

SalukiTECHNews

A STUDENT EXTERN'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE SIU PMO

During spring break, I worked with the Project Management Office of SIU for a week. I got a chance to obtain a general understanding of the PMO's responsibilities. I was fortunate to have Arden Lockwood as my sponsor. Although she was hosting me for two days before leaving for a meeting conference, she left me with a strong impression of her encouraging personality and professional working style. She developed a comprehensive schedule so that I could get exposures to the different aspects of project management. Arden, a leader and a caring mentor, is dedicated to promoting efficiency, reducing costs and aligning the IT functions closely with the university's mission through the steady expansion of the idea of project management to all departments of SIUC.

I shadowed Phillip Goodwin for most of the week. He has been integrating valuable functions into SharePoint. He demonstrated to me that SharePoint is a powerful portal that supports most of the project management functions. As Phillip progresses in the future, project management team members could access specific SharePoint tasks that one is assigned to. Stakeholders could have a much easier and efficient way to monitor the status of a project as a whole, or a particular task in detail. Phillip is also very good at explaining sophisticated concepts and processes in a way that one without a strong technical background can understand.

Although Casey Rolape only

works part-time with the PMO, she does a great job to standardize the project management templates. Templates help to establish standards that improve communication and efficiency of project management. I learned from Casey that with the implementation of the standard templates, people would get on the same page. It would be clear who would be held accountable for what tasks and how each task progresses. Casey also plays an important role in CTE (Center for Teaching Excellence), where faculties are trained to better utilize technologies in the classroom.



Kris Guye is an experienced leader. He works closely with the IT directors and his colleagues. He designs the IT governance architectures and the compliance guidelines. He has been improving communication efficiency and coordinating the requirements from different parties by technology—holding the weekly CAB (Change Advisory Board) meeting through Lync is a good example. Kris has been working on the Mobile Dawg project and the Change Management Project. Kris also stresses the importance of standardization, which helps to define the time, people and costs that need to

be invested to accomplish the project.

Don Barth has been working on media projects for both CTE and IT. He has developed several studying tools and modules that greatly expand the faculty's ways of teaching and helps students to understand many topics from a better perspective. As a student, I was amazed at how fascinating and helpful his projects are for students. I hope one day that all students on and off campus could benefit from his work that combines science and art.

Anthony and Sherri are supporting the Extended Campus and related IT project charters. Anthony has been doing a great amounts of work since he joined Extended Campus. There are 30 plus off-site locations around the country. As Anthony states, there were misunderstandings between Extend Campus and those off-campus programs, and it is important to bring everyone on the same page. Project management is a great tool to achieve this goal.

Although I only got limited exposures to the different areas of project management, I can sense how it brings order to chaos. I really like how nice the team members are when they interact with each other. Even though all of them are professionals with solid experiences, they were extremely patient with me and my simple, sometimes naïve, questions. I wish I could spend more time with the team so that I can learn more from them.

-----Ren Jing

IT STUDENT ASSISTANTS GRANTED MONEY FOR SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

Recently, two Information Technology student assistants, Jake Bock and Kristi Strobbe, were awarded travel funds through SIU Carbondale's Sustainability Councils Travel Awards Program. As IT employees, Bock and Strobbe chose the Annual IEEE Green Technologies Conference (Green Tech 2015), which was held April 15-17, in New Orleans.

Green Tech addresses one of the most concerning challenges of our time: securing green and clean energy sources for the 21st century to protect the environment and help build a more resilient power grid. This long-term vision will require collaborative efforts from engineering, science, architecture and policy disciplines among utilities, vendors, regulators and academics.

The Sustainability Council sponsored this opportunity for Bock and Strobbe to attend the IEEE Green Tech, as well as sustainability-related learning opportunities for other students, with the intention that students will bring back information and ideas for our campus community, as well as for the work world these students enter after graduation.

Linda Hubbs, Education/Change Management Coordinator with Enterprise Applications, learned about the travel grants program after attending a Sustainability Council meeting that described the council's purpose, goals and available resources. She immediately recognized the travel grants as a great opportunity for the department's student assistants to learn concepts and actionable ideas that could be shared with the IT Department, the SIU Carbondale campus and throughout their careers.

"These travel grants offered such a great opportunity

for our students to start learning that we all have responsibility for using and managing resources wisely. I am also very hopeful that our students will bring back the ideas and enthusiasm necessary to both educate and help our department adopt more sustainable IT practices," Hubbs says.

What did Bock and Strobbe think? Both felt the opportunity opened their eyes to sustainability issues and enriched their general learning experience as college students.

"The IEEE Green Conference was valuable to SIU because we can use the research we learned about and directly apply it to conserving energy and money for SIU. It also helped me gain knowledge on electrical engineering concepts that I hadn't learned in class," Bock says.

Strobbe commented, "I learned that you have to be willing to take the extra step to apply sustainable changes that affect not just ourselves, but everyone around us. Most changes don't take a lot of effort—just some thought."

Each semester the council grants student travel awards, up to \$1,000, for students to attend any conference, which has "sustainability" as its primary focus. The award is funded by the \$10 per semester Student Green Fee, a fee that students voted to impose upon themselves.

Although the impending budget cuts are expected to affect the Sustainability Councils' work, Kris Schachel, SIU Carbondale's



Jake Bock

Sustainability Coordinator, is hopeful that they can continue the travel grants. Schachel anticipates the number or amount of the awards may decrease, but for now encourages students to apply. Applications are considered on a rolling basis by the council's executive committee until all available funds are awarded. For more information go to <http://sustainability.siu.edu/network/> or contact Kris

Schachel at the Sustainability Office at 453-2846.

--Laura Leas writes for the Technology Communication and Innovation Department in Enterprise Applications at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. She is currently focused on articles covering information technology issues and initiatives, while completing her last semester Communication Studies major with an emphasis on Public Relations.

Information Security Tips

The April issue of *OUCH!* covers passphrases. Specifically, what passphrases are, why they are better than passwords and how to use them securely. As always, we encourage you to download and share *OUCH!* with others: http://www.securingthehuman.org/newsletters/ouch/issues/OUCH-201504_en.pdf.



Kristi Strobbe