

New report shows sustainability professionals add value to organizational performance
McGraw Hill Financial Global Institute paper looks at fast-growing job class, areas for more research

NEW YORK, Nov. 14, 2013 –More public and private organizations are employing sustainability practitioners, making the profession a fast-growing new job class that is helping organizations become greener, according to a new report published by the McGraw Hill Financial Global Institute. The report, “Managing Organizational Sustainability: Demonstrating the Business Case for Sustainability Professionals in the Workplace,” was written by authors from the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council and provides a preliminary exploration of the relationship between sustainability professionals and performance, as well as the opportunities, challenges and suggestions for future research.

The report uses original research and literature review to find that there is a need for sustainability practitioners across all industries. The report also acknowledges that measuring the impact of these professionals will take time as research catches up to the growing number of sustainability programs. This is a pressing issue considering the speed at which the profession is growing. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of people employed in the “green goods and services” field increased over 5 percent from 2010 to 2011, reaching more than 3.4 million. In addition, one study cited in the paper found that 62 percent of companies surveyed have a corporate sustainability strategy, and 33 percent are crafting one.

“Initiatives that align the business case with environmental performance are the holy grail of sustainability program success,” said Anisa Baldwin Metzger, who helped author the report and leads school district sustainability for the Center for Green Schools at USGBC. “This report shows that sustainability professionals are in high demand, and can be extremely impactful to a company’s bottom line.”

Key findings from the report include:

- Most organizations create sustainability programs as a result of direct or indirect pressures, from suppliers, customers, shareholders, consumers, investors or regulators.
- Commitment from top management and access to top leadership has been shown to be a key determining factor of sustainability performance.
- Academic literature agrees that good social and environmental performance of corporations generally leads to better financial performance.

To download the full report, visit <http://bit.ly/1iZBeqn>.

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About The Authors

Julia Ruedig is a graduate candidate at the University of Michigan in the Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise with the Stephen M. Ross School of Business and the School of Natural Resources and Environment. Her studies are focused on operations management and she is pursuing a career at the intersection of supply chain management and environmental impact. Before returning to graduate school, she worked as Director of Marketing and Communications for a biomaterials company in Seattle, Wash.

Anisa Baldwin Metzger, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP, is School District Sustainability Manager for the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council. She oversees the Green Schools Fellowship program and provides resources, tools and research to a growing number of sustainability staff at school districts across the country. With a background in architecture, she began her work with USGBC as a staff member placed in New Orleans at the Recovery School District after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. She holds a B.S. from Washington University in St. Louis and an M.Arch. from University of Washington in Seattle.

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About the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council

The Center for Green Schools at the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is making sure every student has the opportunity to attend a green school within this generation. From kindergarten to college and beyond, the Center works directly with staff, teachers, faculty, students, administrators, elected officials and communities to drive the transformation of all schools into sustainable places to live and learn, work and play. For more information, visit centerforgreenschools.org or find us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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