

## A Brief History of the New York State Economics Association

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### Abstract

The New State Economics Association (NYSEA) is among the oldest learned societies of academics and professionals interested in the economics discipline. However, the beginning date of 1948 could not be verified by the archives and documents of the association. The association's records prior to 1968 are practically nonexistent. Members of the organization with knowledge or experience with the period before 1968 are either retired or dead.

This paper establishes the historical timeline of organization from its creation in 1948 to the present. The author reconstructs the history of the New York State Economics Association before remaining documents or witnesses to the association's development are lost to the ravages of time. This is accomplished through conversations and communications with former members of the Association and efforts to locate any documents pertaining to the New York State Economics Association.

The results of inquiries with former members and officers trace operation of the organization to the 1950s. The discovery of a copy of the first volume of *The Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association* (December 1968) in the library of SUNY Geneseo, which was missing from the archives of the NYSEA, provides the most definitive documentation of the organization's origins. It contains an article by former president Sanford Gordon who chronicles the NYSEA's history from 1948 to 1968. This combination of sources permits the construction of a fairly complete historical record of the association.

The investigation also documents critical points in the organization's development, including incorporation, its journal, and entrance into the digital age.

### Background

The New York State Economics Association has long maintained that it began in 1948, making it one of the oldest learned societies of academics and professionals devoted to the economics discipline. Table 1 provides founding years for selected economic associations. Reference to 1948 is stated in organization's logo, in the *New York Economic Review*, and in its other public releases and publications. However, this author has made inquiries over the course of a more than a decade to members and long-time members about the origins of the organization. No strong evidence was ever

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offered or could be found to verify the beginning date of 1948. In fact, not even a scintilla of evidence was found. The 1948 founding could not be verified by the archives or documents of the association. The association’s records prior to 1968 are practically nonexistent. Members of the organization with knowledge or experience with the period before 1968 are either retired or dead.

<b>Table 1 Selected Early Economic Associations</b>	
<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Year Founded</b>
American Economic Association	1885
Western Economic Association	1922
Southern Economic Association	1922
Econometric Society	1930
Midwest Economic Association	1934
Economic History Association	1940
Industrial Relations Research Association (became Labor and Employment Relations Association in 2005)	1947
<b><i>New York State Economics Association (forerunner Central New York Economics Conference became NYSEA in 1960)</i></b>	<b>1948</b>
National Association of Business Economists	1959

The records for the period 1968 until 1977 are better, but incomplete. Recordkeeping became much more consistent after incorporation of the NYSEA in 1978. With no artifacts in the headquarters’ records, the greatest challenge to chronicling the history of NYSEA was filling the vacuum of 1948-68.

**Reconstructing the 1948-1968 Period**

In attempting to uncover the origins of the NYSEA, several people with lengthy affiliations to the organization were contacted. All had been officers or past presidents. They were: Alfred Lubell, Robert B. Carson, A. Dale Tussing, Sanford Gordon, David Martin, Edward Beck, William P. O’Dea, and Barbara Howard. The age distribution of the group was the determining factor in how much information each subject could provide. Carson, Gordon and Tussing were initially the only ones with information concerning the period prior to 1968.

Robert Carson could recall his professors, John Gambs (Hamilton College) and Melvin Eggers (Syracuse University) being involved in the organization. Carson believed a link existed between the Joint Council on Economic Education (1949) and the activities of the NYSEA or a forerunner organization that he thought might have been called the Western New York Economic Association.

Dale Tussing also believed there had been a Western New York Economic Association and that “Western” being in the name had some bearing on resources received in connection with the economics education mission. Tussing’s memory is second-hand information from Melvin Eggers who spoke with Tussing about the organization when he was a graduate student. Seemingly innocent at the time when Tussing’s recollection was elicited was his statement: “There may have also been a Central New York Economics Association in the mix at one time.”

Sanford Gordon recalled presenting a paper at the NYSEA conference at Syracuse University in the late 1950s and emphatically rejected that NYSEA was called “west” or “western” at that time. He also remembered Louis Salkever of SUNY New Paltz and later SUNY Albany serving as president, but could not pinpoint the year. Moreover, throughout the time of Gordon’s participation, meetings were held in conjunction with the New York State Council on Economic Education (NYSCEE). Gordon said J. Woodrow Sayre was the director of NYSCEE in the late 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>1</sup> The author’s exchanges with Gordon involved trying to determine if Virgil Crisafulli was president from 1968-69 or if it was Gordon instead or if Gordon was president before Crisafulli. Although Gordon could recall things that lent support to the existence of the organization, perhaps as early as the 1950s, he no longer had any documents pertaining to the organization in his possession.

### ***An Old Photograph***

Gordon has in his possession an old photograph of the meeting when he assumed the presidency. The photograph he sent to the author is presented in Exhibit 1 and the date stamp at the upper right indicates when it was received. The caption he typed below the photograph is self explanatory. Sanford Gordon is on the right in the photograph. Is it Virgil Crisafulli or Louis Salkever who appears in the photo at the far left? Robert Carson inspected the photo. He said it is definitely not Louis Salkever and believed it could be Frank Farnsworth of Colgate University. However, the author is convinced that it is indeed Virgil Crisafulli after examining photos posted online by Utica College<sup>2</sup>. Gordon has since confirmed as well that it is Virgil Crisafulli on the far left in the photograph. Hence, Gordon is the outgoing president and Crisafulli is the incoming president in 1968. The identity of the prize-winning visiting scholar at SUNY Binghamton is undetermined at this time.

