PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

PRINCIPLE 5: PARTNERSHIP

We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges to meet social and environmental responsibilities and explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Nature’s Bee receives the Ecopreneur of the Year Award

CSSI sponsors the Ecopreneur of the Year Award at Synergy Enterprises’ annual sustainability awards event. This year we were proud to see 28 year old BCom alum Katie Gamble win our award. Four years ago Gamble was searching for a single use plastic alternative to covering leftover food. After trial and error, she developed Beeswax Wraps out of her parents’ basement, which has grown to a full-scale production. Gamble recently also launched a line up of concentrated cleaning tablets that are proving to be popular. The tablets dissolve in water at home to create cleaning solutions. Gamble’s goal is to encourage other like-minded individuals to make small sustainable changes to their daily lives.

Briefly tell us about yourself and your business.

We are proud to be a female-owned and operated Canadian small business with incredibly impactful values. We are a small business making a big impact through Sustainability, Community, Education, and Impact. By combining a passion for giving back and global sustainability we have created an inspiring and supportive organization. On the topic of diversity and inclusivity, here at Nature Bee we provide a space for people of all abilities and backgrounds to learn, grow, and create. We are focused on helping others live a more sustainable life! We believe one small change has a major impact.

What does it mean for you and your business to receive the “Ecopreneur of the Year” award?

Receiving the “Ecopreneur of the Year” award was an incredible honour. This is a huge step in Nature Bee’s journey and encourages us to continue what we are doing because it is making a difference. This award helps to bring awareness to what we are doing here at Nature Bee and opens up our community even more.

The Ecopreneur of the Year award celebrates the work of an individual who has started an impactful eco-venture that has been in operation for 3 or more years. Tell us about the impact your eco-venture has had on the community.

Nature Bee embodies sustainability, community, education and impact. While providing a low waste alternative to plastic wrap, it’s important to us that we support our local businesses while doing so. We are proud to source local ingredients for our beeswax wraps, such as our beeswax from Country Bee Farm here on Vancouver Island. Beyond this, Nature Bee is constantly making an effort to support our local community and sustainability-oriented organizations. We have built partnerships with businesses such as Mamas for Mamas, Surfrider Vancouver Island, Lalmba Canada and more to help them achieve their goals to assist families undergoing poverty related struggles and protecting our beaches and oceans. We are constantly amazed by the impact the Nature Bee community has had on the planet. In 2021 alone, from purchases of Beeswax Wraps, we were able to avoid more than 250,000 pieces of plastic that would have ended up in landfills. Having just recently launched Nature Bee Clean, we are already seeing an amazing impact with our community choosing to refill sustainably. Each concentrated refill tablet is saving a single use plastic bottle from entering our landfills.

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October 13 – 15, 2022, 40 community champions, social entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, government officials, and researchers gathered at the Old Cottage Hospital and Lions Club in Norris Point, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), to find solutions to building stronger communities. Participants joined from communities across the province—from Sheshatshiu to St. John’s—to reflect on Place-based solutions in a challenged world: The role of social enterprises and communities, the theme of the 2022 edition of the PLACE Dialogues.

A collaborative initiative formed by researchers and community partners, the PLACE Dialogues is an annual event that brings together diverse perspectives on rural development with a strong focus on place-based social enterprises. The PLACE acronym is not only an acknowledgement of the research partners’ dedication to place, but also refers to five principles for place-based social entrepreneurship identified through years of research on social enterprises in Newfoundland led by Dr. Natalie Slawinski, sustainability professor and Director of CSSI. Each principle captures key strategies and approaches that social enterprises in rural communities can pursue on the road to rural resilience: P refers to Promote community champions, L to Link diverse perspectives, A to Amplify local capacities, C to Convey compelling stories, and E refers to Engage both/and thinking.

The 2022 edition offered opportunities for participants to connect across sectors and inspire new collaborations and perspectives on future-proofing rural communities. The first edition of the Dialogues took place on Fogo Island, NL, in 2018 with subsequent editions in 2019 in Petty Harbour, while 2020 and 2021 were held online.
Meet the CSSI Advisory Board

In June 2022, CSSI announced its inaugural advisory board. The Board will help CSSI achieve its new strategic vision—to be a leading research centre for regenerative sustainability. Read on to learn more about each member.

