

SPRING 2011

NATURAL RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENT
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Stewards

A magazine for alumni and friends of the School of Natural Resources and Environment

urban EVOLUTION

SNRE research examines sustainability
challenges of American city life

The Bierbaum Decade

10 years of profound change
in environmental studies

Tipping Point

How many species do humans
need to survive?



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Photo by Angela Haric/SF Public Press



Brent Plater (B.S. '95) is an adjunct professor in San Francisco State University's Environmental Studies Program and executive director of Wild Equity Institute, a nonprofit organization building a sustainable global community. His group recently commissioned a study of the environmental impact of preserving the Sharp Park Golf Course in San Francisco vs. preserving it as a nature reserve, a cutting-edge conservation issue in the Bay Area. In 2010, he received the Environmental Education Conservation Award from the John Muir Association and was a Fulbright scholar at the University of West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, teaching in a program on the science

and management of tropical biodiversity and drafting regulations to protect the nation's leatherback sea turtle population. Learn more at wildequity.org.

Trish Beckjord (M.L.A. '96) returned to the Dana Building Feb. 1 and spoke to students about how LEED, the Green Guide for Health Care (GGHC), and the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) support provision of outdoor and indoor space that is mentally and emotionally restorative. (Visual and physical connections to indoor and outdoor nature have been documented to have a variety of beneficial effects for patients, families and staff in stressful medical-care environments, and certifying green programs such as LEED, GGHC and SITES are beginning to incorporate design criteria relative to these qualities.) Her talk, based on her work in the health-care arena, capped Portfolio Day, an event for Landscape Architecture students to receive feedback from professional landscape architects. In her career, she has managed several LEED Gold-certified



hospital projects in which she has integrated sustainable-site and respite criteria to create healing campus settings. She also has served as project manager or landscape design lead for a variety of other LEED certified projects, including the Omega Center for Sustainable Living in Rhinebeck, N.Y. (LEED Platinum and the first project to be awarded the Living Building Challenge); JCI corporate headquarters

in Glendale, Wis.(LEED platinum); and the first LEED Gold-certified McDonald's in the country. She can be reached at tbeckjord@gmail.com.

Elizabeth Kruska (B.S. '00) is an attorney at Griffin, Marsicovetere & Wilkes P.C., in White River Junction, Vt. She graduated in 2004 from Vermont Law School.



Michael Wagg (M.S. '04) was named a program analyst by the U.S. Agency for International Development in January. He is the desk officer in USAID's Europe and Eurasia bureau. He previously

worked in the Office of Program Evaluation within EPA's Office of Inspector General, where he conducted evaluations of U.S. drinking water and wastewater programs, underground storage tanks and environmental enforcement.

Cynthia Koenig (M.S. '06) created the WaterWheel, a 20-gallon rolling water barrel, and Wello, the business that distributes it in developing countries where clean water is scarce. The product won \$10,000 in the Global Social Entrepreneurship Competition at the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington. Koenig, who is enrolled in the MBA program at Michigan's Ross School of Business, developed the WaterWheel with teammate Colm Fay, a dually enrolled SNRE and Ross student at the Erb Institute for Global

ALUMNUS TO ALUMNUS

Heather (Lutz) Leszczynski (B.S. '00) is the new alumni relations and annual giving officer at the School of Natural Resources and Environment. Heather oversees all alumni programming activities at the school, including events, homecoming, reunions and social media. She also directs the school's annual giving activities, including donor stewardship. "I'm excited to be back inside the Dana Building and working together with my fellow alumni to enhance the school's national reputation," she said. She comes to SNRE from the U-M Center for Global Health, where she was a project manager. She also previously served as a program assistant at the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. In her spare time, she is a figure-skating instructor for the Ann Arbor Figure Skating Club. Contact her at hnlutz@umich.edu.



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Send us updates and photos about your new job or personal achievements. Visit the SNRE website at snre.umich.edu/alumni and fill out our online update form. Or, send your information to Kevin Merrill, director of communications, via e-mail (merrillk@umich.edu) or regular mail. The address is School of Natural Resources and Environment, Office of Communications, University of Michigan, 440 Church St., Ann Arbor, MI, 48109-1041. We're looking forward to hearing from you and spreading your good news.

LESZCZYNSKI