From Melissa's Desk

Summertime is here! Although things have slowed for much of the campus in these warm months, we are as busy as ever in the Center preparing for the coming year.

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Would Your Non-Profit Hire A Baby Boomer? Help Us Find Out!

This summer the Center of Social Value Creation began a research project in partnership with the Vision Institute for Total Ageless Living (VITAL) in order to examine... (read more)

ChangeTheWorld.org Partner
University Expansion Finishes Y1

(Left: Spring 2012 Smith MBA Consultant Santhosh George ('12) works with staff at evacuteer.org in New Orleans, LA) Doubling outreach was the name of the game for the ChangeTheWorld.org program for 2012... (read more)

Student Spotlight:
Abby Murray
Social Innovation Fellows, Triple Impact, and Terp Changemakers

Business Solutions for a Post-Conflict Environment

(Right: Consultant Genevive O'Reilley (MPP '13) Speaks With Students at the Jesuit
Dean Anand welcome 1,200 students to the 4th Annual Social Enterprise Symposium this past March.

From The Blog: 4th Annual Social Enterprise Symposium Reflections (8-Part Series)

We are continuing to feature student reflections on #SES4, including blogs on the business of food, College Park Impact, IBM's leadership in CSR. Interested in sponsorship for the 5th Annual Social Enterprise Symposium on March 1, 2013? It's never too early to secure your participation! E-mail Kim Robertella at kroberte@rhsmith.umd.edu to learn more.

Smith is co-sponsoring the 2012 Net Impact Conference in Baltimore—register today!

Alumni Feature:

Nick Dilks (MBA ’06)
Opportunities For Business In Environmental Conservation

The USAID-sponsored Sri Lanka internship program finished its... (read more)
Summertime is here! Although things have slowed for much of the campus in these warm months, we are as busy as ever in the Center preparing for the coming year.

This past June, business schools from around the globe gathered at the 3rd Global Forum of Principles for Responsible Management Education in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to discuss how to train future business leaders to lead the sustainable development movement. Just as companies are developing strategies for the creation of economic, social and environmental value, higher education institutions are reframing their role as a platform for interdisciplinary, cross-sector problem-solving in teaching, research and community engagement.

On July 26, I will join other Ashoka U Changemaker Campus partners in a convening of higher education stakeholders to address how higher education can remain relevant in a world defined by change, interdependence and increasingly complex social and environmental challenges. The event, "Making the Case: Social Innovation in Higher Education", is designed to grow a team of innovators for higher education who share a sense of the critical role higher education plays in sustaining a flourishing society.

Dean Anand had the foresight to establish the Center for Social Value Creation in 2009 and has invested in its development much like a venture capitalist supports a promising start-up. The key to our early success is the staff that make every day happen and their passion for students, the potential of business to address important issues and the impact they create. Similarly, entrepreneurial thinkers are doing amazing work in companies, nonprofits, and public sector organizations to create a better world. The question on my mind is, then, how do we take individual efforts and create collective change as a whole – whether as a single institution, a sector, or perhaps society at large?

This summer, we are partnering with the Business Civic Leadership Center’s Business for Good project to create the definitive “keeper of record” database for CSR projects globally. Through a multi-modal effort of data collection by Smith School Undergraduate interns, the Business for Good project will provide a source of rich information on CSR work that includes project locations, information about the goals of each project, and links to outcomes. This is one example of how we might be able to connect, empower, and accelerate the work of individuals into a collective impact.
The halls of Van Munching may be quiet but our faculty and staff are working diligently on the mission of the Center for Social Value Creation. The team at CSVC has created a new format for our quarterly newsletter and we hope you like it. We are also moving our network to Salesforce.com and launching a new website on July 30. Our 2011-2012 Annual report will be published at the same time. Plus, we have many more projects in motion that will create greater dialogue among our students, the faculty, and you this Fall!

Best,

Melissa Carrier
Would Your Non-Profit Hire A Baby Boomer? Complete Our Survey and Help Us Find Out!