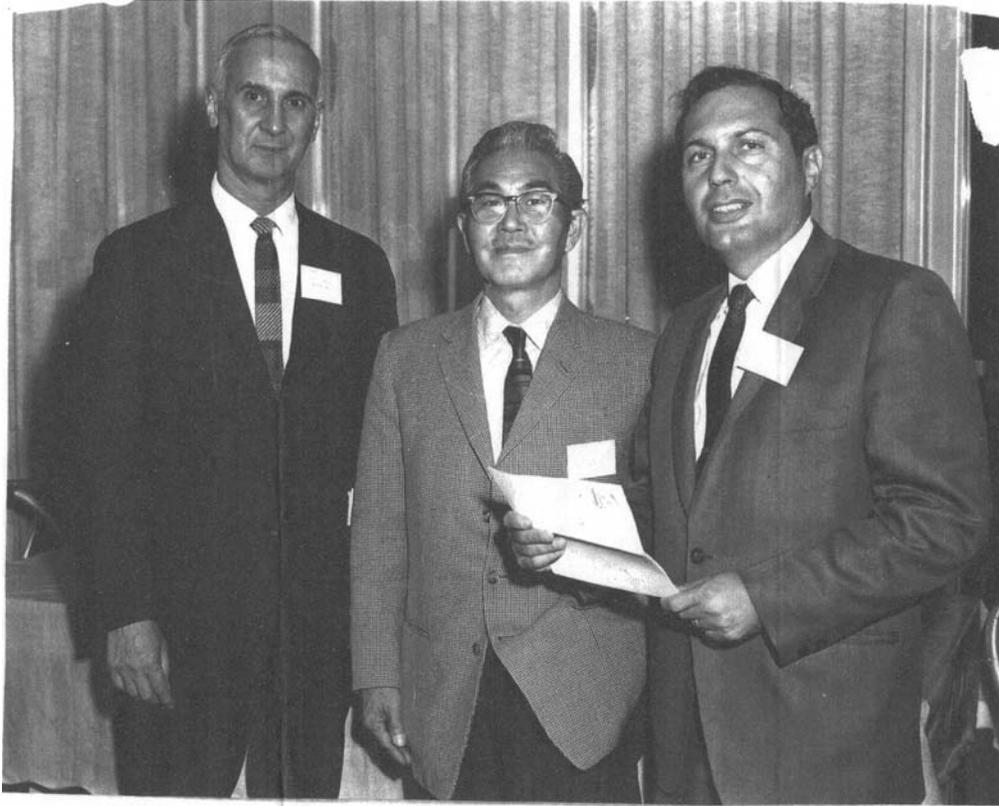
Gordon’s hand written note to the right side admits uncertainty on his part. The photo is an interesting artifact of the NYSEA from 1968.

### ***Where Was Volume One?***

Unfortunately, the first volume of the published *Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association* was missing from the headquarters’ records and archives maintained and left by Alfred Lubell (emeritus professor of economics, SUNY Oneonta). Volume 1 was also not in the archive of proceedings and journals held by William O’Dea, editor of the *New York Economic Review*. The Milne Library at SUNY Oneonta, long thought to have a complete collection, did not have volume 1 of the *Proceedings*.

At this point, finding a copy of the first *Proceedings* would complete the NYSEA collection and possibly settle the matter of when Gordon was president because officers of the organization were printed in every other known NYSEA publication. The relatively new digital development of SUNY Connect allows searching the collections of all SUNY libraries, which revealed that SUNY Geneseo and SUNY Institute of Technology had copies of the first *Proceedings* in their libraries. Barbara

**Exhibit 1: Photograph Provided by Sanford Gordon Presumed to Be from 1968**



DEC 28 2009

*I am  
confused  
Sandy*

Taken when I became President of the New York State Economics Association. To the far left is the outgoing president and in the center was the Distinguished Professor of Economics and winner of the Einstein Chair at SUNY Binghamton.

Howard, an assistant dean and faculty member in the School of Business at Geneseo whose long association with NYSEA included serving on the board of directors was contacted with a request for her to copy the volume.<sup>3</sup> Professor Howard persuaded the Milne Library of Geneseo to donate the first *Proceedings* to the NYSEA.

***Dawn of the Dead Binding, Birth of the Organization***

Upon arrival at SUNY Oneonta, it was evident that the plastic binding from 1968 had succumbed to dry rot and chemical degradation. The volume was removed from the shipping envelope by Dawn Tompkins, secretary to the Division of Economics and Business and clerical support to NYSEA on a contract basis for many years. Ms. Tompkins who had also been a former library employee at the Milne Library of SUNY Oneonta was no stranger to artifacts in long-term storage. She found the binding shattered into small pieces and dust. The volume that arrived on the author's desk was secured by a binder clamp. Despite the destruction of the binding, the front and back covers and all the pages between were in very good condition.

