

HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR 2ND GREENSUMMIT CONFERENCE GREW BY LEAPS, BOUNDS IN YEAR

by Chris Samila

August 30, 2008

For the *Arizona Republic*

This article is one in a series of articles contributed by Arizona State University's Global Institute of Sustainability. The institute advances interdisciplinary research and education on environmental, economic and social sustainability.



When we organized the first GreenSummit on ASU's Tempe campus last year, we never imagined that anyone but students and a few local residents would show up. We were astounded when we attracted the support of major corporate donors and 4,000 people and 55 exhibitors attended.

Our second summit, set for Friday and Saturday at the Phoenix Convention Center, will be the largest sustainability-focused event in state history and among the largest in the United States. We expect more than 10,000 people to attend. Among those will be a delegation from Eastern Europe brought by the U.S. Department of Commerce to showcase American innovations and ideas for sustainability. The summit will also rank as one of the most affordable conferences in America, considering its wide range of sustainability topics and presenters.

The goal of this year's summit goes beyond recycling cans or conserving paper. Its mission is to help catalyze a transforma-

tion of society. Around the globe, massive changes are in motion due to the growing need to become more in balance with our natural environment, and this movement has stimulated an exciting array of new innovations and opportunities. The summit will help people learn about these things.

The GreenSummit features two major components – a two-day Advancing Sustainability Conference for both professionals and consumers with more than 100 educational sessions, and a Green Innovations Expo full with more than 120 exhibitors displaying cutting-edge green products and services. It also offers networking events, organic chef presentations, and green building tours around the Valley.

The conference is the prime educational component of the GreenSummit. It covers how “going green” affects industries, the communities we live in, and the natural environment around us. Topics include “Carbon Footprints for Buildings,” “The Human Face of Green,” “Green Roofs in a Desert Environment” and “Solar Research and Market Transformation.”

The expo will organize the many ideas of sustainability into 10 categories, including green building design, green chemistry materials, business products and services, renewable energy, transportation, greener computing, fashion and beauty, and others. The names of the exhibitors tell their story. Solar City, Earth Friendly Chemicals, a.k.a. Green, Kitchen Water Saver, Interface, Whole Foods, Trane and Wright Choice Promotions to cite just a few.

People often ask me how an undergraduate student can manage to produce such a large conference in record speed – I've been told that it usually takes 5 to 10 years to build up the momentum for an event of this size. My answer is that a legion of volunteers from around the community stepped up to help and we were all fueled by the passion to make a difference. We're already planning to expand

the GreenSummit to the Southeast U.S. next year and other regions in the future.

I also give my parents and Arizona Public Service Co. much of the credit for the success of the GreenSummit. They provided the resources to make this event a reality. ASU has provided vital support as well, on top of the education that prepared me for this massive undertaking. For the complete schedule,

and information on registration, check our Web site, www.GreenSummit.net, or contact us directly at info@greensummit.net.

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