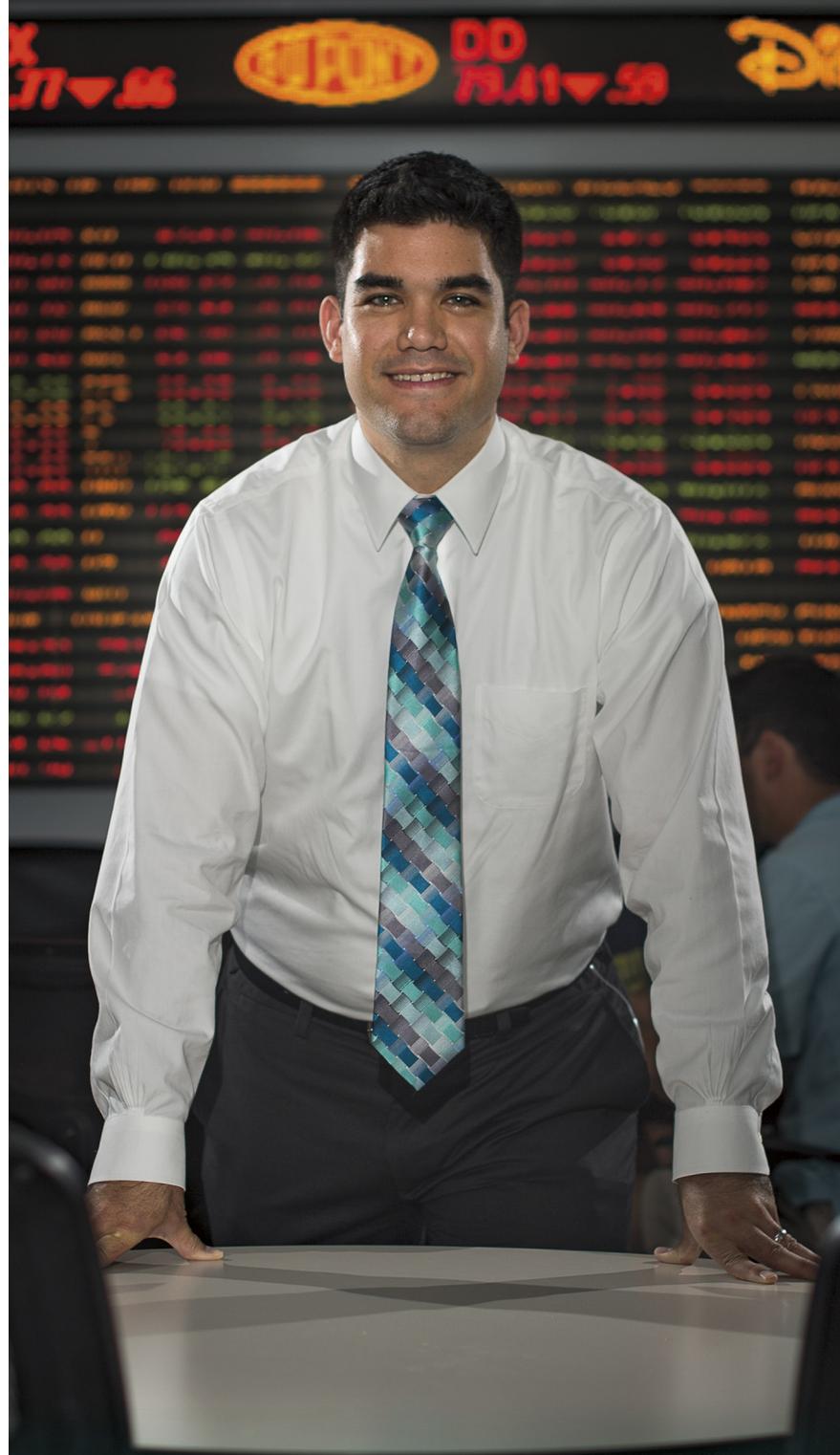
Though Soques chose to major in business administration, he pursued his master's degree and Ph.D. in economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Soques returned to UNCW in 2016 to join the faculty as an assistant professor of economics in the Department of Economics and Finance. "It was always my dream to come back here," he said. He now works alongside his former faculty mentors, including Tom Simpson, Executive in Residence at the Cameron School of Business and 30-year veteran and senior official of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C.

In fall 2009, Simpson formed UNCW's team to compete in the Fed Challenge. The competition requires college students to learn how the Federal Reserve system works and try their hand at preparing the type of economic forecasts that help drive decisions on interest rates. Competitors hone project management and presentation skills that will serve them in business while developing a deeper understanding of the role of the Federal Reserve and its impact on the economy.

As a competitor on that first UNCW team, Soques found the Fed Challenge to be a valuable experience. "I could apply what I was learning in macroeconomics as it would be used in the business and banking worlds," he said. "It is the thing I got the most out of as an undergraduate."

Soques now sings the praises of the Fed Challenge to his own students. He coaches the UNCW team with Simpson and associate professor of economics Adam Jones, and believes participating in the challenge as an undergraduate informs his coaching.

He enjoys when his students begin to see economics as a fascinating field, not merely a career. "It's rewarding to see them become passionate about economics and see its usefulness as more than a paycheck." 🌿



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