The front cover carried the library seal of the Milne Library, which was initially surprising and confusing because Milne is the name of the libraries both at SUNY Oneonta and SUNY Geneseo. Having established that the volume was not an unreturned inter-library loan from 40 years earlier, the first few pages would not only eliminate the ambiguity surrounding the presidency in 1968, they would establish the beginning of the NYSEA right down to the exact date and day of the week.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Sanford Gordon's Thumbnail Sketch of the New York State Economics Association***

*The Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association* in April 1968 led with Sanford D. Gordon's "Thumbnail Sketch of the New York State Economics Association." Gordon had intended to write a "brief history," but settled for a shorter "thumbnail sketch."

Gordon contacted living persons whose experiences with the NYSEA were of sufficient duration and depth with the organization throughout its existence. They were Arnold Tolles of the School of Industrial Relations at Cornell University, Melvin Eggers, Chairman of the Economics Department at Syracuse University, and Laurence Leamer, Social Science Chairman at SUNY Binghamton. Gordon infers that a longer piece consistent with a brief history was sacrificed in favor of the thumbnail sketch because of conflicting testimony, limited documentation, and inconsistent interpretations of past events.<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, Gordon pinpoints the date and location for the beginning of the NYSEA to Saturday, May 15, 1948, at Wells College in Aurora, New York. Professor Mabel Magee of Wells College (an all female college at the time) hosted the meetings. Professor Wilfred Cook of Colgate University (an all male college at the time) presided over the meeting. The group was to be known as the Central New York Economics Conference, which Gordon identifies as the predecessor to the NYSEA. Dale Tussing's recollection of the involvement of a "Central New York Economics Association" had found corroboration.

The Central New York Economics Conference held meetings from 1948 to 1956 on the campus of the president of the organization for the particular year. Gordon found that in at least three of those years meetings were held in both fall and spring. Locations included Syracuse University, Cornell University, Harpur College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Hartwick College, Wells College and Colgate University.

Gordon recounts the format of the conference agendas, types of papers and participants during the period. A meeting scheduled for Niagara University in 1957 was not held. Gordon could not find records of meetings for 1958 and 1959.

### ***Transition to the New York State Economics Association***

The organization held its first meeting under the name of the New York State Economics Association at Syracuse University in 1960. Gordon reckoned that: "The new organization must logically be considered as a revival of the old—with a new title."<sup>6</sup> He arrives at this conclusion largely

by comparing the key figures of the Central New York Economics Conference with those of the new organization and by discounting the unexplained cancellation of the Central New York Economics Conference in 1957 and the absence of records for meetings in 1958 and 1959. However, the use of the word “revival” implies, perhaps accurately, that something had gone awry with planning and logistics or that other unexpected events had led to the cancellation of the 1957 meeting. An ensuing breakdown in continuity may in fact have occurred and it is not known whether meetings were held in 1958 and 1959. Additionally, Gordon is persuaded by the central role played by Arnold Tolles in the formation and operation of each organization.

The author matched all the key individuals identified by Gordon as having been involved in either organization from the time period 1948 to approximately 1963. The results are presented in Table 2. Clearly, Arnold Tolles, Melvin Eggers, Lester Blum, Archibald Mclsaac, and John Gambs were common leading figures in the creation of both organizations. It also seems very plausible that the new organization’s title was a re-branding effort to expand its territory to all of New York rather than a liberally defined swath of territory running through central New York from the Canadian to the Pennsylvania borders.

One cannot discern from Gordon’s account who was president in each year from 1960 to 1963. However, the process of elimination led the author to converge on three of the individuals reported in Table 2: William Hoskings (Colgate University), Laurence Abbott (Union College), and Archibald Mclsaac (Syracuse University). It probably would have seemed a safe bet that Mclsaac was president in 1960, given that the meeting was at Syracuse. However, Dale Tussing thought that Mclsaac might have died in 1960. The *American Economic Review* in fact reported that Mclsaac died on January 12, 1960.<sup>7</sup>

Gordon has the NYSEA taking shape in the fall of 1960. Clearly, Mclsaac was dead by then and his purported role in forming the new organization has to be regarded as tenuous. However, the presidential leadership of the NYSEA from 1964 forward appears to be now almost completely established based upon Gordon’s article and documents in the NYSEA records from 1968 forward.

Recall that Table 2 is derived from Gordon’s account. Martin recalls that Tolles and Mclsaac were key to the Central New York Economic Conference. Mclsaac dies and Eggers becomes chair of the Economics Department at Syracuse University (after Jesse Burkhead’s short stint as acting chair). Martin regards Tolles, Eggers, and Leamer as important to the development of the NYSEA in 1960. He also notes the involvement of Morris Copeland (Cornell University), William Dunkman (University of Rochester), and Edward Holstein (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) in the early years.