The gradual shift over the last decades in the average age of a willing and able employee has been a burgeoning topic of conversation. Today’s economists are forecasting a labor and skills shortage by 2018 with at least 5 million job vacancies, and furthermore, studies indicate that there are not enough young, skilled individuals in or entering the workforce to fill these vacancies.

This summer the Center of Social Value Creation began a research project in partnership with the Vision Institute for Total Ageless Living (VITAL) in order to examine non-profit organizations’ readiness to employ/engage mature workers, defined as those who are 50+ in age. Through survey collection conducted in the coming months, CSVC and VITAL will compile data to eventually inform a report outlining the state of this segment of the labor market.

“Nearly 66% of baby boomers say they want to work for a non-profit or the government after they retire,” says Monica Schaeffer, President and Co-Director of VITAL. “Furthermore, baby boomers have reported that they want to be challenged and make use of their talents, skills, and expertise with organizations that have a social mission.”

“We continually look for ways to leverage our programs into meaningful research,” said CSVC Executive Director Melissa Carrier on the project. “And this is interesting.”

The survey has been vetted through a number of pundits in the non-profit and survey space, from University leaders down to alumni of the CSVC ChangeTheWorld.org Consulting Program. We are now collecting responses— all non-profits that complete the survey will be entered into a drawing for a $50 gift card to Staples to help support your organization. The survey link is:
If you are an Executive Director of a non-profit organization, please (please!) complete the survey and help us with our exploration of this prudent and important issue! The survey will stay open from now until August 7th, 2012.

connect with us:
A Year In The Books, ChangeTheWorld.org Expansion Looks Forward To Continuing Success

The 2011-2012 expansion of the Center for Social Value Creation’s Social Venture Consulting Program via ChangeTheWorld.org to additional partner universities was highly successful, and everyone is excited to see what is yet to come for the next year. Over the last year, five additional universities launched programs pairing business students with 501(c)3 organizations to provide pro bono business consulting services in areas ranging from marketing to finance to strategic planning. Student groups at the University of Virginia’s McIntire School of Commerce, Drexel University’s Lebow School of Business, Loyola University Chicago, George Mason University, and Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business each joined on as a ChangeTheWorld.org partner and successfully delivered services to a client.

“It has been an interesting process to manage,” says Guillermo Olivos, CSVC Assistant Director and Director of the ChangeTheWorld.org Consulting Program. “Some of our partner schools already have consulting programs in place and we simply help source clients for them—Grassroots.org has over 3,000 non-profits in its database so we’re at no loss for supply. Plus finding good clients can be one of the trickiest parts of running a student consulting program. We want valuable experiences for both the organizations as well as the students. We want non-profits that are willing to work with our consultants, and willing to institute the recommendations and utilize the deliverables provided to them in order to strengthen their organization. These aren’t projects for fun— they are genuine, capacity-building opportunities.”

Over academic year 2010-2011 the program served 20 non-profits. In this past year, University partnerships allowed ChangeTheWorld.org to nearly double the number of clients served to 38. The chart at the bottom of the page shows the growth trend of all Grassroots.org client projects from the inception of the partnership with the Robert H. Smith School of Business in 2006.

“Beyond simply sourcing clients for partners, we also have partner schools starting programs from scratch. Naturally, we support those partners on a stronger basis in the initial semesters. It is, however, hugely gratifying to see those partners get momentum and become more self-sustaining as they get more projects under their belts. There is tremendous leadership from the student side.”

Feedback from clients has been positive. “Attachment Parenting International greatly appreciates the opportunity to participate in this program and the valuable contributions made by the students,” said Samantha Gray, Executive Director of Attachment Parenting International, of the contributions of CTW Smith School MBA consultants Shelly Ann Winokur, Jerry Burton, and John Spadaro.

“What we set out to learn, the students accomplished, and much more. I must admit I wish we still had them on board regularly. They put themselves into the project and really cared about the outcome and the impact. Their work made a difference to our organization’s sustainability. Thank you.”

ChangeTheWorld.org continues to actively seek new University partners that want to start their own programs, and accepts applications on a rolling basis from both administrators as well as student groups. To learn more, e-mail Guillermo Olivos at golivos@rhsmith.umd.edu.

