



www.eswusf.org

PRESS RELEASE BY KEN THOMAS (press@eswusf.org)

On April 13th 2007 The Second Annual Business Sustainability Symposium was held at the College of Business Administration (COBA) at USF's Tampa Campus. The Symposium, entitled *Building Sustainable Enterprise II: Opportunities for Positive Change*, was sponsored by the Colleges of Business Administration and Engineering. It sought to assemble persons from academia – inclusive of faculty from USF's COBA, College of Engineering (COE) and the College of Architecture (COA) - as well as a myriad of local industries, all of whom are keenly interested in collaborating with USF on research that attempts heightened levels of sustainability for their individual businesses.

At around 9am the affair commenced with a welcome address by the Symposium's Chair Dr. Sharon Hanna-West, Exide Distinguished Lecturer of Ethics and Sustainability in COBA at the Graduate Wing Atrium. Directly proceeding similar sentiments by the Symposium's Co-Chair – Dr. Maya Trotz, Assistant Professor in COE and faculty liaison-in-chief for USF's chapter of Engineers for a Sustainable World – the keynote speaker, Mr. David Gustashaw, Vice President of Engineering of Interface, Inc. took to the podium and made a spirited presentation on *Applied Sustainability*. His discourse gave valuable insight on how his company strives to attain sustainability while merging economics and engineering. Mr. Gustashaw's talk heightened when he highlighted areas as to how to assess the need for sustainability in a business. Inevitably, an interactive question and answer session followed where many participants took advantage of Mr. Gustashaw's obvious wealth of knowledge on the sustainability issue.

After such an interesting and informative morning session, Mr. Gustashaw's expertise was retained for both of the afternoon's panel discussions which were both held in COBA room BSN 230. The first panel discussion was on *Community Engagement* and was facilitated by Dr. Sharon Hanna-West. Other panelists for this first discussion were Dr. Mike Barnett of COBA's Department of Management, Fred Bennett of Lykes Brothers, Inc., Dr. Walter Nord and Prof. Aarti Sharma, both from COBA's Department of Management. Several pertinent issues were raised and dealt with inclusive of, but not limited to, sharing of resources (e.g. APEX and FEEDS) between universities to bring business issues into the classroom, linking NGO's and the community with USF in attainment of sustainability of businesses; mechanisms to link academic journals and magazines of both business and engineering as well as internships within partner business for USF students. One of the most important issues that was brought to the fore, by Prof. Sharma, was that "...social responsibility and sustainability are not mutually exclusive but need to focus on profit first especially for small businesses..." This brought the possibility of sustainability by businesses into a practical perspective which ultimately



www.eswusf.org

PRESS RELEASE BY KEN THOMAS (press@eswusf.org)

led to discourse on what small business can attempt to do in an effort to attain sustainability.

Dr. Maya Trotz led the second panel discussion in the sphere of *Curriculum Development*. Dr. Trent Green of COA, Dr. Chris Thomas of COBA, Dr. Yogi Goswami of COE, Dr. Paul Schnitzler of COE and Prof. Denise Kleinrichert of San Francisco State University joined Dr. Walter Nord, Dr. Mike Barnett and Mr. Gustashaw as the panelists for this segment of the Symposium. Their expertise were tapped into after Dr. Angela Linder, Associate Professor of Environmental Engineering Sciences at the University of Florida (UF), gave an enlightening presentation on her experience on developing sustainability courses and her involvement in the UF chapter of Engineers Without Borders.

At the end of the second panel discussion the Symposium was formerly closed by the Chair, Dr. Sharon Hanna-West, and informal networking among participants began with many business associated and faculty members creating alliance to undertake sustainability issues.