“Woody” Sayre bears influence upon the organization under its new name because he could ply the monies of the economic education movement in support of the organization. According to Martin, “Sayre had a printing press, a budget and a secretary.” Those were rare and enviable commodities in those days. Both Carson and Martin recall a routine of the economic education participants holding a

**Table 2 Comparison of Key Participants in the Central New York Conference and the New York State Economics Association Using Sanford Gordon's Historical Account**

Central New York Economics Conference		New York State Economics Association	
Participant	Affiliation	Participant	Affiliation
 Arnold Tolles	Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations	Arnold Tolles	Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations
 Melvin Eggers	Syracuse University	Melvin Eggers	Syracuse University
 Lester Blum	Colgate University	Lester Blum	Colgate University
 Archibald McIsaac	Syracuse University	Archibald McIsaac	Syracuse University
 John Gambs	Hamilton College	John Gambs	Hamilton College
G. Ralph Smith	Harpur College		
Mabel Magee	Wells College		
Jack Taylor	University of Rochester		
Wilfred Crook	Colgate University		
William Kessler	Colgate University		
		J. Woodrow Sayre	Syracuse University
		William Hoskings	Hobart and William Smith Colleges
		Laurence Abbott	Union College
		Laurence Leamer	Harpur College/SUNY Binghamton
		Louis Salkever	SUNY New Paltz and SUNY Albany
		Frank Farnsworth	Colgate University

Friday meeting that was financed through Sayre's resources with the hope that the conventioners would stay overnight and participate in the paper presentations and roundtable sessions the next day. Martin's reflection upon circumstances of the time was that the economic education movement was the stronger force in the organization—a sentiment echoed by Carson. The New York State Council on Economic Education paid the conference expenses for an economist from each institution affiliated with the Council.<sup>8</sup>

However, in Martin's estimation, "Nothing much happens until Sandy Gordon." Gordon advances and widens the NYSEA's profile by leveraging the resources of the economic education movement and aggressively seeking private sponsors. The production of the first proceedings is tangible evidence.

### ***First Constitution***

The organization's first constitution was ratified at the 21<sup>st</sup> annual meeting at SUNY Brockport on April 18, 1970. The first constitution was effectively superseded by the corporate by-laws in 1978. Joseph Eisenhower (Canisius College at the time) called for revision of the constitution, which occurred under his presidency on October 13, 2001.

The first constitution coincided with the presidency of Rawle Farley (SUNY Brockport). Farley's ambitious ideas followed Gordon's energizing of the NYSEA. Farley wanted to turn the NYSEA into the Eastern Economics Association. This endeavor faced competition from T.S. Saini of Bloomsburg University. Records show Saini also participated at NYSEA conferences. History shows that Saini succeeded with the Eastern Economics Association's first conference in 1974.

In the meantime, the NYSEA had assumed the posture of a much more serious organization. The keynote speaker in 1970 was Paul Samuelson. The 1972 conference featured Kenneth Boulding as the luncheon speaker. Other notable participants that year included Murray Rothbard, Abba Lerner and Stanley Engerman. Wassily Leontief was a panel speaker in 1974. Leon Keyserling was also involved in this period.

### ***Incorporation***

The NYSEA ignored legal formality for many years. Officers were selected and dues and sponsors' fees were collected without regard to legal obligations, liability issues, or proper financial record keeping and reporting requirements. It is not clear how its treasurers handled funds or in whose accounts monies were deposited.

Alfred Lubell's (SUNY Oneonta) ascendancy to the presidency in 1977 would be accompanied by his recognition that the association was inviting trouble. Lubell sought, with the assistance of attorney Steve Blumenkrantz (SUNY Oneonta), to incorporate the New York State Economics Association as:

a corporation defined in Section 102 (a) (5) of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law and [as] a Type B Corporation within the meaning of Section 201. The purposes of the corporation are educational within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations, and this corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning of Section 420 of the New York Real Property Tax Law.

In short, the NYSEA officially became a tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation on July 19, 1978. The articles of incorporation were signed by President Alfred M. Lubell, Vice-President Stanton A. Warren (SUNY Albany) and Secretary-Treasurer George H. Webster (Hartwick College).

The first meeting as a corporation of the members and directors was held at 4:45 p.m. on April 7, 1979, in Newhouse I, Room A1 at Syracuse University and was attended by Directors Edward Beck (SUNY Oneonta), Alfred Lubell (SUNY Oneonta) and James Price (Syracuse University). The directors elected Alfred Lubell as temporary chairman and Edward Beck as temporary secretary. At

this meeting, by-laws were adopted, directors were appointed, and the office of the corporation was set at SUNY Oneonta. Officers elected at this meeting were:

Alfred Lubell, president

James Price, vice president

Robert Carson, secretary

Edward Beck, treasurer.

The minutes of the meeting were also signed by NYSEA members Guy Mhone (SUNY Oneonta), Carolyn Ingalls (SUNY Oneonta), Philip Robbins (SUNY Oneonta), Grace Ts'ao (SUNY Oneonta), Stanton Warren (SUNY Albany) and Angela Hardy (SUNY Oneonta). The signing of the minutes constituted a full ratification of the actions taken and waiver of notice of the meeting. It seems this action was taken for expediency in commencing corporate operations and establishing a proper bank account.

In 1978, the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting was held at SUNY Oneonta. The dues were 15 dollars and conference registration was 10 dollars. For what it is worth, that would be \$83.59 in 2010 compared to the actual comprehensive registration of \$75 in 2010.