Note: Applications for non-profit organizations for the Fall 2012 Semester are now open through July 31, 2012. To apply, please visit http://changetheworld.org/apply-now/ .
June and July saw the second year of the annual summer internship program in Sri Lanka delivered by the Center for Social Value Creation, Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), the School of Public Policy, the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance program of the United States Agency for International Development (VEGA), and the International Executive Service Corps. The internship, a consulting-based opportunity available to University of Maryland MBA and MPP (Masters of Public Policy) candidates, focuses on improving competitiveness and economic revitalization in Sri Lanka. The six students selected consulted with three distinct clients— the Jesuit Academy of Trincomalee, an aquaculture business called Aqua ‘N Green, and VEGA’s BIZ+ job creation grant delivery platform in Colombo.

After a month of preliminary research in the DC area, the students traveled abroad to visit their clients first hand and conduct on-ground research. Students conducted interviews, examined supply chain mechanisms, and analyzed the efficacy of business processes and procedures. Once analyses were complete, the teams delivered recommendations to the clients on the ground and then returned to the U.S. to complete more formal presentations and reports. The program culminated in a series of afternoon presentations in the Smith School suite at the Ronald Reagan building to stakeholders from USAID, IESC, and a number of University of Maryland entities.

In the case of the Jesuit Academy, the team focused primarily on digital marketing strategies as it related to attracting new students. By introducing processes and training on social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as well as search engine optimization and user-friendliness advice on their main website, the Academy should be better positioned for customer retention going forward.

“Since the conclusion of the civil war, internet use has skyrocketed,” said Genevieve O’Reilley (MPP ’13.) “One of the
first things we looked at was Facebook. We converted them over to a business account, which kept them in compliance with Facebook regulations and granted them access to Facebook insights. We believe this tool will be extremely helpful in helping them understand what generates interest in the organization.”

At the conclusion of the presentations, audience members offered constructive feedback, reminding the consultants of the effect that political environments can play on the relevance and feasibility of business advising.

“All of you were focusing on one dimension, focusing on these terms of reference working with these projects. As foreign service officers, we face another dimension, the political dimension...a lot of people think of AID as this altruistic organization, but it’s really a tool in the foreign policy toolbox,” said Paul Richardson, Director of Economic Growth in the USAID Sri Lanka Mission.

“In addition to dealing with technical issues in the field, you always have to deal with the political dimension. Foreign policy involves the wishes of the U.S ambassador, who is a personal representative of the President of the United States, so we have these other angles we have to play with. Development in and by itself is indeed very challenging, but you throw in the politics as well and it’s even more interesting.”

The participating consultants were, left to right in the above picture: O'Reilley and Andres Feijoo (MPP '13), Jesuit Academy of Trincomalee; Valerie Lubrano (MBA/MPP '13) and Martha West (MBA '12), Aqua 'N Green; Caitlyn Zachry (MPP '13) and Sergio Pinto (MPP '13,) BIZ+.
Faculty Focus: Professor Anand Gopal

by Aaron Czinn (CSVC Intern, UG ‘13)

Recently I sat down with Dr. Anand Gopal, Associate Professor of Information Systems here at Smith (back row, middle in picture), to learn more about his role in a recent CSVC Social Venture Consulting project as well as how we can use information systems to create social value.

You just completed your role as Faculty Advisor on one of CSVC’s inaugural Smith Experience Social Venture Consulting projects. Can you tell us about the project you worked on and what exactly your role was as the Faculty Advisor?

Well, my wife and I are members of this grocery store co-op called the Takoma Park – Silver Spring Co-op. A lot of people are unfamiliar with co-ops, but there are actually some big name brands that are co-ops like Ocean Spray and Ace Hardware. Basically, the way a co-op works is that the company is owned by its members, and members see the profits by the way of lower prices.

