

Why is the research analyst position at the Jerome Levy Forecasting Center an exceptional opportunity for graduating students with economics or related majors, and is it right for you?

Dear Senior,

Since 1991, the Jerome Levy Forecasting Center has been providing extraordinary opportunities to elite college graduates in economics, helping them clarify and advance their career goals in the fields of economics, business, finance, or government. Details on the position are in the attached announcement. Because this opportunity is unique among the jobs or educational experiences you may be considering, I'd like to offer you some additional background on the position to help you decide whether it is right for you.

We have found over the years that many applicants are intrigued by our announcement or by what they have heard about the Forecasting Center, but they have many questions about the program. Below are answers to the most common questions we've encountered over the years:

What kind of person becomes a research analyst at the Levy Forecasting Center?

Our research analysts are highly intelligent and have excellent academic track records. They are from excellent undergraduate programs; for example, Swarthmore, Williams, and Bryn Mawr have each provided us with more than one analyst. Generally, these individuals are in the top 10% of their classes, and several have been in the top 1% or 2%.

In addition, they are people who are self-directed, comfortable planning and managing their own projects, and unafraid of new challenges. They have excellent communications skills, especially writing. They work easily in cooperation with others, looking out for the broad concerns of their organization as well as their own explicit responsibilities. They are open-minded, intellectually curious, and more interested in truth than conventional wisdom.

Their career plans separate them into four categories:

- Those aiming at economics graduate school but first seeking a broadening and deepening of their economic knowledge as well as extensive experience in its practical application.
- Those interested in economics but unsure whether they want to do graduate work or go into business (and if so, in what occupation).
- Those interested in business seeking to build on their economics backgrounds to understand more about business trends, issues, and risk.
- Those interested in economic public policy and wanting practical, real-world experience in macroeconomic analysis before continuing their education.

What kind of work would I do? How much responsibility would I have, and how interesting and challenging would my responsibilities be?

I know of no opportunity for individuals who have just completed their bachelor's degrees that compares to the position at the Levy Forecasting Center in breadth of research exposure, chances for research creativity, responsibility, practical experience, and freedom from mindless number crunching. Each analyst works in several research areas relating to sectors of the economy, regions of the world, and types of issues (e.g. inflation or financial stability). Analysts also participate in our macroeconomic forecasting process, where all the sector work is integrated in the development of alternative economic scenarios.

Our analysts spend several months working closely with senior members of the team, learning the ropes of one area after another. They continue to work with more experienced economists, but increasingly independently. Their research involves intense review and analysis of government and private economic statistics, but it hardly ends there. It includes the business press, Wall Street industry analyses, reviewing the economics literature, attending conferences and lectures, and more. The emphasis is on applying theory in a complex, real world context in which many types of information are important.

Analysts contribute to writing and editing our publications. They may become involved in projects relating to the operation of the Levy Forecasting Center, depending on their backgrounds and aptitudes. Each has a unique experience. One studied the literature on wealth effects and helped us form new positions on the stock market wealth effect years before it became a dominant issue in the late 1990s. Another served as my key staff person when President Clinton appointed me to serve on his Commission to Study Capital Budgeting. Two co-authored a report with me on our unique, profit-centered macroeconomic methodology.

Analysts will also have the opportunity to learn about the Levy Forecast Fund's philosophy and strategy and various financial futures and options instruments. Analysts will observe and, most likely, contribute to the fund's investment analysis, although the majority of the analyst's time will be spent on economic analysis.

Who will I work with? Who will I meet? What other skills will I develop?

Research analysts work closely with me (the chairman of the Forecasting Center), as well as the director of research, and other members of the research staff. In addition, they attend meetings and presentations where they hear speakers and interact with business, government, and academic economists, as well as distinguished business and financial leaders. They also have phone contact with data experts in the government's statistical agencies.

Analysts are likely to have some exposure to econometrics and models, but most of their experience is attaining deep understanding of the real world in all its complexity, which makes many models naïve and inadequate. Analysts planning to do graduate work in economics do not so much get a jump on their graduate work as learn things they will never learn in graduate school. The research analyst position equips them with knowledge of how economic actors really operate, thereby making them better theoreticians and practitioners. Analysts learn about the extensive problems with economic statistics, becoming savvy critics and users of data. Perhaps most importantly, their work exposes them to many fascinating research problems and questions, which will enable them to identify many more interesting research projects in the future and thereby help them do more creative, ground-breaking work than colleagues who have never been outside an university.

Analysts also learn more about business, as students of the economy and as active participants in some organizational decisions. They will develop confidence in business situations, hone their communications skills, and learn more about the exciting career possibilities in our dynamic economic system.

I'm still evaluating various possibilities for my career. Will this position help me clarify and reach my goals, or will it narrow my options?

Even in this information age, most college students find it difficult to flush out the opportunities available other than grad school or the firms recruiting on their campuses. Researching a starting point for your career takes time, a problem when you have a heavy course load and other activities and commitments. Moreover, it is hard to know how much you will enjoy a field or occupation without experience, and the pressure to make the “right choice” can weigh heavily.

Fortunately, most people have opportunities to change direction, especially early in their careers. Still, you want to get the best start you can and, unless you are certain of what you want to do, you want to know that you will have plenty of options at your next career decision point.

The research analyst position with the Levy Forecasting Center is an excellent starting point for people with questions—indeed, most of our analysts were still exploring their career options when they joined us, typically considering both economics graduate work and business careers. Every one of these people felt that their experience at the Levy Forecasting Center greatly increased their understanding of their options—and enhanced their prospects for whatever they chose to do.

What career opportunities would I have afterwards? Where have past analysts gone after working at the Forecasting Center?

The research analyst position has the unique characteristic of being an unparalleled preparation for a career in economics and a broad, flexible experience for people heading into business, government, or other areas besides economics. The best answer I can give is to recite some facts:

One third of our analysts have entered economics Ph.D. programs

One third have entered or will be entering M.B.A. programs

Others have entered or plan to enter graduate programs in other fields, such as government and international affairs

Prior to or after their graduate work, our analysts have gone into the following:

- Real Estate Development
- Academic Research/Teaching
- Investment Management/Finance
- Federal Reserve System Research
- Public Sector Management
- Not-for-profit Research/ Management
- Business Sector Economic Analysis
- Consulting

What is the Jerome Levy Forecasting Center? What kind of research does it do, and for whom?

Please visit our website (www.levyforecast.com) for further information.

Where is the Jerome Levy Forecasting Center?

The Jerome Levy Forecasting Center is in Mt. Kisco, New York, which is a suburb of New York City and a reasonable train ride away from everything that the Big Apple has to offer. A number of our analysts chose to live in New York City and commute.

Still have questions?

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Our number is 914-666-0641. Ask for Marie Poka (poka@levyforecast.com), office manager.

Thank you for your interest, and best of luck with your career search.

Sincerely,

David A. Levy
Chairman