

Prize Honors Successful Economist

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Stefano Barbieri, a leading scholar in the study of economic issues concerning government and the public sector, is the 2011 recipient of the Larry Schloss Prize for Excellence in Economics. The award is given annually to a faculty member or student at Tulane who makes the greatest contribution in understanding of this branch of social science.



The 2011 Schloss Prize goes to Stefano Barbieri, an associate professor, for advancing knowledge in economics. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

In his research, Barbieri, an associate professor in the Tulane [Department of Economics](#), is “trying to understand how the different features of the way in which people interact end up helping or hurting them.”

He explains that a standard result in public economics is that individuals usually won't contribute to a public good like national defense or law enforcement because they can “free-ride” on the contributions of others and still derive benefits. Free-riding is a problem because it can cause public goods to be deficient in supply or not provided at all.

Economists have been examining how to limit free-riding and its negative effects for a long time. Much of Barbieri's research focuses on discovering mechanisms that will improve cooperation and thus challenge this issue. His investigations have provided insights into how incentives and institutions can be established and altered to encourage cooperative behavior.

Within the past year, Barbieri has published several articles in leading journals in economics. This literature, which concentrates on various aspects of voluntary contributions, has made important strides in advancing economic understanding.

"It has been a very good year [for me]," says Barbieri. "I am extremely honored and very thankful to both Mr. Schloss and my colleagues for selecting me to receive this award."

[Lawrence M.v.D. Schloss](#), a 1976 Tulane graduate, is chief investment officer for the New York City pension system and a member of the Board of Tulane. He endowed the prize in 2009.

Emily Johnson is a writer in the Office of Development.