
11-1-2020

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Recommended Citation

(2020) "Scholarly Pursuits: Nationally Recognized Health Expert Tony LoSasso Returns to DePaul," *Business Exchange*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 14 , Article 6.

Available at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/bx/vol1/iss14/6>

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Tony LoSasso (photo by Kathy Hillegonds)

Nationally Recognized Health Expert Tony LoSasso Returns to DePaul

By Jaclyn Lansbery

As a DePaul undergraduate student in business, Tony LoSasso (BUS '91, MS '93) never thought about getting a master's degree. Then, the late Ashok Batavia, who served as a professor of economics at the Driehaus College of Business, encouraged LoSasso to pursue a master's degree at DePaul.

"It all started with DePaul and having people like Ashok push me in this direction, showing me that there was this direction, because I didn't even know it existed," says LoSasso, who was the first in his family to attend college. "I've been really fortunate to have people help me along the way. I certainly would not have found my own way."

LoSasso rejoined the DePaul community in 2019 as a professor of economics and Driehaus Fellow. "I'm really excited to be back. It's a tremendous thrill," he says. A nationally recognized expert in health economics, LoSasso teaches graduate and undergraduate health economics courses. His award-winning research spans several dimensions of health and labor economics, health policy and health services.

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Currently, LoSasso is working with the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business to launch a DePaul MBA concentration in health care markets and analytics, which is scheduled to debut in January 2021. The concentration will prepare students to work in the health insurance industry and in health consulting and government positions.

LoSasso's interest in health economics was spurred by the federal health reform efforts of the 1990s, which occurred while he was earning a PhD from Indiana University Bloomington.

"I'm somebody who has always been interested in the policy side of things, and, of course, health economics is ripe with policy interest and relevance," he says. "It was an untapped market for research, and then new and more data, and more powerful computers that could crunch data, became available."

An area of particular interest for LoSasso is health insurance benefit design and the impact it has on health care utilization and health outcomes. One of his most recent research pieces, which he has yet to publish, utilized data to examine premiums within the health insurance market for small businesses.

In the classroom, LoSasso uses research to help students better understand the course material.

"I don't think students often think that most of their faculty at DePaul are active researchers and scholars trying to push the boundaries of science," he says. "So in addition to being informative about the subject matter, bringing my own research into the classroom can be of interest for students to get a sense of where research ideas come from, how they germinate and how they ultimately become published articles."