### ***Saving the NYSEA***

When Alfred Lubell sought to incorporate the NYSEA, he was not only trying to avoid trouble. In fact, the organization was in trouble. It was headed for bankruptcy. Kelvin Lancaster's presidency in 1974-75 served the organization poorly—perhaps because of insufficient commitment, perhaps owing to true confusion on Lancaster's part about the year in which he was supposed to organize the conference. Martin and Gordon scrambled to rescue the meetings that year, which Martin describes as inferior in comparison to other years. For example, in 1972, Martin presided over the largest conference attendance at SUNY Geneseo of some 200 participants.

After 1975, the NYSEA went into rapid decline. Economic education money had dried up. The development of the Eastern Economic Association adversely affected the NYSEA. As the organization's attendance and financial problems mounted, no one wanted to assume the role of president. In 1977, Alfred Lubell would step forward with the courage and savvy to turn the failing organization around.

### ***Leadership History***

Using Gordon's article, information from David Martin, pre-corporation archives, and corporate records, the author has been able to construct the most complete list of presidents and presiding officers of the organization from 1948 forward. This is provided in Table 3.

The organization was founded at a women's college and, clearly co-founded by a woman, Mabel Magee of Wells College. This study regards Wilfred Crook of Colgate University as the first person to preside over the organization because he chaired the organizational meeting. The group then elected

William Kessler of Colgate University to chair the organization. One could argue about whether it should be Crook or Kessler. Whichever side of the argument one favors, Crook is undeniably a cofounder of the organization.

Angela Hardy Isaac of the Rochester Institute of Technology was the first woman to hold the title of president. She served from 1985 to 1987. Rawle Farley of SUNY Brockport is believed to be the first black president of the NYSEA in 1969-70. SUNY Brockport would be the source for an African-American president from 1992 to 1994: Charles Callahan III who might also contend for the tallest person to hold the office.

Alfred Lubell claims the record for the most terms as president, six and all consecutive. His lengthy service contributed immensely to SUNY Oneonta having the most terms for the presidency at 9 with Ithaca College at 8. Ithaca College has had the most individuals serve as president (4): Frank Musgrave, Sherry Wechtler, Elia Kacapyr, and William Kolberg. The only president to come from a two-year college was Peter Pasqualino of Fulton-Montgomery Community College, serving from 1998 to 2000. Richard Dietz of the New York Federal Reserve Bank has been the only president from a non-academic institution (2001-2003).

<b>Table 3 Presidents and Presiding Officers of the NYSEA and Its Forerunner the Central New York Economics Conference</b>
1948-49 Wilfred Crook, Colgate University (Chairman of the Central New York Economics Conference)*
1949-50 William Kessler, Colgate University (Chairman of the Central New York Economics Conference)
1950-56 N. Arnold Tolles, Cornell University and Louis Salkever, SUNY New Paltz and SUNY Albany are believed to have served as presidents during this period. .
1952-53 Raymond de Roover, Wells College
1953-54 S.A. Anderson, Rensselaer Institute of Technology
1957 Meeting scheduled at Niagara University was not held
1957-1959 No records of meetings
1960 First meeting under the new name of New York State Economics Association at Syracuse University
1960-63 meetings were held at Syracuse University (William Hoskings, Colgate University; Laurence Abbott, Union College; and Archibald McIsaac, Syracuse University, had to be presidents during these years based upon Gordon's account. The exact years are not known.)
1963-64 Laurence Leamer, Harpur College (SUNY Binghamton)
1964-65 Gerard, Lemoyne College (first name possibly Lester)
1965-66 Frank Farnsworth, Colgate University
1966-67 Louis Salkever, SUNY Albany
1967-68 Sanford Gordon, SUNY Oneonta
1968-69 Virgil Crisafulli, Utica College of Syracuse University
1969-70 Rawle Farley, SUNY Brockport
1970-71 Edwin Holstein, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
1971-72 David Martin, SUNY Geneseo
1972-73 William N. Leonard, Hofstra University
1973-74 William Bennett, SUNY Buffalo
1974-75 Kelvin Lancaster, Columbia University
1975-76 Stanton Warren, SUNY Plattsburgh
1976-77 Thomas Kershner, SUNY Buffalo

1977-78 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1978-79 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1979-80 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1980-81 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1981-82 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1982-83 Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
1983-84 James Cicarelli, St. Bonaventure University
1984-85 James Cicarelli, St. Bonaventure University
1985-86 Angela Hardy Isaac, Rochester Institute of Technology
1986-87 Angela Hardy Isaac, Rochester Institute of Technology
1986-87 John Helmuth, Rochester Institute of Technology
1987-88 John Helmuth, Rochester Institute of Technology
1988-89 Frank Musgrave, Ithaca College
1989-90 Frank Musgrave, Ithaca College
1990-91 A. Dale Tussing, Syracuse University
1991-92 A. Dale Tussing, Syracuse University
1992-93 Charles Callahan, III, SUNY Brockport
1993-94 Charles Callahan, III, SUNY Brockport
1994-95 Sherry Wetchler, Ithaca College
1995-96 Sherry Wetchler, Ithaca College
1996-97 Wade Thomas, SUNY Oneonta
1997-98 Wade Thomas, SUNY Oneonta
1998-99 Peter Pasqualino, Fulton-Montgomery CC
1999-00 Peter Pasqualino, Fulton-Montgomery CC
2000-01 Joseph Eisenhauer, Canisius College
2001-02 Richard Deitz, Federal Reserve Bank Buffalo NY
2002-03 Richard Deitz, Federal Reserve Bank Buffalo NY
2003-04 Elia Kacapyr, Ithaca College
2004-05 Elia Kacapyr, Ithaca College
2005-06 James F. Booker, Siena College
2006-07 James F. Booker, Siena College
2007-08 William Kolberg, Ithaca College
2008-09 William Kolberg, Ithaca College
2009-10 Jeffrey Wagner, Rochester Institute of Technology
2010-11 Jeffrey Wagner, Rochester Institute of Technology
*1948-49 Mabel Magee, Wells College, hosted and Wilfred Crook, Colgate University, presided over the meeting to create the Central New York Economics Conference. This organization was the forerunner of NYSEA.