David Miller, Director of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business.
I am the director of the C40 Centre for urban climate policy and economy, a think tank which exists to help the mayors of the world’s major cities become equipped with the scientific and economic arguments they need to succeed in their mission of using their voices and actions to help the world avoid climate breakdown. My background is in politics and law, with a particular interest in the successful leadership by mayors and the implementation of actions by major cities.

Why did you decide to join CSSI’s Advisory Board?
We cannot achieve our global and local environmental goals without leadership of business. Young people are demanding, correctly, that all our institutions respond to our environmental crises—CSSI gives Gustavson a strong ability to lead this conversation locally, nationally and globally.

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals?
Our Mayors work with businesses on a daily basis to achieve their city’s sustainability goals. I hope to help them access leading thinking, ideas and practices so they can move faster and farther.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals?
I will bring an urban lens to CSSI—how can we create models of regenerative sustainability in cities? What are the best ideas that we can bring to Gustavson? How do we create real-world collaborations beyond the ring road?

What about this partnership is most exciting for you?
Its relevance and its potential. Gustavson and Uvic are ideally placed to lead conversations about sustainability—and they do not need to be limited to our local area. The potential ideas considered by and work of CSSI will be powerful and global in potential scope if we build from local success thoughtfully and strategically.

Anthony Everett, President & CEO of 4VI

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business.
I am President & CEO of 4VI, a social enterprise formed to ensure that travel is a force for good for Vancouver Island—forever. We transitioned from a destination management organization, previously known as Tourism Vancouver Island, in April 2022. We recognized that the pandemic has forever changed the tourism industry, and our organization needs to move forward in a completely new way.

I have served as CEO of the organization since 2018, having spent more than 30 years in the tourism industry in British Columbia, including leadership positions with Northern BC Tourism and Tartan PR (now tartanbond).

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals?
There is a lot of alignment between our two organizations. As we adopt and implement the Responsible Tourism Institute Biosphere certification for Vancouver Island and our commitment to the Glasgow Declaration, we will often be engaged with CSSI for insights and inspiration.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals?
I hope that we can bring our learnings from the work that we are doing to help CSSI achieve their goals. I also hope that we can work directly with CSSI on research projects with staff and students.

What about this partnership is most exciting for you?
When we changed to 4VI as a social enterprise, I made it clear that we didn’t want to sit around a boardroom table and simply talk about responsible travel and sustainability. Instead, we want to put expertise into action. What excites me most is the opportunity to learn and expand on the expertise that we bring to the travel industry.
Christian Van Buskirk, Assistant Teaching Professor at the Gustavson School of Business

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business. I am an assistant teaching professor here at Gustavson, and I joined the team in 2014, focusing on marketing and management topics from first-year BCom students through to the MBA level. I also run a consulting business focusing on customer experience management and helping organizations maximize opportunities around service strategy, experience design and delivery.

Why did you decide to join CSSI’s Advisory Board? First, my work on sustainable tourism that resulted in me becoming the Gustavson representative for the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). This is where I began to see a great opportunity to engage our students and faculty, via CSSI, in the world of sustainable tourism and its tremendous impact. Second, the work I am doing with Principles of Responsible Management in Education (PRME). The synergies between what PRME is trying to create and how CSSI approaches research and learning for students and faculty seem strong, so I feel I can engage with CSSI to seize future opportunities.

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals? In my mind, the way we integrate the research done by Gustavson faculty into our classrooms for our students is incredibly important. Just as important is how we connect industry, both globally and locally, into our classrooms and to our students with real-world examples of sustainability. I see a lot of potential to fulfill my teaching goals around incorporating more sustainability issues and more Indigenous ways of knowing and doing into course planning and delivery.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals? I hope to take CSSI’s research findings as they relate to regenerative sustainability, for example, and share them with my farming and cider communities.

What about this partnership is most exciting for you? I think the paradigm shift to regenerative sustainability is exciting (and daunting!).

Kristen Needham, Founder and Owner-operator of Sea Cider Farm & Ciderhouse

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business. I am the founder and owner-operator of Sea Cider Farm & Ciderhouse, a cider-centric, community-minded business rooted in farming that exists to create exceptional cider experiences while supporting local food security, providing a safe and fulfilling work environment for staff, and operating as a value-driven business.

