

Inside RFF

Espinosa, Economist and AmEx VP, Joins RFF Board

J. Andres Espinosa, vice president and international head of consumer lending for American Express, was elected to the RFF Board of Directors in April. Espinosa has a background in environmental economics, international trade, and statistics, but the initial focus of his education was dairy science.

A native of Ecuador, Espinosa studied tropical agriculture and earned a degree as an agronomist from the Pan-American School of Agriculture in Honduras before coming to the United States. He majored in animal science and industry at Kansas State

University, where he also earned his master's degree in agricultural economics. A deepening interest in how markets work led him to the Ph.D. economics program at North Carolina State University.

Espinosa's dissertation research, on a general equilibrium model of air pollution in the European Community, was supported by an RFF Joseph L. Fisher dissertation fellowship, awarded in 1993. Named in honor of the president of RFF from 1959 to 1974, this fellowship supports doctoral dissertation research on issues related to the environment, natural resources, or energy.

His Ph.D. thesis "transformed environmental economists' understanding of the subtle interactions between international trade policies and environmental amenities," says V. Kerry Smith, University Distinguished Professor, agricultural and resource economics, and director of the Center for Environmental and Resource Economics Policy at NC State and an RFF University Fellow.

Espinosa's skills in innovative analysis made him valuable to American Express, where he began his career as an econometrician in risk management. Several steps later, he was promoted to vice president in International Risk and Information Management for Latin America and Canada, then vice president and regional marketing head in the International Consumer and Small Business Services Group; he was named to his current position in that division in January.

"The same concepts used to describe how people make choices outside the market," observes Smith, "can be used to understand their prospects for making disciplined financial decisions."

Having been a beneficiary of RFF, Espinosa says, "I feel a strong connection to the organization and want to give something back. And being a board member will help me stay informed about RFF's important research on important issues." ■



RFF sponsors a summer internship program that brings students from across the country to work with the research staff on ongoing projects or to assist them in developing new areas of research and analysis. RFF also offers an internship in the name of Dr. Walter O. Spofford, Jr., who helped establish RFF's China program. Pictured here are some of this year's interns:

Bottom row, from left: Francisco Aguilar, Bidisha Lahiri, Honglin Li, and Hui He (Spofford).

Middle row, from left: Brock Howell, Jennifer Hanson, Eleanor McCormick, RFF Acting President Ted Hand, and Yi Jiang.

Top row, from left: Mike Springborn, Momodou Fanneh, Madeleine Baker, and Erik Johnson.

Not pictured: Jonathan Basile, Indivar Dutta-Gupta, Elizabeth Leavy, Cameron Speir, and Sarah Wise.

Resource Links

Interested in learning more about the feature stories in this issue? The following links will take you to special pages on the RFF website, where you will find additional resources:

- www.rff.org/shallwegatherroundthecampfire
- www.rff.org/ecosystems-services-and-governments-accountability
- www.rff.org/forever-wild-but-dowecare
- www.rff.org/taking-risks-on-the-space-frontier

Also, RFF events are videotaped—you can turn to www.rff.org/rff/Events/index.cfm for more information.