Fields of Grads: Part II
Geology Major turns Policy Wonk

Miles Mercer ’98 was a geology major and ENTS concentrator. He communicated with Rachel Smit, editor of the Green Bean, via email.

GB: What are you up to these days?

MM: I am a research assistant with the Center for Clean Air Policy. CCAP is a non-profit, non-governmental environmental organization in Washington, DC with about 20 people on staff. We deal with climate change, air quality, and transportation issues at the international, national, and state levels. We are more of a policy analysis/think tank type of organization and do some lobbying of government. We are not a membership-based organization with a grassroots network. I assist some of our climate change and transportation projects. One climate project I work on is examining the potential for a domestic greenhouse gas emissions trading system to control US emissions. A transportation project I work on involves how marketing can attract new riders to public transit. I also coordinate an environmental exchange program which brings Europeans to the US to study transportation, air quality, and land use policy issues as part of a month long fellowship. So in all, it’s a mixed bag of topics.

GB: What do you do on a daily basis and do you enjoy it?

MM: I find myself doing a combination of research and logistical tasks. On the research side of things, I help find information for policy papers that my bosses write. I have even gotten into the drafting of papers. On the logistical side of things, I organize conferences, meetings, and fellowships.

I really enjoy my job. I enjoy the variety of topics that I work on and the variety of tasks that I do. I also appreciate being in a small organization and having to deal with little bureaucracy.

GB: How did you find out about this job?

MM: I learned about this job from an ad another Carleton alum in DC forwarded on to me. I sent in a resume, had some interviews, and got the job.

GB: How long have you been with the Center for Clean Air Policy and what did you do before this?

MM: I learned about this job from an ad an-Continued on page 2

New ENTS Course - Fall 2000

ENTS 370 Special Topics: Biotechnology Ethics & Policy

Few events of recent years have attracted more interest than the birth of the lamb named Dolly. An event that prompted the US President to demand a report on its implications to be submitted to him within 90 days, it demonstrates the capacity of developments in biotechnology to touch a raw nerve. Quieter, but arguably no less momentous developments are taking place throughout the fields of plant and animal biotechnology, which have far-reaching implications for the future of both humans and the natural world. This class will focus on ethical issues raised by these developments and implications for public policy. 6 credits, HU, Fall, A. Holland

Holland is a visiting Benedict Professor for the fall term. He is a Professor of Applied Philosophy at Lancaster University in England. He is the editor of the international journal Environmental Values. He has recently co-edited collections of articles on Global Sustainable Development and Animal Biotechnology and is a partner in several European research projects including, Environmental Valuation in Europe, Deliberative and Inclusionary Processes, and Social Psychology and Economics in Environmental Research.

ENTS Summer Internships Announced

These ENTS concentrators have been awarded ENTS Summer Internships to work with environmental organizations:

Alicia Hancock 01 - Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs - Washington, DC

Kellie Hoyt 01 - Minnesota Zoo —Apple Valley, MN

Katie Kolarich 01 — Colorado Peoples Environmental and Economic Network — DenverCO

Ariel Tesher 01 — National Center for Atmospheric Research - Boulder, Co

Margie Sollinger 02 — Center for Biological Diversity - Berkeley, CA

GREEN NETWORK UPDATES

MIPR

The next lecture in MIPR’s WTO series, focusing on the environment and/or agriculture, will be held some time during the week of May 8. Another event, focusing on discussion and reactions, without speakers, will likely conclude the series. The very successful and highly attended series has emphasized the victims rather than the beneficiaries of WTO actions and the globalization of trade, although speakers from opposing sides have presented.

At the Issues and Actions conference, proposals from all MIPR chapters were narrowed down to these four topics: sustainable energy, prison reform, credit card schemes, and green campuses. The State Board will be deciding one of these issues to focus on next year. Students should voice their opinions on which issue is most important to Sarah Schumann, Carleton’s board representative.

Green House Composts for You

Reps from floors/houses can bring compost as necessary to Greenhouse, we will take it on to Farmhouse. We have a big bucket on the back porch for collecting. We’re doing this on a per-interest basis, as an attempt to prevent compost buckets from sitting in kitchens unattended. If people are interested, they can email me with questions, volunteers, or requests for collecting bucket.

-Laila Parker 01

Paper Use Reduced

The College Telecom department is working to bill students for calls electronically instead of sending out paper copies. The new system will definitely be operating in the fall and perhaps even later this spring.

Steve Kelly

Udall Scholar Named

Congratulations to Jessica Yarnall ’02, who has won a Morris K. Udall Scholarship for up to $5,000. The Udall Foundation offers approximately 75 scholarships each year to juniors and seniors who are in majors related to the environment, and for native Americans and Alaskans who are in majors related to health care or tribal public policy.

http://lists.carleton.edu/mailman/listinfo/greennetwork
MM: I’ve been working here for 8 months. Before coming to CCAP, I was a staff assistant with the US Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. That was more of an administrative job, but I did get the chance to do some more research and writing as time went on. Working in the Senate also gave me a sense of how Congress and other parts of the government work. Before that and during the summer after my graduation, I was an intern with the White House Climate Change Task Force, which is a part of the Council on Environmental Quality. This too was mainly an administrative position, but I got an exposure to how the Administration works. I actually found out about both the Senate and White House positions through contacts with Carleton alums.