### ***Distinguished Fellows***

The NYSEA formally established a Distinguished Fellow Award in 1990 to honor those who have made significant contributions to the economics profession that are not likely to be recognized by other organizations. Frank Musgrave of Ithaca College was the source of inspiration for the award by advocating for Bogdan Mieczkowski (also of Ithaca College) to be recognized by the NYSEA as “Distinguished Fellow.”<sup>9</sup> Nominations must be made by NYSEA members, though the nominee need not be a member.

The recipients of the Distinguished Fellow Award are presented in Table 4. Alfred Lubell was awarded a similar type of award in 1986 on an ad hoc basis because of his service to the association.

Given the reasons behind this recognition, Lubell is regarded as the first recipient of the award. He was again recognized in 2008.

Recipients of this award have typically had respectable records of scholarly output. However, the officers and directors have historically placed a heavy emphasis on participation and service to the organization in choosing the recipients of this award.

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Year</b>
Alfred Lubell	SUNY Oneonta	1986
Bogdan Mieczkowski	Ithaca College	1990
Frank Musgrave	Ithaca College	1992
William P. O’Dea	SUNY Oneonta	1999
Wade L. Thomas	SUNY Oneonta	2004
Joseph Eisenhower*	Wright State University	2007
Alfred Lubell	SUNY Oneonta	2008

\*Eisenhauer had been affiliated with Canisius College in New York at the time of his nomination, but had changed positions by the time of the award.

***The New York Economic Review***

The origins of *The New York Economic Review (NYER)* are traced to *The Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association* from 1968. The 1968 publication was the first and a direct result of the efforts of Sanford Gordon as president. He had obtained a grant from the New York Telephone Company to help finance the publication of volume 1.

The journal underwent changes in title and frequency of publication throughout the years. The present title began in 1984. Prior to that year, proceedings were the association’s journal and subsequently the publication was known as *The Journal of the New York State Economic Association*, an identification that is maintained as a subtext to the current journal.

Editorship of the NYSEA’s publications has a history unto itself. A seemingly permanent fixture throughout most of the life of the journal right up to recent times is William P. O’Dea with his remarkable passion for the subject and driving industry for the production of *The New York Economic Review*.

John Piccione, with academic and financial industry positions too numerous to list here, has served as the managing editor of the *NYER* since 1986. His role is primarily to assure physical production of the journal at reasonable cost. Piccione can only be described as fiercely dedicated to the production of the *NYER*’s printed version and continuation.

O'Dea's tenure is preceded by several editors: Gordon in 1968, an editorial board in 1969-71,<sup>10</sup> David Martin (SUNY Geneseo) for 1973-74, and David Colander for a single edition of combined proceedings from 1975-76 and 1976-77. Edward Beck served as editor of *The Journal of the New York State Economic Association* from 1979 to 1982 Beck was managing editor in 1983 and 1984 with Alfred Lubell as the associate editor. There was also an editorial board. The managing editor performed the combined roles of the editor and managing editor in today's organization. Lubell was largely responsible for the production of the journal from 1977 to 1985.

David Ring (SUNY Oneonta) and William O'Dea were managing editors in 1985. Lubell was associate editor and there was an editorial board. Ring and O'Dea were responsible for editorial work, not production of the journal as the managing editor title might imply.

The structure changes again in 1986. Ring and O'Dea became coeditors without an editorial board. Piccione became managing editor and took over responsibility for production of the journal from Lubell. Ring ended his tenure in 1987 and O'Dea became sole editor. The current structure has been in place since 1987. Probably few editors of economics journals have served as long as O'Dea. In the past three decades, the quality of the *NYER* has been sturdy and respectable for a journal of its type, owing to the efforts of the editor, managing editor, contracted staff and self-sacrificing referees of manuscripts.

#### *The Missing Proceedings*

Published proceedings for 1973 seemed to be missing from all collections. This would be explained through a conversation the author had with David Martin on September 19, 2010, wherein Martin recounts an extraordinary episode in the *NYER*'s history. Sanford Gordon had decided to propel the journal and the organization to a higher level by arranging for selected papers from the annual conference to be published in *The American Economist*, which is associated with the international honor society in economics of Omicron Delta Epsilon. This happened just one time, but 10 papers from the NYSEA conference, including one written by David Martin, were published in the spring 1973 issue of *The American Economist*. Appendix A provides a screenshot of the front matter from the journal, showing that NYSEA papers were in the contents of that issue.