Why did you decide to join CSSI’s Advisory Board? I believe in CSSI’s mission and think it’s important for agriculture to be at the table to listen, learn and contribute a perspective of a farm-based business. I also think CSSI offers an exciting model for engagement, learning and dissemination of ideas.

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals? As one example, I look forward to sharing ideas on how to measure progress towards sustainability.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals? I hope to take CSSI’s research findings as they relate to regenerative sustainability, for example, and share them with my farming and cider communities.

What about this partnership is most exciting for you? I think the paradigm shift to regenerative sustainability is exciting (and daunting!).
Stacey Toews, Co-founder and Owner of Level Ground Coffee

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business.
I am the co-founder and owner of Level Ground Coffee. I love being active and spending time with others. I enjoy hearing about struggles that people encounter and the learning that results. I believe that being healthy physically, relationally and mentally is critical to achieving my life purpose of inspiring and educating others. Level Ground has pioneered Fair Trade and sustainable practices from our onset. We want to collaborate more, stay curious and always improve.

Why did you decide to join CSSI’s Advisory Board?
While our business regularly hires Gustavson students for co-ops, and I mentor students from the school, I believe that joining the CSSI advisory board is an added opportunity to stretch myself through new learning and contribution. I crave company that is values-aligned and passionate about sustainability. It’s my desire to learn from thought leaders—knowing and sharing more—in order to effect broader change in my own business and networking.

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals?
I’m confident that greater exposure to the sustainability initiatives of other businesses, plus the research being done at Gustavson, will have a powerful impact on Level Ground. It’s our aim to always improve in our own practices both internally and with the small-scale farming cooperatives with which we partner globally.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals?
Within the CSSI's priorities, I can contribute in the areas of Education and Community focused on regenerative sustainability. I believe thoughtful social impact in communities influences positive environmental outcomes. My 25 years experience in business has shown me the power of long-term relationships to bring sustained improvement.

What about this partnership is most exciting for you?
There’s lots to be excited about! Level Ground will have greater access to research and culture-shaping behaviour while I will expand my network alongside amazing business and thought leaders.

Eda Koot, General Manager at the Inn at Laurel Point

Tell me a bit about yourself and your business.
I am a career hotelier and have worked in several beautiful locations in our province. I am currently the general manager at the Inn at Laurel Point, which has been carbon neutral since 2009 and has had stewardship as one of our core values for over 10 years.

Why did you decide to join CSSI’s Advisory Board?
I think the opportunity to work together with CSSI from a hospitality perspective is wonderful. We have a lot of information to share as we all continue the journey toward regenerative tourism.

How do you see your partnership with CSSI contributing to your organization’s sustainability goals?
We have the opportunity to represent our stakeholders and guests, which range from those coming internationally and locally for a leisure weekend or attending a conference. The information we can gain and the opportunity to educate guests from these various sectors can only benefit us all.

How do you hope to contribute to CSSI’s goals?
I am open to learn and to share from our hotel and the industry’s perspective. I believe so many individuals and businesses want to do the right thing and just need to understand their role, and I think we can assist in that process.

What about this partnership is most exciting for you?
I believe everything we do can be impactful. Often making that first step is the most difficult, and together we can make progress that will affect visitors and locals alike. It’s exciting!
CSSI Partners with Jawl Properties on a Case Study

To meet CSSI’s goal of developing local current cases for use in Gustavson classrooms, Heather Ranson and Natalie Sławinski met with local businessman and developer Robert Jawl. The Jawls have a long history with the school as guest speakers, but this meeting aimed to understand how Jawl Properties navigated the Covid crisis and worked with its retail tenants to help them through this difficult time. Following an interview and tour of the Atrium, a building constructed by the Jawls in 2010, Natalie and Heather met with recent alum Rachel Bond to start writing the case. The result is a case study that puts students in the Jawl’s shoes to learn about the importance of community values in business decision-making. The fast-changing environment of COVID featured in the case requires students to use a long-term view and understand the Jawl family values to make an executive decision. The case will be used in the third year Business and Sustainability course in spring 2023 where Jawl will attend to answer questions and support students as they wrestle with the decision.