GB: How has your Carleton education and the ENTS concentration in particular prepared you for this type of work?

MM: As far as my preparation from ENTS, I think it was valuable to have taken courses from a variety of subjects: science, policy, economics, and the humanities. I think having some understanding of basic environmental concepts from all of those disciplines has been important for me.

I would stress also, that you don’t have to be a poli sci major to do policy work. Graduating from Carleton, we have the liberal arts skills of thinking critically, communicating effectively, etc. For working with policy, I think it’s more important to have those skills, as well as the ability to learn quickly and a strong work ethic, than to have had a particular major.

GB: Do you have any advice for students interested in policy work?

MM: My thoughts on getting a policy-oriented job after graduation is that environmental policy is everywhere, however in differing amounts. Washington, DC definitely has the highest concentration of environmental policy jobs in government, NGOs, and the private sector. But environmental policy also happens in state capitals, local government, non-Washington DC-based environmental NGOs, and companies. The location for jobs can also depend on the environmental issue you’re working on. Things like climate change seem to have a Washington DC focus, but something like smart growth or urban sprawl happens at the local and regional levels all over.

Another piece of advice for breaking in to an area is to do an internship. In DC, internships are often unpaid, so it can be difficult to swing it. However, I believe ENTS probably still has grants for summer internships. Internships provide you some real-life experience as well as exposing you to people working in the field.

Those are my initial thoughts. I am very open to talking further with any interested students about environmental jobs. Feel free to email me at miles_mercer@hotmail.com.

Campus Developments -Max Wilson 00

Work on the townhouses began this term, with nine units going up on the Musser Hill. Although the college has not brought in outside environmental consultants as they had for the Dining and Language Center, the buildings should surpass mandated efficiency standards. The buildings will have a minimum life span of 40 years but practically will be able to be used up to100 years. Northfield zoning laws mandate that the college build additional parking in a ratio of one spot for every three beds. A new parking lot will be built between Hwy 19 and the river where there is now green space - the only location that seems feasible. Runoff from the housing units and parking lots will flow into a retention pond.

In the Dining and Language Center the college has incorporated natural lighting and automated light controls in large spaces as recommended by the Weidt group. Recommendations which have not been acted upon include high efficiency HVAC systems and controls (chillers, boilers, blowers) and photovoltaics. Recycled carpet is being considered for this building. Once this building opens, the Science Annex and the MLC will either be sold or relocated on campus - possibly near the farm.

Several measures have been taken in the Rec Center to promote daylighting and address issues of light pollution.

The beginning of dorm renovations has been delayed until next summer when work will start in Sevy. The intent is to increase the comfort, satisfaction, and safety of the occupants and to update the mechanical and electrical systems. As there will be very little room reconfiguration, there will be minimal waste from the project, with all the heating and plumbing piping being recycled.

The college has not committed to the Energy Star program or any other program with efficiency guidelines, although Richard Strong’s Sustainable Design Guide will be consulted on the projects.

The scoring sheet that accompanies the guide grants 100 points for various sustainable practices. The new student housing has a target goal of 63 points. Committing to the Energy Star program would ensure a minimal level of increased efficiency and would earn the college technical assistance, recognition and publicity of their efforts at creating more sustainable buildings.

Many of these projects integrate important elements of sustainable building design representing a great new commitment from the college, but there is still much room for improvement and the most proactive measures (such as energy production -photovoltaics- and sustainable materials) have yet to be taken.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, May 4

Call for the Legacy Initiative (MPIRG) 10-3 Great Space
Call Governor Ventura to voice your support for the Legacy Initiative and other relevant issues. An MPIRG cell phone will be available in Sayles for people to use.

Green Network Dinner  6:00 pm  214 East Fourth Street

Tough Broad and Toxic Waste: Environmental Housekeeping from Alice Hamilton to Erin Brockovich  7:00 pm SCIX 110
Lecture and discussion by Kim Smith

MPIRG Meeting  8:00 Upper Sayles

Friday, May 5

Landscape Photo Contest Entries Due  3:00 pm Tami Little’s office in Goodsell

Saturday, May 6

Greening the Campus Workshop: The role of higher education in creating a sustainable future (Featuring David Orr)  8:30 — 4:30 pm, St. Paul
Contact rsmit to arrange transportation or for more information.

Monday, May 8

CSA Senate Platforms due
Deadline was extended. Everybody should run at least once.

Wednesday, May 10

CSA Candidate Debate

Thursday, May 11

Green Network Dinner  6:00 pm Location TBA

MPIRG Meeting  8:00 pm Upper Sayles

Friday, May 12

CSA Elections/MPIRG Referendum
Vote, or you don’t get to whine!