#### ***Appearance on the World-Wide Web in 1997***

NYSEA was among the first economic associations to establish a presence on the World Wide Web. President Wade L. Thomas (SUNY Oneonta) coded the organization's first Web pages and uploaded them on the SUNY Oneonta web server in July of 1997 to help promote the conference held at Oneonta that year.<sup>11</sup> The NYSEA site first became live on July 22, 1997. The College at Oneonta continues to host the organization's Web pages. Exhibit 2 shows the site in 1997.

The Internet age warranted a new position in the organization: Web coordinator. Thomas was assigned the role. In February of 2000, he registered the domain NYSEA.org in advance of the

growing flurry of speculative domain registrations and squatting. A readily recognizable Web identity for the organization and its members was established without having to pay a premium to obtain it or resorting to concocting a contorted version of the organization's identity that might have remained available for domain registration.

The transition to digital media has allowed the *NYER* and other publications of the organization to begin migrating to electronic publication. While a considerable backlog of paper materials awaits conversion, the NYSEA's current publications are contemporaneously available online free of charge.

**Exhibit 2: Screenshot of the NYSEA Website in August 1997**

**NEW YORK STATE ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION WEBSITE**

Welcome!

[Audio Message](#)

*This page supplies information about the New York State Economics Association, the 50th Annual Convention, and the New York Economic Review. Visit often for updates and improvements.*

**NYSEA 50TH ANNUAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN ONEONTA**

The 50th Annual Conference of the NYSEA will be held Friday and Saturday, September 26-27, 1997 in Oneonta, New York, at the Morris Conference Center on the State University College at Oneonta campus. Registration, conference and lodging information are available from:

Dr. Wade L. Thomas, President  
NYSEA  
Department of Economics and Business  
SUNY Oneonta  
Oneonta, NY 13820

Telephone: 607-436-3458 Fax: 607-436-2543

[Preliminary Program of the 50th Annual Convention](#)

**NYSEA Officers**

- President: Dr. Wade L. Thomas, Department of Economics and Business, SUNY Oneonta
- Vice President: Mr. Peter Pasqualino, Business Program, Fulton-Montgomery Community College
- Treasurer: Dr. Alfred Lubell, SUNY Oneonta
- Secretary: Dr. David Ring, Department of Economics and Business, SUNY Oneonta

**NYSEA Board of Directors**

- Charles Callahan III, SUNY Brockport
- Barbara Howard, SUNY Geneseo
- Frank Musgrave, Ithaca College
- A. Dale Tussing, Syracuse University
- John Piccione, Chase Manhattan Bank
- Sherry Wetchler, Ithaca College
- Martha Wojtowycz, Syracuse University
- William P. O'Dea, SUNY Oneonta

**New York Economic Review**

*The New York Economic Review*, a semi-annual, refereed publication, is the official journal of the NYSEA. Turnaround time for article submissions is ordinarily less than three months. Submission fee is \$20 (U.S.) for non-members, which confers a one-year NYSEA membership. Submit two copies of manuscripts to:

*Dr. William P. O'Dea, Editor, The New York Economic Review, Department of Economics and Business, State University College at Oneonta, Oneonta, NY 13820*

**Managing Editor of The New York Economic Review:**

[John Piccione, Chase Manhattan Bank](#)

**Membership Directory**

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*This site maintained by Dr. Wade L. Thomas, Chair / Economics and Business / [thomaswl@oneonta.edu](mailto:thomaswl@oneonta.edu) / revised August 29, 1997*

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***How Many Conferences?***

It is a simple question. How many NYSEA conferences have actually been held? As of this writing, the NYSEA maintains that 2010 was the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting. This investigation casts doubt on the number of conferences and the accuracy of the annual meeting designation. However, the number 63 might be correct.

First, the meeting date was shifted from spring to fall in 1987. Two conferences were held that year and double counted as annual meetings. Records show the 39<sup>th</sup> and the 40<sup>th</sup> annual conferences both occurring in 1987. This change also explains why Angela Hardy Isaac and John Helmuth were both presidents in 1986-87. This has long been the seemingly straightforward explanation of the NYSEA's bad arithmetic, which has been a source of confusion for years.

Second, Gordon states that between 1948 and 1956, the forerunner Central New York Economics Conference held meetings in spring and fall for at least 3 of the years in that span. Perhaps that occurred in more than 3 years. The years are not specified. Nonetheless, conservatively add 3 conferences.

Third, it is known that the 1957 meeting was not held. Subtract one conference.

Fourth, the status of conferences for 1958 and 1959 is unknown. Perhaps 2 meetings should be subtracted.

Fifth, it does appear that annual meetings were held from 1960 forward except for the 2 in 1987 as noted.

Sixth, the constitution adopted at SUNY Brockport in 1970 states on the document that it is the 21<sup>st</sup> annual meeting and proceedings from 1969-70 state 21<sup>st</sup> as well. Are the documents in error? Or did the creators of the documents know that an annual conference was not held in 1957, which would explain why the document states 21<sup>st</sup> instead of 22<sup>nd</sup>? Is this evidence that conferences were in fact held in 1958 and 1959? Contrast this with the fact that the 1978 conference is identified as the 30<sup>th</sup>—eight years after the 21<sup>st</sup> conference in 1970.