In the last few years the Co-op has not been doing as well as it should given its location. The Co-op focuses on organically-grown, sustainably-grown and locally-grown food. The citizens of Takoma Park and Silver Spring are loyal to this type of ideology, yet the Co-op is still not as successful as it should be in terms of market performance. As a member of this co-op, I suggested that the organization collaborate with Smith School students to improve the Co-op’s marketing efforts. After speaking with Melissa, she loved the idea and we were able to put together a team of four MBA students to work on improving the Co-op’s marketing.
The goal of the project was to understand the Co-op’s market positions and make sense of their data. The team analyzed different options for improvements, and came up with some really good suggestions. It was a great experience for me because I had a unique role in both helping students with their project, as well helping my own Co-op.

**Has the Takoma Park – Silver Spring Co-op been able to implement your group's recommendations yet?**

They are in the process of implementing the team’s suggestions. One suggestion our team made was to create a larger social media presence. The Co-op traditionally has been running print ads in one of the local newspapers, but our team saw that those ads were ineffective. We also saw that many consumers chose to go to competitors like Whole Foods or Trader Joe’s instead of the Co-op. The Co-op has better prices and a better location than those stores, and it goes through a much more comprehensive analysis of its food’s organic and sustainable qualities.

Overall, we saw that the Co-op had a fair share of advantages over the big name stores, but it had little engagement with consumers. The Co-op essentially was stuck in the 1990's in terms of its technology and the use of sales data that they had access to. So our team recommended that the Co-op hire an online marketing specialist to engage with consumers through Twitter and Facebook, and post deals on groceries. So now they are in the process of looking to hire someone to fill this role.

Our team also recommended that the Co-op invest in a proper data analytics system. There is currently no way for them to pull all of their data together to analyze it properly. They plan to pursue this also, but it will take some more time.

**Now, you are also a professor of Information Systems here at Smith. What would you say is the importance of information systems in terms of creating social value?**

I like to look at information systems as “the great facilitator.” You cannot do anything in today’s world without coming into contact with technology. It is essential that you can understand what technology can provide in your field or your business model. It’s not necessarily the end in and of itself, but there’s no way to work around not having technology.

With respect to social value creation, I believe that this tends to happen in frugal environments. I don’t think that firms can go out of their way to just create social value without gaining some underlying economic value. Social value creation has to stand as a part of a greater economic argument, but the economic argument must be done in a socially responsible way.

The presence of technology allows you to make it easier for you to find ways to create social value and also create the required economic value. Technology helps you access the social value creation on the side while also making sure you are able to perform your primary function. Take microfinance, for example. Financing entrepreneurship efforts in rural areas of developing countries is very much limited by geographic location. But when you add technology to the mix, you can finance these entrepreneurs from anywhere and have a much wider reach.

**Which research project/publication are you most proud of?**
Actually, the project that I’m currently working on is very interesting. It is very different from what I’ve usually done. We are looking at the progression of App Developers who make apps for the Apple App Store. We’re not looking at the mainstream ones created by big companies or apps like Angry Birds. We’re looking at the independent app developers, the people who develop an app in their “basement” or “garage”. We’re looking at the development of these developers and their business decisions. We’ve seen that when many of these nascent developers create an app and start to see it have success, they see that the app business has potential and they begin to work on their apps full time. At this point, though, they don’t have any deep knowledge of the market. Just as marketers generally have no knowledge of the engineering that goes into app development. We know that in a certain situation, marketers and engineers tend to take different courses of action simply because they view things differently. An engineer may recognize that there is some flaw in the user interface of an app and want to upgrade the app, but a marketer may recognize that the app users are not ready for the upgrade in the user interface. Our study is looking at how app developers reconcile these conflicting notions. How do they stay faithful to good practices of engineering, user interface and performance optimization? But at the same time how do they go out and market and sell the app?

So far we’ve researched 20 developers. We have hour long interviews with each developer, and we’ve obtained some really in depth information from each of them. It’s the antithesis of some of the more quantitative research I’ve done in the past, so it’s definitely a change for me.

**Do you have any fun plans for your off-time during the summer?**

I’m going to Toronto with my family. My cousin is getting married, so it should be a slightly crazy family reunion. We’re also going to the Solomon Islands in Eastern Maryland. It’s over where the Patuxent River flows into the Chesapeake Bay. So we’ll spend some time out on the water, and sail a little bit and also enjoy some great seafood.
Student Spotlight: Abby Murray

by Aaron Czinn (CSVC Intern, UG ’13)

I checked in with the incoming Terp Changemakers Campus Relations Chair, Abby Murray (UG ’13), to get some insight on her passion for social value creation, social entrepreneurship and social innovation. Abby is a rising senior majoring in International Business with a minor in Spanish. She is currently spending her summer in New York interning with Sony Music.

