Welcome to the Fall 2012 Center for Sustainable Enterprise and Regional Competitiveness (SERC) Newsletter! This newsletter is intended to update you on SERC’s activities and alert you to upcoming events. For more information, please check out the SERC website.

Thanks to all of you who have attended our events, have provided various kinds of support, subscribe to the Climate Inc. blog, participate in our educational programs, or just quietly follow the issue and try to make an impact, however small.

This has been a very busy semester for SERC and for the College of Management in which we are based. We launched a new Ph.D. program in Business Administration, with the first cohort of students joining the track in Organizations and Social Change. Several of our students have interests in sustainability. We have opened our Graduate Certificate in Clean Energy and Sustainability to qualified non-UMass Boston students. We have initiated new research projects on planning and adaptation for coastal flooding risks, and on the development of regional clean-tech clusters within global value chains. We established a Net Impact chapter, with a great group of enthusiastic MBAs leading the way. We launched a new Green Internship program to provide our students with meaningful exposure to work experiences across a range of sectors and functions. We have forged a new partnership with Plymouth University's School of Management in the UK, an institution that shares our vision of training entrepreneurial professionals for leadership roles in creating a more sustainable economy and society. We welcomed aboard Dr. Vesela Veleva from Boston College’s Center for Corporate Citizenship as a new lecturer and Associate Director of SERC. And last but not least, we organized a highly successful event featuring Peter DeBruin, Vice President, Office of Environmental Sustainability, State Street.

Meanwhile, there is much in the world that needs attention. On the climate change front, greenhouse gas emissions increased 3% in 2012 from the prior year, and negotiations in Doha were stalled, as of the time of writing. Low prices for natural gas and carbon credits continue to exert a drag on prospects for clean energy. Hurricane Sandy, which ravaged the New York region, and Typhoon Bopha, which has killed over 600 people in the Philippines, provide a foretaste of what we might expect in a warming world. Disastrous factory fires in Pakistan and Bangladesh that took the lives of nearly 400 people painfully illustrated the limits of current social responsibility practices and standards such as SA8000. So there is no room for complacency, we need to leverage all the resources and expertise available to address these pressing sustainability challenges!

Please feel free to ask questions, make suggestions, and get involved!

David L. Levy
EVENT: PRESENTATION BY PETER DEBRUIN

In partnership with State Street, SERC was pleased to host a presentation by Peter DeBruin, Vice President Office of Environmental Sustainability, State Street.

"Environmental Sustainability at State Street: Performance and Opportunities for the 21st Century"

Over 100 students and faculty attended the presentation, which discussed the business value of environmental sustainability and introduced participants to the frameworks, policies and principles used by State Street, a company founded in 1792, to manage risks and opportunities. Specific examples demonstrated the challenges and opportunities that financial firms face today in advancing the green economy. At the end, Peter DeBruin provided practical advice for students interested in pursuing a career in sustainability. His enthusiasm and engaging presentation clearly “fired up” the room and created a lot of excitement and interest.

NEW! GREEN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCHED

By Vesela Veleva, Associate Director, SERC

Green internships are an ideal way for students to obtain hands-on experience and knowledge, develop their professional skills, and improve their ability to find an appropriate job after graduation. Environmental skills and knowledge are increasingly valued in the employment market. In a recent survey, 65% of businesses said they value environmental and sustainability
knowledge in job candidates and 78% said that this knowledge would grow in importance in the next five years.

As part of its commitment to lead the region in preparing students and returning professionals for careers related to a sustainable economy, SERC launched the “Green Internship Program” in November 2012. It is open to all UMass Boston students, but is particularly appropriate for students enrolled in the Clean Energy and Sustainability Programs, including the certificate and the MBA Environmental Management specialization. The program includes a range of available green internships and jobs at companies, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions (for more information and to see the available internships and jobs check the SERC website - www.umb.edu/serc/internships).

REFLECTIONS FROM A RECENT GRADUATE

By Mikhail Glazomitsky, Director of Training, Munro Distributing, Clean Energy & Electrical Solutions

The Solar industry was something I was passionate about, was always interested in, and it represented a huge growth potential not only here in Massachusetts but across the world. One of the companies that I was interested in was Munro Distributing and luckily they were hiring. Thanks to my experience in the MBA program and the concentration in environmental management, my interpersonal and sales skills, and my undying passion for this industry, I was offered the position of training coordinator. This position allowed me to truly broaden my horizons in the energy side of sustainability. Here at Munro, not only do we have a robust and growing solar department but we also have an energy conservation department that does lighting, lighting controls, energy management systems, vfds, motors and controls, power factor correction, water conservation, etc. Being in a training function allowed me to work with every aspect of the company, not just the solar department. After completing my MBA and getting my Clean Energy and Sustainability (CES) Certificate, I was promoted to Director of Training at Munro Distributing. I spend a lot of my time doing and organizing trainings (as well as research) on new products, technologies, and markets for our staff internally here. I have even had the chance to work on some of our own sustainability initiative here at Munro such as increasing our participation in recycling and looking at energy and waste conservation measures at each of our locations.

The UMass Boston MBA program, and in particular the CES certificate and specialization in environmental management, helped get me in the door here at Munro, and signaled my interest and expertise in the area. It has also allowed me to have more rich and encompassing conversations with those I work with, our suppliers, and our customer base. Although we might be talking about solar, it is good that I learned a little bit about wind at UMB because people do ask and I feel confident and competent because I can talk about multiple technologies. In this industry you run into a lot of people who want to talk about the politics or the science of climate change, again the exposure to these ideas and issues at UMass Boston in the CES program was instrumental in allowing me to have intelligent conversations.

All in all I could not be happier with my life and my career and UMass Boston has played a big role in this. I wake up every day excited and happy to go to work. It has truly transformed my personal life as well, having a career about which I am passionate and in which I am
professionally successful.

UMASS BOSTON NET IMPACT CHAPTER LAUNCHED

In spring 2012 the UMass Boston Net Impact Chapter was founded by students, alumni, and faculty from the College of Management. Special thanks go to College of Management faculty Marc Lavine for his advising and support in launching the Chapter. The mission of UMass Boston Net Impact is to inspire, educate, and equip individuals to use the power of business to create a more socially and environmentally sustainable world. As stated in its report, the chapter exists “to create learning opportunities, professional development, and strengthened social networks for our members and the UMass Boston community.” The group seeks to engage the greater UMass Boston community- including students, alumni, faculty, staff, administrators, as well as local business leaders- to develop a multidisciplinary platform for learning, networking, career exploration, and innovation. Five chapter leaders from Net Impact UMass Boston attended the 2012 Net Impact Conference in Baltimore and prepared a report with specific goals and recommendations. SERC is planning to collaborate with the Net Impact chapter on several forthcoming events and activities, such as a Green Career Event and sustainability-focused presentations.

SERC RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

SERC faculty engages in research projects with the aim of exploring the business-sustainability interface and providing businesses and policy makers with a solid foundation for long-term strategic decisions. Our faculty engages in a range of research that encompasses everything from accounting and finance issues associated with climate risk to sustainability standards to organizational challenges of combining economic and social values and goals. We have recently initiated new research projects on planning and adaptation for coastal flooding risks, and on the development of regional clean-tech clusters within global value chains. A (partial) list of recent publications is below. For more information, please check out the SERC website.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY SERC FACULTY


http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nantod.2012.10.002


Zhang, W. “Laboratory profile of the Green Organic and Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Massachusetts Boston” Green Processing and Synth. 2012, 1, 291-293.