The designation as “annual conference” is outright wrong, but the NYSEA and its ancestor Central New York Economics Conference do appear to have held a total of 63 conferences since 1948, but the true number is not conclusive.

**Conclusion**

The principal purpose of this investigation was to verify the origins of the New York State Economics Association and to construct an improved and updated account of the organization. Uncovering Sanford Gordon's earlier account of the organization's beginnings provides credible information about many years of operation before 1968. The New York State Economics Association was not founded in name in 1948. That identity began in 1960, but the evidence that it was formed from a predecessor organization in the form of the Central New York Economics Conference is quite plausible based upon written and verbal accounts. Thus, the starting date of 1948 is predicated upon

reasonable belief and intention, not fiction or exaggeration. It is also of interest that the organization began at an all women's college and one of the cofounders was a woman.

Prior to this investigation, the NYSEA records could document presidents who served from 1968-69 and forward. This study has succeeded in reconstructing the history of nearly all the known top leadership since 1948.

The NYSEA became a legal entity in 1978. From that time, it has operated dependably. Its journal began in 1968 and is the product of unrelenting professional dedication.

The NYSEA was among the first economics associations to establish a presence on the World Wide Web. The NYSEA Web site was published in the summer of 1997. Its online publications include *The New York Economic Review* and conference-related publications.

Probably from the late 1980s, the founding date for NYSEA and the number of annual conferences exceeding the elapsed years by one has been a source of confusion. Clearly, there have not been 63 annual conferences. However, the evidence suggests that the number of times the organization and its predecessor have met since 1948 could be 63. Suffice to say, it is impractical for the organization to correct this anomaly.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Both Robert Carson and Sanford Gordon referred to Woodrow Wilson Sayre. However, the author's investigation found that J. Woodrow Sayre was the man's actual name. Carson confirmed that "Woodrow Wilson" was a nickname used because J. Woodrow Sayre was a descendant of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson.
2. Crisafulli was one of the founders of Utica College. He died in 2008 and Utica College has a memorial page on its Web site (<http://www.utica.edu/instadvance/marketingcomm/special/cris/index.cfm>). Crisafulli appears to be wearing the same necktie in a photograph posted by Utica College as he is in this photo--additional evidence confirming his identity. David Martin said that it is "unquestionably Crisafulli" in a conversation with the author on September 19, 2010.
3. Professor Howard has stated on several occasions down through the years to the author that she thought David Martin, a former faculty member and head of the business school at SUNY Geneseo had started NYSEA. While Martin was an NYSEA president, held other offices in the organization and was an important figure in the organization for a number of years, he did not start the organization. After speaking with David Martin, the author found the explanation for Howard's belief. Martin started a Western New York State Economics Association that operated from 1969 to 1980 from Geneseo. This also explains Tussing's recollection of such an organization. This group's genesis was from the Genesee Region's Council on Economic Education, which was run by Byron Williams, social science chair at the University of Rochester. Williams' death led to transfer of the organization to Geneseo under Martin's control.

4. On September 14, 2010, the author discovered volume 1 in a file box of NYSEA records in storage at SUNY Oneonta.
5. Sanford B. Gordon, "A Thumbnail Sketch of the New York State Economics Association," *The Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association*, (December 1968), p.1. For clarification, Gordon's reference to Arnold Tolles must be to N. Arnold Tolles.
6. Ibid, p.4.
7. *American Economic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (June 1960), p. 548.
8. Gordon, p.5.
9. Mieczkowski was a prolific writer who had managed to alienate himself from the Ithaca College administration by publishing unflattering accounts of campus operations in his books about bureaucracy. The conferral of the Distinguished Fellow Award occurred at the NYSEA Conference held at Ithaca College in 1990. The venue erupted into a standing ovation for Mieczkowski.
10. The board in 1969-70 was Stanley Hart (SUNY Fredonia), Edward Willet (Houghton College) and Terry Darveaux (Lincoln Rochester Trust Company). The editorial board membership is not identified for 1971-72, but it may have been the same people given that Martin had an editorial board composed of Willet and Darveaux in 1973-74.
11. For context, the Netscape browser arrived on the scene in late 1994, greatly improving the layperson's use of the Internet. Between 1995 and 1998 Netscape and Microsoft were engaged in the famed "browser wars" and the NYSEA website reflects those earliest vestiges of the rapidly changing and competing support for the evolving Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). In 1997, there were 1.3 million Web sites. At the beginning of 2000 when NYSEA.org was registered, a mere 779,950 were .ORG registrations. At the end of 2009, there are 234 million websites and 7.9 million .ORG Web sites. (Data from Zooknic.com)

## REFERENCES

*American Economic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (June, 1960).

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*Minutes and By Laws of the New York State Economics Association*, records from 1978-79.

Various issues of the Journal of the New York State Economics Association in the form of *The Proceedings of the New York State Economics Association*, *Papers and Proceedings*, *Journal of the New York State Economics Association*, and *The New York Economic Review*.

*The American Economist*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (spring, 1973).

**Appendix A: Screenshot of Front Matter from *The American Economist* Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring, 1973), Showing the Publication of Papers from the New York State Economics Association Conference**