I hear you are interning with Sony Music this summer. How is that going so far? How do you like living in New York?

Sony is very different from what I’m used to. I don’t have any background in music, but I think it’s really cool to learn about how the recording industry works. And the business side of it is very applicable to what I want to do. I’m working in Sony’s International Marketing Department helping to create video streams that promote different Sony artists in Europe. So I’ve got to work on projects to promote people like Bruce Springsteen, R-Kelly, Adele and Kelly
Clarkson!

As for New York, I’m living in Greenwich Village, and I really love it. I’m also waitressing at a restaurant part-time, which is really fun.

Throughout your time at Smith you’ve really been involved in efforts for social value creation. You’ve been a part of the Social Innovation Fellows program, you’ve worked as an intern with the Microfinance Information Exchange and you are a co-founder of a new B-corporation, Triple Impact. It is clear that you are passionate about pursuing social value through business, so where would you say your passion and inspiration for that comes from?

I’d say it definitely has a lot to do with my high school experience. I went to The Academy of the Holy Cross in Kensington, MD. Service was a huge component of our curriculum in high school. We had to complete a lot of service hours before we could graduate. Along the way, I learned a lot about different social issues, and I realized that there are just so many areas that need help. Now, I recognize that I can’t solve everything, but I want to be able to help as much as I can. Because of that, I’ve always known that I wanted to work in something that directly helps people. When I was looking at Smith’s different Fellows programs, I noticed CSVC’s Social Innovation Fellows program, and I was immediately interested. I learned so much this past year as a Social Innovation fellow, it really made everything come together for me. And now, I know that I want to pursue social value creation as a career.

Triple Impact, the company that you co-founded with your Social Innovation Fellows classmates Stephanie Cantor, Dipti Badrinath, and Nikita Shenoy, seeks to provide corporations with opportunities to send their employees on international service-learning trips. What exactly was your role in founding the company, and what is your current role in helping the company grow?

The company started out as an idea for a group project last Fall in our Social Innovation class. Steph Cantor picked the idea and I was immediately on board. I love service and I love traveling, so I really believed in the mission. During the Spring semester we had the option to work on a new project or to continue to pursue our Fall project. Dipti, Nikita, Steph and I decided we wanted to stick with Triple Impact, and make it into a reality.

Today, my job is to work on marketing and promoting Triple Impact on social media. (Follow Triple Impact on Twitter and on Facebook.

As the Campus Relations Chair for the Terp ChangeMakers, how do you think campus groups can work together better to spread the tenets of social value creation?

I really believe that social entrepreneurship can apply to every single major. Sometimes, though, I feel like that message is lacking within our education. We really can apply everything that we’re learning to help other people. So I think that we need to take our out-of-class opportunities to find a way to develop and promote cross-functional teams among campus groups in order to create some powerful ideas.

What’s your favorite extracurricular campus activity?

I love being in my sorority, Alpha Chi Omega. Specifically I really love Greek Week and Homecoming Week. Also pretty much any other spirited event – Maryland soccer games and basketball games!

Last question: what are you most excited to do during the rest of your summer?

Just being in New York is amazing. I’m also going to Martha’s Vineyard with my family in a few weeks, so I’m really
excited for that, too.
Alumni Feature - Nick Dilks

by Aaron Czinn (CSVC Intern, UG '13)

As society increases its emphasis on environmental conservation, the opportunities for businesses in the space grow as well. Recently CSVC caught up with Nick Dilks (MBA '06) a Founder and Managing Partner of Baltimore-based Ecosystem Investment Partners (EIP) – an idea he initially conceived right here in the walls of Van Munching Hall.

Can you tell us a little bit about your background before coming to Smith, what you accomplished while at Smith and what you’ve been up to since graduating from the Smith MBA program in 2006?

Before I came to Smith, I was working for a non-profit called The Conservation Fund in Arlington, VA. The Conservation Fund is a national organization (similar to The Nature Conservancy) that buys land in need of conservation for various government agencies and non-profit partners. In many instances these partners, like the National Park Service, cannot afford to buy the land they desire at a given time. So the Conservation Fund buys the land, and holds it until the partner can buy it back from The Conservation Fund. At the time, I was the VP of Real Estate, so my job was to acquire these properties and work with our partners to secure funding for the projects. The Conservation Fund operated entirely off of charitable donations, and it was always a challenge to fund-raise the amount that we needed. Our biggest challenge was always to figure out how to raise more money or how to find new ways of raising capital to purchase properties.
This challenge was a driving force in my quest for an MBA. I really wanted to get an MBA because I wanted to be more involved in the business of conservation. When I enrolled in the MBA program at Smith, I took a course in which I had to write a business plan. The plan I wrote revolved around a for-profit conservation investment fund, which is actually the model of the business that I run today. My professor actually didn't believe that my business plan was realistic, and he threatened to give me a poor grade. I ended up interviewing a man named Fred Danforth (who is now my current partner in my business) who had been working on a similar project and had an extensive and very successful career in business and investing. He gave my project some more credibility, and fortunately, my professor was convinced.

I really believed in my business plan, and I decided I wanted to make it a reality. And now, here I am.

**How does EIP operate today as both an economic-value and social-value generating enterprise?**

Well, as I mentioned before, the main constraint in performing land-conservation deals is the lack of capital required to buy the land. I realized that one way to solve this problem was to find a way to make conservation profitable. Instead of raising money from charitable sources, our company went straight to investors and showed them how we could make a financial return on their investment.

We saw that PES-markets (Payment for Ecosystem Services markets) had the potential to protect and restore important land while also generating returns for our investors. The way this works is through a relationship between our company, the government and land developers. When the federal government passed a number of environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act in the 1970’s, they required developers to offset negative environmental impacts resulting from their land use activities. For example, if a developer, say a county highway department or pipeline company, had no way to avoid filling a wetland, they could be authorized permission to do so as long as they made arrangements to restore a wetland nearby. There are developers that may perform the restoration themselves, but many prefer to buy credits from other companies that perform restorations on their behalf. That’s where my company, EIP, comes into play. We take the capital we’ve raised through our investors, and buy land in need of restoration. Once the land is restored to the government’s standards, we receive these credits from the government. We are then free to sell the credits to developers who need to offset their negative impacts, so that they can fulfill their commitment to the environmental laws. And then, we generate our profit and payout the returns to our investors.

So, when the entire transaction is complete we’ve restored significant pieces of land, and also provided our investors with significant financial returns.

**Some critics claim that socially responsible investments pay out lower monetary returns. Do you ever have difficulty trying to find investors and overcoming this obstacle?**

Yeah, that is definitely a stigma that’s out there. The way I see it is there are two categories. There’s socially responsible investing in which investors are willing to accept a lesser return in order to do something good. But there is also market rate mission investing which yields no sacrifice in the amount of the return, but also produces something good that is related to the mission.

In today’s world, society has decided that environmental protection is important, as well as this system of mitigation in which people must restore the land that they unavoidably impact. Conservation is something that society needs and desires. At EIP, we capitalize on this need that society has decided it wants. We are one of the only companies that can perform these types of projects on a large scale, so the outcome of what we do is definitely a net benefit for society.
What is the most important lesson you learned here at Smith that has helped shape your current career?

The hard science of business. The accounting, finance and statistics courses I took at Smith were definitely the most challenging, but are also the ones that I really needed to succeed. They are incredibly important in the conservation business. There are a lot of skilled professionals in the environmental protection field with deep backgrounds in law and policy or science, but relatively few with extensive business and investing experience. Having a business background in this field creates an advantage for me and my business because we are able to look at conservation in a business sense. So the business knowledge I gained at Smith has really helped my business grow.

Finally, what’s your favorite thing to do in your free time?

Be outside with my family. I have two young kids and a wonderful wife, and I love hiking and being outside with them.